



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 168

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2022

No. 98

Senate

(Legislative day of Tuesday, June 7, 2022)

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Eternal God, robed with honor and majesty, we praise You for the marvelous things You have done throughout our Nation's history. Lord, thoughts about Your mighty deeds continue to fill us with joy. You are Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.

Lord, in these tumultuous times, we continue to trust You to compel evil forces to retreat. Surround this Nation with the shield of Your divine favor as You execute judgment from Your throne. Lord, continue to remind our lawmakers of their accountability to You.

And Lord, bless Ukraine.

We pray in the Name of our Savior. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

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

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is hard really to know where to start. I am

here on the Senate floor to talk about guns. In a world in chaos, we cannot forget about the chaos right here at home. Gun violence is killing our children: 19 students and two of their teachers in Uvalde 2 weeks ago; 20 children, and 7 others, in Newtown, CT—nearly 10 years ago; 12 students and a teacher at Columbine—23 years ago. In between? Las Vegas, 58 dead; the Pulse nightclub, 49 dead; Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, 17 dead—all victims of gun violence. And this is just a snapshot of the epidemic of gun violence in our country.

I look back at my 48 years here in the Senate and say, When will we say enough? We hadn't yet finished honoring and celebrating the lives of the 10 victims in Buffalo before news broke of the tragedy unfolding in Uvalde—19 children, 2 teachers, massacred in their school, where they learn and work, where they should be safe—safe to just be children.

This weekend, at least a dozen people were killed and 60 more injured in shooting incidents across the country. When is it enough?

After Sandy Hook, well over decade after Columbine shook the Nation, the conscience of the country was stirred. Now, we said, now we must look at our gun laws. Now, we must think about what simply makes sense and what does not. The Judiciary Committee acted. I was proud to lead that, but the Senate did not. There were bipartisan proposals—proposals that I believe can muster bipartisan support again today, support that acknowledges that there is a problem and acknowledges that we can and must do something about it. The problem is not the Second Amendment. The problem is the view that the Second Amendment is itself absolute.

I was in Vermont last week, and people would say to me, Of course, we pray for the victims, but we also pray that Congress will finally stand up and do something.

I am with my fellow Vermonters. I am a lifelong gun owner. I was on the target shooting team at St. Michael's College in Vermont, my alma mater—earned my letter in that. Millions of other Americans like myself, lifelong gun owners, are responsible gun owners and honor Americans' rights to own firearms and choose to own firearms to defend their families, or to hunt—but not to commit battlefield-style murders. To most Americans, firearms are valued for defensive purposes and not for murder and mayhem.

There are ways that we can use our common sense to keep our communities safe and keep guns out of the hands of people who are dangerous. Let's start with background checks. They are a quick and easy way to help accomplish that goal. There is bipartisan support to require background checks for commercial firearms sales. Now, I think we should go further, but we have to start somewhere, and commercial sales background checks are a good start; background checks would help to bring common sense back into this discussion.

How about extreme risk laws, also called "red flag" laws? We should encourage more States to enact these laws to allow loved ones or law enforcement agencies to petition a court for an order that would temporarily prevent an individual in crisis from accessing firearms. People who are in crisis and are a danger to themselves or others should not have ready access to firearms. This, again, is practical common sense.

We have seen where criminal gangs will send people into other States to make straw purchases of weapons that are then sold back to them. There is no criminal statute specifically prohibiting straw purchasing, so prosecutors have to rely on laws that prohibit making false statements in connection with the purchase of a firearm—a paperwork

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



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offense. There is bipartisan agreement that we should strengthen the penalties for straw purchasers to deter this dangerous conduct. This, again, is practical common sense.

We should also add common sense and consistency to minimum age requirements to purchase guns. You have to be 21 to buy a handgun. You also have to be 21 to purchase alcohol or even cigarettes. But under our Federal laws? Just 18 to buy a shotgun or rifle, including an automatic rifle like those used on battlefields, like the ones used in Buffalo and Uvalde. And if we cannot find enough common ground to ban military-style assault rifles, we should at least raise the age at which they can be purchased from 18 to 21.

All of these proposals are practical common sense; they should be the least that Congress can do to help prevent the next mass shooting. But we have a problem. We have a problem in the United States when the leading cause of childhood death in 2020 was firearms. Think of that. Our children and our grandchildren—and the leading cause of death is firearms.

We have a problem when we cannot stand up—and together—to respond to the fears of our children. We have a problem when we cannot push aside the interests of the NRA and the gun industry or of the Gun Owners of America or other pressure groups that tell us that Democrats are “coming for your guns.” Of course, some of the gun industry will say that because it boosts their sales. It boosts their sales, and children die.

I am a Democrat. I am a gun owner. I have been both, nearly my entire life. I have also been a prosecutor and prosecuted cases and went to death scenes at 3 in the morning and seeing people shot. I am also parent and a grandparent. I am a U.S. Senator. I am the Dean of the Senate, and I am a proud Vermonter. In my home State, we have a long tradition, dating back to our founding, of hunting the land. Ownership of our firearms is part of that. I have also heard from more than 1,000 Vermonters since Uvalde, urgently telling me that something must be done.

When is it enough? Everywhere Marcelle and I went last week in Vermont, we heard, When is enough enough?

I have spent months—or actually years—listening to my friends on the Republican side in Congress talk about protecting children. Who will step up now and who will step in to say enough? If we are to protect our children, we must be the adults with the courage to listen to their fears and to act to alleviate them. We are the adults who must protect our children. We must protect our children. If we do nothing, we are not protecting them.

This isn't about politics. This isn't about the moneyed interests of pressure groups, lobbying Congress without acknowledging the tragedies in our world today. This isn't even about you

or me, Mr. President. This is about the thousands of people who are killed through gun violence every year and the countless family members forced to sorrowfully move on in their absence, saying, Why our family? Why our loved one? Why my parents? Why my children? Why my brother? Or why my sister? Why? In this, the greatest country on earth, our horrific record of gun violence.

In no way is this about revoking the Second Amendment, but about applying practical common sense safeguards to help mitigate the violence.

Yet again, I ask, as I have since I have been in the Senate, and the American people ask: When is it enough? When is it enough? I join those who pray for the victims, but I especially join those who pray that Congress will have the courage, Democrats and Republicans alike, to finally do something meaningful.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, the House oversight and reform committee heard from a witness who, by all means, should never ever have had to come before the Congress, Miah Cerrillo, an 11-year-old girl who survived the shooting in Uvalde, TX.

Our House colleagues will also hear from Felix and Kimberly Rubio, the parents of 10-year-old Lexi, who was killed in the shooting. You can just imagine their broken hearts.

They will also hear from the only pediatrician in Uvalde available to treat the victims on that awful, awful, awful day.

I hope every single Member of the House and Senate pays attention to these proceedings. God knows, many in Congress need to listen to what these witnesses have to say.

We need to listen, and Congress needs to act, because across every neighborhood, every school, every city, every town—urban, suburban, rural—Americans are wondering the same thing: When is Congress going to act to stop the violence?

Now, that is precisely what we are working on right now in the Senate. It will be hard to believe, after hearing what these witnesses have to say, that the Senate cannot find a way to come together and act on gun violence.

Over the past week and a half, my Democratic colleagues, led by the efforts of Senators MURPHY, SINEMA, BLUMENTHAL, MANCHIN, COONS, HEINRICH, and others, have been holding good faith talks with Republicans to see if we can arrive at an agreement on gun violence legislation.

As I have said, these bipartisan talks deserve the space they need to produce meaningful results, and so I hope my colleagues continue to make progress toward an effective agreement—hopefully, by the end of the week.

The overwhelming consensus of our caucus, among the gun safety violence prevention advocates and among the American people, is that even if we can't get everything done, that getting something real done is worth pursuing.

Let me repeat that. It is an overwhelming consensus in this caucus, among the broad panoply of gun groups, gun safety groups, and among the American people: Get something done. Get something real done, even if it is not everything that many of us would wish for.

Given the other side's long-held refusal to do anything meaningful on gun violence, we know how difficult this is. But that is all the more reason for us to explore every realistic opportunity to getting something real done.

We know we won't get everything we want. The debate for gun safety will continue after this moment, but we have a moral obligation right now to try and get something meaningful—something meaningful—done for the American people in the name of those who have died.

This is not a partisan issue. Gun safety is overwhelmingly backed by a large majority of Americans, a majority of Democrats, Republicans, Independents. It is bipartisan because all Americans know the same thing: We stand alone in the developed world in the number of mass shootings that take place every year. We stand alone among the developed nations in the world in that on any given day, another school, another grocery store, another hospital, another concert, another neighborhood can suddenly become a site of unimaginable tragedy.

Americans, many for the first time, are thinking: I am going to be shot, whether they are in a supermarket, their kids are in a school, or anywhere else.

And we stand alone in that year after year, the plague of mass shootings in this country has been met by inaction. When other countries have faced these mass shootings, they have acted, and they have acted well.

Why aren't we?

The American people are tired and angry of the same thing happening again and again. They are tired of nothing getting done. They are tired of the greatest country in the world being paralyzed and not acting in a right way, mainly because people on the other side of the aisle haven't joined us.

But I urge my colleagues now, let's get something done. The sooner we act, the greater chance we have of preventing another senseless mass shooting in America. Let's break this cycle of gun violence, and let's end the days when parents, doctors, and children have to come to the U.S. Capitol in order to beg their elected representatives to take action.

JANUARY 6 HEARINGS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, on FOX News and January 6.

Tomorrow evening, the House Select Committee will hold its first public hearings on the insurrection of January 6. It will be a watershed moment for what has now been a 10-month investigation to uncover the truth of what happened on that terrible, terrible day in our Nation's history.

The American people need to see January 6 for what it was—a deliberate, organized, and violent attempt to reverse a free and fair election. It was a profane and grotesque assault upon American democracy. Worst of all, it was part of a larger effort from the hard right to erode our constitutional order from within.

Just a couple of days ago, someone was arrested who said he was within 20 feet of me and was trying to get me as we left this Chamber.

These hearings will be essential viewing. They are a direct look into the dark soul of the hard right, and every single American needs to know the truth of what happened that day.

Every major broadcast and cable network will cover these proceedings live—every network except one, that is: FOX News.

In one of the most cowardly journalistic decisions in modern memory, FOX News, one of main amplifiers of the Big Lie about January 6 and about the election, has stated they will not broadcast Thursday's hearing.

After giving the likes of Tucker Carlson a blank check to spread conspiracy theories and White supremacist views night after night, it is beyond repugnant that FOX News refuses to cover the investigation into the deadliest attack on our democracy in modern history.

It is a disgusting and treacherous decision, one that will gravely harm our democracy, one that deliberately will conceal the truth from a large portion of the viewing public.

Let me say it once again. FOX's decision not to air live proceedings on January 6 is cowardly and is tantamount to hiding the truth from the American people.

FOX News has an obligation to report the facts of the January 6 investigation so their viewers can learn the truth, especially after FOX News was one of the main propagators of so many of the Big Lies.

Are they a real news station? They don't seem to be. I hope they reverse this awful decision.

HONORING OUR PACT ACT OF 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on the PACT Act, today, the Senate is going to adopt a motion to proceed to Honoring our PACT Act, and my colleague from Montana, chair of our Veterans' Committee, who has worked so hard on this, will speak about that shortly, in a moment.

The PACT Act is one of the most important veteran healthcare bills this Chamber has considered in decades. Yesterday, the Senate invoked cloture on the motion to proceed by a whopping 86 votes.

Three and a half million veterans—three and a half million—have been likely exposed to toxic chemicals in the line of duty since 2001. Over the years, these toxic exposures have led to terrible healthcare complications that have cut too many lives short and burdened far too many of our Nation's heroes.

Tragically, many of our Nation's veterans have been unable to access the care they need because of outdated VA rules that dictate eligibility for benefits. The PACT Act would fix that for some of the biggest reforms to the VA ever.

It is a no-brainer to move forward on a bill to take care of veterans who have been exposed to toxins in the line of duty. We cannot let dilatory or destructive amendments stand in the way of the need of our veterans' dire and crucial needs.

Again, last night's vote was overwhelmingly bipartisan. There is no reason for us not to pass this important, vital, sensible bill A-S-A-P. Every one of us in this Chamber has heard from a military servicemember who is struggling to afford quality healthcare, and this is one of the best steps the Senate can take to improve the lives of those who have given their all for our country.

Veterans service organizations across the country are urging the Senate to act, so let's get this bill passed with the same bipartisan good will that has characterized the negotiations to date.

I yield the floor.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS ACT OF 2021—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3967, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to H.R. 3967, a bill to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS ACT OF 2021

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3967) to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

AMENDMENT NO. 5051

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 5051.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. TESTER] proposes an amendment numbered 5051.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask to dispense with any further reading of the amendment.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of June 7, 2022, under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 5065 TO AMENDMENT NO. 5051

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 5065.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 5065 to amendment No. 5051.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

At the end add the following:

SEC. ____ . EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, the Senate is on the verge of honoring our commitment to our country's toxic-exposed veterans and their families through the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our PACT Act.

Look, generation after generation of veterans have been exposed to toxic substances during their time in service, dating all the way back to World War I and every conflict since then.

And they have returned only to face yet another battle here at home when

they seek care and benefits because of the impact of toxic exposure on their lives.

In the worst care scenarios, folks are paying the price with their lives—veterans and heroes like Sergeant First Class Robinson, for whom this bill is named after.

Look, we have made some incredible advances as a country over our history when it comes to taking care of our servicemembers both in-theater and after they get back home. The survival on the battlefield now compared to 50 years ago has been improved amazingly.

Prosthetics—we have done some amazing work with prosthetics for the folks who have come back who are missing limbs. We have been working hard on mental health. We are not where we need to be, but we are making some advances. We have got more stuff to do, particularly in the area of transition and implementation of alternate forms of mental healthcare.

But the fact is, with toxic exposure, we have never done a good job. This bill will put the VA and put this Nation on the right track to addressing decades of inaction and failure by our government—by us—to pay for the cost of the war.

So what does it do? It expands eligibility—expands eligibility—for VA healthcare to more than 3½ million combat veterans exposed to burn pits since 9/11.

It supports our post-9/11 and Vietnam-era veterans by removing the burden of proof for 23 presumptive conditions caused by toxic exposure, from cancers to lung diseases.

It establishes a framework for the establishment of future presumptions of service connection related to toxic exposure. So why is this important? Well, you know how the Senate works. Oftentimes, it takes a long time to get much done, and it has taken an act of Congress—literally, an act of Congress—to get these presumptives approved in the past.

Now the VA is going to have a structure where they can follow the science and get these toxic exposures covered, the ones that are going to happen in the future—and, unfortunately, I am afraid that they will happen in the future so this structure is important.

This bill also gives the VA the tools it needs to bolster its workforce, to establish more healthcare facilities, to improve claims processing, which will better meet the immediate and future needs of every veteran that the VA serves.

I have talked about the costs. The costs are \$287 billion over 10—significant, very significant, but it is a cost of war.

Keep in mind that this substitute—because of the work that the staffs have done in a bipartisan way—is \$50 billion less than the House-passed toxic exposure bill.

So we have done our best to make sure that this bill meets the needs of

our veterans and also meets the needs of our taxpayers.

This is the right thing to do, and it is the right thing to get done today because right now our veterans are paying the cost. They are the only ones paying the cost, and they cannot afford to wait any longer.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 Lisa M. Gomez, of New Jersey, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 6 months ago, the Washington Post published an extremely disturbing report.

According to the report, a man in his mid-20s was stopped near the house of a Supreme Court Justice carrying a weapon and burglary tools. He reportedly told police he intended to murder the Justice. Reportedly, he indicated he was angry at the decision he thinks the Court may reach in an upcoming case in light of the unconscionable leak from a few weeks back.

So this is where we are. This is where we are. If these reports are correct, it was an assassination attempt against a sitting Justice, or something close to it.

This is exactly—exactly—the kind of event that many feared that the terrible breach of the Court's rules and norms could fuel. This is exactly the kind of event that many worried the unhinged, reckless, apocalyptic rhetoric from prominent figures toward the Court going back many months and especially in recent weeks could make more likely.

This is exactly—exactly—why the Senate passed legislation very shortly after the leak to enhance the police protection for Justices and their families. This is commonsense, non-controversial legislation that passed in this Chamber—in this Chamber—unanimously.

But House Democrats have spent weeks blocking—blocking the measure that passed here unanimously related

to security for Supreme Court Justices. The House's Democrats have refused to take it up.

Now, look, that needs to change, and it needs to change right now. Right now. House Democrats must pass this bill and they need to do it today. No more fiddling around with this. They need to pass it today. They need to stop their multiweek blockade against the Supreme Court security bill and pass it before the sun sets today.

I will have more to say on this subject as the facts continue to unfold.

INFLATION

Mr. President, on a completely different matter, rising food prices have been one of the most relentless and painful aspects of the historic inflation unfolding on Democrats' watch.

One year ago, President Biden's White House bragged—bragged—that the cost of an Independence Day cook-out would be 16-cents cheaper than the year before. Well, in the past year food prices have jumped more than 9 percent. So that same spread won't be cents cheaper, it will be dollars more expensive.

Grocery store prices have risen at their fastest rate since 1980, and at full-service restaurants, prices have jumped more in the past 12 months than any year on record. Any year on record. There has been 17 straight months of rising food prices.

So this is not a "Putin" price hike. As one of my constituents in Nancy, KY, put it a few months back, "Many people are scared that they might have to choose between eating and heating the house."

Democrats' failed policies have made it harder to feed a family in America, but the pain isn't limited to the supermarket or to the dinner table, it includes producers at every step of the supply chain.

According to the owner of Jot 'Em Down Store, which boasts the oldest lunch counter in Lexington, rising costs have come from all directions. "This year, we've been hampered by supply chain issues, rising gas prices [and] inflation . . ."

In my hometown of Louisville, the operator of one stand at the local farmers market elaborated, "The feed to feed animals has gone up. Packaging, processing has gone up. . . . Butter has gone up three times in the last 4 weeks." Our food producers are feeling the pinch.

A soybean farmer in Muhlenberg County put it this way: "I can put out two, maybe three crops in years past for what it's costing this year."

A corn grower in Christian County says rising prices are "crippling family farms like mine."

Of course, Kentucky farmers are not alone. Across America, farm country has been absolutely hammered on Democrats' watch. And by the Biden administration's own data, farm production expenses from animal feed to diesel fuel are climbing even higher this year than last year.

It is a really hard time to be in the business of feeding America. But it didn't have to be this way. It didn't have to be this way. Washington Democrats didn't have to ram through a multitrillion-dollar wish list of inflationary spending last spring. The Biden administration didn't have to declare war on affordable American energy on day one.

Needless to say, millions of working American families sit down for dinner these days wondering why on Earth they did.

TRIBUTE TO KENNY KLEIN

Mr. President, now finally, on one totally different matter, it is my privilege today to pay honor to an iconic Kentuckian.

The NCAA basketball season may only last 5 months, but for our outgoing University of Louisville media relations manager and Senior Associate Athletic Director Kenny Klein, the game has been a four-decade odyssey.

When Kenny joined the U of L program in 1983, he was the youngest Sports Information Director at an NCAA Division I football school. Now some might have doubted this young Tennessean could manage U of L's impassioned fan base or Louisville's prickly sports reporters, but he proved them all wrong. Long after games ended, after players went back to the locker rooms, after fans returned home, Kenny would stay in his office well into the night. He would pore over notes and statistics to perfect his answers to journalists' questions, and he would stash a cold beer in his desk for any reporter who spent the long nights with him.

He was there for the team's highs—888 wins, two NCAA titles—and he deftly managed the team's lows as well. Referring to Kenny's flawless handling of media frenzies, one former *Courier-Journal* sports journalist suggested Kenny could run a course in crisis management in his retirement. That kind of sterling praise from an adversarial journalist, no less, is proof of Kenny's magic touch with the media.

Over the course of his long career, he became the face U of L basketball to fans spanning generations. As an example, the star player of the 1986 championship squad Kenny Payne arrived on campus during Klein's second year on the job. And next year, Payne will be on the court coaching the school's basketball program. So students, athletes, and administrators came and went, but they could always count on Kenny Klein's constant presence.

Since announcing his retirement, Kenny has received an outpouring of support from across the country, including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the College Sports Information Directors of America.

Everyone, from Louisville's newest students to Kenny's biggest fan in the U.S. Capitol, is sad to see him leave his post. And we are glad that, after some

begging, he has promised to stay at U of L in a reduced capacity.

So we all wish him the best in the next chapter of his extraordinary life.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TITLE 42

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, 3 weeks ago, a Federal judge blocked the Biden Administration from lifting title 42 COVID restrictions. It was a welcome decision that will hopefully stave off an additional flood of illegal immigration on our southern border. But it has been pretty much the only bit of good news on this front, because the situation at our southern border is out of control.

In April, U.S. Customs and Border Protection encountered 234,088 individuals attempting to cross our border illegally—234,088. That is the highest number ever recorded.

The Border Patrol is stretched thin. A recent article reported that “around 60 percent of CBP agents have been assigned to process migrants, taking them away from field work.” Sixty percent. Detention facilities are overflowing and massive numbers of illegal immigrants are being released into the country, many of whom will never report to an immigration office as ordered.

In short, our southern border is in chaos, and if title 42 is lifted, the situation is almost guaranteed to become much worse.

The Department of Homeland Security has estimated that as many as 18,000 migrants per day could attempt to cross our southern border if the policy is lifted. Eighteen thousand per day—that is more than double the number we are currently experiencing, and the administration has yet to implement any plan for dealing with such a situation.

Illegal immigration, especially the kind of out-of-control illegal immigration we are now experiencing, has serious consequences. Criminals, including human traffickers, drug smugglers, and gang members, regularly attempt to cross our southern border. The worse the situation at our border gets, the easier it is for those individuals to make their way into the United States, and that has consequences for our entire country.

South Dakota law enforcement officials tell me that they are seizing drugs that they can trace directly back to the cartels who smuggle these drugs across our border. Our country is currently in the midst of a fentanyl crisis. In fact, right now, fentanyl overdose is the leading cause of death for U.S. adults between the ages of 18 and 45. And where is all this fentanyl coming

from? Most of it is being trafficked across our southern border; and when more and more of our Customs and Border Protection agents have been pulled off the border to process migrants, it is pretty much a guarantee that drug smugglers are having a much easier time in getting their product into the country.

I mentioned that Customs and Border Protection encountered more than 234,000 individuals who were attempting to cross our southern border illegally in the month of April, but that number only reflects individuals the CBP has actually apprehended. In April, Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas testified that, in addition to the 1.7 million apprehensions at the southern border in fiscal year 2021, there were more than 389,000 “got-aways”—individuals the Border Patrol saw but was unable to apprehend.

The Economist recently reported:

One border expert estimates that less than 20 percent of people trying to cross the border undetected are stopped.

The administration has attempted to suggest that the surge in illegal immigration that we have been experiencing since President Biden took office is, in large part, a function of conditions in other countries; but while these factors exist—and there are legitimate asylum claims at the border—that doesn't mean there is nothing the President can do about our out-of-control border situation. Better border security is well within the President's control. He is just not interested in putting it in place, and his Vice President has all but formally abandoned her role as border czar.

In fact, since taking office, the President has invited increased illegal immigration with the policy decisions that he has made. On his very first day in office, President Biden rescinded the declaration of a national emergency at our southern border; he halted construction of the border wall; he revoked a Trump administration order that called for the government to faithfully execute our immigration laws; and his Department of Homeland Security issued guidelines pausing deportations except under certain conditions. That was all—all—on his first day in office.

Needless to say, the effect of all of this was to declare to the world that the U.S. borders were effectively open. And, of course, the President's anti-border security efforts didn't end there.

The President has significantly limited the ability of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to enforce immigration laws. Deportations dropped precipitously during fiscal year 2021, as did arrests in the interior of the country. In March, the administration rescinded a 2019 rule expanding the expedited removal for individuals here illegally; and as I have mentioned, of course, the administration is attempting to remove title 42 COVID-19 restrictions with no visible plan to control the resulting surge in illegal immigration.

President Biden has made it known that he wants to create a “fair, orderly, and humane” immigration system. Well, he is failing on all fronts. I don’t need to tell anyone that the situation at the southern border, right now, is far from orderly, but it is also not humane. The President and other members of his party tend to convey an attitude that strong border security and the enforcement of our Nation’s immigration laws are somehow not compassionate or humane. Well, they are wrong. We are seeing the effects of the President’s anti-border security policies at our southern border right now, and the results are neither compassionate nor humane.

Encouraging individuals to make the oftentimes dangerous journey to our southern border in the hopes they will be able to slip across illegally is not humane. Encouraging families and, at times, unaccompanied children to expose themselves to the dangers of heat and the elements and human trafficking is not compassionate. At least 557 migrants died while attempting to cross the southern border during fiscal year 2021. That, too, was a record number. How many of them were encouraged to make the journey by the President’s lax border policies?

And I haven’t even mentioned the lack of compassion and humanity the President displays for Americans affected by the illegal immigration crisis. Straining the resources of U.S. border communities by smoothing the way for illegal immigration and cross-border criminal activity is not compassionate. Making it easier for cartels to flood our Nation with fentanyl is not humane.

The President of the United States—any President—has a special responsibility for our Nation’s security, and that includes securing our Nation’s border. So far, President Biden has spectacularly failed to meet that responsibility. This week, a caravan of thousands has reportedly started working its way north, through Mexico, aligning with the Summits of the Americas.

It is long past time for the President to get serious about the border crisis that he has created, and this summit could be an opportunity for him to finally take action. I hope that he will reverse his current course before his administration’s signature accomplishment ends up being a legacy of chaos at our southern border.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

HONORING OUR PACT ACT OF 2021

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, every Senator here has a serious responsibility to make sure that our veterans get the support and help they are promised after their service to our country, and that includes making sure that those who have been harmed by toxic exposures during their service get the service and care they deserve. It seems pretty simple, but I hope we can hold up our end of the bargain today.

My dad was a World War II veteran—he was a Purple Heart recipient—and when he got really sick with multiple sclerosis, help from the VA made a huge difference for my family. So I want to really thank Senators TESTER and MORAN for their persistent work on this bill. I am glad we have come to a bipartisan agreement on the PACT Act because it does matter, it will help people, and it will save lives.

Right now, the reality is that too many veterans are living with chronic illness and respiratory diseases as a result of toxic exposures from their time serving our country in uniform. I have heard countless stories about the challenges they have faced struggling to get access to VA care and benefits they have earned, and that is unacceptable.

I believe very strongly that no one who put their life or health on the line for our Nation should face hurdles getting the care or medical treatment they need as a result of that sacrifice. When they signed up to serve, we told them we would have their backs long after their service, so if we are going to live up to our promise, then we need to pass comprehensive legislation to ensure all veterans have access to the VA services they deserve. Simply put, we need to pass this PACT Act.

With this bill, generations of toxic-exposed veterans would finally be able to get the high-quality care they need, and the VA will get the resources needed to process claims efficiently and better serve our veterans.

I remember, back when I was 22 years old, I interned at the Seattle veterans hospital. I have visited with and met with VA staff in every part of Washington State. The doctors, the nurses, and everyone else working at our VA medical centers really care about this work, they care about this Nation, and they care about their mission, but they need us here in Congress to care just as much and fight just as hard for their patients, our veterans. That is really what this bill is about.

When VA was considering closing or reducing services in Walla Walla, I fought back to make sure that our veterans in rural Washington were able to see a doctor without having to drive 2 hours or longer, sometimes through a lot of rain and snow.

About 1 in every 10 residents in Washington State is a veteran, and I am privileged enough to serve on the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee. It is my job to be a voice for Washington

State veterans who are in Seattle or Spokane or Walla Walla or anywhere, and that is a job I take seriously. That is why I have been continually pressing the VA Secretary to cut redtape and make sure the VA caregivers program works for everyone who needs it, the way we wrote it. It is why I introduced the Helping Heroes Act to get families and kids of disabled veterans the assistance they need. It is why I will keep doing everything in my power to hold the VA accountable for its really unacceptable rollout of the electronic health record system in Washington State.

There is a lot we need to do to really make sure the VA works for veterans, but passing the PACT Act, getting this done, is an important and meaningful process.

Washington State veterans deserve the very best the VA has to offer, and there should be absolutely nothing controversial about making sure all veterans across all generations who are suffering from chronic illness get the care they have earned.

I am glad to see we have bipartisan support for this bill. Let’s get it done and to the President’s desk.

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.

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

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

HEALTH INSURANCE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today on behalf of 9 million Americans who directly benefited from very important health insurance credits in the American Rescue Plan—credits that are set to expire at the end of the year if Congress doesn’t act. I don’t believe enough attention has been focused on this issue.

Last year, in March of 2021, we came to this very Chamber and passed the American Rescue Plan, which provided a crucial lifeline for so many families. We eliminated health insurance premiums for low-wage workers making less than 150 percent of the Federal poverty level, expanded eligibility for health insurance tax credits to middle-class families, and guaranteed that health coverage would not cost more than 8.5 percent of a person’s income. The American Rescue Plan also increased the size of the tax credit for all eligible income brackets, putting more money in workers’ pockets.

As a result, ACA health insurance premiums were brought down by an average of \$50 per person per month, and people in both New Mexico and in Minnesota took great advantage of that. As a result, a record number of Americans—14.5 million Americans—are enrolled in the Affordable Care Act health insurance plans. That is 2.5 million more people who signed up in a

single year than ever before. In my home State, that translated to a record-low uninsured rate of just 4 percent. That means 96 percent of Minnesotans have health insurance, which is a great improvement over where it was.

Millions more Minnesotans and Americans now have the peace of mind that comes with affordable, quality health coverage. Eligible households in Minnesota have an annual average ACA tax credit of \$3,600. That is \$3,600 freed up for housing, gas, and groceries, while maintaining access to healthcare. But unless Congress acts to make the enhanced, family-friendly tax credits currently set to expire at the end of 2022 permanent, millions of Americans will have the rug pulled out from under them, likely seeing a double-digit hike on their health insurance premiums. Karen Tumulty, a columnist for the Washington Post, called it a “ticking time bomb.”

If these tax credits are not made permanent, 70,000 Minnesotans—or 61 percent of Minnesota families—purchasing health insurance on their own could see a 35- to 41-percent increase in their health insurance premiums, and over 10,000 Minnesotans could lose their health insurance tax credits in 2023 unless Congress acts.

In my State, Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 would be most affected, and you think about this with cost issues and inflation and all the things people are already facing. Right now, a 60-year-old Minnesota couple with a household income of \$75,000 is saving \$773 in monthly premiums. Taking away those tax credits would increase their annual health spending by at least \$9,000. That is like taking away multiple paychecks.

It is no wonder that Americans overwhelmingly support making these tax credits permanent. Doctors and patients have called on us to protect these historic gains in affordability, coverage, and equity. Families can't afford to go back to paying upwards of 20 percent or more of their monthly income toward healthcare premiums.

This is important for patients, and it is also important for providers. We know—hearing when we are back home—that many hospitals are stretched thin right now, and putting millions of Americans' healthcare in jeopardy is going to create a lot of volatility as patients are forced to disrupt their care and cancel procedures.

At a time when so many families are struggling to make ends meet, we just can't sit back and let those ACA tax credits expire. More Americans insured is good for patients, good for families, good for communities, and good for our country.

I would note one other thing I would do when it comes to healthcare, and that is making sure that we allow Medicare to negotiate prices under Medicare Part D for pharmaceuticals. While our communities are facing the potential of this—what the Washington

Post called a “ticking time bomb”—we also must act when it comes to pharmaceuticals because those prices are also going up.

I have just presented two really straightforward ways that we can help families with costs when it comes to healthcare. One is making sure we keep in place the tax credits that protect middle-class families in this country, and the second is to make sure we allow Medicare to negotiate better prices under Medicare Part D because when you look at what is happening right now, we continue to see major drugs—major drugs—go up, doubling, go up 200 percent, 300 percent, to the point where we are already paying double what they pay in Canada for a significant number of drugs. For Minnesota, that is right across the border.

We must allow, in my mind, reimportation of less expensive drugs, but the biggest game changer would be to lift the ban that the pharmaceutical companies got in place in law that says Medicare, representing tens of millions of seniors, is not allowed to negotiate cheaper prices. That is what the VA does, and it has been really good for our veterans. We should allow the same help for 46 million seniors. It will be good for all Americans because it will bring down the taxpayer expense in part of the payment of drugs, and it will be good for individual consumers. So let's get these two things done.

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

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

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I just want to say I know many of us recognized your enormous service yesterday, and we really appreciate it and so much today, the day after your 50th birthday, appreciate the fact that you are presiding over this august body.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON GOMEZ NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Gomez nomination?

Ms. BALDWIN. 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 49, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 219 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Brown	Casey
Bennet	Cantwell	Coons
Blumenthal	Cardin	Cortez Masto
Booker	Carper	Duckworth

Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand
Hassan
Heinrich
Hickenlooper
Hirono
Kaine
Kelly
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Lujan

Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla
Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz

Shaheen
Sinema
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—51

Barrasso
Blackburn
Blunt
Boozman
Braun
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Collins
Cornyn
Cotton
Cramer
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Ernst
Fischer

Graham
Grassley
Hagerty
Hawley
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
McConnell
Moran
Murkowski
Paul

Portman
Risch
Romney
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Schumer
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

The nomination was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The majority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Nina Morrison, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

VOTE ON MORRISON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Morrison nomination?

Ms. SMITH. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY).

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 220 Ex.]

YEAS—53

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

Van Hollen
Warner

Warnock
Warren

Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—46

Barrasso
Blackburn
Blunt
Boozman
Braun
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Cornyn
Cotton
Cramer
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Ernst
Fischer

Grassley
Hagerty
Hawley
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
McConnell
Moran
Paul
Portman

Risch
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

NOT VOTING—1

Romney

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 Senator from Michigan.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of Executive Calendar No. 675, the nomination of Todd Harper, and that upon disposition of the Harper nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the Loyd nomination, as provided under the previous order.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Todd M. Harper, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration Board for a term expiring April 10, 2027 (Reappointment).

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. STABENOW. For the information of Senators, at 4:30 p.m. today, the Senate will vote on confirmation of the Harper and Loyd nominations, in the order listed.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, in 1946, the National School Lunch Program was signed into law by President Truman—broadly supported in a bipartisan manner. And for 76 years, we have been providing food for our children's schools so they have every opportunity to learn and to be successful. Over the years, we have added school breakfast, and then summer meals, and other support.

At the beginning of COVID, we worked together on a bipartisan basis to make sure our children still had access to healthy meals, even though they weren't able to physically be in school. We have worked together to provide critical funding and flexibility until now. Our kids are counting on us to do this again.

In 22 days—22 days—healthy meals for many American children will stop if we can't get the bipartisan support necessary to extend the flexibilities and the funding that allows schools and summer programs to keep feeding our children healthy meals—22 days.

Again, critical funding will stop in 22 days. That is not very far. Summer programs need to be planning right now. And many children are already starting those summer programs. Critical funding is going to stop in 22 days, even though supply chains are still broken and costs are still rising.

In July 2020, with bipartisan changes we made in the middle of the pandemic, almost 6 million children received summer meals, and that was double the year before. This was a great thing for children and families across the country.

During the school year, the roughly 30 million children who participate in school meals knew that they could count on breakfast and lunch each day. They may not get supper, they may not get other food, but they could count on breakfast and lunch.

These are real kids, the same as my grandchildren and yours, and they need our continued support to be healthy and to be successful. That is what this is about. They want to spend their summers playing with their friends and their school days focusing on learning, not just trying to ignore a headache and a growling tummy.

There is a little boy in Coopersville, MI, who got summer meals for the first time because his school district could deliver to his neighborhood. If local sites can't open or flexibility doesn't happen, if these options end at the end of the month in just 22 days, 20 percent of the meal providers in Michigan will likely no longer be able to provide that healthy food in the summer.

Kids have always been able to count on healthy meals at school, but next year is going to bring new challenges for children, for families, for schools.

Take the little girl in Port Huron, MI, whose family is doing their very best to make ends meet as they recover from the pandemic. Over the past 2 years, she has been able to get school meals without her parents and her school having to worry about lots and lots of paperwork and redtape. But when the flexibilities end, schools will be right back at it, having mounds of paperwork for too many families, which, too often, result in kids who need help being missed or left hungry. Schools may also be forced to increase the price of meals for children, and that is going to be very difficult for many working families.

This lack of action is not only about our children, which, of course, that should be enough that this is about our children; but, too often, when we talk about the budgets and the programs, we lose sight of the people who are doing the work to feed our children, and they have to make the hard choices on how they are going to continue to do that.

For example, 357,000 students get their meals at a school in the Miami-Dade school district. It is the fourth largest school district in the country serving more than 35 million meals each year to young people. But because of the uncertainty in the supply chains, Miami-Dade has struggled to find a single distributor to serve their school district.

While this contract has since been addressed, many districts have not been so lucky, because if we go back to low reimbursements in the fall, they are finding they can't find vendors, providers, that will bid for those contracts.

Issues are popping up all over the country. In Fort Worth, TX, kids have increasingly limited options for food. Again, supply chains have broken down; food supply chains have broken down. The school district is reporting over 400 options out of stock, things as simple as orange juice or chicken wings.

In a Cleveland school nutrition program, they have got 67 open positions they are trying to fill, which is the other issue right now coming out of the pandemic as we look at our labor shortage.

Outside Portland, OR, school food staff are going to grocery stores to get the food and supplies they need when their distributor cancels their order, and they are paying up to 10 times more doing that in a retail store.

Starting this month, kids will have fewer options for healthy milk and other dairy products when the main dairy serving Northern Virginia schools is going out of business. There are a lot of challenges.

When Senator MCCONNELL, Leader MCCONNELL, said he didn't want to extend the funding and flexibilities because the pandemic is over—the effects of the pandemic are not over, nor is the pandemic. We are managing it better. Thank you to the President's leadership and all of our hard work to make sure we have the vaccines, and the testing, and the therapeutic medicines, and so on, but the supply chains that broke down when you shut down an entire economy—not just an American economy, by the way, but global economy. These are still trying to be fixed in so many different ways to try to get things up and going, which, of course, has led to the increased cost in inflation.

So we are in a situation where our schools, going into next year—not only this summer but next year—are going to have a very, very difficult time making sure they can provide healthy meals to our children, and there is no excuse for that to be happening if we come together and act.

The fact is, we are seeing shortages across the board. Healthy options are hard to find, and there are delays for new equipment so schools could safely store prepared food. What happens when school food staff are faced with challenges like this? Kids don't eat;

that is what happens. And that is not OK.

Nationwide, 90 percent of our schools and summer programs count on the funding and flexibility that is currently in place—90 percent of our schools. All of this in red, 90 percent—over 90 percent—count on the flexibilities, they count on the funding that we put in place during the pandemic that is still needed because of the challenges going on. This is who is counting on us to act to be able to help them feed children.

Starting July 1, 22 days from now, that is going to stop for many schools. I have been told that if we don't act, one-third of our schools will be in such a dire situation that they may not be able to continue the National School Lunch Program at all. Let me repeat that. One-third of our schools may not be able to provide healthy meals to our most at-risk children through the school lunch program at all if we don't come together and do something to help them. And we know what to do. We just need the bipartisan support to do it. This is a shocking failure of our country's responsibility to provide for our children and set them up for success.

Throughout the pandemic, Democrats and Republicans have come together to make sure that schools and summer meal programs have the tools they need to feed hungry kids. We need Republicans to join us again. We are working to return to normal, but we aren't there yet. It is so urgent that we pass my Support Kids Not Red Tape Act right now. I am extremely grateful that we have every Democratic Member of the U.S. Senate and Independent Members and two of our Republican colleagues leading the way: Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator COLLINS. It is a bipartisan, broadly supported way to make sure our kids aren't going hungry. But time is running out, and we only need eight more Republican colleagues to join us. We have 52; we need 8. We need eight more Republican colleagues to join us to be able to provide support for our children and support for our schools throughout the next year as we are working our way through all of these supply chain issues and so on that are getting in the way.

Our kids are counting on us. Twenty-two days—twenty-two days—that is what we are talking about. We have got 22 days before all of the support, all of the funding to be able to make sure that as many children are getting healthy food in the summer as possible, the children who need it—and in the schools that we have a school lunch program and that we are able to provide healthy meals so that kids can focus on learning, they can focus on being kids, they can focus on being successful—not just how they are going to manage their hunger through another day.

Twenty-two days, Mr. President. Our kids are counting on us. We need to act.

I yield the floor.

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

HONORING OUR PACT ACT OF 2021

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the PACT legislation that we are now considering.

As a former chair and longtime member of the Senate Veterans' Committee, one of my highest priorities is to make certain that every veteran in this country, people who have put their lives on the line to defend us, get the quality healthcare and benefits that they have deserved.

This is an important piece of legislation, and I want to congratulate Senator TESTER, chair of the committee, and Ranking Member MORAN for their hard work on this. This legislation will improve healthcare, research, and resources for veterans who were exposed to deadly toxic substances and environmental hazards, including open-air burn pits, during their military service. This legislation will finally recognize and treat toxic exposure as a cost of war for the millions of veterans Congress has ignored for far too long. And we do that by adding 23 burn pit and toxic exposure-related conditions to the VA's list of service presumptions. This will mean that some 3.5 million veterans will now be eligible for VA healthcare, and that is very, very important.

It goes without saying that in the wealthiest country on Earth, where we spend more on defense than the next 11 nations combined, no veteran should be without the healthcare that they are, in my view, entitled to. I understand there is not the political support for this in Congress right now, but I happen to believe that in a world in which nation after nation guarantees healthcare to all of their people as a right—in fact, we are the only major country on Earth not to do that—that the very least we could do is to make certain that every man and woman who has put the uniform of the United States of America on, put their lives on the line, are, in fact, entitled to healthcare because they served our country. That is my view. This bill does not do that, but this bill does at least enroll 3.5 million more people for VA healthcare, and it is a step forward.

In terms of this bill, clearly, it is unacceptable that we have exposed our military members to toxic burn pits and other dangerous substances on the battlefield. For decades, the Pentagon has utilized open-air burn pits to dispose of a wide variety of waste, including medical, human, and hazardous waste.

Way back in 2009, when he led the U.S. Central Command, GEN David Petraeus sounded the alarm “about the effects of burn pits and airborne toxins on our servicemembers and civilians.” Despite those concerns, DOD continued to expose U.S. forces to burn pits, leaving the VA with the responsibility of

dealing with the consequences of these dangerous and deadly actions.

So the bottom line is, I am deeply supportive of this legislation. It is a step forward. But we can significantly improve this bill, and that is why I have introduced four amendments to this important bill that I hope will be supported by the Senate.

First, this first amendment that I have offered will expand permanent access to VA healthcare to members of the National Guard and Reserve who are not otherwise eligible. Right now, National Guard men and women who are activated on Presidential orders are eligible for VA healthcare, and that is good, but that turns out to be only a very small percentage of people who are in the National Guard and Reserve. And I happen to believe that if you are in the National Guard or Reserve and you could be called up at any moment to put your life on the line, I think you should be entitled to VA healthcare. And that is what that amendment does.

The second amendment deals with—what can I say—a pathetic and laughable bureaucratic nightmare that currently exists in the VA. And Rube Goldberg would have a hard time coming up with a system like this. This is really quite amazing. And that is, within the VA bureaucracy, which is itself difficult to overcome for many veterans, you have a system which now has over 3,000 income eligibility standards based on ZIP Codes.

So a veteran out there watching this says: You know, I would like to apply for VA healthcare. I served my country honorably. How do I do it?

Well, it turns out that, depending on your income and depending on the ZIP Code that you live in, you may or may not be eligible for VA healthcare. So, in other words, in Vermont you can have one veteran with an income of X living across the street from another veteran who has an income of Y, \$3,000 more or less. One veteran will be eligible for VA healthcare; another will not. In a large State like California, you have literally hundreds of different income eligibility standards that veterans are going to have to overcome.

So if people go to a service officer in the VFW or the American Legion and ask: Am I eligible, it takes a lot of research to determine whether you are eligible. Look at the eligibility standards for San Francisco versus Los Angeles, for example. There are many, many thousands of dollars in differential. So you could be eligible in San Francisco—rather, eligible in Los Angeles and not in San Francisco. It really makes no sense. It is a nightmare.

This amendment simplifies it. It simply says that every State in the country takes the highest level of income eligibility and that is the standard. So you will have 50 standards rather than 3,000 standards, and I think that will make it a lot easier for veterans to access VA healthcare.

My third amendment is a pretty simple one. It says that the VA should

maintain a dental clinic in every State in the country to provide necessary dental services for veterans. Right now, there are very few States that do not have at least one dental clinic. My own State of Vermont is one of those States, and I think every State should have that.

My fourth amendment again deals with the issue of dental care. One of the many, many crises facing the American dysfunctional healthcare system is that, by and large, we do not recognize dental care as being healthcare, and the result of that in the general public is there are many, many, many millions of people who cannot afford the outrageously high cost of dental care. These are people, including many seniors, who literally lose all of the teeth in their mouth; they can't chew their food properly. For younger people, they can't go out and get a job successfully because if you open your mouth and you don't have any teeth in it, it is kind of hard to get hired under those conditions.

Currently, out of the 8.9 million veterans enrolled in VA healthcare, only 16 percent—or 1.4 million veterans—are eligible for dental care, and that is because, within the VA, almost the only people eligible for dental care are those with service-connected problems. In other words, if you have a service-connected issue with your mouth, with your teeth, you are eligible for VA healthcare, but if you don't, if you are simply a veteran whose teeth are rotting in his or her mouth, sorry, you are not eligible.

And the limitations of that approach are not only that dental care should be considered as healthcare in general; if somebody is suffering with poor dental care, we should take care of that person because it is healthcare. But there is no question that dental problems, oral problems—infections, et cetera—have an impact on our overall health.

According to the VA, there are roughly 3.9 million veterans who have chronic diabetes and heart disease who are enrolled in the VA—3.9 million. Most of the veterans diagnosed with diabetes were exposed to Agent Orange during their service in the Vietnam war. Furthermore, the overwhelming healthcare consensus is that poor oral health worsens the symptoms of diabetes and heart disease. So what that means in English is that you have veterans out there who are struggling with diabetes, struggling with heart disease, and their problem is exacerbated by poor dental health, poor oral health; and yet they can't get the dental care they need, which not only should be an end in itself, but it also impacts their overall health.

So, without going into great detail, I would say that providing dental care to veterans not only eases pain, not only addresses overall healthcare concerns, but it ends up being a very cost effective approach. In a 2019 report to Congress on the cost of expanding dental care—something that I asked for—the VA stated—and I quote:

... the provision of dental services could result in some reduction in total health care costs.

Neglecting oral health can contribute to health problems including bacterial pneumonia, cardiovascular disease, and oral cancer.

In other words, when you treat oral problems, you are treating overall health issues; and you can keep people healthier and not have to expend a whole lot of money dealing with the health problems of those veterans.

During a VA briefing earlier this month, the VA's office of dentistry stated unequivocally that "dental care is essential to overall health care" while simultaneously advocating to maintain VA's dental eligibility status quo.

The bottom line is that it is not complicated; dental care is healthcare. By ignoring dental care, we cause other healthcare problems and we increase expenses to the VA.

So those are the four amendments, and I hope the Senate will give them serious consideration.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I want to talk today about one of the most disturbing human catastrophes in the world. Now, I have recently visited the Ukraine border, and I have done medical mission work around the world from Haiti to Honduras to Africa. I have seen malnutrition and starvation. I have seen trauma. I have seen the consequences of the lack of potable water and sewage.

I describe this so when I say our southern border—yes, our own southern border—is a humanitarian crisis, you know I am not speaking in ignorance or hyperbole. And this crisis, this humanitarian nightmare, has been created by our own President's policies.

You see, when he was elected, he sent a loud invitation to the whole world; and more recently, when he said he was ending title 42, it was like turning on a stronger magnet. It was like sending a flare, a signal. It was like a giant Times Square billboard telling all the world: Come now, come to the United States. Amnesty is waiting for everyone.

As for the cartels—the people traveling, they paid no mind to the court ruling. Instead, they kept coming. And as we speak, the largest caravan to date is on its way, with more than 15,000 people—bigger than my hometown of Great Bend.

This invitation, this magnet has made an already treacherous, inhumane situation worse. Our President is, indeed, inviting people to their own peril, to their own harrowing, life-threatening journey.

Let me share with you what I saw just 16 days ago on my fourth visit to the border.

Upon our arrival and a short drive to the river, we found the Border Patrol

and our National Guard hard at work with some 30 migrants in line waiting to be processed. They had turned themselves in. And within moments, within minutes, that line was over 100 people. And at the front of the line were two beautiful young sisters, ages 7 and 9. They were unaccompanied—no parents and no families. I can only imagine what it would have been like traveling over 1,000 miles from Central America to the Rio Grande River without your parents or without a family member. I can only imagine what might have happened to them on that trek.

From the river, we traveled to a detention center where the migrants were held for 2 to 3 days.

I have to again compliment our Border Patrol; they are doing an incredible job in a humanitarian crisis by providing showers, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and meals. The challenge is 80 percent of our Border Patrol officers are having to function like they are like running a restaurant, like running a hotel, functioning as social workers while our borders are left unguarded.

And the get-aways—we haven't talked about the get-aways. Let me tell you the story of one young lady I met. Let's say she was probably 17 years of age from Central America. She or her family paid the cartel some \$3,000 to get from Central America through Mexico across the river and into the United States. Now, I don't know if she was raped or violated, but this certainly is a very common situation—all too common during this trek. We do know that some people in her group were asked to smuggle drugs across the border as part of their thoroughfare.

Now, after crossing this treacherous river, she was abandoned by her coyote. She was already dehydrated, had dysentery. She was malnourished. She hadn't slept for days. And she was no doubt frightened. Eventually she found refuge at a cartel stash house on the Texas side of the border. Yes, now the cartel has cartel members living in America along the river and, as I later found out, all across America.

Next the cartel arranged—of course, for a price—for her to be smuggled via car from a border city to a checkpoint some 60 miles away. Now these journeys, too, are treacherous, as migrants are often placed in containers, in the backs of trucks, or in the trunks of cars. And when they are chased by sheriffs, the drivers recklessly place their own human cargo in peril.

But this person wasn't done yet. About 5 miles short of the checkpoint, the human smugglers let her out of the car. Then she had to walk around the checkpoint—probably a journey of 15 to 20 miles—through the Texas heat, scrub brush, and rattlesnakes. In fact, many days now Texas Rangers find dead, decayed bodies of migrant workers or migrant folks who had not made the trek successfully.

So this journey around the checkpoint would take 3 to 4 days. She was

given 2 days' worth of water—a milk jug full of water.

A couple miles beyond the checkpoint, a new human smuggler, hired and coordinated by the cartel to pick her up, awaits. This is where I met our young lady. We watched as she and four others packed into a small car, and a fifth hopped in the trunk. After a short, high-speed chase, the car finally pulled over and the riders fled on foot. Now, most were apprehended very shortly, including the young lady in this photo.

This is when I met the woman in the story for the first time. Again, she hadn't had water for 2 days. Her left knee was swollen and painful. She had multiple cuts that were infected, multiple bruises, and she was semicomatose, fading in and out. She had certainly heat exhaustion and was bordering on a heatstroke. Now, we were fortunate. With some minor first aid, giving her hydration, cooling her down, she is going to make it and she is going to be fine. But for many making this treacherous journey across the southern border, this story ends much more differently and much more tragically.

I am asking—I am begging our President to turn off the magnet, to turn off the billboards that advertise for these people to risk their lives, to stop inviting them to their peril and perhaps their death.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, today, America looks like a country governed by teenagers who grew up reading "Choose Your Own Adventure" books. They got some authority and decided they could govern under a system of choose-your-own-laws. But a government that derives its power from the people cannot endure if its laws change every few years based on the whims of a select few in positions of power. That is, after all, why John Adams said we are "a government of laws, not men."

Folks, our laws are not a buffet. You can't pick and choose which ones to uphold and which to overlook based on your desires. But that is exactly what we are experiencing today under Democratic control. This is a political party that wants to rule but do so without following the rules. They want to break our institutions, rig the system in their favor, and fundamentally transform our country.

Today, we are seeing the result of this radical agenda. Look no further than the Biden border crisis. U.S. law requires that immigrants be deported or detained pending determination if they don't have a legal right to be here, but under this administration, enforcement simply no longer exists.

In September 2019, on the campaign trail, Joe Biden proudly said to those seeking asylum in America:

You should come.

In March 2020, he said:

The only deportations that will take place are commissions of felonies.

President Biden knew we didn't have the detention space, the enforcement capacity, or the administrative staff to follow the law, but he encouraged people to come, and they listened.

If the illegal immigrants who have entered the United States since President Biden took office establish a new city, it would be the ninth largest city in the country, with a population of 1.34 million. And they are still coming. Just this week, we learned that what might be the largest caravan ever—nearly 15,000 migrants—is headed to our southern border. This is unacceptable and unsustainable, and it was completely avoidable.

This manufactured border crisis is also a boon for the deadly drug cartels. Customs and Border Protection estimates that smuggling migrants into the United States earns cartels up to—get this, folks—\$6 billion a year. And in the first 3 months of 2022, Border Patrol seized over 150 pounds of drugs on the southern border. Our country has been struggling with an opioid epidemic for far too long, and the Biden administration's solution is an open border that will allow some of the deadliest drugs to be transported across the country, turning every State into a border State. In fact, in 2021, more than 100,000 Americans died from drug overdoses—the highest number ever recorded—with opioids such as fentanyl responsible for 3 out of 5 of those deaths. Not to mention the horrific abuses many young girls and women face at the hands of their smugglers.

Folks, don't miss this: The Biden administration is aiding and abetting illegal immigration and all the criminal activity that comes with it. They have the tools in their toolbox to curb the flow of drugs and human trafficking and to stop the historic record of illegal border crossings, but they refuse to use them.

On his first day in office, the President canceled the construction of the barrier along our southern border, calling it "a waste of money." Ironically, his decision to not build the wall is the real waste of money because, while it is not providing any security, it is still costing taxpayers. Since pulling the plug on the project, Biden has continued paying contractors upwards of \$3 million a day—yes, you heard it right, folks: \$3 million a day—to watch over the unused materials that are lying in the desert. Taxpayers are being billed to babysit piles of surplus materials.

But some States being overrun by the influx of illegal immigrants would still like to set up barriers to control who is coming across the border from Mexico. Taxpayers have already paid \$350 million for the concrete, the steel, and the fencing that is now sitting idle, collecting dust and dollars. Why not let States that want to build the wall access these unused materials? It would save taxpayers money and deter the unprecedented number of border crossings that we have seen as a result of

Biden's border policies—or in this case, lack thereof.

To paraphrase a well-known quotation in Iowa, if you build it, they will come. Let's paraphrase: If you don't build it, they will come.

Folks, America is and always has been a welcoming nation, but those seeking a better life here have an obligation to respect our laws, and the President has a sworn duty to enforce them. That is why I introduced the Border's Unused Idle and Lying Dormant Inventory Transfer Act, or the BUILD IT Act, which would turn over the unused materials already purchased by taxpayers to construct the southern border barrier to any State wishing to finish the job.

President Biden's refusal to secure our border is causing chaos and allowing cartels to smuggle drugs into communities in Iowa and across the country, while costing taxpayers billions of dollars for nothing.

Here is a simple solution: President Biden, please enforce current immigration laws, curb cartel activity, and put these materials to use. Let's end the taxpayer-funded waste, and let's stop the unprecedented flow of illegal migrants, and let's build it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, normally I don't like to use numbers in speeches because I think numbers get lost in people's minds as they are trying to wrap their heads around numbers, but I do want to use some numbers today because the numbers are just so incredible.

During President Biden's time in office, the Department of Homeland Security has encountered illegal immigrants crossing our border more than 2.8 million times. In not quite a year and a half, 2.8 million people were encountered crossing the border. Last month alone, they caught people trying to cross the southern border illegally 234,088 times. So a quarter of a million people just last month were caught trying to cross the border. That is the highest number in the Department's history. It is more than four times the average monthly number from 2018 to 2020. If you have a problem that is four times bigger than it was in the 3 preceding years, it is probably time to ask, what were they doing in those 3 preceding years that we are not doing now?

Some of the people who cross the border got sent back and may have gotten caught later in the month. They may have been a catch-and-release, and then they come back. But some people who cross the border didn't get caught at all. I am not sure that number is not bigger than the other number. But even if you had double-counting, it is still an incredible number: a quarter of a million people coming across the border illegally in 1 month who were caught—not who were coming across the border but who were caught coming across the border.

We have never seen such a massive or prolonged effort by people to illegally enter our country as we are seeing now. It has created a giant humanitarian crisis at the border. Ask anyone who lives in a border community the problem that has been created by this.

The Biden administration's response has actually been to tie their own hands by removing the most effective tools we have to try to manage the situation. We developed a reasonable approach to the border based on lessons we learned from previous surges—one in 2014 when President Biden was Vice President and one in 2019. These policies helped cut the number of people trying to cross the border illegally. They allowed us to deal with legitimate cases of people seeking asylum in a much more responsible way.

People who actually qualify for asylum come to the United States like people don't come to any other country in the world. We are still the most welcoming country in the world for people who have a legitimate request for asylum, but that doesn't include everybody who lives in a poor and dangerous place.

In contrast to what we have been doing to make it easier for people to seek asylum and harder for people to illegally cross the border, the Biden administration has over and over again reversed the progress that is being made.

As Senator ERNST just well pointed out, on their first day, they halted the construction of the border wall. The logical debate to have there was finish the wall in progress and then have a debate with the new administration about whether you needed more border wall, but they halted construction of the border wall. The material was there. The wall was in progress. In fact, the wall, in some places, had been removed so you could put the more effective wall up, so now there is no wall. There were places where we had known for several years now that people would come across if they could where there was no wall and there was no building the wall. They revoked a 2017 Executive order calling for stricter enforcement of the immigration laws. They canceled the Migrant Protection Protocols. They suspended asylum cooperation agreements known as safe third party agreements, third country agreements. If someone is unsafe where they live and has a legitimate claim for asylum, this is not a legitimate claim for entry into the United States; it is a legitimate claim to get to a safer place for them. Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador all had agreed to those third party, third country agreements.

Even the leaders of even Guatemala and Mexico said that President Biden's policies are incentivizing illegal crossings at our southern border, which, of course, create a lot of illegal transit through their country as well.

Now the administration seems intent on ending the public health policy

known as title 42, which allows authorities to turn back many of the people caught crossing the border illegally. A Federal judge issued a preliminary injunction blocking the efforts to eliminate title 42, but the administration immediately decided they would appeal that decision.

Now, that is exactly the wrong decision at this moment, particularly when the administration is arguing that we need billions of dollars of more money to fight COVID, and I think there is some merit to that argument, but you can't argue that we need billions of dollars to fight COVID and COVID is over at the border and is no longer a problem there.

In fact, just the latest example of the administration over and over again responding to the crisis at the border with the wrong decision. Time after time, the White House could have looked at problems that it was causing with its immigration policies and reverse course. And time after time, it responded by going ahead anyway, doubling down on more than one occasion.

According to the New York Times, there are tens of thousands of people who have been waiting in the border region for title 42 to be lifted. They are watching the Biden administration and the signals it is sending now and how it intends to deal with them the next time they cross the border.

Most of them will be allowed to stay in the country while they go through immigration proceedings, many of which can take years to just get a hearing. That is why waiting in another country like Mexico was a policy that we should have continued to improve and move forward with because most people, when they are waiting, would find out that they didn't have a legitimate asylum claim; that they weren't going to successfully get into the United States and disappear into the country that we live in. And they would wind up going back and making it easier for other people who had a legitimate asylum claim to have that asylum here.

What makes it worse, the administration has proposed taking away essential resources to enforce immigration law. With the budget that they requested for this year, the Department of Homeland Security specified cutting the enforcement and removal budgets to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement by \$614 million. It doesn't sound like, to me, that that is the way to deal with a problem that is the size of the problem that almost every American has a sense of.

In April, the Homeland Security Secretary said that he will need to reprogram funding from other DHS accounts to respond to increased activity at the border, while the administration—his administration—is asking for \$614 million in cuts.

Other parts of the Department, like the Coast Guard, the Transportation Security Administration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, could

have their operational funding diverted to process paperwork for illegal immigrants at the border.

The human tragedy unfolding on our border is due, in large part, to the policies of this administration, a massive turnaround that occurred on day 1 and hasn't stopped since.

We need that act—and they need to act on border security effectively and restore order to our immigration process.

It is long past time for the administration people to be honest with the American people about the crisis it has created and to do something about it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise today, again, regarding the need to secure our southern border. Right now there is a caravan of migrants making its way to Mexico through the southern border.

Media reports that it could be the largest caravan ever, growing to 15,000 migrants by the time it reaches the U.S. border. The unprecedented and growing crisis at the southern border is due to the Biden administration's misguided immigration policies.

This includes the lack of enforcement of key tools, including the "Remain in Mexico" policy, the safe third country agreements, and the title 42 public health order.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported that in April of this year, over 234,000 individuals were encountered attempting to illegally cross the southern border—234,000 in the month of April.

This is an increase of 31 percent from April of 2021, last year, and a staggering 1,268-percent increase from April of 2020, 2 years ago. There are 234,000 individuals attempting to cross the border illegally in just 1 month—just 1 month.

I was recently in Del Rio and Eagle Pass, TX, to draw attention to the challenges at the border and to meet with the North Dakota Army National Guard soldiers. Our Guard members are providing support to Customs and Border Protection in light of the immigration crisis.

Our dedicated CBP officers and agents are working tirelessly to try to fulfill their mission of securing the border, with the added pressure and stress of addressing the humanitarian crisis occurring with the continuing surge of migrants seeking to cross the border illegally.

While they do everything they can, they face an impossible task that the Biden administration's actions are exacerbating. As I mentioned earlier, the current crisis at the southern border is the result of the Biden administration's policies.

Notably, the Biden administration is now attempting to end the use of public health order 42—just last month. Those efforts failed when a Federal judge correctly issued an injunction preventing the Biden administration from ending title 42.

The Federal injunction noted that rescinding title 42 will result in a significant increase in illegal immigration at the southern border. This includes an anticipated tripling of illegal border crossings at the border, increasing from 7,000 per day to 18,000 per day, should public health order 42 end.

At the same time, the ongoing crisis at the southern border is creating significant challenges for northern border operations and the security of our northern border. Northern border personnel and resources continue to be depleted because of the surge at the southern border. That is unacceptable.

We need to address the ongoing crisis at the southern border and ensure that we have the resources we need at our northern border as well.

Border security is vital to national security, and we need to secure them both. President Biden's actions have incentivized migrants to take the dangerous journey to the U.S. border. We need to change those policies to get the border crisis under control.

That means we need to do three things to ensure that we have a secure border. We need to make sure that we continue the border wall, along with personnel and technology to make sure that we secure the border; we need to reinstate key immigration policies like I talked about; and we need to move toward a merit-based immigration system.

Again, we need to enforce our Nation's immigration laws, resume construction of the border wall, and ensure that we have in place the infrastructure, the personnel, and the technology to adequately secure the border. The Biden administration needs to take these steps, and they need to do it now.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, one of the dangers of having a weak President is that our enemies will be able to test the boundaries that used to keep them in check. They want to see just how far they can push it before we start pushing back. Indeed, we have seen that in action during this Presidency.

The threat of violence, crime, and of the dangerous influence of those who do not wish us well has crept into the American consciousness and made an already stressful time in our history even worse.

Now, last week's news about what could be the largest migrant caravan yet hasn't helped the situation. We are all hearing about it. At least 6,000 people, probably 10,000 people, have set out from the Guatemala-Mexico border because Joe Biden invited them to come or so they think. That is what they heard. That is how they interpreted his actions.

This is not up for debate. You can look at the reports on TV. Now, this is very shocking to so many of the Tennesseans I am talking to every single day.

First, they say this is a massive national security and safety concern. It makes common sense that you would try to stop this, but more importantly because they know that this President isn't just abandoning the border; he is intentionally giving control of that border to international criminals, to cartels, to gangs, to people who do not wish us well.

Now, what it appears to be is that for many of my Democratic colleagues and for this administration, this action of intentionally leaving the border open is there to keep the radical left happy.

This is what they want, an open border policy. But that open border policy for terrorist organizations, fugitives, cartel mules, this is to them all about exploiting Joe Biden's terrible choices and making the chaos work in their favor.

They will continue to push until they are stopped. And right now they are using this to turn these cartels into international organizations. Last year, 160 different countries came to that border.

The drug dealers, they are all very happy with the way it is operating. In April, Customs and Border Protection intercepted more than 50,000 pounds of drugs—37 percent more than in March.

Now, think about that, 1 month, a 37-percent increase. Keep in mind, this data only reflects what the CBP found.

We know for a fact that every month the got-aways make it into the country undetected. And we have no clue what they have brought with them. Law enforcement officials in Tennessee have told me that around 80 percent of the drugs they seize contain fentanyl—fentanyl. That is what they are finding. It is coming right over the border and coming to a community near you, courtesy of the Biden administration.

We also know that business is booming for the human smugglers, and this caravan is about to provide them some excellent cover.

Over the course of 48 hours this week, Border Patrol agents in the Rio Grande Valley sector interrupted four separate human smuggling attempts, and that included 156 different people. That is right, 156 people in 48 hours.

Now, that is just one example that we chose to pull out and share. I have heard a great many advocates on the left accuse Republicans of blowing the scope of these smuggling operations out of proportion, but here is what I will say. I say that just one person falling into the hands of the cartels is a problem. That is one person too many who is being subjected to drug trafficking, human trafficking, sex trafficking, being forced into a gang, being put on a bracelet that is going to track them until they pay their debt to the cartel.

The people locking these migrants into shipping containers and stash houses without food or water—these are not people on a humanitarian mission. A good outcome is not guaranteed, and, indeed, it is quite the oppo-

site. If the cartels guaranteed good outcomes, no one would be left for dead in the desert or die of heatstroke in an overcrowded truck. No one would have to work off their debt as a prostitute or a drug runner after they got here. But the cartels are after money. They are not providing humanitarian aid. So what do they do? They look at the "welcome" mat, and they see it as a way to cash in.

In 2020, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reported more than 10,000 unique cases of potential human trafficking in the United States. Only 6 percent of those victims reported themselves as being U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents. That is correct—10,000 cases and only 6 percent were citizens or legal residents. About 60 percent of those victims were female. More than 72 percent of them revealed that they had been forced into prostitution or some other form of sex work. Eighty-four percent of those sex trafficking victims were female.

This problem doesn't begin and end at the border. End Slavery Tennessee reported that they just helped 207 potential trafficking victims in 2021. Now, that is one organization in Middle Tennessee—one. Two hundred and seven trafficking victims in Middle Tennessee.

You know, every town is a border town, every State is a border State, and every U.S. citizen deserves to know why this barbarity has gone unanswered by this administration.

Remember what I said at the beginning of my remarks: Our enemies are watching. They are paying attention. They are looking for loopholes. They are looking for ways to exploit. They want to see how far they can push Joe Biden, how far they can push this administration, and so far, they have not found his limit.

As the President and Democrat allies here on Capitol Hill contemplate how long they are willing to be pawns in this game our enemies are playing, I would advise them to just take a look at the data—at the data. Look at the reports from our own Federal and State Agencies. Go talk to the human trafficking organizations in your State. Look at the number of known terrorists whom our Federal Agencies have apprehended. Look at the drugs that are being seized at the borders, at the ports, and back in your hometowns. Look at the number of people Border Patrol has had to save from smugglers. And remember that you are not the victims here. You have the power to fix this. You could do something about this. You do not have to choose to let the cartels run unabated at the southern border, bringing thousands upon thousands of people to our border. You might be pretending that this situation on the border isn't getting worse by the day, but people can see with their very own eyes exactly what is going on. Tennesseans are watching. I think the American people are watching, and when it gets worse, and it will, they

will never forget that you sided with drug dealers and with sex traffickers over your own citizens.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 925, Alan M. Leventhal to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark; that there be 10 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form on the nomination; and that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, reserving the right to object, and I certainly hope we don't have to prolong this for very long, but I can report to Members of the Senate that there are Members on this side who have concerns about this particular nomination. Perhaps those matters can be resolved in short order. I certainly understand my friend from Massachusetts and his support for this nominee, and I respect that. In addition, there are larger issues involving actions and conduct of the State Department in Europe writ large that go beyond this nominee. Again, I hope the State Department will work with us on those important concerns. But for those stated reasons, I do object at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I just want to say that I appreciate the position of the Senator from Mississippi, but I will say this on behalf of Alan Leventhal: He is a favorite son of Massachusetts. He has left an indelible mark on our community, on the surrounding community, and he has done just incredible work in his life.

He is in a senior position at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has worked to train the next generation of innovators and leaders. He has received broad accolades for his transformational work as chairman of the board of trustees at Boston University.

In every professional, philanthropic, and personal endeavor, no matter how big or challenging, Alan has embodied excellence.

The men and women of our Foreign Service and locally employed staff in Copenhagen will have an exceptional advocate and an accomplished manager and Ambassador, and our strong ally Denmark will get a committed partner with a direct line back to Washington to further strengthen our bilateral relationship. This is critical, as we rely on Denmark—a key member of NATO

and of the European Union—to sustain its leadership role in defense of Ukraine in the wake of Russia's invasion.

So I think it would be invaluable to have him on duty right now, especially at this critical time in European history. I understand the objection of the Senator from Mississippi, and I look forward to working with him and other Senators in order to find a route to removing the objection to this extremely qualified candidate as Ambassador to Denmark.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, over Memorial Day weekend, I spent a chunk of it in Yuma, AZ. In Yuma, AZ, it is 107 degrees in daytime, 102 at sundown. Those of us from Oklahoma are not used to that kind of heat, but it was very helpful to be there, to be on the ground and to see what is happening at that particular border area.

You see, each area of the border is a little bit different. But what we are experiencing right now on our southern border is a continual rolling, chaotic crisis there.

I have people who will catch me occasionally in Oklahoma and will say: It seems like things are going better because I don't hear the media talking about what is happening at the border anymore. And I will smile at them and say: Well, you remember last summer when the media was focused on the southern border? We had 6,000 people illegally crossing a day at that time. Now we have 8,000 people illegally crossing a day—8,000. In fact, last month, we had a quarter million people that illegally crossed the border in 1 month. That was a record, by the way. The previous record for a 1-month illegal crossing was the month before. Things continue to get worse.

But each area of the border is a little bit different. Now I had not been to this particular border crossing in Yuma, AZ, to be able to see how things are different there, but this is either the No. 1 or No. 2 most trafficked areas for illegal traffic across the entire southern border at this point.

What you see first when you are in Yuma, AZ, when you get there to the fencing area, you notice this: You notice in Yuma, AZ, that you have got a port of entry there; and at that port of entry, you have miles and miles of border fence and then a gap in the fence, where on January 20, 2021, construction was on to be able to complete this, but literally, that day, it stopped. And so that gap has never been closed, and so border crossings look like this.

Another picture of it is a picture like this. This scenario where there is a dam on the Mexico side, and on the American side there is the fencing—or at least there was going to be fencing. There is fencing on both sides of this. So individuals literally step over the dam, walk over and walk right up into

the country. And you ask, well, why is this not complete? Is it because we ran out of materials? Actually, if you go just a mile from that last picture, in the desert you will see this: just stacks and stacks and stacks of steel, 30-foot sections all cut and ready to go to be able to close those gaps. But those gaps are not being closed because the Biden administration a year and a half ago determined they were not going to close those gaps; they were just going to leave them open. So there they sit open.

So that is one of the issues. That is different in Yuma than in some of the other areas where they just literally left the steel sit horizontally in the desert rather than being installed vertically—what it was designed for.

The second big issue is in this area because of those gaps in the fence, individuals, as they fly into Yuma—they are not coming in long caravans to come in—they are literally flying into Mexicali, Mexico, taking a charter bus that the cartels have organized for them, where they will pick them up at the airport, load up into a charter bus. They will drive them up to the gaps in the fence with the bus and allow them to be able to step across the border. They were literally—I could see it—they will literally step across the border and wait for the Border Patrol to come and pick them up, like it's Uber XL coming to be able to pick them up at their spot. And they know if they just stand here on this side of the fence and wait long enough, Border Patrol will come by, pick them up in a van. They will take them to the processing area where they get processed and then within a couple of days released into the country wherever they want to go.

These individuals are traveling from all over the world. In fact, when I met with some of the leadership there in Yuma, AZ, I just asked the question: How are things going? What is happening in different spots? What are you seeing?

One of the folks there said: Well, last week—last week—we encountered people from 50 different countries crossing just in this spot.

Why is that? Because the border remains open and people from all over the world know they can fly to Mexicali, Mexico, pay the cartels—and the current rate is between \$7,000 and \$15,000 a person for that section of the border. They get on the buses, drive up to the border, and then they step across.

It is a different kind of thing. We see sometimes pictures of people who have traveled 3,000 miles in a caravan. And by the way, there is another caravan that is actually organizing through Central America right now and coming through Mexico. The current caravan has an estimated 6,000 people in it that are walking their way up and traveling their way up through Central America and Mexico right now.

But the folks coming through Yuma, AZ, are not like that. They step across

the border, and they are carrying luggage with them. In fact, Border Patrol has had to actually limit the weight that they can actually bring in luggage to no more than 50 pounds. They come into the process area. They are bringing their luggage with them. They are dressed in nice clothes. They are clean. They just got a shower the day before.

They come across the border. They wait on Border Patrol. We take them to the processing area. In fact, when I got to the processing area, one of the Border Patrol agents walked up to me and said, "Do you see the lady behind you?" And I turned around and said, "Yes."

She said, "She is wearing a Versace dress."

I said that probably should mean something to me as a guy, but it currently doesn't. And my wife later explained to me, "That is a pretty expensive dress."

Why are we seeing people like that crossing the border? Because it is easier to come in illegally into the country now than it is legally.

Most years we have a million people a year that legally cross our border—legally—that go through the process, fill out the paperwork. We do a background check on those individuals. They come through and come into our country, and we celebrate people who come legally into our country and have for over two centuries. These individuals are finding it faster and cheaper to just pay the cartel, fly to Mexico, walk across the border. And when you walk across the border, you are in the country not just for a few months. Right now, when you cross the border and enter into this area, as you walk across the border you are given a work permit and the ability to stay in the United States for 8 years until your asylum hearing comes up.

Why do we have people coming from all over the world? We have a million people doing it legally, but last year we had 2 million people do it illegally because it is faster to just illegally come into the border.

Let me ask a simple question to this body: Do we really want a system that incentivizes illegal activity as the entrance into the United States of America, because right now the incentive is to come into the country illegally?

Let me phrase it this way. For the individuals who come across this border, we do not do a background check on these individuals. We have no idea any criminal history they have in the country from where they are coming. We do a background check with American records. We know if they committed a crime here in the past, but we have no idea from any of the countries that they are coming from. And let me remind you, in Yuma, when I was there a week ago, the week before, 50 different nations crossed that border that week. We have no criminal background check on any of those individuals.

What else happens with this? Because of the chaos that is happening here and

Border Patrol are having to run their Uber XL vans to be able to pick people up and take them to processing, and they have to come off the line to be able to come into the processing center. What else is happening? The open desert areas not far from here, where they know the drug traffickers are actually moving large quantities of drugs, they don't have enough agents to be able to patrol that anymore. They can see them on cameras. They just don't have enough people to get to it.

The checkpoints that are on the highways typically leading out from this area to try to pick up the gun and drug smugglers coming in and out of the country, those checkpoints don't exist anymore. Why? Because they don't have enough staff anymore because they are managing this chaos at the border.

We are losing our security presence on our southern border because the President is incentivizing illegal immigration, and it is taking everybody that is there for our national security to actually be on the border to manage the check-in staff for people coming in.

This is a ticking time bomb. It is solvable.

Let me give you just some very basic things on this. No. 1, keep title 42 in place. The Border Patrol that I speak to when I talk to the folks on the line, their No. 1 fear is the Biden administration is going to cancel title 42. Now, currently, the court is prohibiting them from doing that, but their biggest concern is, if the Biden administration cancels title 42, even more people will come across, and this chaos will be even worse. That is their No. 1 issue. Keep title 42 authority in place.

The second thing is, stop giving people that cross the border between the port of entry and illegally cross, stop giving them work permits that incentivizes people to come between the ports of entry in an illegal fashion. The administration can do that right now.

Third thing: Stop giving people a free pass to come into the country for 8 years to stay in the country while they await their asylum hearing.

Whoever is last in, first up for the asylum hearing, and do it right there at the border. The asylum hearings can be done in less than a month, and do it right there at the border so they have to remain in place to have their hearing.

What happens is, these individuals cross the border, they cross the border, they get their 8-year pass in the country, they get their work permit. They snap a picture of it. They send it to their family back home and say: I paid this cartel member this much money. I crossed in this spot. I stood in this line. When I got there, I got into the country. Come join me. And it keeps accelerating. That is a policy decision that the administration could stop now, and they are choosing not to stop now.

And the final thing on this. Again, it is not hard. Close that gap.

Why is this so hard? Close that gap.

We have fewer people crossing in California right now than we do in Yuma. Why is that? Because the gap is closed in California. And while many of my colleagues scream "fences don't work," why do we have fewer people crossing in California than we do in Yuma, AZ? Well, it is because there is a functioning fence in California and a big, giant gap in Yuma. This does work, and everybody knows it. That is why the Biden administration leaves it open—because they are facilitating this. This is something that is going to bite our Nation. It is a national security issue, and we should not ignore it.

Again, I celebrate legal immigration. I want more of it in our country. This is unchecked, illegal activity, and we had better pay attention to it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Wyoming.

INFLATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about another Biden crisis. We just had my friend and colleague from Oklahoma talk about the crisis, as he saw it, at the southern border while he was on his trip there very recently. We hear from other colleagues about the crisis of crime in our cities across the country as another failure of this administration's. I come today to talk about the Biden economic crisis, which is hitting families in all of our States, in all of our communities, and it is the thing that I heard the very most about when I was home in Wyoming last week.

Across the country, summer is almost here. It is time for barbecues, visiting friends, and family vacations for many. This year, there will be many fewer who will be able to afford what has been a natural part of their family lives.

The American people have just been through the most expensive Memorial Day ever, and it has been painfully expensive for families across this country. This is just a preview of the summer of stress that families are going to be facing all across America. Hamburger meat today is at its highest price ever; chicken, its highest price ever; a gallon of gasoline, its highest price ever.

They say inflation is up by a certain percentage, but gas prices have doubled since Joe Biden became President. There has been a 100-percent increase in gas prices since the Democrats became the majority in the Senate and Joe Biden was sworn into office. Gas prices in America, under the Democrats, have gone up 15 out of 16 months since Joe Biden came to the White House and CHUCK SCHUMER came to be majority leader. Gas now costs more than \$4 a gallon on average in every State of the Union, and we are approaching \$5 on average across the country. In the liberal paradise of California, the gas price today is over \$6 a gallon if you can find it at that price. Financial analysts who have looked at

this thing recently predicted that the average price of a gallon of gasoline nationwide could be \$6.20 all across the country this summer.

So what do the President of the United States and the Democrats in this body have to do about that? What is the solution? Because people are looking for solutions.

The Democrats say: We run the place. We are the House. We are the Senate. We are the White House. We run the place.

Well, where are your solutions? I would say to those Democrats.

Oh, Joe Biden has a solution: I think I will go and beg for oil from Saudi Arabia. I think I will go and beg for oil from Saudi Arabia.

The Democratic policy on energy seems to be "anything but American energy." The Biden administration has already been begging Venezuela, Iran, the OPEC cartel, and even Vladimir Putin to sell us more oil. We have seen that all in the last year. If North Korea had oil, I am sure the Democrats would go and try to beg them as well. This President would rather beg the Saudis to sell us energy than to let hard-working American energy workers get it out of the ground here at home.

Now, we don't need to go to Saudi Arabia. We don't need to go to Iran. We don't need to go to Venezuela. We don't need to go to OPEC. We don't need to go to Russia. We have it here at home in America, and we have an abundance of energy. Joe Biden is transferring the wealth of our Nation to the Middle East. Why? Because that is a decision by Joe Biden and the Democrats—to send our wealth to the Middle East rather than to use the wealth that we have here in America.

Joe Biden has blocked off the vast majority of Federal lands from energy exploration and production. Even on the remaining Federal land, Joe Biden continues to cancel major oil and gas lease sales. Just last week, while Members were home, the Biden administration, with none of us in Washington but all of us at home, said they are going to redo the environmental reviews of leases made by the previous administration. Now, this includes 2,000 leases in my home State of Wyoming. For every existing energy lease, Joe Biden has done what he can to stop production there. He has put 4,300 drilling permits in limbo.

What does he say about this? He said it in Japan. He said: We are going through an incredible transition.

This is Joe Biden, the President of the United States.

He said: God willing, when this is over, this incredible transition we are going through, we will be stronger and less reliant on fossil fuels.

What Joe Biden is saying to every American is, tough luck. Take your medicine. Take your medicine, and pay the price because we are going through an incredible transition, and God willing, when it is over, we are going to be stronger.

The real transition that is happening today is that we are going from being a nation of energy dominance to being an energy-dependent nation. We are going from prosperity to poverty and from wealth to weakness. That is what we are getting from the Democrats in Congress, the Democrats in the Senate, the Democrats in the House, and Joe Biden.

Today, we are still producing 1 million barrels of oil fewer than we were before the pandemic. So what do Democrats want to do? Once again, the Secretary of the Treasury was with us yesterday. They want to raise taxes on the American public and on American energy. Well, what do you think higher taxes on energy production are going to do when oil is already at a point at which people are paying \$5 a gallon for gasoline?

For Democrats who choose to go home and listen to the people at home, I would imagine they are getting an earful from the people at home.

One Democratic Member of the Senate was on TV yesterday, bragging in a hearing. I saw it played a number of times. She didn't care how high energy prices went. She didn't care at all because she had an electric car and drove it here, from her home to Washington, DC, so it didn't matter. Oh, if you can't afford to have \$55,000 to buy an electric vehicle, too bad for you. That is the Democrats' response. That is what we are seeing in this country which Joe Biden has led into crisis after crisis.

High energy prices, of course, mean higher prices for almost everything else. Higher energy prices are already driving up food costs. For any Senator who went to a grocery store—and I am not sure how many Democrats do the shopping for themselves or how many Democrats saw how high food prices are, but I certainly saw it in Wyoming this past weekend—food prices are rising at the fastest rate in 40 years. Does a single Democratic Senator make reference to that? talk about it? come up with or try to find solutions for it? Will we have a solution? Joe Biden can't blame Vladimir Putin for high food prices. The price of food has gone up every single month—every single month—since Joe Biden came into office. High energy prices. High food prices.

There is a 40-year high of inflation in this country today, so inflation has driven the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates. What does that mean? Well, for the seniors and retirees who are watching their savings and their retirements melt away, it means a lot. Interest rates have gone up, and mortgage applications have dropped. Many Americans are giving up on their dreams of even owning their own homes.

Young mothers can't buy or find infant baby formula to buy. Joe Biden didn't see it coming. People saw it coming, and mothers saw it coming, but it was ignored by the administra-

tion. Once again, they dropped the ball, and the President was caught by surprise. Seven out of every ten stores in America have run out of baby formula. There have already been cases of children being hospitalized because they can't get the right kind of formula. What did the Biden administration finally say? They admitted they knew about the crisis last year; yet they did nothing.

Month after month after month, this administration did nothing. That is kind of what we have gotten with this President. The President is too slow—too slow to react, to slow to act, and too slow to respond to the needs of the American people. No wonder they are nicknaming him "Too Slow Joe." That is what we have in the White House today. It is a disgrace. The country deserves better. Americans of every background and in every stage of life are being punished by the bad policies of Joe Biden's and the Democrats' in Congress.

For most Americans, this is the worst economy they have ever seen. More and more Americans are having to borrow money just to pay the bills to try to keep up. Household debt is near an alltime high, and credit card day is near an alltime high. The average car in the United States is now 12 years old. This is a record high.

I would have to say to my colleague who bragged about having an electric car and driving it here and not caring about the fact that gas prices have gone up and was actually laughing about it, it seemed to me, well, you are different than most Americans, I would have to say, because most Americans can't do what you do. They don't have that opportunity. The average car in the United States is 12 years old because that is what people can afford, but they can hardly afford the gas to go in it. They can't afford to buy a new car or a used car, let alone an electric car.

Since Joe Biden became President, prices have gone up faster than wages. That is the complaint I continue to hear about at home. Month after month after month, the buying power of the average American family keeps going lower and lower and lower. Now two-thirds of the American people are talking about living paycheck to paycheck with nothing left over—nothing. As a result, the American people are feeling stuck and stressed and squeezed.

The pessimism of the economists is only exceeded by the pessimism of the American people about the Joe Biden economy. All told, Joe Biden's economic crisis has become a perfect storm of bad economic news.

Jamie Dimon is the CEO of JPMorgan Chase. He warned of an upcoming economic hurricane. The economic hurricane is a perfect storm of record inflation, record debt, a shortage of necessities, higher interest rates, vanishing savings, and a shrinking economy. The Biden inflation crisis

is quickly spiraling into an all-around economic crisis. If the Democrats continue on this path, it is going to get a lot worse soon.

Inflation for producers is even higher than inflation for consumers. In fact, inflation for producers has been the highest on record. Wholesale prices for producers went up 11 percent in the last year. That means higher prices for the people who grow our food, who build our buildings, and who keep the lights on. Inflation for producers today means inflation for consumers tomorrow.

After 13 months of this inflation crisis—a crisis that the administration kept ignoring, kept denying, kept refusing to admit was here, kept saying wasn't coming—the Secretary of the Treasury said: Well, if it comes, and there is a small chance it comes, it will be manageable.

There is no light at the end of the tunnel. If there is any light at the end of the tunnel, it is because the freight train marked "recession" is about to hit America. Inflation is so bad that the Democrats can't even deny it anymore. So they create it; they ignore it; they deny it; they blame inflation on everybody else.

Yesterday, in the Finance Committee, the Secretary of the Treasury said: No, no. It wasn't them.

The Democrats denied it. They said: No, no. It was Putin. It was the pandemic.

But now the Democrats want to make it worse.

Well, it took about 14 months, but Janet Yellen admitted earlier this week in a CNN interview that she had been wrong about inflation. When she said there was a slight risk, she was mistaken. When she said it was manageable, she was mistaken.

She said: Now, I was wrong about the path inflation would take. This is the Secretary of the Treasury for Joe Biden, his handpicked person to run the economy. She also admitted that inflation was a matter of supply and demand and that the spending in the American Rescue Plan did feed the demand. I think she is talking about the \$2 trillion that every Democrat voted for and that every Republican voted against; the \$2 trillion to which even the Democratic economists said: Don't do that. It is going to make us have bad inflation. And we had bad inflation. But Joe Biden and the Secretary of the Treasury and every Democrat in the House and Senate voted in favor of pouring fuel on the fire that turned into the inflation we are facing today.

This was an enormous mistake on the part of the Democrats and the President—CHUCK SCHUMER and every Democrat in this Senate, all the Democrats in the House and Speaker NANCY PELOSI. It is costing the average American family today \$5,000 more this year than last year just to stay even—not to get ahead, just to stay even.

Democrats were warned. They were warned by Republicans. They were

warned by their own experts, and they ignored it; simply, flatly ignored the warnings, passed the largest spending bill in American history. And ever since that day, inflation has spiraled out of control. More than a year later, Democrats still don't have anything to offer beyond blame and excuses.

Last week, the Secretary of Commerce was asked:

Is there one specific category [of high prices] where you think you can actually make a difference?

This is her answer. She said:

I wish.

That is what Democrats are left with: wishes, wishes—no plan to fix the crisis that they have created.

Joe Biden's so-called energy inflation plan made so many false promises. And he talked about this. He wrote an editorial in the Wall Street Journal. You would think that maybe somebody at the White House who wrote it would have been vetted before they gave it to the President, before he put his name on it. It got Four Pinocchios from the Washington Post which talked about what the President had to say about energy as just being a lie.

We know what we need to do. We need to stop the reckless spending. We need to unleash American energy. Instead of canceling lease sales, Joe Biden needs to open up Federal lands to American energy production instead. Instead of canceling pipelines, Joe Biden should speed up the pipeline permitting process. Instead of begging other countries to sell us oil, we should get it out of the ground right here in America.

Oh, we have the American energy skills and skilled workers to see us through this crisis. The President just needs to let them go to work.

Working families have already been pushed to the breaking point. People are spending their savings, seeing it melting away. They have run up credit cards just to get by, and now recession is heading toward us. We need to change course. The administration needs to change course because the Joe Biden economic hurricane is about to hit America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, yesterday, as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I had the honor of welcoming a group of important guests to Washington.

The committee was joined by the families of some of the victims in last month's mass shooting in Buffalo, NY, when a White supremacist marched into the Tops Grocery store with an assault rifle and massacred 10 Black Americans in cold blood and wounded three others. Just weeks after laying their loved ones to rest, these families flew to Washington to deliver one very simple, straightforward message to Congress: Do something. Do something

to prevent the next mass shooting, to combat the lethal threat posed by violent White supremacists, to honor the memory of those who were slain in this horrifying act of racist violence.

One of the family members who attended yesterday was Garnell Whitfield, Jr., and his brother Raymond. Their mother Ruth Whitfield was the eldest victim in this Buffalo shooting. She was 86 years old.

In the hours before her murder, Mrs. Whitfield just finished her regular daily ritual, visiting her husband, Mr. Whitfield's father, at his nursing home. The two had been married for 68 years, and in an instant, she was gone. Her family is shattered.

During yesterday's hearing, Mr. Whitfield courageously voiced what millions of Americans feel about the devastating run of mass shootings in America: outrage. He asked me and the fellow committee members there a really important question:

What are you doing? You were elected to protect us. Is there nothing that you [can] personally [be] willing to do to stop the cancer of White supremacy and the domestic terrorism it inspires?

Mr. Whitfield concluded his testimony with the following words I hope every Member of the Senate will hear. He said:

Mrs. Ruth Whitfield's life mattered. Your actions here will tell us if and how much it mattered to you.

We heard the same sentiment from across the country—from Uvalde, TX, to Chicago, IL. It is impossible to keep track of these mass shootings. They have claimed so many innocent lives.

During this past weekend alone, our Nation was hit with at least 10 of them—10. Think about it: In this country, 10 in one weekend. In many countries—most countries around the world—there are none. No other developed Nation on Earth experiences this degree of bloody carnage every day, every week. And if we want to prove to Americans like Garnell Whitfield that the lives of their loved ones who were lost really do matter to us, we have to do something in the Senate.

The first thing is simple: close the loopholes on the purchase of guns. Currently, there is a bipartisan group of Senators working on this issue. I commend this group, especially Senators MURPHY and CORNYN—Democrat and Republican—who are leading this effort.

We are also going to hold a hearing next week in the Judiciary Committee over a phenomena which is equally embarrassing. Gunfire is now the leading cause of death for kids in America. Did you hear that? Gunfire, the leading cause of death of children in America.

We talk about protecting our kids, our highest priority. Well, the guns are killing our kids more than automobiles, more than poison, more than accidents in the home.

DOMESTIC TERRORISM

Madam President, that brings me to our second obligation to families like

the Whitfields. It was the focus of our hearing yesterday. We have got to condemn and combat the hateful ideology that has inspired attacks like the mass shooting in Buffalo.

During the previous administration, officials within the FBI and Department of Homeland Security shared a sobering assessment—this was under the previous President, Trump. They found that since 2000, the year 2000, White supremacists have been “responsible for . . . more [homicides] than any other domestic extremist movement.”

Right now, in the words of FBI Director Wray, the threat of domestic terrorism is “metastasizing across [America],” and we have seen evidence of it time and again.

In the past decade alone, White supremacists have committed mass shootings in a church, at a Sikh gurdwara in the State of Wisconsin, synagogues, not to mention a Walmart, and a grocery store.

We have seen other acts of domestic terrorism. This past weekend, in Wisconsin, Madam President, a violent extremist broke into the home of a former judge and shot him to death. The murderer was found with a list of names that included that judge and other officials, including the Governor of your State.

It is no coincidence that the threat of White supremacy is growing worse at a time when racist rhetoric is being dragged into the mainstream of our discourse.

The fact is, in 2022, hate has a formidable platform on FOX News. Media figures like Tucker Carlson are amplifying false racist conspiracy theories like the so-called “great replacement theory” to millions of vulnerable Americans.

Night after night, Tucker Carlson legitimizes the fiction that his political opponents are scheming to deliberately change the demographics of America. It is the same racist dogma that inspired the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan 100 years ago. They just took off the white robes on this gang.

Tucker Carlson, and pundits like him, traffic in fear and hate. They are radicalizing their viewers by preying on paranoia and winking to the far-right extremists who look to them for leadership.

Tragically, we have seen the growing use of political violence against elected officials, against flight attendants, against election workers, school board members, and other public servants. To make it clear, our condemnation of violence applies on the right and on the left.

Just this morning, news broke that a man was arrested near the home of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh. Carrying at least one weapon, and with burglary equipment, he told police he was planning on killing the Justice.

Let me be clear: We have to stand united—Democrats, Republicans, Independents, left and right, voters and

nonvoters alike—in condemning violence wherever its source, right or left.

Whether violence is being threatened against a sitting Supreme Court Justice or the Capitol Hill police officers on January 6 who wanted to defend this building from the insurrectionist mob, it is unacceptable and inexcusable.

As the threat of domestic terrorism looms over the country, we must ensure that members of law enforcement have resources, training, and our support in their legitimate exercise of their duty. That is why we need to pass the Domestic Terrorism Protection Act.

I put this bill on the floor in 2017. It ensures that the Federal Government will keep track of the crimes and the nature of them. That is it. It doesn't give any new powers of investigation, surveillance, or arrest—simply counts the number of attacks and where they come from.

It was the decision of the Trump administration to remove White supremacy as one of the motives for this domestic terrorism at a time when the head of the FBI tells us that threat is metastasizing across America. President Trump was wrong. The FBI should be keeping track of these crimes so that we know the source of this violence.

That is why this legislation is needed not just to pass through the Senate but to say to the Whitfield family in Buffalo, NY: We hear you. We are going to start by doing something very basic.

As we watch one community after another torn apart by sickening acts of violence, the Members of this Senate have to go beyond thoughts and prayers. If anyone in this body is unwilling to take even the most basic steps to save lives, I would encourage them to follow the advice that Mr. Garnell Whitfield offered yesterday. If you don't want to take any action, “yield your positions of authority and influence to others that are willing to lead.”

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I want to thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee for his remarks just now. I, too, sit on the Judiciary Committee, and I listened to Garnell Whitfield talk about his 86-year-old mother, who was murdered, and his charge to us to do something, because basically he said: If you are not going to do something in the face of all this gun carnage in our country, what are you doing here?

I think that is a question that each of us should ask: What the heck are we doing here if not to protect America's citizens?

One of the questions that I asked of the panel, which consisted of two invitees from the Republican side and three panel members of Democratic invitees—I asked them: Is the easy access to guns in our country a major part of the gun violence and the mas-

sacres and the killings in our country? And they each said yes. They acknowledged that the easy access to guns, regardless of ideology, is what makes our country the outlier country among all developed nations. What that says to me is that we need to be very, very committed and very serious about the need to enact sensible gun safety legislation.

As I listened to one of my other colleagues a little bit earlier talking about inflation, yes, inflation is a problem, but certainly it is not the answer to just blame the Democrats. I would like my Republican colleagues to make a commitment to do what we need to do and at least get a start in ending the gun violence in our country. As I said at yesterday's hearing, Hawaii has among the strongest gun safety legislation in the country. We have the lowest gun violence in the country. There is a cause and effect here.

As Mr. Whitfield charged us with yesterday, do something. That is our responsibility.

HONORING OUR PACT ACT OF 2021

Madam President, turning to another subject, over decades of conflict, millions of American servicemembers have been exposed to burn pits and other toxic materials. These men and women risked their lives in service to our country, and we have a duty to ensure they get care for conditions caused by these toxic exposures.

For months, my colleagues and I on the Veterans' Affairs Committee have worked to craft a bill that meets our responsibility, our duty to our veterans, and now we have the responsibility to pass this legislation here in the Senate and deliver for our veterans.

This legislation is a bill named for SFC Heath Robinson from Ohio, who served tours of duty in Kosovo and Iraq, where he was exposed to toxic burn pits. A decade after returning home, Sergeant Robinson developed a rare form of lung cancer caused by his toxic exposure. Tragically, he passed away in 2020.

The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act is historic, comprehensive legislation that provides the care toxic-exposed veterans like Sergeant Robinson deserve. This bipartisan legislation extends VA healthcare eligibility to millions of post-9/11 veterans, including nearly 3.5 million who were toxic-exposed. It also adds nearly two dozen conditions to the VA's list of service presumptions and strengthens the VA's ability to provide the high-quality care and benefits these veterans need in a timely manner. Altogether, this bill delivers the historic investment in caring for our Nation's veterans.

The Honoring Our PACT Act is the latest step we are taking to support our veterans in Hawaii and across our country. Just yesterday, President Biden signed legislation to name the state-of-the-art VA clinic under construction on Oahu after the late Senator Daniel Akaka. He also signed our

bill to expand access to breast cancer screening and treatment for veterans, helping ensure every VA patient can get the care they need. By passing the Honoring Our PACT Act, we can continue building on this progress and delivering for our veterans.

I would like to thank Chairman TESTER, Ranking Member MORAN, and Chair MARK TAKANO in the House for their leadership in this effort, and I would like to thank all the veterans and their loved ones who have shared their stories and advocated for so long to help us get to this moment.

This is an important and long-overdue step toward honoring our Nation's veterans, caring for them. I urge my colleagues to pass this bill without delay.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Florida.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HEINOUS ATTACK AT THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB ON JUNE 12, 2016

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, nearly 6 years ago, our State, Nation, the city of Orlando, and Hispanic and LGBTQ communities were attacked. Forty-nine innocent and beautiful lives were lost. It was an evil and hateful act, an act of terrorism designed to divide us as a nation and strike fear in our hearts and minds. But, instead, we came together, we supported each other, and we persevered. We have proved to the world what we in Florida already knew: Floridians are resilient.

The days I spent in Orlando following the shooting will always be with me. I talked to parents who lost their children. I went to funerals and wakes. I sat in hospital rooms. It was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. It was heartbreaking. But in this horribly dark time, the selfless courage of so many—from community members to law enforcement, to healthcare workers—provided a sense of hope. This incredible strength, love, and bravery lifted up Orlando and the State of Florida and helped us begin to rebuild.

This week, on the sixth anniversary of this devastating tragedy, the State of Florida comes together to honor the lives lost too soon, and we vow to always stand up and fight against evil and hatred in this world.

I was proud that last year Congress passed and the President signed into law legislation I introduced with Senator RUBIO and Senator PADILLA to designate the location of the Pulse nightclub in Orlando as the National Pulse Memorial, which will honor the memory of those we lost.

Today, I am requesting all my colleagues to join Senator RUBIO and me to pass a resolution honoring the memory of the 49 lives lost during the heinous attack at the Pulse nightclub. Let's come together now to say that our Nation will always stand against hate and evil in this world.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, this weekend will mark 6 years since 49 of our fellow Americans were killed in one of the deadliest attacks in our Nation's history.

It was a tragic, despicable terrorist attack on the Hispanic and gay communities in Orlando. Each person killed was a son or daughter, brother or sister, mother or father, husband or wife. They were part of our families and communities. The assault on Pulse was an act of pure evil that was and remains the worst terror attack on U.S. soil since September 11, 2001. And it was inspired by the same ideology of hate. But ultimately, that hateful ideology failed to tear apart our community.

June 12, 2016, is a day that I will never forget. The senseless, tragic loss of life will never dull with time, nor will the memory of how our communities came together in the days and weeks that followed. Pulse was a well-known nightclub in central Florida. It was part of the fabric of the local community, and that awful day struck a terrible blow. But the community awoke from the tragedy stronger and more united than it was before.

The terrorist would have been horrified to see the First Baptist Church in Orlando—another pillar of the local community—opening its doors to the LGBT community, welcoming them and their families, and holding services there. The terrorist would have hated to see Floridians from all across the State bringing food and water to support victims, families, and first responders. There were unending lines to donate blood. There were memorial services around the State. There was a sense that there was something greater than any one person worth sacrificing for; there was a sense of community, fellowship, and solidarity. This is the America I know and love, and it is our country at its best.

Sunday will be a day for reflection, for remembering those who lost their lives to an evil, hateful ideology. It will also be a day to acknowledge the tremendous impact their families and the survivors have had, not only on their community and State, but on our Nation.

And while the fight against evil and hate continues, we can and should take inspiration from their strength.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 663, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 663) honoring the memory of the victims of the heinous attack at the Pulse nightclub on June 12, 2016.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. 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. 663) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GUN SAFETY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, when the Senate considers complex and profound issues of public policy, I am particularly reminded of the wisdom of our late friend, Mr. Mike Enzi, the Senator from Wyoming. Not long after I came to the Senate, I noticed how productive that Senator Enzi, one of the most conservative Members of the Senate, was working on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions committee with Teddy Kennedy, the "liberal lion of the Senate." You had one of the most conservative Members of the Senate working with one of the most liberal Members of the Senate. But, amazingly, to me, they seemed to get a lot done.

So I asked Senator Enzi, I said: How is it that you, a staunch conservative, could work so productively with somebody with such different views? Senator Enzi told me: It is easy. I call it the 80-20 rule.

Well, the fact of life is we are not going to agree with everybody 100 percent of the time. And I sometimes say I don't agree with my wife 100 percent of the time, but she is always right.

But, seriously, if we are going to get things done here in the U.S. Senate for the benefit of the American people, we have to understand nobody is going to get everything they want. And I think for purposes of simplicity, an illustration of Senator Enzi's comments about the 80-20 rule are very helpful.

I have tried to employ that strategy many times since those days, and I hope we can apply that wisdom and strategy again dealing with this recent string of shootings, including Uvalde, TX.

Now this debate evokes strong emotions and strong opinions from people across the political spectrum, and it is an understatement to say that there are serious differences of opinion.

I start with the premise that I took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, and I

have no intention of violating that oath. That is where I start. Part of the Constitution is the amendments, including the first 10 which are the Bill of Rights that includes the Second Amendment, which provides a constitutional right to keep and bear arms for law-abiding Americans. I have no intention of violating my oath, and I have no intention of undermining the rights of law-abiding gun owners in America because it is a constitutional right.

It is no secret that when it comes to the culture in America, there are very different views ranging from, let's say, Connecticut, where Senator MURPHY comes from, to places like Texas, where guns are commonplace but people know how to use them and they use them responsibly and they are not a threat to public safety.

There are those who would like to restrict the rights of law-abiding gun owners because that is their view—they strongly hold that view, but I have been clear that is a nonstarter for me.

But to Senator Enzi's wise advice, rather than focus on the 20 percent we can't agree on, I have been trying to explore common ground with our colleagues on a bipartisan basis. These were devastating tragedies. We all agree with that. We all agree that no child should ever fear for his or her safety while sitting in a classroom.

I think we even all agree that there is a mental health epidemic in America today, and that is a piece of the puzzle. To me the shootings are a symptom of a larger problem, which is the failure of our mental health system in America, and it manifests itself in many different ways. Now, people suffering from mental health challenges, by and large, they are not violent, but a subset of them threaten their own lives with suicide. Some of them, even a subset of others, not only commit suicide by attacking a known armed police contingent, but they also engage in homicides, too, which is what happened with Salvador Ramos in Uvalde, TX.

I think there is a consensus in America that criminals and people experiencing severe mental health crises should not have access to guns. It is not just my opinion; it is actually the law. That is what the National Instant Criminal Background Check System is supposed to vet for—to make sure that people who have criminal records, people who have been institutionalized for mental health problems, people who are dishonorably discharged, people who are under a protective order, people who have committed felonies, people who have committed domestic violence, those are all people who now, if you went to buy a firearm and underwent a national instant criminal background check, you would not be able to legally purchase or possess a firearm because that is the law of the land and has been a long time.

With that in mind, Senator MURPHY from Connecticut, Senator TILLIS from

North Carolina, Senator SINEMA from Arizona, and I have been looking at these various factors and tried to come up with a targeted bill that might have prevented some of these tragedies. To me, that is the best way to look at this, is to say: If this had been in place, is it less likely that this tragedy would have occurred? Stated another way, if we do this, is there a chance or a probability that we could save lives in the future? To me, that should be our focus.

Instead of wasting time talking about what we don't agree on, I think it is productive for us to focus on this subset of issues where I believe there is room for a consensus because, of course, that is the only way to make progress and to get a result.

When the Constitution was written, it created three branches of government; but in particular, the legislative and the executive branch, with two branches of the Congress. They are very different in their nature. They made it difficult to pass legislation. It is hard. We do it, but it is hard. And it is hard because it takes consensus, and consensus sometimes takes time, particularly on issues that evoke such strong views and opinions and reflect, frankly, the diversity of this country.

I am glad to say, on this topic, we are making steady progress. It is early in the process, but I am optimistic where things stand right now. What am I optimistic about? I am optimistic that we could pass a bill in the Senate, it can pass the House, and it will get a signature by President Biden. It will become law of the land.

What is the test of that legislation? It is, to me, not whether it meets your ideological standard of what the bill should look like, but it is simply this: Will it save lives? If it will, it is worth all of our best efforts.

As I said, there is broad agreement about the mental health challenges, not only in our schools, but in our society at large and how that manifests itself. Sixty percent of the gun deaths in America are suicides. Don't we want to try to prevent those suicides? I think so. That is why the mental health issue is so important, among other reasons. And then, obviously, the school safety issues. We need to try to figure out ways to make our schools harder to get into for people like Salvador Ramos.

Unfortunately, the mental health challenges of young, disaffected, and alienated boys is a profile that is all too familiar. It is reflected in the shooter in Uvalde. It is reflected in the shooter in Sandy Hook, Adam Lanza. They came from much different places in terms of their socioeconomic, but in terms of their alienation and their developing mental illness and their willingness to not only take their own life but other people's lives, unfortunately, it paints an eerily similar picture.

The shooter in Uvalde was isolated and bullied at school. He had a record

of cutting his face—self-mutilation—and abusing and torturing animals, and he was known for fighting and threatening his fellow students with everything from assault to rape. He was a ticking time bomb, and many people—not all the people but many people in this small community of 15,000 people knew it. Certainly, his mother knew it. Unfortunately, his mother was a drug user, and he was living with his grandmother. But this is a young man who shot his own grandmother because she wanted him to go back to school because, of course, he had been out of the classroom because of COVID-19 restrictions. Frankly, that isolation just made his mental illness that much worse.

As I said, the shooter at Sandy Hook, Adam Lanza, experienced what was later described as "severe and deteriorating" mental health problems that went untreated, not because his parents didn't try—they did—but when he was prescribed medication to help him manage his mental illness, he refused to take it, and his mom finally gave up, exhausted, as you can imagine. It was a period of 3 years that he didn't see any mental health provider at all, sitting in his room, playing video games, killing people online virtually, becoming increasingly desensitized, and spiraling down that psychiatric, psychological, and emotional drain.

We need to equip all of our young people in America with the resources and the assistance they need in order to manage their emotional and mental health struggles. I think that is part of what we need to do.

School security, as I said, was also a glaring issue at Uvalde. The shooter was able to enter Robb Elementary School through a door that wasn't even locked. That is a problem. School districts need to be prepared for the worst-case scenario. They need to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. That means evaluating physical security, reviewing current protocols, developing best practices, and potentially adding or expanding the number of school resource officers. Those are law enforcement officers on campus.

I think there is a lot of common ground on things we can agree on here—safer schools, better mental health resources, and coming up with additional assistance that will harden our schools and provide greater deterrence and protections for our students.

The Senators whom I have been talking to—including the group of four but even the larger group today at noon—we have been talking about other things we might do to keep individuals who are already prohibited by law because they have a criminal background or they have mental health adjudications and problems.

How do we keep guns out of the hands of criminals and those who are undergoing mental health crises? That is an area of common ground. This is not about creating new restrictions on

law-abiding citizens; it is about ensuring the system we already have in place works as intended.

One idea we have discussed is, because this young man in Uvalde turned 18 and because there was no look back at his juvenile record, he passed a background check. It is as if he was born on his 18th birthday and nothing that happened before was important. That is obviously a problem. So we are looking at taking steps to encourage States to upload juvenile records into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. This is standard practice in some but not most States, and it is easy to see why it is important. If we are uploading information about adults' mental health adjudications but we don't have access to juveniles' mental health adjudications, to me, that is a problem. If a 17-year-old, for example, is convicted of aggravated assault, the record should show up in his background check if he tries to purchase a gun when he turns 18.

I think this is a commonsense way to make sure the National Instant Criminal Background Check databases are complete and they are accurate. That is not about expanding the system; that is about making sure the system we have actually works.

I want to make sure that we are committed to providing due process protections for citizens in all circumstances. Again, this is part of our Constitution, due process of law—the right to appear, the right to contest a decision by the government and to produce evidence and to cross-examine witnesses. That is an essential aspect of due process. When you talk about depriving somebody of a constitutional right, it is even more important.

The goal here is to make a law; it is not to make a political statement. As I said, I am encouraged by the progress we are making, but I don't think artificial deadlines are useful. The majority leader, Senator SCHUMER, has threatened to schedule votes if an agreement isn't reached by a certain time. I don't think that is particularly helpful.

Again, my goal and I think most Senators' goal here is to come up with a bill that can pass; otherwise, we might as well move on to other topics. But I sense a feeling of urgency and a desire to actually get things done. Around here, if you know people have the will, there is a way, and I believe there is a collective bipartisan will. So far, everybody, I believe, has been working in good faith. We all understand the differences that we have regionally and culturally when it comes to things like the Second Amendment. We understand the different politics in different States. That is the genius of the Senate that brings us all together. It doesn't make it easy, but it makes it possible for us to try to find some common ground.

The most common cry you hear today when it comes to incidents like Uvalde is to do something. I think we agree with that, but what that some-

thing is is not easy, but it is important, and we need to try. Again, I am optimistic because of the progress we have made so far that we will do something here that is important that will save lives. To me, that is the goal. And I think all 100 Senators would agree, if we can achieve that goal, then our efforts will have been worthwhile.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The clerk will call roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VOTE ON HARPER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Harper nomination?

Mr. RUBIO. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 221 Ex.]

YEAS—59

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

NAYS—40

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

NOT VOTING—1

Gillibrand

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). 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.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Amy Loyd, of New Mexico, to be Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education, Department of Education.

VOTE ON LOYD NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Loyd nomination?

Mr. LEAHY. 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.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 222 Ex.]

YEAS—57

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

NAYS—42

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

NOT VOTING—1

Burr

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Georgia.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, like millions of my fellow Americans, I contracted COVID-19 from a close contact. Fortunately, because I am vaccinated and boosted, my symptoms were mostly mild. However, as a growing number have also experienced, after taking Paxlovid and recovering, I then experienced what is known as "Covid-19 Rebound." I again had to isolate, per CDC guidance, and was not able to make a number of votes as I could not travel back to Washington, DC, to be present on the Senate floor.

On May 24, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 194, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 855, Stephanie Dawkins Davis, of Michigan, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On May 24, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 196, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 896, Dara Lindenbaum, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On May 25, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 200, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 857, Evelyn Padin, of New Jersey, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Jersey. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On May 25, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 201, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 915, Charlotte Sweeney, of Colorado, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Colorado. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On May 25, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 203, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 806, Sandra Thompson, of Maryland, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On May 25, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 205, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 651, Henry Christopher Frey, of North Carolina, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On May 25, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 209, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 717, Cathy Ann Harris, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Merit Systems Protection Board. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On May 26, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 210, motion to invoke cloture on the Motion to Proceed to H.R. 350, a bill to authorize dedicated domestic terrorism offices within the Depart-

ment of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to analyze and monitor domestic terrorist activity and require the Federal Government to take steps to prevent domestic terrorism. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

As recent, unthinkable tragic events at a grocery store in Buffalo, NY, a Taiwanese church in Laguna Woods, CA, and now an elementary school in Uvalde, TX, have shown, we need to be doing much more to protect our fellow Americans. Every man, woman, and child has the fundamental human right to live their life; to be and feel safe in their classrooms, house of worship, and within their communities. White supremacy and gun violence are crises that are plaguing our Nation, and inaction is unacceptable. I am disappointed that the Senate failed to advance this important legislation, and I will continue working to pass it in the future.

On May 26, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 211, S.J. Res. 46, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security relating to "Procedures for Credible Fear Screening and Consideration of Asylum, Withholding of Removal, and CAT Protection Claims by Asylum Officers." Had I been in attendance, I would have voted nay.

On May 26, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 212, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 461, Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat, of New Jersey, to be Director General of the Foreign Service. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On June 7, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 214, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 477, Alex Wagner, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On June 7, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 216, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 652, Chavonda J. Jacobs-Young, of Georgia, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On June 7, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 217, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 792, Kenneth L. Wainstein, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, Department of Homeland Security. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On June 7, 2022, I missed rollcall vote No. 218, confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 772, Shalanda H. Baker, of Texas, to be Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact, Department of Energy. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

NATIONAL SEERSUCKER DAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, today I rise in recognition of seersucker manufacturers and enthusiasts

across the United States. I wish everyone a Happy National Seersucker Day. This uniquely American fashion has a storied history dating back to 1909. The first seersucker suit was designed by Joseph Haspel at his Broad Street facility in New Orleans, LA. Louisiana is proud to have played an important part in introducing the country to seersucker apparel.

This lightweight cotton fabric, known for its signature pucker, has been worn and enjoyed by Americans across the country during the hot summer months. Mr. Haspel said it best: "Hot is hot, no matter what you do for a living."

In the 1990s, Seersucker Day was established by Members of this Chamber to honor this unique American fashion. I proudly resumed this tradition in 2014 in the U.S. House of Representatives and continued this tradition in the U.S. Senate. This year, I wish to designate Thursday, June 9, 2022, as the ninth annual National Seersucker Day. I encourage everyone to wear seersucker on this day to commemorate this traditionally American clothing.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

• Mr. PAUL. Madam President, the Kentucky Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners—NAWBO—provides dynamic opportunities for women to network with other business owners, mentor one another, develop partnerships, and incubate and foster that next big idea. It is composed of women of all ages and levels of experience from all sectors of the marketplace.

This year, as NAWBO Kentucky continues to celebrate three decades of success stories that are as diverse as our Commonwealth, its members have established a series of awards to recognize women business owners who have excelled. These include the Woman Business Owner of the Year, the Next-Gen Women Business Owner of the Year, the Public Policy Catalyst of the Year, NAWBO Corporate Partner of the Year, and the NAWBO Member of the Year.

Christine Smalley, owner of Fort Thomas Coffee, was named the Woman Business Owner of the Year. FTC opened in March of 2019 and will expand in June of 2022, to include a wine and cocktail bar and a business center. Christine's husband Justin and their two children Kaelan and Cadence have been embraced by their community as "The Hot Chocolate House," by serving hot chocolate instead of candy to their neighbors on Halloween. To this day, trick-or-treaters will make plans weeks ahead to visit the Smalley household and it delights the family to no end.

Brooke Corder, owner of Squeaky Cleaners, was awarded as the Next-Gen

Women Business Owner of the Year. Brooke has developed what was once an idea into a beautiful dream with her housekeeping, residential, and commercial cleaning services business in Louisville that opened in February of 2020.

Adriane Polyniak, owner of the Kentucky Cannabis Company, was awarded the Public Policy Catalyst of the Year. Based in Midway, this family-owned business has been involved in multiple policy changes that have been beneficial to women business owners. Some of these policies include the legalization of hemp, Shawna's Law, and improved access to cannabis research.

The NAWBO Corporate Partner of the Year was awarded to Wiser Strategies, a public relations and communication firm in Lexington, KY. President and APR Nancy Wiser has worked with NAWBO on many projects, including the NAWBO website and media relations efforts that made the EPIC event possible.

Vanessa Pennoyer, founder and owner of Go2Girl, LLC, was awarded the NAWBO Member of the Year. Vanessa helps diverse-owned businesses seek and obtain certification by navigating the time-consuming portal process. Vanessa has also been involved with NAWBO for years and stepped up this year to assist with all marketing efforts, as well as assistant duties.

I am proud to salute the Kentucky Association of Women Business Owners on its 30th anniversary and to honor these awardees.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Swann, 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 a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:46 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 bill, without amendment:

S. 3823. An act to amend title 11, United States Code, to modify the eligibility requirements for a debtor under chapter 13, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 187. An act for the relief of Victoria Galindo Lopez.

H.R. 680. An act for the relief of Arpita Kurdekar, Girish Kurdekar, and Vandana Kurdekar.

H.R. 681. An act for the relief of Rebecca Trimble.

H.R. 739. An act for the relief of Median El-Moustrah.

H.R. 785. An act for the relief of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso.

H.R. 6087. An act to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to cover, for purposes of workers' compensation under such chapter, services by physician assistants and nurse practitioners provided to injured Federal workers, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 88. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 187. An act for the relief of Victoria Galindo Lopez; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 680. An act for the relief of Arpita Kurdekar, Girish Kurdekar, and Vandana Kurdekar; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 739. An act for the relief of Median El-Moustrah; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 785. An act for the relief of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 6087. An act to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to cover, for purposes of workers' compensation under such chapter, services by physician assistants and nurse practitioners provided to injured Federal workers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

PRIVILEGED NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator ROGER F. WICKER under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Susie Feliz, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce, vice Michael Platt, Jr., resigned.

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-4271. 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; Wichita, KS" (MB Docket No. 22-78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 25, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4272. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communica-

tions Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Updating FM Broadcast Radio Service Directional Antenna Performance Verification" (MB Docket No. 21-422) (PCC 21-38) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 25, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4273. 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; Bozeman, Montana" (MB Docket No. 21-422) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 25, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4274. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a certification entitled "Conservation of Sea Turtles"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4275. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of the West Sonoma Coast Viticultural Area" (RIN1513-AC40) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 6, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4276. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to Safety Standard for Baby Changing Products" (Docket No. CPSC-2016-0023) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 6, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4277. 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; Weston, West Virginia" (MB Docket No. 22-112) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 25, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-141. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan urging the United States Congress, federal agencies, and state departments to address the ongoing fertilizer price increases and shortages that are impacting Michigan farmers; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 205

Whereas, Michigan's agricultural industry is vitally important to the state economy. As our nation's second most diverse agricultural system, it contributes more than \$104.7 billion in economic activity annually to the state. More than 800,000 people work in Michigan's agricultural industry, and care for nearly 10 million acres of land; and

Whereas, Fertilizer is a critical agricultural input that is utilized by farmers to provide nutrients to their land and maximize the productivity of their farms. It is essential that Michigan's farmers have access to fertilizers so they can nourish their land and maintain production levels; and

Whereas, Fertilizer prices in the United States have dramatically increased over the past decade. While the increase in prices can

be attributed to several factors, such as strong demand for fertilizer and rising costs of raw materials, the recent decision by the United States Department of Commerce to impose tariffs on imports of phosphate-based fertilizers from Morocco and other countries has significantly increased fertilizer prices. These tariffs were implemented in 2021 after the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) determined that the import of foreign phosphatic fertilizers injured U.S. manufacturers; and

Whereas, These tariffs place a substantial burden on farmers who are unable to compete with rising costs of production. Additionally, due to the highly consolidated structure of the U.S. fertilizer manufacturer industry, many farmers have little bargaining power with suppliers. For example, one company controls an estimated 90 percent of the U.S. phosphate fertilizer production while another controls nearly half of U.S. urea fertilizer production. This highly concentrated structure has resulted in local input dealers having very little bargaining power with the manufacturers, and cost increases are inevitably passed on to farmers; and

Whereas, Michigan farmers are facing the greatest increase in fertilizer prices in 13 years. Without access to fertilizer, Michigan's agricultural production will fall, and the state's economy will suffer. Not only will farmers be directly impacted, but the broader supply chain will also suffer: now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the U.S. Congress, federal agencies, and state departments to address the ongoing fertilizer price increases and shortages that are impacting Michigan farmers; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, the commissioners of the U.S. International Trade Commission, and the Director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

POM-142. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to take any action necessary to halt federal actions resulting in the delay or cancellation of offshore oil and natural gas lease sales, and urging the United States Department of Interior to expedite actions necessary to comply with a court order to resolve lease sales, finalize a new five-year plan for oil and gas leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf, and focus efforts on lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 12

Whereas, the Gulf of Mexico produces approximately seventeen percent of the United States crude oil and five percent of United States natural gas while contributing five to eight billion dollars to the federal treasury each year and sending hundreds of millions of dollars to coastal states for coastal restoration and hurricane protection projects; and

Whereas, the oil and gas industry directly supports two hundred forty-nine thousand eight hundred jobs in Louisiana; and

Whereas, the oil and gas industry activities represent twenty-six percent of Louisiana's gross domestic product, accounting for nearly four billion five hundred million dollars in state and local tax revenue in 2019

alone, representing fourteen and one-half percent of total state taxes, licenses, and fees collected; and

Whereas, according to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, which regulates offshore lease sales, the Gulf continues to be the nation's primary offshore source of oil and gas, generating about ninety-seven percent of all United States Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas production and since 2017, Gulf of Mexico lease sales have generated more than one trillion dollars from offshore leasing; and

Whereas, since 1953, the United States Secretary of the Interior has been required by law to prepare a five-year plan to set a schedule for oil and gas leases in United States offshore waters based on a lengthy, multi-year regulatory process with multiple stages for public comment, input, and consultation; and

Whereas, the Obama administration issued a five-year-plan for oil and gas leasing that expires on July 1, 2022, which includes two remaining lease sales for the Gulf of Mexico, Lease Sale 259 and Lease Sale 261; and

Whereas, the United States Department of Interior missed the deadline to issue a notice of sale for Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 259 in order to meet the expiration of the current five-year plan; and

Whereas, on January 27, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14008, "Tackling the Climate Crisis" declaring a pause on leasing on federal lands and waters, including the Outer Continental Shelf of the Gulf of Mexico; and

Whereas, the United States District Court issued a preliminary injunction on the leasing pause and ordered federal oil and gas lease sales to proceed on June 15, 2021; and

Whereas, the Department of Interior held Lease Sale 257 on November 17, 2021; however, on January 27, 2022, a ruling by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia invalidated the sale and required the Department of Interior to reassess the environmental impacts of Lease Sale 257; and

Whereas, the Department of Interior is not appealing the court ruling and therefore there is no indication that leases will be awarded to the offshore companies from Lease Sale 257; and

Whereas, there is no indication that the federal government will hold another Gulf of Mexico offshore lease sale for the duration of the Biden administration's term and there is no indication that the Department of Interior is working on the next five-year plan; and

Whereas, according to the most recent federal data, although U.S. crude output fell slightly with a drop of nearly thirteen and one-half percent in offshore Gulf of Mexico production from December 2019 through December 2021, the demand for oil climbed nine and four-fifth percent from a year earlier; and

Whereas, oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico is the only reliable source of funding for Louisiana's coastal programs such as the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act that allows the Gulf states to share in offshore revenue generated from offshore oil activity including bonus bid revenue; and

Whereas, over the past five years Louisiana approximately has received between one hundred sixty million dollars and four hundred seven million dollars from bonus bids alone; and

Whereas, it is estimated that in 2021 the state of Louisiana lost approximately twenty to forty million dollars due to the cancelled lease sales and lost bonus bid revenue; and

Whereas, Louisiana depends on Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act revenues to

fund a fifty billion dollar coastal restoration plan; and

Whereas, delaying or cancelling Gulf of Mexico leasing negatively impacts federal and state revenue, as well as Louisiana businesses and jobs; and

Whereas, drilling contractors will see impacts, dropping as many as twenty-five percent of the remaining Gulf of Mexico rigs over the next several years, in addition to the network of staff, supply boats, and other vendors that support and maintain drillships that equates to roughly one thousand jobs per rig; and

Whereas, the Gulf of Mexico is the safest and cleanest oil produced anywhere in the world; and

Whereas, halting domestic energy development in one of the lowest carbon intensive energy producing regions in the world to shift production and capital investment overseas undermines decades of environmental progress; and

Whereas, a 2016 Obama administration study conducted by Bureau of Ocean Energy Management concluded that America's greenhouse gas emissions will be little affected by leasing decisions on the bureau's offshore leasing program and could in fact result in an increase of greenhouse gas emissions in the absence of new Outer Continental Shelf leasing due to an increase in importing foreign oil; and

Whereas, the Biden administration is pursuing a policy which places the United States at the mercy of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and Russia to meet domestic needs and harming national and economic security. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the President of the United States and Congress of the United States to take any action necessary to halt federal actions resulting in the delay or cancellation of offshore oil and natural gas lease sales. Be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the United States Department of Interior to expedite any actions necessary to comply with United States District Court for the District of Columbia order to resolve Lease Sale 257, finalize a new five-year plan for oil and gas leasing on the outer continental shelf, and focus all efforts on mandated lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico. Be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the United States Secretary of the Interior, the United States Secretary of Energy, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the White House National Climate Advisor, the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the secretary of the United States Senate, and to each member of the Louisiana delegation of the United States Congress.

POM-143. A resolution from the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico requesting that the government of the United States to grant a partial exemption from the application of the Coastwise Laws to the maritime transportation of crude oil and petroleum products between the United States and Puerto Rico for the duration of the armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia and the collateral effects thereof; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 718

The implementation of the so-called Coastwise Laws in Puerto Rico began with the approval of the Organic Act of 1900, known as the Foraker Act. The Jones Act was subsequently approved in 1917 which, among other

things, maintained the effectiveness of the coastwise laws until the present day. The Jones Act was enacted at a historical juncture which posed certain challenges to the United States of America that are no longer a concern. As a result, maritime transportation from U.S. ports to the Island may only be provided by U.S.-built, -owned and -crewed vessels. Thus, the U.S. Congress enacted legislation providing that, in order to move goods between the United States of America and Puerto Rico, vessels should not only be built in the United States but must also be owned and operated by U.S. citizens. This federal legislation also applies to Guam and the states of Alaska and Hawaii. The territory of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, however, are exempt from the Jones Act.

With regard to maritime transportation, on March 14, 2013, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, commonly known as GAO, issued a report stating that the Jones Act may result in higher freight rates, particularly for certain goods, than would be the case if service by foreign carriers were allowed. Likewise, the conclusions of the report state that the original goal of the Act remains important to military preparedness and to the shipbuilding and maritime industries, but understanding the full extent and distribution of the costs that underlie these benefits is elusive.

It is a well-known fact that Puerto Rico is facing difficult economic challenges that have worsened with the passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria, the earthquakes of January 2020, inflation, the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, and more recently, the cost of fuel, factors that are out of the government and the consumer's control. That is, the rising oil prices coupled with the effects of inflation and the emergencies have steadily increased the prices of food, transportation, and electricity, thus adversely affecting consumer and business spending.

In addition to global security concerns, the war between Russia and Ukraine has resulted in a shortage of consumer goods and pushed oil prices above \$125 per barrel, after having remained steady between \$80.00 and \$90.00 for a considerable time. Should this war continue and no agreement be reached, it might lead to a crude oil shortage in Europe, which would have repercussions on the global market, such as even higher prices. There is concern due to the fact that there is no indication as to whether the price of crude oil, goods, and transportation shall stabilize any time soon. On the contrary, projections show that rising costs and instability shall persist.

In spite of our efforts to transform electric power generation in Puerto Rico, our system still relies primarily on crude oil and petroleum products. Likewise, most individual, mass transit, and freight motor vehicles on the Island run on gasoline or diesel. Therefore, granting Puerto Rico a partial exemption from the Jones Act is necessary to prevent future electricity rate increases, mitigate the rising costs of gasoline, diesel, transportation, as well as the potential shortage of crude oil in Europe.

For all of the foregoing, the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico deems it necessary to take action in order to mitigate the multiplier effect that crude oil price fluctuations are having on the economy, by requesting the President of the United States of America and his government to approve a partial exemption from the application of the Coastwise Laws to the maritime transportation of crude oil and petroleum products between the United States of America and Puerto Rico for the duration of the armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia as well as the collateral thereof.

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of Puerto Rico:

Section 1.—The President of the United States of America is hereby requested to grant a partial exemption from the application of Coastwise Laws to the maritime transportation of crude oil and petroleum products between the United States of America and Puerto Rico for the duration of the armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia and the collateral effects thereof. The foregoing for the purpose of addressing the demand for land transportation and energy generation on the Island, as well as to mitigate what would otherwise be higher crude oil prices given the volatility of the international market.

Section 2.—A copy of this Resolution, translated into the English language, shall be delivered to the President of the United States of America; the Department of Homeland Security; the leadership of the United States Congress; and the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico in Washington, D.C.

Section 3.—This Resolution shall take effect upon its approval.

POM-144. A resolution adopted by the Legislature of Rockland County, New York, urging the United States House of Representatives to pass the Sunshine Protection Act of 2021, which would make daylight saving time permanent; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

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

H.R. 2142. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 170 Manhattan Avenue in Buffalo, New York, as the "Indiana Hunt-Martin Post Office Building".

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BROWN for the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*Jaime E. Lizarraga, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for a term expiring June 5, 2027.

*Mark Toshiro Uyeda, of California, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 5, 2023.

*Michael S. Barr, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of fourteen years from February 1, 2018.

*Michael S. Barr, of Michigan, to be Vice Chairman for Supervision of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of four years.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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 Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 4357. A bill to reauthorize the Maritime Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. SUL-LIVAN):

S. 4358. A bill to establish an awareness campaign related to the lethality of fentanyl and fentanyl-contaminated drugs, to establish a Federal Interagency Work Group on Fentanyl Contamination of Illegal Drugs, and to provide community-based coalition enhancement grants to mitigate the effects of drug misuse; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. TESTER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 4359. A bill to designate the regional office of the Department of Veterans Affairs in metropolitan Atlanta as the "Senator Johnny Isakson Department of Veterans Affairs Atlanta Regional Office", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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

S. 4360. A bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to extend the authority to temporarily adjust the basic allowance for housing in certain areas; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LUJÁN:

S. 4361. A bill to require reports to Congress on reporting and disclosure requirements related to retirement plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 4362. A bill to amend the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to eliminate the use of valid court orders to secure lockup of status offenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 4363. A bill to require commissary and exchange stores in the United States that offer gasoline for commercial sale to offer the sale of at least one fuel that contains not less than 13 percent ethanol; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 4364. A bill to prohibit contracting with persons that have business operations with the Government of the Russian Federation or the Russian energy sector, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

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

S. Res. 663. A resolution honoring the memory of the victims of the heinous attack at the Pulse nightclub on June 12, 2016; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. Res. 664. A resolution expressing opposition to the criminalization of essential healthcare, including the full range of sexual and reproductive healthcare such as abortion, gender-affirming care, and contraceptive care, and disapproving of the criminalization of pregnancy outcomes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 665. A resolution to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Seefried, et al; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 666. A resolution to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Williams; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. KELLY (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. Res. 667. A resolution commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire in Arizona; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 466

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 466, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require providers of a covered service to provide location information concerning the telecommunications device of a user of such service to an investigative or law enforcement officer or an employee or other agent of a public safety answering point in an emergency situation involving risk of death or serious physical harm or in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services.

S. 467

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 467, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a program to improve the identification, assessment, and treatment of patients in hospital emergency departments who are at risk of suicide, and for other purposes.

S. 618

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 618, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify and extend the deduction for charitable contributions for individuals not itemizing deductions.

S. 1079

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1079, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the troops from the United States and the Philippines who defended Bataan and Corregidor, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service during World War II.

S. 1131

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1131, a bill to regulate firearm silencers and firearm mufflers.

S. 1618

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1618, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow first responders to continue to exclude service-connected disability pension payments after reaching the age of retirement.

S. 1819

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1819, a bill to support State, Tribal, and local efforts to remove access to firearms from individuals who are a danger to themselves or others pursuant to court orders for this purpose.

S. 1892

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1892, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify employer-provided fringe benefits for bicycle commuting.

S. 1896

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1896, a bill to prohibit the discriminatory use of personal information by online platforms in any algorithmic process, to require transparency in the use of algorithmic processes and content moderation, and for other purposes.

S. 2130

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2130, a bill to modify the disposition of certain outer Continental Shelf revenues and to open Federal financial sharing to heighten opportunities for renewable energy, and for other purposes.

S. 2198

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2198, a bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to give the Department of Education the authority to award competitive grants to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs to assist at-risk students in middle school and high school in developing cognitive and social-emotional skills to prepare them for success in high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce.

S. 2429

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2429, a bill to amend chapter 38 of title 31, United States Code, relating to civil remedies, and for other purposes.

S. 2607

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a co-

sponsor of S. 2607, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the former hostages of the Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979–1981, highlighting their resilience throughout the unprecedented ordeal that they lived through and the national unity it produced, marking 4 decades since their 444 days in captivity, and recognizing their sacrifice to the United States.

S. 3018

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3018, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements with respect to the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans, and for other purposes.

S. 3242

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3242, a bill to provide for the settlement of claims relating to the Shab-e-hnay Band Reservation in Illinois, and for other purposes.

S. 3335

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3335, a bill to provide liability protection for the sharing of information regarding suspected fraudulent, abusive, or unlawful robocalls, illegally spoofed calls, and other illegal calls by or with the registered consortium that conducts private-led efforts to trace back the origin of suspected unlawful robocalls, and for the receipt of such information by the registered consortium, and for other purposes.

S. 3607

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3607, a bill to award a Congressional gold medal, collectively, to the First Rhode Island Regiment, in recognition of their dedicated service during the Revolutionary War.

S. 3726

At the request of Mr. Kaine, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3726, a bill to address research on, and improve access to, supportive services for individuals with long COVID.

S. 3766

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3766, a bill to increase the benefits guaranteed in connection with certain pension plans, and for other purposes.

S. 3821

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3821, a bill making appropriations to provide emergency assistance for the Community Development

Fund for disaster response and recovery for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022.

S. 3850

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3850, a bill to increase the number of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Customs and Border Protection officers and support staff and to require reports that identify staffing, infrastructure, and equipment needed to enhance security at ports of entry.

S. 3895

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3895, a bill to extend and authorize annual appropriations for the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom through fiscal year 2024.

S. 3909

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3909, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make employers of spouses of military personnel eligible for the work opportunity credit.

S. 4015

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4015, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to eligible entities for creating or enhancing capacity to treat patients with Long COVID through a multidisciplinary approach.

S. 4105

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4105, a bill to treat certain liquidations of new motor vehicle inventory as qualified liquidations of LIFO inventory for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

S. 4147

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4147, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Labor from constraining the range or type of investments that may be offered to participants and beneficiaries of individual retirement accounts who exercise control over the assets in such accounts.

S. 4232

At the request of Mr. KELLY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4232, a bill to address the recovery of certain costs with respect to certain Reclamation facilities in the Colorado River Basin, and for other purposes.

S. 4276

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4276, a bill to improve services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for veteran families, and for other purposes.

S. 4293

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4293, a bill to prevent unfair and deceptive acts or practices and the dissemination of false information related to pharmacy benefit management services for prescription drugs, and for other purposes.

S. 4343

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4343, a bill to require any convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response reached by the World Health Assembly to be subject to Senate ratification.

AMENDMENT NO. 5048

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 5048 intended to be proposed to H.R. 3967, a bill to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 4363. A bill to require commissary and exchange stores in the United States that offer gasoline for commercial sale to offer the sale of at least one fuel that contains not less than 13 percent ethanol; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 4363

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 “Armed Forces Fuel Choice Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. FUEL CHOICE AT COMMISSARY AND EXCHANGE STORES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by subsection (b), each commissary or exchange store located on a military installation in the United States or any territory or possession of the United States that offers gasoline for commercial sale shall offer the sale of at least one fuel that contains not less than 13 percent ethanol not later than January 1, 2024.

(b) EXCEPTION FOR GAS STATIONS REQUIRING NEW STORAGE TANKS.—A commissary or exchange store described in subsection (a) that requires the replacement of an underground storage tank to offer for sale fuel described in that subsection shall offer the sale of at least one such fuel not later than January 1, 2025.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 663—HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HEINOUS ATTACK AT THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB ON JUNE 12, 2016

Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 663

Whereas, on June 12, 2016, a gunman inspired by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria targeted the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, where he killed 49 innocent victims and wounded dozens more in a despicable attack;

Whereas the attack at the Pulse nightclub was an attack on the LGBTQ community, the Hispanic community, the City of Orlando, the State of Florida, and the United States;

Whereas the Orlando community continues to mourn the tragic loss of life but has demonstrated remarkable strength, unity, and resilience in the aftermath of the horrendous event;

Whereas June 12 is designated as “Pulse Remembrance Day” in the State of Florida to honor the victims and survivors of the senseless attack;

Whereas the people of the United States continue to pray for those affected by the tragedy; and

Whereas June 12, 2022, marks 6 years since the lives of the 49 innocent victims were tragically cut short by this senseless act of terrorism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the 49 innocent victims killed in the attack at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, on June 12, 2016, and offers heartfelt condolences to the families, loved ones, and friends of the victims;

(2) honors the dozens of survivors of the attack and pledges continued resolve to stand against terrorism and hate; and

(3) expresses gratitude to the brave law enforcement and emergency medical personnel who responded to the attack.

SENATE RESOLUTION 664—EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE CRIMINALIZATION OF ESSENTIAL HEALTHCARE, INCLUDING THE FULL RANGE OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE SUCH AS ABORTION, GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE, AND CONTRACEPTIVE CARE, AND DISAPPROVING OF THE CRIMINALIZATION OF PREGNANCY OUTCOMES

Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 664

Whereas access to the full range of sexual, gender-affirming, and reproductive healthcare, including abortion, is essential to the health and well-being of all people;

Whereas reproductive and sexual healthcare providers, and those who support people making important healthcare decisions, provide high-quality, essential healthcare and play a critical role in ensuring people are able to make decisions about their bodies and lives with dignity, empathy, compassion, and respect;

Whereas no one should be criminalized for providing essential healthcare;

Whereas no one should be criminalized for their pregnancy outcomes, for using contraception, or for obtaining gender-affirming care;

Whereas States and localities have attempted to prohibit healthcare providers from providing gender-affirming and reproductive healthcare, including abortion care, to patients;

Whereas people have been prosecuted in the United States for their actions during pregnancy that allegedly caused harm or risk to their pregnancies;

Whereas people have been forced to undergo unwanted medical procedures or surgical interventions, including involuntary sterilization and cesarean sections, prosecuted for not seeking healthcare, prosecuted for experiencing a miscarriage or stillbirth, criminalized for alcohol and drug use during pregnancy, and prosecuted for self-managing an abortion;

Whereas groups like the American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Bar Association, and others oppose the criminalization of healthcare provision and the criminalization of pregnancy outcomes;

Whereas the threat of criminalization or prosecution can result in negative outcomes by intimidating people from seeking or providing care;

Whereas abortion and gender-affirming care have become increasingly restricted in the United States;

Whereas research shows there is an increased need and demand for pills to self-manage an abortion in States with abortion restrictions, and that self-managed abortion with access to medications and accurate information is safe;

Whereas the reasons why people self-manage an abortion are varied and valid;

Whereas healthcare providers have an ethical obligation to provide essential care to their patients and to protect the private medical information integral to the patient-provider relationship;

Whereas even when charges are dropped or the defendant is exonerated, the turmoil caused by arrest or prosecution is irremediable;

Whereas several States have taken steps to repeal or reform laws that had been used to criminalize pregnancy outcomes and to increase access to abortion, contraception, and gender-affirming care;

Whereas Black, indigenous, and people of color, people with low incomes, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other marginalized individuals are disproportionately likely to be surveilled, arrested, charged, prosecuted, convicted, and heavily punished within the criminal justice system;

Whereas Black, indigenous, and people of color, people with low incomes, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other marginalized individuals are more likely, due to persistent disparities, to experience adverse pregnancy outcomes that place them under the scrutiny of the legal system; and

Whereas punishing people for their pregnancy outcomes or for providing essential reproductive and sexual healthcare violates

their fundamental rights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the misapplication of criminal laws to punish people for the outcomes of their pregnancies;

(2) affirms that people deserve access to high-quality healthcare without fear of reprisal or punishment;

(3) condemns the criminalization of providing essential healthcare;

(4) affirms the ethical obligations of healthcare providers to safeguard patient privacy; and

(5)(A) declares a vision for a future where access to abortion, contraception, and gender-affirming care is free from restrictions and bans universally, and people are able to manage care on their own terms, free from discrimination or punishment; and

(B) affirms the commitment of the Senate to working toward this goal in partnership with providers, patients, advocates, and their communities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 665—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. SEEFRIED, ET AL.

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

S. RES. 665

Whereas, in the case of United States v. Seefried, et al., Cr. No. 21-287, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, and from Nate Russell and Diego Torres, custodians of records in the Senate Recording Studio, a department of the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former officers and employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for evidence relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, and Nate Russell and Diego Torres, custodians of records in the Senate Recording Studio, are authorized to provide relevant testimony in the case of United States v. Seefried, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Messrs. Schwager, Russell, and Torres, and any current or former officer or employee of their offices, in connection with the production of evidence authorized in section one of this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 666—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. WILLIAMS

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

S. RES. 666

Whereas, in the case of United States v. Williams, Cr. No. 21-377, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former officers and employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for evidence relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, is authorized to provide relevant testimony in the case of United States v. Williams, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Mr. Schwager and any current or former officer or employee of his office in connection with the production of evidence authorized in section one of this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 667—COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RODEO-CHEDISKI FIRE IN ARIZONA

Mr. KELLY (for himself and Ms. SINEMA) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 667

Whereas June 18, 2022, is the 20th anniversary of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire;

Whereas the Rodeo-Chediski Fire forced the evacuation of more than 30,000 people in Arizona, including in the City of Show Low, Pinetop-Lakeside, Navajo County, and the White Mountain Apache Tribe communities of Hon-Dah;

Whereas the Rodeo-Chediski Fire burned 468,638 acres (742 square miles), making it second largest wildfire recorded in the State of Arizona;

Whereas the Rodeo-Chediski Fire damaged and destroyed 491 structures, including homes and businesses;

Whereas the Rodeo-Chediski Fire started as 2 wildfires that later merged into the first megafire in Arizona history;

Whereas, on June 18, 2002, the human-caused Rodeo Fire ignited near the Rodeo Fairgrounds near the community of Cibecue, located on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation (commonly known as the "White Mountain Apache Reservation");

Whereas Rodeo Fire burned at a rate of 2,000 acres per hour for the first 30 hours with flame lengths up to 1,000 feet and ground temperatures above 2,000 degrees;

Whereas fire-fighting aviation support was grounded during the Rodeo Fire due to high, erratic winds, requiring a total airspace closure for the third time in the history of wildland firefighting in the United States;

Whereas, on June 20, 2002, the human-caused Chediski Fire was reported near Chediski Peak in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests about 20 miles northwest of the Rodeo Fire;

Whereas, on June 20, 2002, Arizona Governor Jane Dee Hull declared a state of emergency and authorized mobilization of the Arizona National Guard to support firefighters;

Whereas, on June 23, 2002, the 2 fires burned together and were redesignated as the Rodeo-Chediski Fire;

Whereas, on June 25, 2002, President George W. Bush arrived at Springerville Municipal Airport, Springerville, Arizona, and signed a declaration that designated the Rodeo-Chediski Fire a national disaster;

Whereas more than 4,500 firefighters and support personnel, 30 helicopters, 251 engines, 92 water tankers, and 90 bulldozers were assigned to the Rodeo-Chediski Fire; and

Whereas the Rodeo-Chediski Fire burned for 5 weeks until the fire was declared contained on July 7, 2002: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the 20th anniversary of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire;

(2) commends the courage of local residents affected by the Rodeo-Chediski Fire;

(3) extends condolences to individuals who lost homes, businesses, and property; and

(4) honors the life-saving bravery and sacrifices of the firefighters and first responders assigned to the Rodeo-Chediski Fire.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 5065. Mr. SCHUMER proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

SA 5066. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5067. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5068. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5069. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5070. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5071. Mr. MARSHALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5072. Ms. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5073. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5074. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5075. Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 5065. Mr. SCHUMER proposed an amendment to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end add the following:

SEC. . . . EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 5066. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

Subtitle C—Other Health Care Matters

SEC. 121. INCREASED PER DIEM RATES FOR STATE HOMES OUTSIDE THE CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1741(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “paragraph (3) and” before “section 1745 of this title”; and

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

“(3) The Secretary shall pay to a State a per diem rate that is more than the rate specified under paragraph (1) or determined under paragraph (2) in the case of a State located outside the contiguous United States based on the reevaluation of such rates conducted under section 121(b) of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022.”.

(b) REEVALUATION OF PER DIEM RATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report reevaluating the per diem rates paid under section 1741(a) of title 38, United States Code, to States located outside the contiguous United States.

(2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Subcommittee on Military Construc-

tion, Veterans’ Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans’ Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

SA 5067. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 708. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION TREATMENT PROGRAM FACILITY IN ALASKA.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall construct a new Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program facility in Alaska.

SA 5068. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 708. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER IN ANCHORAGE, ALASKA.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall construct a new community living center in the vicinity of the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Anchorage, Alaska.

SA 5069. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 809. APPRAISALS FOR HOUSING LOANS GUARANTEED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) COMPLETION OF APPRAISALS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that any appraisal that is being conducted for purposes of a housing loan guaranteed under chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, and is outstanding as of the date of the enactment of this Act is completed not later than December 31, 2022.

(b) APPRAISAL POLICIES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall maintain policies that ensure that an appraisal conducted for purposes of a housing loan guaranteed under chapter 37 of such title is completed not later than 45 days after the date on which the appraisal is ordered.

SA 5070. Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ MAKING ADDITIONAL LAND AVAILABLE FOR SELECTION UNDER THE ALASKA NATIVE VIETNAM ERA VETERANS LAND ALLOTMENT PROGRAM.

All Federal land identified as suitable for allotment selection in the report under subsection (c)(1) of section 1119 of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g-1), and published by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in the report entitled "Identification of National Wildlife Refuge System Lands in Alaska That Should Be Made Available for Allotment Selection by Eligible Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans" (November 2020), shall be made immediately available for selection in accordance with that section.

SA 5071. Mr. MARSHALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ LIMITS ON USE OF OFFICIAL TIME BY EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 7131 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking "Any employee" and inserting "Except as provided in subsection (e), any employee";

(2) in subsection (c), by inserting "or (e)" after "subsection (a)";

(3) in subsection (d), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "provided in the preceding subsections of this section" and inserting "provided otherwise under this section"; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(e) An employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs representing a labor organization (including an exclusive representative) may not be authorized official time to participate in—

"(1) any negotiations with respect to a collective bargaining agreement under this chapter, including any impasse proceeding; or

"(2) an arbitration proceeding in which the Department and the labor organization are opposing parties."

SA 5072. Ms. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 408. CONDITIONAL EFFECTIVE DATE.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, no other provision of this title shall take effect until the date on which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs certifies to Congress that there will not be any negative operational impact on existing disability claims processing and health care delivery for veterans.

SA 5073. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other pur-

poses; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

Subtitle C—Other Health Care Matters

SEC. 121. SYSTEM FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 7309A(c) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) Beginning not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Director shall establish an information technology system that will allow a veteran (or the designated representative of a veteran) to electronically—

"(A) file a complaint that will be received by the appropriate patient advocate; and

"(B) at any time view the status of the complaint, including interim and final actions that have been taken to address the complaint."

SA 5074. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

Subtitle C—Expansion of Dental Care for Veterans

SEC. 121. REQUIREMENT THAT SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FURNISH DENTAL CARE IN THE SAME MANNER AS ANY OTHER MEDICAL SERVICE.

(A) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 17 is amended—

(1) in section 1701(6)(B), by striking "as described in sections 1710 and 1712 of this title";

(2) in section 1710(c), by striking the second sentence; and

(3) in section 1712—

(A) by striking subsections (a) and (b);

(B) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), and (e) as subsections (a), (b), and (c), respectively; and

(C) in subsection (a), as redesignated by subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking "Dental appliances" and inserting "The Secretary may furnish dentures, dental appliances"; and

(ii) by striking "to be furnished by the Secretary under this section may be procured by the Secretary" and inserting "under this section and may procure such appliances".

(B) CONFORMING AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) PROTECTION OF HEALTH CARE ELIGIBILITY.—Section 1525(a) is amended by striking "medicines under section 1712(d)" and inserting "medicines under section 1712(b)".

(B) DENTAL INSURANCE PLAN.—Section 1712C(h) is amended—

(i) by striking "section 1712 of this title" and inserting "this chapter"; and

(ii) by striking "such section 1712" and inserting "this chapter".

(2) HEADING AMENDMENT.—The heading for section 1712 is amended to read as follows:

"§ 1712. Appliances; drugs and medicines for certain disabled veterans; vaccines".

(3) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of subchapter II of chapter 17 is amended by striking the item relating to section 1712 and inserting the following new item:

"1712. Appliances; drugs and medicines for certain disabled veterans; vaccines."

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 122. EXPANSION OF FURNISHING BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF DENTAL CARE TO ALL ENROLLED VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall furnish dental care to all veterans enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, pursuant to the phased approach required under this section.

(b) PHASE ONE REQUIRED.—

(1) COMMENCEMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall furnish dental care to all covered veterans who are not eligible for dental services and treatment and related dental appliances under the laws administered by the Secretary as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) PHASE ONE.—In this section, the furnishing of dental care under subparagraph (A) shall be referred to as "phase one".

(2) DURATION OF PHASE ONE.—Phase one shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of phase one.

(3) LOCATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out phase one at the following locations:

(i) Each medical center of the Department with an established dental clinic.

(ii) Not fewer than four military medical treatment facilities of the Department of Defense with the capacity to furnish dental care, which shall be selected in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.

(iii) Not fewer than four community-based outpatient clinics with space available for the furnishing of dental care under phase one.

(iv) Not fewer than four Federally Qualified Health Centers.

(v) Not fewer than four facilities of the Indian Health Service with established dental clinics, which shall be selected in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for phase one, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in each of the following:

(i) Rural areas.

(ii) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(iii) Areas representing different geographic locations, such as census tracts established by the Bureau of the Census.

(C) MOBILE DENTAL CLINICS.—In carrying out phase one, the Secretary shall test the efficacy of mobile dental clinics to service rural areas that do not have a population base to warrant a full-time clinic but where there are covered veterans in need of dental care.

(D) HOME BASED DENTAL CARE.—In carrying out phase one, the Secretary shall test the efficacy of portable dental care units to service rural veteran in their homes, as the Secretary considers medically appropriate.

(4) SCOPE OF SERVICES.—The dental care furnished to covered veterans under phase one shall be consistent with the dental services and treatment furnished by the Secretary to veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 100 percent disabling under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(5) USE OF THERAPISTS AND TELE-DENTISTRY.—In carrying out phase one, the Secretary shall test the efficacy of the use of

dental therapists and tele-dentistry to service the dental care needs of covered veterans.

(6) **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.**—The participation of a covered veteran in phase one shall be at the election of the veteran.

(7) **COPAYMENTS.**—The Secretary may collect copayments for dental care furnished under phase one in accordance with authorities on the collection of copayments for medical care of veterans under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code.

(8) **ADMINISTRATION.**—

(A) **NOTICE TO COVERED VETERANS ON PHASE ONE.**—In carrying out phase one, the Secretary shall inform all covered veterans of the services and treatment available under phase one.

(B) **CONTRACTS.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to clause (iii), in carrying out phase one, the Secretary may enter into contracts with appropriate entities for the provision of dental care under phase one.

(ii) **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND METRICS.**—Each contract entered into under clause (i) shall specify performance standards and metrics and processes for ensuring compliance of the contractor concerned with such performance standards.

(iii) **LIMITATION.**—The Secretary may only enter into contracts under clause (i) if the Secretary determines that the Department does not employ, and cannot recruit and retain, qualified dentists, dental hygienists, and oral surgeons in the applicable location.

(9) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection:

(A) **COVERED VETERAN.**—The term “covered veteran” means a veteran enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of such section.

(B) **FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER.**—The term “Federally Qualified Health Center” means a federally-qualified health center as defined in section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B)).

(C) **EXPANSION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—After the completion of phase one, the Secretary shall expand the provision of dental care under this section to all veterans, including through the use of the recommendations of the Secretary under subsection (d)(2)(F), as follows:

(A) In phase two, which shall—

(i) commence not later than 90 days after the completion of phase one; and

(ii) consist of the provision of dental care to all veterans enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, pursuant to paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4) of such section.

(B) In phase three, which shall—

(i) commence not later than 90 days after the completion of phase two; and

(ii) consist of the provision of dental care to all veterans enrolled in such system pursuant to paragraph (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), or (6) of such section.

(C) In phase four, which shall—

(i) commence not later than 90 days after the completion of phase three; and

(ii) consist of the provision of dental care to all veterans enrolled in such system.

(2) **FACILITY EXPANSION.**—Under each phase specified in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall expand the number of facilities described in subsection (b)(3) furnishing dental care under this section commensurate to the number of new veterans furnished care under such phase, including through the use of any other facilities to which veterans have access.

(3) **DURATION.**—Each phase specified in paragraph (1) shall be carried out during a period not to exceed two years and all such phases, including phase one, shall be carried out for a period not to exceed eight years.

(4) **CONCLUSION.**—Upon the conclusion of phase four specified under paragraph (1)(C), all veterans enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall be eligible for dental care from the Department.

(d) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days before the completion of phase one, and not later than 180 days after the completion of each subsequent phase under subsection (c)(1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on the phase about to be completed and the plans of the Secretary for implementation of expansion of the provision of dental care pursuant to subsection (c).

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A description of the implementation and operation of the phase covered by the report.

(B) The number of veterans receiving dental care under such phase and a description of the dental care furnished to such veterans.

(C) An analysis of the costs and benefits of such phase, including a comparison of costs and benefits by location type.

(D) An assessment of the impact of such phase on appointments for care, prescriptions, hospitalizations, emergency room visits, wellness, employability, and satisfaction of patients, and perceived quality of life of veterans.

(E) An analysis and assessment of the efficacy of mobile clinics and home based dental care to service the dental needs of veterans during such phase.

(F) An analysis and assessment of the efficacy of dental therapists and tele-dentistry to service the dental needs of covered veterans during such phase, to include a cost benefit analysis of such services.

(G) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to such phase.

(H) A comparison of the costs for private sector dental care with cost of furnishing dental care from the Department, broken down by each locality included in such phase.

(I) Such recommendations for the expansion of dental care pursuant to subsection (c) as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 123. PROGRAM ON EDUCATION TO PROMOTE DENTAL HEALTH IN VETERANS.

(a) **PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program of education to promote dental health for veterans who are enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The program required by subsection (a) shall provide education for veterans on the following:

(1) The association between dental health and overall health and well-being.

(2) Proper techniques for dental care.

(3) Signs and symptoms of commonly occurring dental conditions.

(4) Treatment options for commonly occurring dental issues.

(5) Options for obtaining access to dental care, including information on eligibility for dental care through the Department.

(6) Available and accessible options for obtaining low or no-cost dental care, including through dental schools and Federally Qualified Health Centers.

(7) Such other matters relating to dental health as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall provide educational materials to veterans under the program required by subsection (a) through a variety of mechanisms, including the following:

(A) The availability and distribution of print materials at facilities of the Department (including at medical centers, clinics, Vet Centers, and readjustment counseling centers) and to providers (including members of Patient Aligned Care Teams).

(B) The availability and distribution of materials over the Internet, including through webinars, My HealtheVet, and VA.gov.

(C) Presentations by the dental program office of the Department of information, including both small group and large group presentations, and distribution of such information to all locations in which the program is being carried out.

(2) **SELECTION OF MECHANISMS.**—In selecting mechanisms under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall select mechanisms designed to maximize the number of veterans who receive education under the program.

(d) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter or revise the eligibility of any veteran for dental care under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(e) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER.**—The term “Federally Qualified Health Center” means a federally-qualified health center as defined in section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B)).

(2) **VET CENTER.**—The term “Vet Center” has the meaning given that term in section 1712A(h) of title 38, United States Code.

(f) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 124. STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM TO INCENTIVIZE DENTAL TRAINING AND ENSURE THE DENTAL WORKFORCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs has sufficient staff to provide dental service to veterans, shall implement a loan reimbursement program for qualified dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, and oral surgeons who agree—

(1) to be appointed by the Secretary as a dentist, dental therapist, dental hygienist, or oral surgeon, as the case may be, under section 7401 of title 38, United States Code; and

(2) to serve as a dentist, dental therapist, dental hygienist, or oral surgeon, as the case may be, of the Department pursuant to such appointment at a dental clinic of the Department for a period of not less than five years.

(b) **MAXIMUM AMOUNT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary may reimburse not more than—

(A) \$75,000 for each dentist participating in the program under subsection (a);

(B) \$20,000 for each dental therapist participating in such program;

(C) \$10,000 for each dental hygienist participating in such program; and

(D) \$20,000 for each credentialed doctor of medicine in dentistry serving as an oral surgeon and participating in such program.

(2) **DUAL ELIGIBILITY.**—The Secretary may reimburse an individual serving in multiple

positions described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of paragraph (1) not more than \$95,000.

(C) **SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.**—The Secretary shall monitor demand among veterans for dental care and require participants in the program under subsection (a) to choose from dental clinics of the Department with the greatest need for dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, or oral surgeons, as the case may be, according to facility enrollment and patient demand.

SEC. 125. EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS FOR DENTISTS, DENTAL THERAPISTS, DENTAL HYGIENISTS, AND ORAL SURGEONS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into educational and training partnerships with dental schools to provide training and employment opportunities for dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, and oral surgeons.

SEC. 126. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2023 such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle.

(b) **AVAILABILITY.**—The amount authorized to be appropriated under subsection (a) shall be available for obligation for the eight-year period beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 5075. Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

Subtitle C—Other Health Care Matters

SEC. 121. REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE CARE UNDER VETERANS COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM FOR TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERANS.

Section 1703(d)(1) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

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

“(F) the covered veteran is a toxic-exposed veteran.”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I have seen 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 in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to vote on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is author-

ized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Republican Leader, pursuant to Public Law 105-292, as amended by Public Law 106-55, Public Law 107-228, and Public Law 112-75, appoints the following individuals to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Mr. Abraham Cooper of California; The Honorable Eric M. Ueland of Oregon.

AUTHORIZING TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. SEEFRIED, ET AL.

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 665, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 665) to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Seefried, et al.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, another criminal trial arising out of the events of January 6, 2021, is scheduled to begin on June 13, 2022, in Federal district court in the District of Columbia. The two defendants in this case, Kevin and Hunter Seefried, are charged with five counts: obstructing the counting by Congress of the elec-

toral ballots for President and Vice President; entering and remaining in a restricted area within the United States Capitol grounds; unlawful parading, demonstrating, and picketing; and two counts of engaging in disorderly and disruptive conduct. Hunter Seefried is additionally charged with destruction of government property and two counts of engaging in physical violence.

The prosecution has requested trial testimony from Daniel Schwager, formerly counsel to the Secretary of the Senate, related to the obstruction count, including his knowledge and observations of the process and constitutional and legal bases for Congress' counting of the Electoral College votes. The prosecution is also seeking testimony at trial, if necessary, from Nate Russell and Diego Torres, custodians of records in the Senate Recording Studio, which operates under the authority of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate, to authenticate Senate video of the proceeding that day. Senate Secretary Berry and Senate Sergeant at Arms Gibson would like to cooperate with these requests by providing relevant testimony in this proceeding from Messrs. Schwager, Russell, and Torres, respectively.

In keeping with the rules and practices of the Senate, this resolution would authorize the production of relevant testimony from Messrs. Schwager, Russell, and Torres, with representation by the Senate legal counsel.

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 665) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

AUTHORIZING TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. WILLIAMS

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 666, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 666) to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Williams.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, another criminal trial arising out of the events of January 6, 2021, is scheduled to begin on June 27, 2022, in Federal district court in the District of Columbia. The Federal indictment

charges the defendant with five counts: obstructing the counting by Congress of the electoral ballots for President and Vice President; entering and remaining in a restricted area within the United States Capitol grounds; unlawful parading, demonstrating, and picketing; and two counts of engaging in disorderly and disruptive conduct.

The government has requested trial testimony from Daniel Schwager, formerly counsel to the Secretary of the Senate, related to the obstruction count, including his knowledge and observations of the process and constitutional and legal bases for Congress' counting of the Electoral College votes. Senate Secretary Berry would like to cooperate with this request by providing relevant testimony in this proceeding from Mr. Schwager.

In keeping with the rules and practices of the Senate, this resolution would authorize the production of relevant testimony from Mr. Schwager, with representation by the Senate legal counsel.

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 666) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RODEO-CHEDISKI FIRE IN ARIZONA

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 667, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 667) commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire in Arizona.

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

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be

considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 667) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2022

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. Thursday, June 9; 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 conclusion of morning business, the Senate resume consideration of Calendar No. 388, H.R. 3967; further that at 1:45 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of Executive Calendar No. 728, vote on confirmation of the Bagenstos nomination as provided under the previous order, and that upon disposition of the nomination, the Senate resume legislative session; finally, if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:16 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, June 9, 2022, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

DANIEL B. MAFFEI, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSIONER FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2027. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD

CATHERINE J.K. SANDOVAL, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE KRISTEN MARIE KULINOWSKI, TERM EXPIRED.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

DOUGLAS J. MCKALIP, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE CHIEF AGRICULTURAL NEGOTIATOR, OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, VICE GREGORY DOUD.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JESSICA DAVIS BA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE.

ROBERT J. FAUCHER, OF ARIZONA, 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 SURINAME.

KENNETH MERTEN, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. DARRYL A. WILLIAMS

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. MICHAEL E. LANGLEY

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate June 8, 2022:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AMY LOYD, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION

TODD M. HARPER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 10, 2027.

THE JUDICIARY

NINA MORRISON, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on June 8, 2022 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

MARIA DUAIME ROBINSON, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (OFFICE OF ELECTRICITY), VICE BRUCE J. WALKER, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 4, 2022.