



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2021

No. 108

Senate

The Senate met at 10:03 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O Lord, our God, thank You for permitting us to bear witness to Your glory. May our lawmakers with their words and actions prompt people to glorify Your Name.

Give our Senators the wisdom to foresee the dangers ahead and take precautions. As they listen to the voice of conscience, may our legislators reverently seek to fulfill Your purposes on Earth. Remind them often that all things are possible by faith and through fervent prayer. Today, continue to guide them as they dedicate themselves to strive to honor You.

We pray in Your glorious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 22, 2021.

To the Senate:

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

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

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Christopher Charles Fonzone, of Pennsylvania, to be General Counsel of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, Act 77 was passed in 2019 by the Pennsylvania State legislature when Republicans held the majority in both houses. Among other voting reforms, the bill provided for no-excuse absentee voting and extended registration deadlines.

At the time, Republicans in the State legislature were operating under the

assumption that mail-in voting would boost participation among seniors, who tend to lean Republican. Every single Republican State senator voted for the bill. In the State house, 105 Pennsylvania Republicans voted for the bill and 2 voted no. That was 2019.

Fast forward to 1 year later. Donald Trump, fresh off a resounding loss from the 2020 Presidential election, cried foul and lied—lied—that the election was stolen from him, like a petulant child. One of his favorite bugaboos, as we all know, was mail-in voting.

So a little over a year after 132 Pennsylvania Republicans voted for Act 77 with only two against, they introduced a bill to, you guessed it, repeal Act 77, a law that Republicans passed while they were in the majority just a year before.

There is a rot—a rot—at the center of the modern Republican Party. Donald Trump's Big Lie has spread like a cancer and threatens to envelope one of America's major political parties. Even worse, it has poisoned our democracy and eroded faith in our elections, which is so detrimental to the future faith people need to have in this democracy. And, of course, it became the match that lit a wildfire of Republican voter suppression laws sweeping across the country. Because of one man's lie, Republicans are now doing the dastardly act of taking away voting from millions of Americans—millions of Americans—and making it much harder for them to vote, and many, many, many will not.

From Georgia to Montana, from Florida to Iowa, in 14 different States, through 22 different laws, Republican State legislatures are conducting the most coordinated voter suppression effort in 80 years. And as the example of Act 77 in Pennsylvania goes to show, there is no principle behind these laws: not fraud, not election integrity, not security, not better election administration. The only principle is blatant partisan electoral advantage aimed at

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S4661

people of color, young people, urban people, and people who vote Democratic. It has nothing to do with fraud. They haven't pointed out that there is more fraud in those areas than in other areas. It is just blatant, blatant partisan advantage.

Whatever voting changes Republicans think are good for them, they will make them, even if it means resorting to the awful and un-American act of voter suppression. So in State after State—State after State—Republicans are reducing polling hours and locations and the number of drop boxes so that Americans of all parties, but particularly aimed at Democratic voters, people of color, young people, poor people, have a harder time finding the time, place, and manner to vote.

They are limiting the kind of IDs you can use, like student IDs, while at the same time removing requirements of any form of licensing to own a firearm. Has any study shown that there is less fraud among firearm owners than students? There is probably very little among either, but they pick one group and not the other, and we know why.

Republican legislatures are making it easier to own a gun than to vote. Republican legislatures are making it harder to vote early, harder to vote by mail, and harder to vote after work. They are making it a crime to give food or water to voters waiting in long lines. They are trying to make it harder for Black churchgoers to vote on Sunday. And they are actually making it easier for unelected judges and partisan election boards to overturn the results of an election, opening the door for some demagogue, a Trumpian-type demagogue—maybe he himself—to try and subvert our elections in the very same way that Trump tried to do it in 2020.

Republicans say these laws are about “election integrity.” They claim they are only trying to “secure the vote.” Some of my friends here in Washington have resorted to the old refrain that election laws are best left to the States, ignoring the fact that for generations, we, in Congress, have passed Federal election laws and constitutional amendments to prevent exactly this kind of discrimination and voter suppression.

We all know what these laws are about. I daresay my Republican colleagues know. They are not stupid. When the State of Texas proposes to limit voting hours on Sunday to only a few hours in the evening, do they really believe that is about preventing fraud? Do my Senate friends want to back up that kind of thing, prevent it from even being talked about here on the floor of the Senate? When Georgia Republicans say it is a crime to give a voter some water or food as they wait in line on a hot day, do they really think they are preventing voter fraud by denying them a snack? Give me a break. Give me a break.

Republicans across the country are deliberately targeting all the ways

that younger, poorer, non-White, and typically Democratic voters access the ballot. Republicans claim they are making it easier to vote and harder to cheat in an election. In reality, they are making it harder to vote and easier to cheat in an election, and we all know it.

And all we want to do here is debate it in regular order—regular order—which colleagues on both sides of the aisle have asked for. That is what we are asking for here, just to debate these things, and they won't even do that because they are so afraid of what that debate will show: that this is not election integrity; that this is voter suppression and voter suppression directed at only one group of voters.

Well, we are going to see what happens today. Later today, the entire country will see whether our Republican friends are willing to even debate this issue in broad daylight. This afternoon, the U.S. Senate will vote on a motion to proceed to voting rights legislation. We all know what a motion to proceed is around here, but let me explain it. All it says is let's go forward with debate. Let's debate something, and this is among the most important things we could ever debate, the right to vote—what our soldiers have died for and what peaceful marchers have been bloodied for, the right to vote.

It takes 60 votes to start that debate. Everyone knows you still need 60 votes to end the debate on a bill. So even if the Republicans don't like the legislation at the end of the process, let them vote against it then. But, no, they don't even want to debate it. They don't even want to debate it because they are afraid. They want to deny the right to vote, make it harder to vote for so many Americans, and then they don't want to talk about it, sweep it under the rug, and hope that Americans don't hear about it.

But Americans will hear about it. We are going to make sure of that, and millions in the country who are rightly and correctly outraged by what is happening will let everyone know what has happened.

Now, only by starting the process can Senators offer amendments, change the bill, forge compromise. Only then can Senators engage in a full-throated debate about what this Chamber should do about the assault on voting rights in this country. Obviously, there are arguments about what should be done to protect voting rights and safeguard our democracy. Obviously, there are arguments about which policies are the most effective. But shouldn't we at least agree to debate the issue?

That is the only question for the U.S. Senate today. Do my Republican colleagues believe that voting rights, the most fundamental in a democracy, the right that generations of Americans have marched for and protested to achieve, that generations of American soldiers have fought and died to secure, is that worthy of debate? Of course it is.

Should the U.S. Senate even debate how to protect the voting rights of our citizens? There is only one correct answer. We will see if our Republican colleagues choose it this afternoon.

This is not simply a partisan issue, as partisan as the Republican side and the State legislatures and now here in the Senate seem to make it. It is about the fundamental values in this country. It is about what we are all about.

When the Constitution was started in most States, you had to be a White male Protestant property owner to vote. There has been an inexorable march to expand that right to vote and allow more and more Americans to have that right to vote. This is a giant step backward. Obviously, it is a partisan issue to the Republicans, but it is a much deeper issue than that.

Will our colleagues stand up for what generations of Americans have fought for, marched for, and died for or will they just slink away and say we are not even going to debate this?

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

IRAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, over the weekend, Iran held what its Supreme Leader might call a Presidential election. To the rest of the world, including millions of Iranians, what actually happened was quite clear. The regime's favored choice was selected from a limited field of approved candidates in a carefully controlled bit of political theater. There is no doubt this charade works as intended. The Ayatollah got a President-elect with a record of strict adherence to his regime's revolutionary orthodoxy. Meanwhile, former Presidential candidates who emerged as leaders in the popular 2009 Green Movement remain under house arrest. Like his predecessors, Ebrahim Raisi will serve as a figurehead while the Supreme Leader and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard actually run the show.

But even rigged elections have consequences, and the new most visible figure in Tehran has a proven history as a headline theocrat. For decades, from his time on a so-called death committee in the 1980s, the President-elect played an intimate role in the trial, conviction, and summary execution of political prisoners and peaceful protesters. There is no question he is an extreme hardliner, even in the Iranian context, and now he is set to be the so-called counterpart to President Biden as this administration reengages eagerly with the world's most active state sponsor of terrorism.

In some circles, a looming turnover in the top ranks of Iranian leadership is being spun as a reason for the White House to rush even faster than it already is toward restoring the Obama administration's failed nuclear deal. One particularly eager assessment in the New York Times called the next 6

weeks “a unique window for clinching an agreement,” like some sort of liquidation sale in which President Biden needs to take whatever he can. Meanwhile, rational observers know that the fundamental reality of the U.S.-Iranian relations certainly has not changed.

If the selection of a new hardline figurehead in Tehran sends any signal, it is a reminder that showering the regime with sanctions relief and expecting a change in behavior is a reckless and damaging approach. In fact, President-elect Raisi has already said as much himself. Iran's ballistic missile program is “not negotiable,” and meeting with President Biden is not on the table.

Of course, Iranian politicians and diplomats are known to lie and to dissemble, so we should pay closest attention to this regime's actions. What will it actually do?

Here is the truth: Domestic political developments in Tehran don't absolve the Biden administration of its responsibility to confront Iran's nuclear and missile proliferation, its support for terrorism, its abuses of human rights, and its relentless efforts to destabilize the entire region.

If President Biden hopes to earn bipartisan support for an Iran policy that could outlast his time in office, he needs to start explaining how he intends to respond as Iran ramps up threats against the United States and our closest partners in its backyard.

Remember, the thousands of rockets Hamas fired at Israel last month were made possible by Iran. So were the precision-guided munitions in Hezbollah's arsenal and the ballistic missiles and UAVs launched into Saudi Arabia by the Houthis in Yemen. And the dozens of militia attacks on U.S. interests in Iraq? Carried out by Tehran's reliable accolades.

The Biden administration has had months to develop a coherent rationale for its eager engagement with the Iranian regime and months to hash out a better plan than rewarding terrorist sponsors with sanctions relief. An explanation to Congress is long overdue.

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, later today, the Senate will vote on whether to advance Democrats' transparently partisan plan to tilt every election in America permanently in their favor.

By now, the rotten inner workings of this power grab have been thoroughly exposed to the light. We know that it would shatter a decades-old understanding that campaign law should have a bipartisan referee and turn the Federal Election Commission into a partisan majority cudgel for Democrats to wield against their political opponents. We know that it would let Washington bureaucrats direct Federal dollars into politicians' campaign accounts—government money for yard signs and attack ads. We know that it would let Democrats take a red pen to election laws in each of the 50 States,

neutering popular precautions like voter ID while legalizing shady practices like ballot harvesting across the board.

It is a recipe for undermining confidence in our elections, for remaking our entire system of government to suit the preferences of one far end of the political spectrum. And if they could, many Democrats would pass it with the slimmest possible majority, even after its companion faced bipartisan opposition over in the House. What a craven political calculation. What a way to show your disdain for the American people's choices.

Of course, it isn't even limited to election law. Among the most dangerous parts of S. 1 is the way it would equip partisan regulators to intimidate and to discourage private citizens from engaging in political speech.

Unfortunately, this one is a familiar concept for too many Americans. It is not hard to imagine Federal bureaucrats indulging ideological grudges and chilling free speech. It has actually happened before. The Nation was reminded just a few weeks ago how unable the Federal Government can be to protect private citizens' personal information—unable or just unwilling?

But conservatives in particular didn't need a reminder of what became institutionalized discrimination under the last Democratic administration. So when private contributors, nonprofit advocacy groups, and religious organizations see that S. 1's disclosure requirements would intentionally unlearn the lessons of the IRS's abuses under Lois Lerner, they have plenty of reasons—plenty—to fear.

Naming and shaming is not a hypothetical concept; it has been a concrete reality for thousands of private citizens. Today, Democrats are asking for a green light to supercharge the intimidation machine that makes all that possible.

We have heard this entire package described in many ways over the years. It has been around for a while. The same rotten proposals have sometimes been called a massive overhaul for a broken democracy, sometimes just a modest package of tweaks for a democracy that is working perfectly, and sometimes a response to State actions, which this bill actually predates by many years. But whichever label Democrats slap on the bill, the substance remains the same. It has always been a plan to rewrite the ground rules of American politics.

By the way, no matter what far-left activists are telling our colleagues, this most sensitive subject would not be the best place to trash the Senate's rules to ram something through. In fact, these issues would be the worst possible place to push through a power grab at any cost.

The Senate is no obstacle to voting laws done the right way. I have helped write legislation regarding our democracy that has soared through this Chamber on huge bipartisan margins.

The Senate is only an obstacle when the policy is flawed and the process is rotten, and that is exactly why this body exists.

Today, the Senate is going to fulfill our founding purpose, stop the partisan power grab, and reject S. 1.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, what is the status of the floor?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate is considering the Fonzzone nomination.

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

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

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, let's be clear. We are facing the most dangerous and overt threat to our democratic system in generations.

Supreme Court decisions like *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon* wrongly equated money with speech, and in the decades since, unaccountable dark money has flooded into our political system. This broken campaign finance system allows billionaires to drown out the voices of ordinary Americans with no accountability. This lack of transparency also opens the door for dangerous disinformation campaigns.

After the Supreme Court gutted article V of the Voting Rights Act in another terrible decision, we have also seen State legislatures across the country take up and pass voting laws designed explicitly to prevent Black, Brown, and young voters from exercising their right to vote.

These new laws in States like Georgia, Arizona, and Texas are right out of the pre-Voting Rights Act playbook of the Jim Crow South. Some have called them Jim Crow 2.0, and, frankly, it is hard to disagree. They make it harder to register to vote. They reduce early voting times in polling locations. They restrict access to vote by mail. In the Presiding Officer's State in Georgia, it is now illegal to hand out water to someone who has been standing in line for hours to vote, waiting to vote. Could anything be more wrongheaded?

My home State of New Mexico is a good example of what it looks like to enhance rather than attack participation in our democracy. I am proud of the ways that election officials in my State have stepped up in recent years to make voting safer, to make it more secure and at the same time more accessible for every New Mexican, and our State has seen greater participation in our elections as a result. Now, unfortunately, we are seeing the polar opposite of this approach in our neighboring States.

Just last week, Democratic lawmakers from Texas came to Washington, DC, to warn us just how dire the situation has become in their State. Texas's Governor, Greg Abbott, and Republican lawmakers in Austin are hell-bent on passing sweeping voting restrictions as part of a nakedly

discriminatory power grab. These proposed changes would reduce voting hours, push back the start of Sunday early voting when many Black voters cast their ballots, and eliminate polling locations in larger urban counties. The goal of this type of legislation is pretty plain to see.

This shameful and transparent attempt to take away Texans' right to vote and similar attempts to disenfranchise voters in many other States should be a wake-up call to every single American. We should all be able to see that these attacks on voting are taking advantage of and in many cases being driven by our former President's lies and conspiracy theories about the last election.

Make no mistake, former President Trump's Big Lie about his loss in the 2020 election has sown widespread and damaging distrust in our elections. We should never forget that this same distrust and disinformation fomented a mob of violent insurrectionists who stormed into this very building, the very heart of our democracy, less than 6 months ago.

Now, unfortunately, that cat is out of the bag. I don't see this widespread public distrust in our elections going away anytime soon as a result, especially as long as our former President continues to add more fuel to the fire and particularly when Republicans—even Republicans who know that he is lying—continue to follow him down that rabbit hole.

In one of New Mexico's other neighboring States, in Arizona, there is a so-called audit of the votes cast in their largest county. This bogus audit is being conducted by a private company paid for by secret pro-Trump funders, with no effective oversight.

When you outsource nonpartisan election work to a firm calling themselves the Cyber Ninjas, you know things are off the rails. All of the distrust in our elections that has been ginned up by the former President is all the more reason for us to come together to pass commonsense reforms that would restore all Americans' faith in our elections and in our democracy.

The right of every lawful American to vote is just that; it is a right, and no one, no one, should be able to take that away. The public should have confidence that our leaders are working on their behalf, not in fealty to a class of dark money billionaires. They deserve transparency so that they can see who is behind the political ads on their television screens and their social media feeds. Most importantly, they deserve to know that our fundamentally American right to vote is secure, accessible, and easy to navigate for every single lawful American.

That is why it is so important for the Senate to take up the For the People Act this week. This comprehensive legislation addresses all of the critical challenges facing our political systems and our democratic institutions. The For the People Act would restore

transparency, accountability, and strong ethics rules for our elections.

It would stop billionaires from being able to anonymously pour buckets of cash into our elections in an effort to buy them. It would put an end to partisan gerrymandering and broken election rules that allow Republicans and Democrats alike to rig the system for themselves and for special interests. And it would modernize voting systems so that every American, no matter their race, their political party, or their ZIP Code, can have confidence in their ability to exercise their right to vote.

Democrats and Republicans in the Senate should come together to pass commonsense election security, voter protections, and campaign finance reforms in the For the People Act. Each of these provisions, on their own, have won bipartisan support at the State and local level. In a previous, less partisan time, these ideas would have earned broad bipartisan support here in Congress. These are not Democratic or Republican ideas; they are fundamental reforms that we need to pass in order to restore the essential American idea that each of us has a say in who we elect as our leaders.

The House has already passed the For the People Act earlier this year. It is now the Senate's turn to take up this critical legislation. Unless we can pass the reforms that are in the For the People Act, we will keep living under a broken status quo where the special interests wield far too much control and State lawmakers can continue to undermine and ignore constitutional rights.

It is outrageous that Senate Republicans, as we heard from the minority leader, are planning to block legislation to restore voting rights and bring much-needed transparency and ethics into our elections. Their refusal to even allow debate on the For the People Act should be seen for what it is. It is a ringing endorsement of former President Trump's conspiracy theories and his attacks on our elections and on reality itself.

Refusing to take up the For the People Act will prop up the campaigns that we are seeing in States across the country that strip Americans of our hard-won right to vote.

Mr. President, I want to be clear. If Senate Republicans are successful later today in using the filibuster to block the Senate from even debating the For the People Act, this cannot be the end of the story. We simply cannot give up on passing voting rights legislation in this Congress, not when our democracy is what is on the line.

We should all remember that the filibuster is a rule, a rule that cannot even be found in the Constitution, but voting, voting is an American right. When I think about this, I remember my former colleague across the hall from me, actually, when I served in the House, Representative John Lewis. It was one of the most humbling experi-

ences of my life to be able to serve in the same Chamber as Congressman Lewis.

John Lewis dedicated his entire life to the fight for the right of all Americans to cast their ballot safely and without fear of discrimination. More than 50 years ago, he and so many others marched and put their lives on the line to call on President Lyndon Johnson and Members of Congress from both parties to pass the Voting Rights Act. Back then and every time the Voting Rights Act has been reauthorized since, Senators from both parties have found a way to protect our democracy and preserve the right to vote.

Right now, America is facing down daunting threats to our democratic values here at home. For the first time since the Civil War, the greatest threats to the Republic are from within. History will judge all of us based on what we do to defend that fundamental right for all—not some but all—of our fellow Americans.

Mr. President, will we meet this moment? If we fail to rise to the discrimination baked into these State laws, our failure will cast a long shadow. I will be proud to cast my vote on the side of democracy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, later today, the Senate will vote on S. 2093. S. 2093 is the new S. 1. It is the latest version of the so-called For the People Act, which is a massive, massive Federal takeover of election law.

So why are we taking up a massive Federal takeover of election law? Well, that is a good question. Two years ago, Democrats told us that we needed to pass this law because our electoral system was broken. Well, then came 2020. We had a record voter turnout, the largest voter turnout since the election of 1900, the largest turnout in 120 years in American history. And Democrats won the White House.

After that, it got a little awkward to complain that our electoral system was broken. So Democrats found a new argument. Now, we have to pass this legislation to stop States from taking away voting rights. According to Democrats, States' moves to update or clarify their election laws in the wake of pandemic challenges and vote-counting confusion are really plots to restrict voter access.

Of course, so far, most 2021 State election law updates have proved to be both standard and mainstream, but that hasn't stopped Democrats who have, at times, resorted to outright lies in their efforts to persuade Americans

that we are facing a voting rights crisis.

After all, Democrats need to give some reason for why we should allow the Federal Government to take over our entire electoral system. And Democrats' real reason—because they think S. 1 will give them an advantage in future elections—is not really one that they can use to sell the bill, although Speaker PELOSI did admit on national television that she thought S. 1 would boost Democrats' electoral chances.

The question is where to start when it comes to the bill's content. As I said, like the original S. 1, the new S. 1 is an unprecedented Federal takeover of elections. Historically, running elections has largely been a matter for States, which tailor election laws to the particular needs of their cities and communities.

S. 1 would impose one-size-fits-all, Federal regulations on elections—in many cases, deeply problematic regulations. S. 1 would require States to allow unlimited ballot harvesting, which is the controversial practice of allowing political operatives and others to pick up and deliver ballots, with all of the possibilities for fraud that that creates.

It would gut State voter ID laws—laws which, I would point out, are supported by a strong majority of the American people. A recent poll said 80 percent of Americans support voter ID laws. It would remove legal penalties for registering individuals who are here illegally—and so much more.

But the new S. 1, like the old S. 1, goes way beyond undermining the security of our elections and increasing the likelihood of voter fraud. It would implement public funding of political campaigns, which would mean that government dollars, money that belongs to the American taxpayer, would go to funding yard signs and attack ads. Sitting Senators alone could qualify for more than \$1.8 billion in public funding. And that doesn't count their challengers.

Yes, with a record high debt, Democrats apparently think that dropping a couple billion dollars here and there on attack ads and partisan rallies is a good use of taxpayer dollars.

And from there, believe it or not, the ideas only get worse. S. 1 would permanently undermine confidence in our electoral system by turning the Federal Election Commission, the primary enforcer of election law in this country, into a partisan body. That is right. The Democrats' bill would turn the primary enforcer of election law in this country into a partisan body. Now, I am interested to hear how this is supposed to enhance voter confidence in our electoral system. Every single FEC ruling would be suspect.

And on top of all this, S. 1 makes a concerted attack on freedom of speech. It would impose onerous requirements and restrictions on political speech. It would open up private Americans to retaliation and intimidation simply for

making a donation to support a cause they believe in. And it would allow the IRS to consider organizations' beliefs when deciding whether or not to grant them tax-exempt status.

In fact, the ACLU—the American Civil Liberties Union—actually opposed the House's version of S. 1 in the last Congress because the bill would “unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights.” That is right. The American Civil Liberties Union opposed the legislation because the bill would “unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights.”

As hard as it is to believe when you look at the bill's provisions, S. 1 was billed as an election integrity bill. In fact, this legislation would undermine election integrity, making our elections less secure and more susceptible to fraud. And it would undermine voter confidence in our elections.

The partisan divide in this country has reached new heights, and voters on both sides have lost confidence in our electoral process. Any election legislation that we take up should be focused on building voter confidence in the fairness of our electoral system, not undermining it.

Do my Democratic colleagues seriously believe—seriously believe—that S. 1 would do anything to increase voter confidence in the unbiased character of our electoral system? Do they seriously believe that their bill looks like a nonpartisan attempt to protect American elections? They can't possibly.

From the newly partisan FEC to an IRS empowered to reject tax-exempt status for organizations whose beliefs it doesn't like, S. 1 is very clearly a bill designed purely and simply to enhance political power—the political power, Democrats hope, of the Democratic Party. It is the very opposite of a nonpartisan reform bill.

And I have to ask my Democratic colleagues, do you really want an electoral system that is perceived as partisan and which half the country doesn't trust? Haven't we seen the consequences of that? Are you really prepared to sacrifice voter confidence in our electoral system just so you can win elections?

Later this afternoon, we will vote on S. 1. And I fully expect that this legislation will be blocked, and it should be. The Senate's rules, which require the agreement of 60 Senators to move forward to consider legislation, were designed—designed—for times just like these, times when a narrow partisan majority attempts to shove through partisan legislation, times when a partisan majority attacks the freedoms that our government exists to protect.

The Senate was established to act as a monitoring body and check attempts to ride roughshod over minority rights or to curtail our rights and our liberties. And today the Senate will fulfill that role and prevent this dangerous, partisan takeover of our electoral system from moving forward.

To elaborate on that point for just a moment, when I asked the question earlier on about why would you bring this bill to the floor—it is a good question, I think, knowing full well that it is going to fail, and should fail later today, but why would you bring it to the floor? Well, allegedly, the reason to bring it to the floor was to provide pressures on certain Democratic Members that this is the reason that they need to vote to do away with the legislative filibuster, which is something that has been part of the Senate going back to our Founding Fathers. In fact, the very reason the Founding Fathers created the U.S. Senate was a check and balance against majoritarian rule and running roughshod over the rights of the minority here in the U.S. Senate. And the legislative filibuster has ensured and provided that protection, so much so that it was used extensively in the last 6 years, when Republicans were in control of the Senate, by the Democrats to filibuster legislation. In fact, it was used to filibuster coronavirus relief bills. It was used to filibuster police reform bills. It was used over and over to block the former President's nominees. And yet, now, we are being told that the Senate needs to get rid of the legislative filibuster and that all those Democrats, all those on the other side of the aisle who used it extensively to block Republican legislation over the past 6 years, now believe that we need to get rid of this legislative filibuster and that this bill is example No. 1 for why that is necessary.

Well, it is really ironic and interesting to hear Members on the other side make that argument, given where they were a couple of years ago. It was just a couple of years ago—maybe 3 years ago—that 33 Democratic Senators signed a letter—a letter—to the Republican leader at the time, Senator MCCONNELL, saying that we need to preserve the filibuster, the legislative filibuster, in the Senate because it is so crucial to the essence of the Senate and the protections that it provides for the rights of the minority here in the U.S. Senate. Thirty-three Democrats, many of whom are still serving in this body, adopted that position.

And, in fact, the Democratic whip, my counterpart on the Democratic side, said, a couple of years ago on a morning show:

I can tell you that would be the end of the Senate as it was originally devised and created going back to our Founding Fathers. We have to acknowledge our respect for the minority, and that is what the Senate tries to do in its composition and in its procedure.

“I can tell you,” he said, the Democratic whip, the Senator from Illinois, “that it would be the end of the Senate as it was originally devised and created going back to our Founding Fathers.” In other words, we need to preserve the filibuster to preserve our democracy. It is essential. That was the view as recently as a couple of years ago. And now, now, we have to get rid of the filibuster to preserve our democracy 2

years later. The filibuster, the legislative filibuster, which in various forms has served our Republic now for over two centuries. It has been a part of the U.S. Senate checks and balances that the Founders envisioned for this country.

And yet here we are bringing a bill to the floor for no other purpose than to have a show vote to try and pressure certain Democratic Senators who, rightfully, are defending the legislative filibuster as an essential element of protecting the rights of the minority in the Senate, of requiring cooperation and collaboration and bringing people together on legislation. Solutions in the Senate, historically—and I was a staffer here back in the 1980s. That is how long my tenure, at least as a staffer and now subsequently as a Member, goes back. But the Senate is a place where solutions tend to be found in the middle because that is required. It is required that there be 60 votes to move consequential legislation. And as a result of that, Members on both sides have to come together. If you want to pass big things in the Senate, you have to figure out a way to get 60 votes. And right now that would require—in the Senate, if you had every Democrat, 50 Democrats, you would have to get 10 Republicans. As was the case when we had the majority in the Senate, we had to get seven Democrats to do anything. And so, in order to even move essential legislation like the coronavirus bill, we had to reach out to the other side. And it forced that compromise, that collaboration, that willingness to come together and work in a bipartisan way on solutions that are durable, that are durable for this country.

It is really interesting in this Washington Post op-ed by Senator SINEMA, where she points out—makes that very point that if you can do something at 51 votes today, and one side blows up the rules in the Senate, that when the majority changes—and it always does in the Senate, and she points out that sometimes when you get in the majority, you think you will be there forever. Well, I have been here long enough to have been in the majority and the minority and in the majority and the minority again. It goes back and forth.

So what are you going to do then the next time the Senate majority flips and all those things that the other side thinks are awful, awful ideas that the Republicans have, and they would love to be able to block them or at least force Republicans to come to the table and negotiate a solution that would require some bipartisan participation to get to 60 votes—what are you going to do then, where we have 51 votes when one side gets the majority and 50 votes and we go back and forth and we have this policy, this kind of policy roller coaster that provides no certainty, no predictability, and certainly gets away from the checks and balances that the Founders intended?

The filibuster—the legislative filibuster, the rules of the Senate, the pro-

cedures of the Senate, are designed to protect and preserve democracy not to undermine it. What undermines it are cynical attempts to try and use a piece of legislation that the leadership on the other side knows is going nowhere and bring it to the floor for a show vote to put pressure—to put pressure—on Senate Democrats, who, as I said, rightfully, are defending that very procedure, which has worked so well to their advantage for the past 6 years.

And now we are told the reason they have to change it is because Republicans are being so—we are not cooperating. We are not—you know, we are sticks in the mud. We are stopping and blocking things.

We haven't even been in the minority now for 6 months. We spent the last 6 years in the majority, as the other side extensively—and I emphasize “extensively” because any study of the data would suggest that—to block Republican initiatives, to force Republicans to come together to find 60 votes. That was their position and posture for the past 6 years, including 33 Democratic Senators who, as recently as 3 years ago, sent a letter to the Republican leader, saying that we have got to protect the legislative filibuster—statements like the one made by the Senator from Illinois that doing away with the filibuster would end the Senate as it was originally devised and created, going back to our Founding Fathers.

One of the essential elements of this Republic constitutionally was the need for checks and balances. And the bicameral creation of the Founding Fathers, the House, which is based upon the majority, 2-year terms, designed to reflect the will of the of people, the balance and check that was created against that was the U.S. Senate, with 6-year terms, where you have procedures and rules that make it more difficult and challenging, that force this place to be more deliberative, to be more compromising, to consult and work together.

And so what we are doing today, you are going to get up, and my colleagues on the other side are going to talk about how critical it is that we do this because all these States are enacting these terrible, terrible election reforms. And as I said earlier, most of which, at least from what I have seen, are very mainstream and consistent with what the Founders designed in our Constitution, and that is for States to have principal primacy when it comes to controlling and regulating elections in this country. But as I said, it was argued 2 years ago, 3 years ago, in 2019, when this bill was introduced, that it needed to be introduced because we have got to do something to increase participation in our elections; that we really need to encourage people to be more active in our elections; that we have got to get people to vote, which they did, in record numbers—the biggest turnout since 1900, biggest voter participation in the 2020 election literally in 120 years in American history.

So now they introduced a bill this year, and the stated reason is, we have to do this to stop all these States that are adopting these legislative solutions that are going to make it more difficult for people to vote. Well, all I can say is, the rationale for what we are doing today changes depending on the year, depending on the election, but the goal is the same, and that is to create a permanent political advantage for one party—that is all this is about—and to persuade and pressure certain Democratic Senators to do away with one of the fundamental elements of the U.S. Senate in the form of a legislative filibuster.

I hope this vote will make at least some Democrats think twice about the wisdom of permanently politicizing our electoral system and that it will encourage them to make sure that any future election reform proposals are genuinely bipartisan in nature.

Unfortunately, I think it is more likely that Democrats are going to use this vote to argue for destroying the Senate's longstanding protections for minority rights. But today—today, at least, the Senate will fulfill its constitutional mandate and act as a check on this attempt to undermine our basic freedoms.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA).

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I rise today at a defining moment in American history and at a time when I sincerely believe that what we do or fail to do will have long-lasting and far-reaching implications for the health, viability, and vitality of the world's greatest democracy.

We debate many important issues in this Chamber, but this issue, the issue of voting rights, I argue, is decidedly different. It is formative and foundational. It is the framework in which all of our other debates take place, for this issue is about the preservation and the protection of the democracy itself. That is, after all, what we claim to be. That is who we are—a democracy built on that sacred idea of one person, one vote.

With all the arguments taking place in the country right now, with all of the audits being ordered, and with all of the voting legislation being feverishly passed in States all across our country, clearly, ironically, there is agreement—albeit for different reasons on the right and on the left—that democracy itself is in danger. Folks on the left and folks on the right believe that there is something broken and it needs to be fixed.

If that is, indeed, the case, what kind of Congress would we be in the whole history of Congresses if, seeing that discussion out there, we refuse to even debate the matter in here? Who are we and how are we to hide in a moment like this?

So I rise with what I think is a simple request of my colleagues. Let's do our job. Resist the easy route, the temptation to hide behind Senate procedure, and let's have a principled conversation in front of the American people about voting rights. Let's have that conversation right here, right now. How could we do otherwise?

It is said that we are the most important deliberative body on the planet. Well, colleagues, how derelict in our duty would we be if, in this defining moment we refuse to even have a debate—a debate—about how best to preserve and protect that which is most precious: the democracy itself.

In my maiden speech this past March, I made an urgent call upon this body to act to protect the right to vote, and I warned then that the cords of our democracy were dangerously frayed. That was not theoretical stuff from me. I hail from Georgia. I argued then that our democracy was being frayed by unfounded conspiracy theories that led to an attack on this very Chamber and undermined by an onslaught of State-level proposals aimed at suppressing the vote.

Since I gave that maiden speech, things have only gotten worse. When I spoke here in March, 250 voter suppression proposals had been introduced in 43 States—250 proposals. Now it is 389 proposals in 48 States. A violent assault on this Capitol is now metastasizing to voter suppression proposals all across the United States of America. Since I spoke here in March, Georgia and 13 other States have enacted these voter suppression bills into law—14 in total. That is 14 States, and counting, where partisan actors, power-hungry politicians have acted along partisan lines to make it harder, not easier, for eligible voters to cast a ballot and guarantee that ballot will actually count.

In Georgia, after record voter turnout in a historic election, there is now a provision in S.B. 202 that allows partisan actors at the State level to take over the board—to take it over—to take over the process at the local level as voters are casting their ballots. Imagine that. That same law also allows any citizen to challenge the voting rights of an unlimited number of citizens, making it difficult to see how you can certify any election.

Let's not kid ourselves. In this Chamber, of all places, a few months after January 6, this is dangerous stuff. That is one reason we need to debate the legislation before us.

I am hoping to include a provision I introduced yesterday with some of my colleagues that will prevent politicians from being able to overrule local election officials and therefore subvert the

voices of the people. This provision will also protect local election volunteers from harassment and intimidation.

Right now across the Nation, constitutional rights are being assaulted, and I fear that if we don't act as a body in this moment, we will have crossed a dangerous Rubicon in our Nation that will make it extremely difficult for the next generation to secure voting rights for every eligible American.

This is not just another moment in another Congress. We should not think of this as rote and routine. This is a defining moment that calls upon us to speak, to debate, to act. After all, Congress represents the people. It is the job of Congress, as prescribed in article I, section 4, to ensure that the people are not squeezed out and locked out of their own democracy. This is not our house; this is the house of the people. We are stewards of that trust. We have to ensure that the voices of the people can be heard in their own house, and that is why I am urging my colleagues to begin debating on the voting rights legislation before us. That debate is happening right now out there. How could it not happen in here?

I know some of my Republican friends are vowing to prevent this debate, to stop it before it begins. And we are not talking yet about passing the bill. Be very clear. We are just talking about talking about it, and they don't even want to do that. Really?

Surely some of my Republican friends believe at the very least that in this Chamber, we should be able to debate about voting rights. After all, voting rights are preservative of all other rights. And what could be more hypocritical and cynical than invoking minority rights in the Senate as a pretext for preventing debate about how to preserve minority rights in the society?

I stand here as a proud American. I believe in democracy with all of my heart. I believe that democracy is the political enactment of a spiritual idea, that we are all children of God, and that we have within us a spark of the divine and therefore a right to help determine our country's direction and our destiny within it.

I believe in democracy, government of the people, by the people, and for the people. I believe that the blind spots in our public policy and the wrongs in our history are made right through the power of democracy, people of diverse perspectives helping us to see more fully and embrace more completely what it means to be a government of the people, by the people, for the people. It is how Black people finally gained their citizenship; women, the suffrage; members of the LGBTQ+ community, their dignity and equality under law.

Diverse perspectives and voices help us to see what we would not otherwise see, and that is precisely what is being imperiled right now by all of these voter suppression bills and by some in this Chamber to forestall a necessary debate about voting rights at this defining moment in our history.

Mr. President, who are we and how are we to hide at a moment like this? Why are some people hiding? To what end? For what purpose? At whose behest? From whom are they hiding—the American people who sent us here in the first place?

I hope we can take a bipartisan vote to begin debate on this important piece of legislation because that is what democracy is all about. History is watching, and the future is waiting to see if we are who we say we are—the United States Senate, a serious-minded, deliberative body, the United States of America, a nation built on that simple but sublime principle: one person, one vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I had not planned to speak about the Democratic power grab known as S. 1 and H.R. 1, the For the People Act. I have said my piece on this bill before on the Senate floor and in many other forums. But I have listened to my Democratic friends all day long talk about this bill.

We will later today vote on what is known as a motion to proceed to the debate on this bill. That motion will fail. It won't come close to passing. And our Democratic friends are saying: They won't even debate. They won't even debate election reforms.

Well, first off, let me say, if you ask me what the Republican plan to federalize our elections is, my answer is, we don't have a plan to federalize our elections. We don't think we should federalize our elections. We think the States and their counties have done a pretty good job, traditionally, of running our elections.

I would also remind my Democratic friends that what they present as some kind of unprecedented affront to having a democratic debate in the Senate happened repeatedly, hundreds of times, in the last administration.

My Democratic friends simply voted not even to have a debate—not even to have a debate on, say, a coronavirus relief package last summer, which could have gotten aid to families and businesses when they needed it. When the pandemic was still raging, when vaccines were still months away, they filibustered even a debate until after the election, when we passed, in December, almost exactly the same bill that was under consideration.

They blocked even a debate—even a debate—on policing reforms last summer that might have helped provide police departments across the country with additional financial support or training resources.

I could go on and on about the bills on which they blocked even a debate, like protecting unborn children who can survive outside their mother's womb. Yet, today, the Democrats act as if it is some terrible affront that we are not even going to have a debate on a bill that would be one of the biggest power grabs by Washington in the history of our democracy.

Then you have a lot of Democrats who are complaining that the civic rules and customs—the filibuster has to go. They say it is a racist relic of the Jim Crow era.

I will acknowledge that some Democrats over the years used the filibuster to block civil rights progress, but I will also remind my Democratic colleagues that, yes, they used the filibuster hundreds of times in the last administration.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD this letter written on April 7, 2017, persuasively authored by SUSAN COLLINS and CHRIS COONS and signed by more than 60 of our fellow Senators urging Senator MCCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER to “preserve the existing rules, practices and traditions as they pertain to the right of Members to engage in extended debate on legislation.”

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, April 7, 2017.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER SCHUMER: We are writing to urge you to support our efforts to preserve existing rules, practices, and traditions as they pertain to the right of Members to engage in extended debate on legislation before the United States Senate. Senators have expressed a variety of opinions about the appropriateness of limiting debate when we are considering judicial and executive branch nominations. Regardless of our past disagreements on that issue, we are united in our determination to preserve the ability of Members to engage in extended debate when bills are on the Senate floor.

We are mindful of the unique role the Senate plays in the legislative process, and we are steadfastly committed to ensuring that this great American institution continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body. Therefore, we are asking you to join us in opposing any effort to curtail the existing rights and prerogatives of Senators to engage in full, robust, and extended debate as we consider legislation before this body in the future.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Collins, Orrin Hatch, Claire McCaskill, Lisa Murkowski, Christopher A. Coons, Joe Manchin, John McCain, Patrick Leahy, Roger F. Wicker, Luther Strange.

Angus S. King, Jr., Michael F. Bennett, Amy Klobuchar, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Martin Heinrich, John Boozman, Lindsey Graham, Richard Burr, Mark R. Warner, Jerry Moran. Roy Blunt, Marco Rubio, Jeanne Shaheen, Thom Tillis, Sherrod Brown, Shelley Moore Capito, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Brian Schatz, Michael E. Enzi, Dean Heller.

Cory A. Booker, Mazie Hirono, Dianne Feinstein, John Thune, Bill Cassidy, Heidi Heitkamp, Jeff Flake, Chuck Grassley, Maria Cantwell, Rob Portman.

Lamar Alexander, John Kennedy, John Tester, Thomas R. Carper, Pat Roberts, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tammy Duckworth, Jack Reed, Thad Cochran, Joe Donnelly.

Ben Sasse, Todd Young, Kamala D. Harris, Bill Nelson, Johnny Isakson, Edward J. Markey, Mike Lee, Debbie Stabenow, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert Menendez, Tim Kaine.

Mr. COTTON. They note that these rules have changed on our Executive Calendar when we consider traditional nominees or executive branch nominees, but they say:

We are mindful of the unique role the Senate plays in the legislative process, and we are steadfastly committed to ensuring that this great [American] institution continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body. Therefore, we are asking you [Senator SCHUMER and Senator MCCONNELL] to join us in opposing any effort to curtail the existing rights and prerogatives of Senators to engage in full, robust, and extended debate as we consider legislation before this body in the future.

Let me remind you, more than 60 Senators signed this. Twenty-six Democrats currently serving in the Senate signed it, 27 if you include the Vice President.

Let me just give you a few notables. As I said, the Vice President signed it. The following chairs of Senate committees signed this letter 4 short years ago: Senators LEAHY, WARNER, CANTWELL, CARPER, REED, STABENOW, and MENENDEZ. Some other notable Senators—as I said, it was authored by Senator COONS, one of Joe Biden's closest friends in the U.S. Senate. Senator KING, who often finds himself in the middle of consequential debates; Senator HEINRICH, who apparently has changed his tune and today is advocating aggressively to eliminate the filibuster, just like Senator SCHATZ; Senator BOOKER; Senator FEINSTEIN, one of the longest serving Democrats in the Senate; Senator Kaine, who was the Vice Presidential nominee for the Democratic Party in 2016; Senator TESTER, again, who often finds himself in the middle of consequential, bipartisan negotiations.

Yet, somehow, something has changed since 2017. Something has changed, and most of these Democratic Senators now think that the Senate rules must be destroyed so they can pass their massive power grab. What could it be that has changed? What could it be? I don't know. Maybe—maybe it is that Democrats have the most slender reed of power with Joe Biden in the White House and a 50–50 Senate and a four-seat majority in the House.

I wish my Democratic colleagues understood that the shoe can pinch when it is on the other foot.

NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER CHARLES FONZONE

Mr. President, Huawei is no ordinary phone company; it is the eyes and ears of the Chinese Communist Party. According to our Department of Defense, Huawei is a “Communist Chinese military company” that is controlled by the People's Liberation Army. A former officer in the PLA founded Huawei.

Huawei is built on stolen technology from American companies like Cisco, and it is engaged in espionage all around the world on behalf of its masters in Beijing, which raises some important questions.

Should American citizens work on behalf of a Communist Chinese military company? If they do, should they then go on to serve in senior positions in the U.S. Government, making policies that will directly affect our safety and security? These aren't academic questions. The Senate is now considering whether to confirm one Christopher Fonzone for a senior legal position in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

By all accounts, Mr. Fonzone is a capable lawyer. I don't question his qualifications or his character, but there is reason to question his judgment.

While working as a law partner at Sidley Austin, Mr. Fonzone performed legal work for Huawei, as well as China's Ministry of Commerce. He performed this work during a critical period when our government was actively exposing Huawei as a Chinese spy company and applying sanctions to it.

He also wasn't just a longtime lawyer in private practice with long-standing clients, to include foreign clients; he had spent most of his career in government, primarily in national security roles. I cannot imagine that he was not aware of the China threat in general or the Huawei threat in particular. After all, the House Intelligence Committee had produced a landmark report exposing Huawei in 2012, while he served in the Obama administration.

Now, I recognize he didn't do all that much work for Huawei—just a few billable hours here and there—but the fact remains that he first served Huawei, and now he wants to serve in the U.S. Government. Nor is he willing to foreclose the possibility of working for such companies in the future.

Unfortunately, Mr. Fonzone is far from alone in his lapse of judgment. There is a rapidly revolving door in Washington, DC, that shuttles people in and out of government. Unfortunately, some of those people go on to work for companies with ties to the Chinese Government and its armed wing, the People's Liberation Army, after they cycle out of government. These individuals are part of what I call the new China lobby. They work at white-shoe law firms, sprawling multinational corporations, and big banks. Their pockets are lined with Chinese Communist cash, just like Hollywood executives and NBA stars and ivory tower academics. Some of them get very rich by doing Beijing's bidding, and they don't want the gravy train to stop.

Consider a recent article in the Financial Times, which reported that some of the richest banks and investment firms in America had been forming partnerships with Chinese state-run banks. Similarly, some of America's biggest companies, like Nike and Coca-Cola, are so addicted to access to the Chinese market that they lobbied last year against a bill to crack down on goods made by slave labor—all because that bill would make it more difficult for Coke and Nike to make their

products in China and to keep access to the Chinese market.

At the same time as our country wages a cold war against the Chinese Communist Party, some of our best and brightest are taking their talents—King James, LeBron James, who is up to his ears in Chinese cash—to work for companies that are little more than puppets of the Chinese state.

That is deeply troubling, and it is high time the U.S. Senate take a stand against the China lobby. That is why I will, regrettably, oppose Mr. Fonzzone's nomination. Although he is far from the worst offender, it is time we start drawing a line, and in the future, I will therefore carefully scrutinize nominees for ties to the regime in Beijing and military companies like Huawei.

If you wish to serve in the U.S. Government in the future, let me be very clear: Do not do business with the Chinese Communist Party or its military or the companies that support it. Stop it today. Don't take the work. Don't take the meeting. Don't cash the check.

A man cannot serve two masters. It is as true today as it was in the old days.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. President from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators RUBIO, PETERS, and I be allowed to complete our remarks before the scheduled rollcall vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF KIRAN ARJANDAS AHUJA

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about those things that unite us as Americans, and I am here to talk about those things that divide us.

For centuries, public service has been something that unites Americans, drawing us together. Citizens from all walks of life serve in our military. They serve in Federal and State and local governments. They serve in police units and in fire departments across our country. They serve as teachers and coaches. And we as a nation are better off for their service and for their sacrifice.

Those who serve our Nation do it not because they have to but because they want to. They do it because they believe this Nation is worth serving. They do it because they believe this Nation is worth defending. They believe it is worth celebrating. And they are right to think all of those things. Service to this country is an act of selflessness that affirms our Nation is a place worth believing in.

But I am concerned that the present administration and this President, President Joe Biden, do not share this point of view. I am worried that President Biden is nominating for Federal office individuals who do not share a view of America as a good and decent place, who do not believe that the his-

tory of this Nation is worth celebrating; nominating, instead, people who believe that this is a country founded in racism and shot through with corruption.

Many of these nominees are partisans of a viewpoint that goes by different names but shares several features in common—a view that America is a systemically racist place and systemically unjust; a view of America as corrupt; a view of American society as one that needs to be deconstructed, that needs to be pulled apart, torn down, and then rebuilt in a fundamentally different way.

Now, this broad ideology has become known in public as critical race theory or sometimes just critical theory. And let me tell you, as someone who has taught in our Nation's universities, someone who has seen our institutions of higher learning up close, I would say to those in the media and elsewhere who now deny that there is any such thing as critical theory, that critical theory is, in fact, very real, it is very influential, and it appears to have become the animating ideology of this administration. That is cause for great concern.

Critical theory is an ideology that says the United States is rotten to its core. The leaders of this movement think our society is defined by White supremacy. They think our leaders are complicit, at best.

They think that all Americans are either oppressors or oppressed. In our world-class military, these critics see a vehicle for discrimination. In our American flag, they see propaganda. In our family businesses, they see White supremacy. In our police officers, they see agents of racial oppression.

These critics allow no room for merit, for experience, or for grace in our life together. They pit Whiteness and Blackness against each other in a manner that reduces every American, no matter their character or their creed, to their racial identity alone.

One of these critics, Dr. Ibram Kendi wrote this:

The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination.

That is right. That is what he said. Think about that for a moment. He is saying he is opposed to equality under the law. He is opposing our merit-based system for Federal employment. Dr. Kendi and his followers are in no uncertain terms advocating for State-sanctioned racism in the United States of America.

Now, it is a free country. Dr. Kendi and these other authors can write their books and debate their views and put them out in public. It is absolutely their right to do so. They are welcome to do so. But what we cannot allow—what we must not allow—is our Federal Government to affirm and sanction and advocate this critical race theory. We cannot allow the United States of America, the greatest Nation

on Earth, to legitimize a new era of racial engineering.

In the past few years, critical race theory has gained new prominence in the giant corporations, in the media, in the military, and even in our children's schools. We are seeing this across the country. We have seen too many of our children exposed to a curriculum like the 1619 Project and its derivatives that encourage division rather than unity, that rewrites our history in the service of an ideological agenda rather than in the service of truth.

Young children set off to school with eyes full of hope and hearts, full of pride in our country, only to be taught that White privilege defines the Nation, that subjects like mathematics are inherently racist, that the Christian faith is oppressive. They are taught that the nuclear family perpetuates racism.

Now, imagine for a moment if you were taught the same. Imagine if you were taught that your dreams were unjust or unfair, that your family were oppressors, that you were at fault for the problems of our society today. These are just children. We should be nurturing their dreams. We should be nurturing their hopes. We should be giving them a great hope for the future, for the future of this great Nation known as the United States of America, a hope for the future of the greatest Nation in the history of the world, rather than teaching them to mistrust their classmates and to distrust their own history.

It doesn't end there. Last year, we discovered that Federal agencies and other organizations funded by taxpayers were holding workplace training sessions where Federal employees were told that "virtually all White people contribute to racism"—that is a quote—or where civil servants were required to say that they "benefit from racism."

Now, President Trump put an end to this divisive curriculum, and he was right to do so. Workplace diversity training should focus on bringing people together, not on driving them apart. But under this new administration, I fear that critical theory is making a comeback.

In March, President Biden rescinded the former President's ban on this divisive curriculum, and now, he has nominated Kiran Ahuja to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management. That is a key position that runs human resources for the entire Federal Government and millions of its employees. Ms. Ahuja's nomination is before the Senate today. I am concerned that Ms. Ahuja is a disciple of radical theorists. She has frequently promoted Dr. Kendi. She called him a "thought leader" at her confirmation hearing back in April. Just last year, Ms. Ahuja wrote that we must free the Nation from the "daily trials of White supremacy." Those are her words.

She appeared to endorse Dr. Kendi's claim that the election of President

Trump in 2016 was an example of “racist progress” in this country, and she declared that we must do everything in our collective power to realize Dr. Kendi’s vision for America.

I am concerned that, as the Federal Government’s HR director, Ms. Ahuja could use her platform to promote radical ideologies that seek to divide rather than unite people. She could bring critical race theory back into Federal Government training and to every level of Federal personnel, stronger than ever. And I am not alone in this concern. All of my Republican colleagues on the Homeland Security Committee opposed Ms. Ahuja in a vote back in April.

Two weeks ago, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association—they represent 100,000 Federal police officers that protect and defend our Nation every day—they announced that they were also concerned about Ms. Ahuja’s nomination because of her advocacy of critical theory.

I have to say, I agree with Federal law enforcement. I agree with what they said in their letter. We should nominate candidates for public office that are committed to ideological neutrality, to fairness, and to impartiality under the law. I want to be clear, I do not for a moment question Ms. Ahuja’s sincerity or integrity. In fact, I thank her for her willingness to serve the Nation; but I cannot agree with what appears to be her fundamental ideology. At the end of the day, this is not about politics or personalities; this is about ensuring that the Federal Government stands for unity, not division, harmony, not hate.

As the Reverend Dr. King famously said, and he was right, we should judge our fellow citizens by the content of their character, not by the color of their skin. We need a strong nation with strong citizens who see each other as Americans, not as oppressors or oppressed.

Now, I have heard a lot of criticism about my position here today. I have heard the corporate media and those on the left say that I misunderstand critical theory or that it is not real or that it is not a real problem. I have heard many say the United States is indeed built on oppression and remains a systematically racist place.

All I can say is that is not the America I see, that is not the America I know. The working people of this country who have rallied to this Nation’s flag in every hour of danger, who are the first to help a neighbor in need, who coach our Little Leagues and volunteer at our churches, who go to work day in and day out to provide for their families and protect the place they call home, these are not oppressors; these are liberators. These are not oppressors; these are great people. They live with a spirit of liberty that has made this country the greatest country in the history of the world, and they want to see that liberty extended to every member of the American family. That

is who the American people are. That is what makes them great. That is what they believe—because they are a great people. Our future is a cause for hope and not despair.

The advocates of critical theory tell us we have to dismantle our culture, our history, our families, our Jewish and Christian heritage and beliefs because they are all oppressive. They say the future of this Nation will be defined by racial division and racial strife. I reject that prophecy of our future, and I take my stand on the goodness of the American people and the God who guides us. I take my stand on hope.

It is not oppression that defines the American story. It is hope. From the minutemen at Lexington and Concord, to the pioneers who found a new life in the West, to the heroes of the Underground Railroad, to the Union soldiers at Little Round Top, to the workers who fought the old monopolies for fair pay, to the women who fought for suffrage, to the young men who twice liberated Europe, to the civil rights demonstrators likes of Bull Connor, to the firemen and police officers who rebuilt New York and gave this country confidence again in the years after 9/11, it is love for one another and love for our country that we call home that has defined our story and given us hope; and that love and that hope will define our future once again. I am confident of it.

In this Nation, we are not united by ethnic creed or race or religion—and proudly so. We are united by our shared history. We are united by what we love together. We are united by the radical belief that those who liberate others, those who practice grace and mercy, those who call forth the best in those around them, they are the ones who changed the world; and that principle, that truth, that hope, is what drives our history. And we are not done building that history yet. The greatest Nation in the history of the world is not done yet.

Critical theory in all of its guises distorts our history, it destroys our common love, and it would leave us hopelessly divided, at enmity with one another and alone. To this dark vision, we must say no. To radical hope, we must say yes.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote no on Ms. Ahuja’s nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to support Kiran Ahuja’s nomination to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management, or OPM. Ms. Ahuja is a proven leader who has the experience and commitment needed to restore confidence in OPM and provide a vision for the future of the Federal workforce.

OPM is an independent agency that supports more than 2 million Federal employees who serve all across the government. Both OPM and the Federal workforce have faced unprecedented

challenges in recent years, from attempts to dismantle the agency, to a record-setting government shutdown, to the coronavirus pandemic. And unfortunately, these challenges were made worse due to the lack of consistent and committed leadership at OPM. Our dedicated public servants are on the frontline every day, responding to the ongoing pandemic, protecting our national security, and delivering vital services to the American people each and every day. The dedicated men and women who serve at OPM and throughout the civil service deserve a qualified, experienced leader who is committed to supporting the people who make government work.

Ms. Ahuja’s career includes over two decades of management experience, including running nonprofit organizations, leading the White House initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders during the Obama administration, and serving as Chief of Staff at OPM.

Throughout this confirmation process, Ms. Ahuja has demonstrated that she understands the mission of OPM and the experience of safeguarding the nonpartisan civil service. She has committed to working closely and transparently with Congress to strengthen and to modernize the Federal workforce.

I am confident that Ms. Ahuja is the right person to lead OPM at this pivotal time. She will provide the strategic vision and the management needed to reinvigorate the Federal workforce.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the confirmation of Kiran Ahuja for Director of OPM.

VOTE ON FONZONE NOMINATION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Fonzone nomination?

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 243 Ex.]

YEAS—55

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

NAYS—45

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

The nomination was confirmed.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 107, Kiran Arjandas Ahuja, of Massachusetts, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Jacky Rosen, John Hickenlooper, Tammy Baldwin, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Raphael Warnock, Martin Heinrich, Chris Van Hollen, Christopher Murphy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Bernard Sanders, Jeff Merkley, Patty Murray, Margaret Hassan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that the nomination of Kiran Arjandas Ahuja, of Massachusetts, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

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

[Rollcall Vote No. 244 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—50

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

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

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Kiran Arjandas Ahuja, of Massachusetts, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

RECESS

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:38 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

NOMINATION OF KIRAN ARJANDAS AHUJA

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, I rise in support of Kiran Ahuja and her nomination to be the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, or the OPM. OPM needs an experienced, qualified leader who is committed to the Federal workforce and is invested in their future.

Ms. Ahuja is that leader. She understands the unique challenges facing OPM, and she has the management experience and vision needed to restore and strengthen the workforce. I am confident that Ms. Ahuja is the right person to lead OPM at this pivotal time. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the confirmation of Kiran Ahuja for Director of OPM.

VOTE ON AHUJA NOMINATION

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote scheduled to occur at 2:30 would occur immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

Mr. PETERS. 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. KELLY assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. MURPHY assumed the Chair.)

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 245 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—50

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

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

The nomination was confirmed.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will immediately be notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021—MOTION TO PROCEED

The VICE PRESIDENT. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to legislative session to resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2093, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 77, S. 2093, a bill to expand Americans' access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen ethics rules for public servants, and implement other anti-corruption measures for the purpose of fortifying our democracy, and for other purposes.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. is equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. I rise today to encourage all of my colleagues to support the motion to proceed that is in front of us.

We might disagree about the underlying bill. In fact, we do disagree. Republicans and Democrats disagree about the underlying bill, but that fact shouldn't prevent us from even having a discussion about the bill and about the issue. It is what we were sent here to do, to talk about the important issues that face the American people.

I can't think of anything more important, anything more fundamental to our democracy than the freedom to vote. That is what we are talking about, the freedom to vote. We are sent here to make our best arguments, to try to persuade Members who don't see the issue in the same way that we do, and in the end, to vote on important legislation like the bill that is in front of us to protect our freedom to vote as Americans.

I want to thank Senator MANCHIN for being willing to engage in this process in good faith and for his hard work on the issue. I have to wonder why my Republican colleagues won't do the same. What are they so afraid of? It is hard to believe that they are afraid of even having the debate—even having the debate. Are they afraid that if the American people hear both sides, the American people will figure out what they are trying to do? After all, the aim of the For the People Act is simply to protect Americans' freedom to vote and ensure their voices are heard.

Sadly, these rights are under attack all across the country, including Michigan. State lawmakers have introduced at least 389 bills to make it harder to vote in 48 States. In 2021, at least 14 States have enacted 22 new laws to take away people's freedom to vote. It is clear this is part of a coordinated, nationwide assault on a fundamental right that my friend, the late Congressman John Lewis, called "precious, almost sacred."

Right now in Michigan, Republicans in the legislature are trying to push through a package of bills that will make it much harder for people to vote.

Some analysts have even described the bills as being worse than the ones in Georgia, except we aren't watching them try to criminalize water.

Why are they doing this in Michigan? Well, let me go back again. Michigan is traditionally a tickets-winning State, what you would call a purple State. In 2010, Michigan elected a Republican Governor. Two years later, Michigan helped give President Barack Obama a second term. Two years later, we re-elected the Republican Governor, and 2 years later, Michigan supported Donald Trump by the narrowest margin of any State, just over 10,000 votes.

After that election, Democrats did not start a massive effort to take away people's freedom to vote. We got to work. We organized. We listened to

people about their concerns, and we worked hard to gain people's support for the next election. That is what you usually do, rather than trying to stop people from voting.

We did that hard work in Michigan, and you know what, we won the next election. In 2020, in the middle of a pandemic, more people in Michigan voted than ever before, 5.5 million of us. And Michigan voters clearly and resoundingly chose Joe Biden to be our next President and KAMALA HARRIS to be our next Vice President of the United States and the President of the Senate. They won by more than 150,000 votes. That is 14 times Donald Trump's margin in 2016.

But what did the Trump campaign do? Well, their campaign—his allies filed eight lawsuits in our State, lost every one. And in the only case that was appealed to the Michigan Supreme Court, the court declined to hear the case, despite having a majority of Republican justices. Republicans know that Michigan's election was fair, the results were accurate, and Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won our State.

The people of Michigan voted. Michigan counties verified it. Our State certified it. There was no evidence of fraud that would begin to suggest that we need legislation like what Michigan Republicans are pushing. The Republicans just didn't like who Michiganders voted for. That is the same thing that is happening here. Republican colleagues don't like being in the minority. They don't like who people voted for. Well, you have a choice. You could work hard, try to gain people's trust, try to do things for people, win the next election, or you can try to take away their freedom to vote.

I mean, think about it. Think about the fact, in Michigan, Republicans didn't like who we voted for, so they are coming after the voters. They are coming after the voters. We know this is happening all across the country. It is wrong. It is un-American, frankly. And that is why we need this legislation, to protect our freedom to vote and to stop billionaires from buying elections.

We are committed to making sure people have their freedoms protected, and we are committed to making sure that billionaires are not buying our elections as well. We want to end the partisan gerrymandering that makes people's votes count—some count more than others—or rig the system. And we are committed to making sure that the wealthiest people in the country are not buying elections.

Why is this important? We have seen how so-called dark money groups that don't have to report anything, funded by a handful of billionaire donors, pour unlimited amounts of money into our elections in an attempt to influence the outcome. It is easy to understand why the average voter might feel their voice isn't being heard.

The For the People Act takes the crucial steps to give voters their voices

back. It includes disclosure requirements so that citizens have a right to know who is giving them money, who is behind those dark money donations. It reforms the Federal Election Commission so they can better enforce the election laws already on the books, and it takes steps to protect our elections from foreign influence.

I, for one, think these are essential to our democracy. I know my Senate Democratic colleagues feel the same. However, Senate Republican colleagues disagree.

So let's pass this motion to proceed so we can talk about it, so we can have a debate about it. Michigan voters made their voices heard. The American people made their voices heard in the election. We need to be debating this issue and making sure that our voices are being heard across the country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, this afternoon, we will have before us, as Members of the Senate, legislation that is entitled the For the People Act.

Before I speak to the For the People Act, S. 1, I want to make clear to colleagues that I have been keenly focused, interested in ensuring that when we have elections in this country, that they are free, they are fair and they are accessible to all, that barriers to voting should be placed on the sidelines.

For the past three sessions of Congress now, I have been the only Republican cosponsor of the Voting Rights Advancement Act. This was a measure that in prior Congresses was led by Senator LEAHY, and I was pleased to be able to join him as a cosponsor. That measure has now been introduced on the House side as the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, a measure to basically reestablish the preclearance system, which was in place until 2013, and then it was pretty much upended with the Supreme Court ruling in Shelby.

I certainly and absolutely intend to cosponsor that measure again under its new name, the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. I will work with Senator LEAHY, I will work with Senator MANCHIN—I will work with anybody on this initiative to help update this formula to ensure that we do have just exactly that, access to voting that is equal, that is fair, that is free from discrimination.

I note at the outset of my comments this morning the support for that legislation so that, again, folks understand that I fully understand that access to the ballot in this country is not perfect and, again, that I have stood behind legislation to ensure that our elections

are fair. We have come a long way. We have come a long way, but I think we all recognize that there is a long path ahead of us.

So let me turn to S. 1, the For the People Act. My fear is that this measure does not move us further down the path. If you look at the bill, it is wholly partisan. Unlike the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, which is very narrowly focused on voting rights, S. 1 has been described as sprawling. It has been described as ambitious, which is fair. Ambitious is not a bad thing, but it is clearly, clearly very broad, and it certainly contains some noteworthy goals, but I fear that there are provisions contained within S. 1 that take it too far or that I think are bad policy or that I simply think are beyond the power of Congress to regulate.

My concern, and I shared this with many, is that the bill that we have in front of us is not so much about voting rights as it is a Federal takeover of the election system—and a partisan Federal takeover of the election system.

The way the bill is being advertised—that somehow or another, we can't count on States to do elections right or fairly—is a premise that I have a problem with. I come from a State where we were under preclearance for a long period of time. We recognize that. We had a history that was not one that I think we were proud of in terms of ensuring that there was fair and open, equal access to all. But what we have seen in the State and how we have worked through that process that was in place some years back is that we have come to this place where we can—we have demonstrated that we can run a proper and an honest election. We have proven this time and again.

Much of my concern about what we have in front of us is that when you nationalize something, when you have kind of a Federal overall oversight, it ends up being a one-size-fits-all mandate coming out of Washington, DC, and in many cases doesn't work in a place like Alaska.

There are certain aspects of S. 1 that I absolutely do support. Early voting. We shouldn't be limited to just the day of the election. I think we recognize that. What we can do to ensure that early voting is there I think is important to us.

I come from a State where, if you want to vote absentee, there is no excuse required. You can just vote absentee because it is more convenient to you. I will tell you, I was really surprised to find out how many States do not allow for that. I think that is something we need to address. I am in support of that.

I think we need to be doing more when it comes to ease of voter registration. Again, in the State of Alaska, we have put in place ways to make it easier for folks to register. But, again, I am looking at what we have done in Alaska, proud of some of the measures we have put in place, but I recognize that we did this without DC

prescriptives or mandates of uniformity.

So in walking through some of the concerns that I have—I mentioned making voter registration easier. Well, the For the People Act mandates automatic voter registration. OK. Maybe a good idea. In Alaska, what we have put in place is that Alaskans are automatically registered—unless they specifically opt out, they are automatically registered to vote when they sign up for their Permanent Fund dividend. This is obviously very exclusive and unique to one State and one State alone. But under this measure that we have in front of us, it would require State election officials to automatically register any eligible unregistered citizens.

So I am looking at that and I am saying: All right, well, if we allow for automatic registration on the PFD—there are a lot of Alaskans, believe it or not, who do not sign up for the PFD or are not eligible for the PFD. So is the State going to have to have two different systems here in terms of how we meet this mandate?

I am looking at it and saying: Well, that is a fair amount of Federal micro-management here. If the State wants to implement an automatic system, it should do so, as Alaska did, but without the threat of the Federal Government looming behind them, making sure the i's are dotted and the t's are crossed in precisely the way the Election Assistance Commission thinks they should be. I don't think we want to make the administration of elections involve even more burdensome efforts or more cost. It is something that you look at and say: Let's make sure we can allow for easier registration, but let's not impose burdensome mandates.

Early voting requirements is another issue. The bill requires at least 15 days of early voting. This is something, again, in Alaska that we already do. It works great, but it also requires that each polling place must be open for at least 10 hours a day. So we are basically back here in Washington, DC, telling us in Alaska that you have to have your polling place open for 10 hours a day.

Think about this in the context of a small community. I will take a super small community, Arctic Village. About 150 people total live there in the village—not 150 voters but 150 people total. It wouldn't make sense. It wouldn't make sense for the State to maintain poll workers for at least 10 hours per day, for at least 15 days, in a community like Arctic Village. The whole town can practically vote in an hour. But that is not the point here. The point is, you are imposing a Federal mandate in a one-size-fits-all approach that just might not fit well there.

One provision in the bill that I have some significant concerns about is requiring same-day voter registration across the country. Again, in Alaska,

we think we have been doing a pretty fair job as to how we run our elections. I think it is reasonable that we be allowed to establish voter registration deadlines that work for the administrators in their respective States.

I know some people are surprised, but the fact is, we don't know everything best back here in terms of how to implement or how States should be implementing. States should have the latitude to implement a registration system that works with the State's geography, with their IT infrastructure, and with their election funding and other limitations they may have.

Forcing States to allow ballot harvesting—this is another area I have a problem with. This practice involves paid campaign operatives going out, collecting ballots, and returning them to be counted. I don't know. I look at this one and see so many ways in which this can be abused and exploited.

If a State wants to permit this practice with certain parameters that the State thinks would prevent abuses, that is fine, but not all States should be forced to do so by the Federal Government and be made subject to DC's idea of what actually works here.

Maintaining voter rolls. I think we all want to make sure that voting rolls are current or accurate, but the provisions in S. 1 really go very far. The bill would require States to secure "objective and reliable evidence." This is a term that is not actually defined in the bill, and they have to be able to establish that before removing a voter. What is not considered objective and reliable is a failure to vote or the failure of a voter to respond to a notice sent by the State informing the voter that they have been removed. So you are going to have a situation here where this undefined term will result in people who have long since left the jurisdiction actually remaining on the voter rolls.

Then there is the issue of restructuring the Federal Election Commission. From its very inception, this was designed to be—this was meant to be a body that was bipartisan to specifically ensure that no political party would grant its candidates an unfair advantage in elections. So you have got a restructuring that is proposed here that I think presents a flaw. It would reduce the number of seats on the FEC from six to five, two members each from the two major political parties and one ostensibly Independent. So what this could mean is that a President could simply find someone who would vote in his or her favor each time but who never registered as a member of a particular political party.

This newly partisan FEC would also be given the responsibility of handing out loads of cash from the public coffers. I take issue with this, and I think that you have a fair amount of folks in my State and across the country who do take issue with that as well in terms of public funding.

S. 1 creates a new structure of public financing of campaigns that matches

small dollar donations on a 6-to-1 basis. So I look at that, and, again, I have concerns about why anyone thinks it is a good idea to have even more money in politics. But it is easy to me to see how this could be exploited by a partisan board holding the purse strings here. So, again, I look at that as a particular example of, what are we doing with this in this voting rights bill?

I mentioned in my introduction here that I feel that you have many provisions in this measure that are likely unconstitutional. To start, while Congress has broad authority to regulate the times, places, and manner of congressional elections, our powers are much more limited in how a State chooses to appoint electors to the electoral college. There, we may only determine the time of choosing electors and the day on which they should give their vote. So every provision that purportedly changes State laws regarding how a State chooses its electors could face significant and I think justified challenges in court.

There are numerous provisions that try to criminalize speech that is almost certainly protected. Even the ACLU opposed several parts of this bill on the grounds that it would unconstitutionally limit the speech of citizens as well as compel speech, neither of which is acceptable. Just 2 years ago, the Fourth Circuit invalidated a law that was nearly identical to a provision that is contained in this bill.

Another issue is the issue of tax returns and whether or not Congress can mandate candidates for President to release their tax returns. I think it is only reasonable that they should do so, but the concern that I have is, the Constitution is really pretty clear in outlining the requirements to be President, and releasing tax documents is not one of those. So it just kind of presents a challenge there. Can we direct that? There is an issue.

Requiring States to create redistricting commissions may also be unconstitutional since Congress cannot coerce or commandeer the mechanisms of State government. Congress also likely doesn't have the authority to require States to permit convicted felons to vote or the ability to impose an ethics code on the Justices of the Supreme Court.

So while these may be good ideas, is the constitutional authority there? I think there is a real question to that.

So my concern—and I am coming to the end of my comments here—my concern about this measure is that while the title is strong, “For the People,” I am not certain that this measure will do what those who have hoped that it would do will do—it will make administering elections more difficult, more expensive, and subject to Federal micromanagement.

Again, I mentioned the issue of questions of constitutionality and whether aspects of it will be thrown out. Passing this into law could result in messy litigation that leaves the state of election law uncertain for years to come.

I mentioned my concern about one-size-fits-all. That is challenging. We are a pretty amazing 50 States, but we are all a little bit unique. But how States have leeway or latitude in determining what works I think is important.

So I recognize that we are at a place and a time when credibility and faith in our institutions are at a really weak moment, a very weak moment, and so when we think about the things that are core to our institutions, one of those fundamentals is the fairness of our elections and also ensuring that we are taking an approach in this Nation where all people feel that the election process is for them as equal and fair as it is for their neighbor down the street or their fellow American all the way across the country. How we are able to deliver on this promise is something that we need to continue to strive toward.

So I am going to continue to work on voting rights reform. I am going to be doing that through the template of the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. Americans need to have faith in our institutions. They need to know that our elections are fair; that they are easy and accessible for all; and we can't instill that trust with a wholly partisan effort. We have got some work to do. We have got a lot of work to do, and it is important work.

I yield the floor.

THE VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Colorado.

MR. BENNET. Madam President, when I got up this morning, the furthest thing from my mind was that I was going to have a chance to see you today. And since I am seeing you today, I want to say thank you. I want to say thank you for your role in this administration and in leading the Biden administration to make a proposal that was passed in the American recovery plan that is going to cut childhood poverty in this country almost in half this year.

And what people should know is not only that the President—the President sitting here—led that effort at the White House, but she led it from the very beginning. She was one of the original sponsors of that legislation. And even though the President's budget has said we ought to make it—extend it to 2025, I just want to let you know that we are still fighting here to make it permanent, and I think we should make it permanent.

We have already had—this is why I am here today. But we have already had Columbia University tell us that there is going to be an eight times annual return on the investment that we make as part of the recovery because instead of mitigating for the problem of kids in poverty, we will actually be eliminating poverty for almost half the kids in this country—for millions of American children. And not only that, over 90 percent of American kids are going to benefit from this Biden-Harris tax cut that is in this package.

So I just want to say thank you for that. And we have got to keep working on it, and I agree that it ought to be extended for years and years and years. For me, that means permanent. We are going to keep trying to do that, so thank you.

And thank you for leading on the issues that we are here to talk about today because this is the moment that we are challenged in ways that we have never been challenged before.

Five months ago—a violent mob stormed this floor 5 months ago trying to stop the peaceful transfer of power from one administration to the next. And they took us out of this room, and they took us to one of the Senate office buildings. And I was watching the television as I was there, and all I could think about was what is the rest of the world thinking about when our Capitol is being stormed by a violent mob of our own citizens—by a violent mob of our own citizens—and not just what our adversaries are thinking, not what is Russia thinking, what is China using with this footage, what are the Iranians going to do with this footage, but what are people like my mom and her parents who were Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust and, after making it through one of the worst moments in human history, were able to rebuild their shattered lives in this country, in the United States of America?

And to think about similarly situated people all over the planet for whom this is the greatest hope still for freedom and for liberty, for democracy itself—that is what is at stake, as least as far as I am concerned in this debate.

And I know the President understands this well, and I hope others understand this well; that even before January 6, our democracy was under attack. It was under attack as a result of gerrymandering. It was under attack because of the way special interests controlled the agenda on this floor and down the hall. It was under attack because of voter suppression that nobody in the 21st century imagined we would ever see in our country again, not to mention the fact of Citizens United, which unleashed the floodgate of money, of billionaires, to control our political system.

This is an effort to separate the American people from their exercise in self-government. It is an effort to destroy the American people's confidence in their exercise in self-government. And making it harder for people to vote is a huge piece of this puzzle.

Now, this isn't the first time in our history that we have been confronted by this kind of stuff. I have said before, and it is absolutely true, that you go back to the founding of this country. It is a story of, on the one hand, the highest ideals that have ever been written down by human beings and the worst instincts that have ever been conjured by human beings. In our case, that was enslaving other human beings.

And our history is a story of that battle between those highest ideals and

those worst instincts. And every single time Americans have stepped up and they found a way to make our country more democratic, more fair, and more free—small “d”, democratic—and that is what we have to do again. That is our job now because, today, in ways that were unimaginable to me when I was in college, except when I read it in the history books, anti-democratic forces are stronger than anytime since Jim Crow. And it is true. That is a fact.

What I was reading back in the 1980s about laws that had been fought against in the 1960s, they are back in 2020. If you think I am exaggerating, here are some examples. In Georgia, there are bills to undermine non-partisan election officials so that politicians can overturn outcomes they don't like; in Arizona, the same kind of thing, a partisan election audit; in Florida, a bill to restrict vote by mail; State legislators attempting to give themselves the power to toss out an election, as I said, that they don't like. These are laws all across the country. There are 250 or so of these laws that are being passed.

And, by the way, not a single one of those is being passed with a Democratic vote—a vote from a Democrat—in 250 legislatures. And you know what else doesn't exist in any one of those legislatures? The filibuster does not exist in any one of those legislatures. We need to stand up for our democracy, and that is why we need to pass the For the People Act.

The bill includes commonsense reforms that are broadly supported by the American people. I know—we know these reforms work because they have worked in Colorado, where we banned gerrymandering. We have automatic voter registration. We have early voting. We have vote-by-mail. We have increased election security. This is all nonpartisan. This is all common sense.

This was done by—this wasn't done by Democrats. It was done by Republicans and Democrats working together. What is the result? We have the second highest voter turnout rate in the country—72 percent. I am so sick and tired of saying that. I want us to be No. 1 so that I don't have to hear from Senator KLOBUCHAR how Minnesota is No. 1. I come here, and I have to say we are No. 2. That is not good enough. We need to be No. 1.

But if we had this across the country, the agenda in Washington would look more like what the American people actually sent us here to do. So this isn't just about voting rights, although that is very, very important. It is not just about elections. That is very important. But we could finally, probably, create universal healthcare in this country, improve our schools, make sure that we had an economy that when it grew, it grew for everybody, not just the top 10 percent. We would probably stop spending our time cutting taxes for the wealthiest Americans when our income inequality has never been higher. Although, now that

I mention that, I realize, because of the President's leadership and President Biden's leadership, we have actually already started to do that because we cut taxes now for the vast majority of Americans because of the work that they have led.

We can change the destiny of America. That is what we can do. And that is what this exercise in self-government is about. We can show that we can compete with the Communist Government in China and send a signal to people like my grandparents all across the world that American democracy is stronger than ever and that they should trust it; they can count on it and maybe get a piece of it for themselves; that we remain a beacon of freedom and self-government and that we remain committed not to our worst instincts but to our highest ideals.

I would encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation. And with that, I thank my colleague from North Carolina for his indulgence.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, welcome back, and thank you for giving me an opportunity to talk about the bill that we will have before us in about an hour and a half.

I have to stand here and rise in opposition to the For the People Act. I think you could appropriately title it the “Fool the People Act.” We are going to be voting on it later today, but it would dramatically alter election laws across our country.

I have been in the Senate for 6½ years, and this ranks up there as one of the worst bills that I have seen come before this body. I know my friends on the other side of aisle like to talk about it as being essential for protecting democracy, but in the face of text that could be patently unconstitutional and taking away the rights of States to administer their elections, I find it hard to believe that it is anything but a motivated attempt to federalize the Nation's election system.

The For the People Act would achieve it through a number of, I think, overreaches. I am only going to talk about a few.

For one, voter ID. The For the People Act would essentially render null voter ID laws across this country. Instead of an ID, which most of us have, and virtually, I think, every citizen should have, you would simply just sign an affidavit to say you are who you say you are. I heard the Georgia law, for example, brought up as providing egregious limits or obstacles to proving who you say you are.

In a hearing a month or so ago, we had an official from Georgia in a Judiciary Committee, and I said: Could you explain to me what the challenge is? So if somebody gets an absentee ballot like you do in North Carolina—we have no-excuse absentee balloting. We have had it for years. I supported it. I voted

that way several times. We had people say that it was just an egregious imposition to note a 10 or 12 character driver's license or government ID number on the affidavit. That is all it is. You don't have to send a copy of it. You just simply have to write a number down.

So if you have an ink pen—I guess you could argue if you don't have a writing instrument, then maybe that is an overreach or an imposition on a voter. I don't think it is. And even in the Georgia law that has been castigated by some of my friends on the other side of aisle, they even provide for people who want to vote, who may not have a government-issued ID, other documents that can be used in their place.

We talked about hundreds of bills that have been filed by Republican legislators without a single Democratic vote that are like the Georgia bill that I just described, which I think is arguably a fair bill. But most of these bills are things that Democrats and Republicans should be able to agree on. You should cleanse your voter rolls. You should make sure that people who have died and people who could be registered in one or more States are cleared from the voter rolls just to prevent fraud and abuse, not necessarily perpetrated by any one party but just because the data could be out of date.

And, you know, back on voter ID, I find it remarkable that we have a measure before us that we are going to be voting on today, a simple ID requirement that 80 percent of Americans just this week in a poll said they think is reasonable. Now, you have to also understand that we make accommodations. If you don't have an ID in North Carolina, we moved heaven and Earth to make sure—you need a government-issued ID, I believe, to be able to move through society, to get a hotel room, and to get on an airplane. I had to provide—I had surgery a couple of months ago. I had to present an ID to get admitted into the hospital. I think we are disenfranchising people from the rest of society by not at least making sure that they can identify who they are. There is no argument. You can't get on a plane without an ID. You can't travel internationally without an ID. You can't get healthcare without an ID. But for some reason, to do something, to exercise our right and our privilege to vote, we think that we don't need an ID.

I also worry about a provision in this bill that would allow nationwide ballot harvesting. There are only a couple of States that allow ballot harvesting. What does that mean? You have a worker coming up, going door to door, and encouraging somebody to vote. It may be somebody who doesn't want to vote. But now, you are up there to capture their ballots and bring bunches of ballots to the polls.

Ballot harvesting is legal in some States—I know California. It is not legal in our State. In fact, there was a

Republican candidate who ultimately withdrew himself after winning a race after there were a couple hundreds ballots that were supposedly harvested. I don't think he knew about it, but there was a campaign operative that did it, and it cost him an election.

I will tell you one thing that I really do believe, that if the Founding Fathers were here in this Chamber today, they would really be scratching their heads, and it is the idea of taxpayer-funded elections. Make no mistake about it, Federal, State, and local dollars are used to make sure that we have election machines, that we have poll workers, that we have access. We can always improve access to the polls, but in this bill, they are saying, and people in North Carolina—if you were paying attention last year, my race was, all in with me and my opponent, \$296 million. There were a lot of ads on TV.

I had my friends call me up, screaming at the TV when they were mean to me. And I am sure I had my opponent, who is a friend of mine, say the same thing. But now, what we are going to do, if we were to pass this bill, is say: Tom Tillis supporters are going to have to have money spent and directed to his opponent to try and beat him, and vice versa—millions and millions of dollars.

And in States like North Carolina—not only North Carolina taxpayers but taxpayers from across this country—will see their taxpayer dollars come to North Carolina to influence an outcome in a campaign that could be a thousand miles away. That is, I think—taking taxpayer dollars and then spending them on something that they are personally opposed to or offended by is something that I don't think the Founding Fathers would have ever envisioned as being appropriate for this great Nation.

So, ladies and gentlemen, today at about 5:30—I think a little after—the For the People—or as I said, the “Fool the People”—Act is going to be before us, and it is going to fail. We know it. Senator SCHUMER knows it.

So why are we doing it? Are we doing it for messaging points? Or are there some far-left liberals that just want the vote on the floor, knowing full well it is not going to pass? Have we actually tried to do any work to figure out what role the Federal Government should play in actually improving election outcomes that ultimately need to be administered by the State? No, that hasn't happened.

So today, we are going to come on the floor. This measure is not going to move forward. And somebody may be fooling—I don't know—far-left groups just to say we tried. But they didn't try because if they tried, they would have reached across the other aisle and tried to figure out something that made sense that could pass with 60 votes.

The For the People Act is far afield from what our Founding Fathers envi-

sioned. Can we improve our election processes across this country? Yes, but I would prefer to have the 50 laboratories of democracy figure out how to improve it and have other States implement it, perhaps even other States in the northeast that have far fewer voting days than we do in North Carolina. They could learn from that.

Maybe we should create standards and incentives for that sort of stuff, but not a Federal takeover of the state of the elections in this country. And for that reason, I will be opposing the For the People Act.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from North Carolina for his thoughts.

We are on the cusp of a vote here on legislation that would dramatically change the way we conduct our elections in this country. As my colleague said, are all elections perfect? No. But I have to tell you, I am really proud of what we do in Ohio. We make it easy to vote; we also make it hard to cheat, and that is the right balance.

This bill, S. 1, is called the For the People Act, but what it actually does is it strips away control from people in Ohio and elsewhere to build the right election laws in our own States and centralizes that control here in Washington, DC. That is not consistent with the Constitution or the Federalist Papers. In addition, some of those proposed changes attempt to undermine the First Amendment rights that we hold so dear as Americans.

I am proud of the way we conduct our elections in Ohio, in part because we have high turnout. In fact, we had record turnout last year, and that is great. And I don't want to leave it up to Federal employees here in Washington, DC, to determine how our system should work in Ohio, which is what this legislation would do.

I mentioned the Constitution earlier. It gives the primary power over election administration to the States. It is very clear about that. It also says in Federalist 59, which is Alexander Hamilton, who was the guy most interested in these Federalist issues—he said it is clear that the Federal Government should only get involved in very extraordinary situations.

Last fall, 5.97 million Ohioans cast a vote—that is a record, as I said—and it represented 74 percent of eligible voters in Ohio. Despite that and despite the challenges of running the largest election in our State's history during an unprecedented pandemic, we ran what was wildly reported on the right, on the left, by the media as a secure and successful election—in fact, I think the most successful election we have ever had. Our State-run, bipartisan county boards of election, with two Democrats and two Republicans in each county, were able to do that because they know what is best for Ohio and they are held accountable.

But this partisan bill claims Washington, DC, somehow knows better. S. 1 strips the power from accountable, democratically elected State representatives in my State and around the country to determine congressional districts and hands that over to a Federal panel, again, staffed by unelected, unaccountable third parties and a computer program. Again, I think it should be something that is part of what election representatives are held to account for, is how we draw our congressional districts.

It mandates the controversial practice of ballot harvesting. I don't like ballot harvesting. I think it makes it easier for partisan operatives on both the right and the left to conduct outright voter fraud.

It would force taxpayers to fund the political campaigns of candidates they don't support. It turns the Federal Election Commission into a tool of whichever party controls the White House. So instead of being even, it would actually be lopsided and be partisan.

It seemingly contradicts the 26th Amendment by forcing States to let individuals register to vote as early as 16 years old, and then it could allow those 16- or 17-year-olds to vote by banning State voter ID laws. The vast majority of Americans support voter ID laws. It is a fact. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents think you ought to have some sort of ID when you come vote, but this bill bans that safeguard.

I could list other serious flaws with the proposal, but the bottom line is that this legislation has been presented as a safeguard for democracy when it actually contains some radically undemocratic provisions.

I am in favor of State-level, common-sense efforts to increase voter confidence in our elections. We absolutely should do that. We need to protect democracy by ensuring, again, that people know it is easy to vote. It is accessible. That is good. We should all want that. But we should also make it hard to cheat and be sure we have security in our elections so people know they have trust in the system, that their vote is going to count, as it should. Again, that is what we do in Ohio.

I don't think this legislation furthers those objectives. Instead, I think it would amount to a Federal takeover of our election system, which has always been in the domain of the States.

Our government is built on a carefully constructed framework of checks and balances, including between the branches of government. I cannot support legislation that would run so counter to what the Framers of the Constitution intended and the election system that works well in my home State of Ohio.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I, too, rise in opposition to S. 1 and urge a no vote.

The bill that the Senate will be asked to consider today is a truly radical piece of legislation. It turns out, because of that, it is an unpopular piece of legislation, the kind of bill the Senate was created to help stop from becoming law. S. 1 seeks to transform the way we do elections in this country and to do so on a narrow, partisan basis.

Here is what Americans need to understand about this legislation.

First, it would strip away the power of the States to run elections and hand it to the Federal Government, showing a complete lack of trust in local and State leadership.

It would also spend millions of taxpayer dollars to help politicians run ads for their campaigns. Taxpayers would suddenly have to finance partisan messages they may strongly disagree with, raising serious First Amendment questions.

S. 1 would nullify sensible voter ID laws across the country, including voter identification laws in predominantly Democrat States, like Connecticut and Delaware.

And the legislation would also give the Federal Government the right to draw congressional district lines, even though States have done this since the beginning of our republic.

At its root, this bill is based on a myth. And I consider my words here. It is based on a lie, and that lie is that voting rights are somehow under attack in States like Georgia and Texas. This is utterly absurd, and I think the voters in those States understand that. The election reforms recently passed in Georgia, for example, have actually expanded access to the ballot box, making it easier to vote, but also making it harder to cheat.

The new Georgia law does this, among other things. It expands the window for early voting. The new Georgia law allows no-excuse mail-in voting to continue. It adds 100 new ballot dropboxes. It allows voters to get a government-issued ID for free, and it increases transparency in elections, for example, making sure the ballot counting does not stop in the middle of the night, as we have seen in past elections.

These reforms are entirely reasonable and widely popular across Americans and were based on broad input from the local stakeholders.

My colleagues who are pushing S. 1 say they are trying to save democracy, but, in fact, the bill would actually harm democracy. S. 1 would undermine the security of the ballot box, causing more and more Americans to question the outcome of our elections. We should be working to strengthen trust in democracy, not weaken it.

The only thing bipartisan about this bill is the opposition to it. In my home State of Mississippi, every Member of the House of Representatives—Democrat and Republican—voted against this legislation, including Democrat Representative BENNIE THOMPSON, a

chairman of a committee in the House of Representatives, the chairman of the Democratic National Convention of 2020, who said he voted against it because it was opposed by his constituents.

The ACLU has come out against S. 1, saying that some provisions “unconstitutionally impinge on the free speech rights of American citizens and public interest organizations”—hardly a rightwing conspiracy group, the ACLU.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, along with 300 other organizations, have said this legislation is “fundamentally incompatible with the American tradition and the principles enshrined in our Constitution.”

And when you ask the public about the specific proposals in this bill, many Americans—conservative and liberal, Democrat, Republican, and Independent—are outright opposed.

According to a recent poll, 81 percent of people say they are concerned with allowing voters to vote without any form of photo ID. Eighty-three percent say they are concerned with ballot harvesting practices, this practice of having party operatives go door to door and pick up large numbers of ballots to turn them in. Sixty-eight percent of Democrats are opposed to so-called ballot harvesting. And 50 percent of people say they oppose taxpayer dollars being used to pay for political campaigns. This, again, cuts across party lines.

So it is clear that S. 1 is not popular. It is squarely at odds with the views of the majority of the American people.

Every Senator who votes yes will need to prepare to explain to voters why they wanted to overturn State voter ID protections, allow ballot harvesting, force taxpayers to pay for political campaigns, and enact a partisan Federal Election Commission. That is why S. 1 should be rejected this afternoon, and that is why it will be rejected.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, this afternoon, I want to discuss my grave concerns with S. 1.

Many have said that this political power grab is a solution in search of a problem. I agree with that. This bill contains, I believe, a number of alarming provisions that would have a devastating impact on our Nation's electoral process. It would make our elections more chaotic and less secure.

This legislation contains more than 800 pages of bad policies that I believe America does not need and does not want. I believe that the strength of our election system is in its diversity, allowing each State to determine what is best for them. S. 1 would force a single, partisan view of elections on more than 10,000 jurisdictions across the country.

For example, State and local election administrators would be forced to change, one, how they register voters and which voting systems they use;

how they handle early voting and absentee ballots; and how they maintain voter lists.

It makes election fraud easier to commit and harder to detect by allowing unlimited ballot harvesting, undermining voter ID laws, and making it more difficult to maintain accurate voting lists. A recent university poll found that 80 percent of Americans support requiring a form of identification before a person can vote. Think about it—80 percent.

Remember, now, presently, Americans are required to present a photo ID to do a number of things. We all do it every day: at the airport to board a commercial flight; in a hospital for any outpatient or inpatient procedure; at the pharmacy to purchase over-the-counter sinus medication and certain prescriptions; at the bank to open a bank account; to apply for a mortgage; to drive, buy, or rent a car; to get married; to purchase a gun; to rent a hotel room; to donate blood; to obtain a passport; to pick up packages at the U.S. Post Office. We all do this every day.

This legislation would permanently tip the scales in favor of the Democrats by politicizing the Federal Election Commission, pouring Federal tax dollars into campaigns and chilling free speech. Do Americans really want their taxes going toward a Federal campaign fund that would finance the expenses of all candidates running for Congress?

S. 1 would reverse years of improvements that have been made in many States, improvements that protect the security, integrity, and the credibility of our elections. Each State, I believe, should be left with the freedom and flexibility to administer its own respective elections, without interference from the Federal Government.

S. 1 mandates ballot drop boxes, which increase the risk of fraud by allowing people other than the voter to drop off marked ballots outside of the view of election officials.

As I mentioned before, this bill provides government funding for campaigns: \$6 of Federal funding for every \$1 from small donors. My gosh, it would be a windfall for a lot of incumbents. This essentially forces Americans to fund candidates they don't agree with and support attack ads against those they do agree with.

It federalizes redistricting, putting in place one set of Federal rules for redrawing congressional districts—something that has traditionally been a role for each State.

Lastly, Mr. President, S. 1 requires States to give felons the right to vote once they are out of prison.

While this is a bad bill all around, I believe these are some of the top worst provisions and the provisions that American people oppose the most: One, gutting State voter ID laws, again; two, spending taxpayer dollars on political campaigns; three, allowing unlimited ballot harvesting; and four, turning the Federal Election Commission into a partisan operation. So just

to name those, among others, are reasons to vote against this bill.

I think the American people do not want this, and they do not deserve to be the recipients of such harmful policy. I do not support this bill, and I trust that a majority of the Senate will not vote accordingly.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the right to vote is the hallmark of a democracy. It is what distinguishes us from authoritarian regimes where elections are tainted, if they are held at all, where the free and fair elections that define America do not exist.

President Abraham Lincoln once said elections belong to the people. Voting is an action we choose to take to exercise a fundamental freedom our Constitution grants to the people. So when we hear of a bill entitled "For the People," we naturally would assume at first that it must be enhancing our democracy, but a closer examination suggests otherwise. In fact, S. 1 would take away the rights of people in each of the 50 States to determine which election rules work best for their citizens.

Let's start with some indisputable facts. This legislation was first introduced in 2019, prior to last year's Presidential election. It was not considered in the Senate. It did not become law. Nevertheless, according to the Census Bureau, the 2020 election saw the highest voter turnout in the 21st century. Equally significant, Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans voted in record-high percentages, and there was higher turnout across all racial groups, including Black Americans, than in 2016.

The Census Bureau also asked eligible, nonvoting Americans why they didn't vote in 2020. The majority of respondents said that they were not interested, didn't like any of the candidates, were too busy, or simply forgot.

The point is, with the record-high turnout in 2020, it is very difficult to make the case that this bill is necessary, as some have said, to save our democracy.

This is a bill that was introduced to enhance partisan messaging, not to enhance participation in our elections, as the over-the-top rhetoric about this bill highlights. Consider, for example, the debate over Georgia's new election law. In many ways, Georgia's election law actually makes it easier for citizens to vote than in other States that have not been subject to the same backlash.

Georgia allows no-excuse absentee ballots. Delaware, New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut do not. Georgia's new law provides a minimum of 17 in-person early voting days. Delaware, New Jersey, and Connecticut had no in-person early voting days at all in 2020. Although New Jersey enacted a new law to allow early voting earlier

this year, to great fanfare, it actually has 8 fewer early voting days than Georgia. Despite having these and many other different election rules, Delaware, Connecticut, and Georgia had very similar levels of Black voter turnout in the 2020 election. Massachusetts, by contrast, had just more than half the Black voter turnout of Georgia.

This information contradicts the underlying premise in S. 1 that we must overturn the laws of every State in our Nation in order to preserve the right to vote.

This legislation would force numerous changes to laws in States that have been successfully conducting elections for a very long time. Let me use the State of Maine as an example—a State that consistently ranks at or near the top of the Nation in voter participation. I am pleased to report. Maine does not have early voting. Maine does not allow ballot harvesting. Maine does not count absentee ballots that arrive after the polls close on election night. Maine does not allow voters to receive absentee ballots automatically without requesting them. Yet, in 2020, 71 percent of Mainers cast a ballot. That is 4½ percentage points above the national average.

These results further demonstrate that, absent a compelling need, the Federal Government should not be preempting the election laws of all 50 States.

Now, let's examine the burdensome list of Federal mandates that advocates of this bill would impose on each and every State. Allow me to highlight just a few of the significant flaws.

The bill would require States to allow ballot harvesting, where third parties, usually political operatives, collect ballots from voters. This raises obvious and significant concerns about voter intimidation, coercion, and ballot security.

The bill would prohibit voter ID, overturning existing law in 35 States. It would require that absentee ballots be accepted up to 7 days after the election, which could lead to chaos and distrust, particularly in close races.

The bill would transform the Federal Election Commission into a partisan entity, which would jettison the requirement for bipartisan agreement on significant issues and lead to partisan enforcement.

Another problem with this bill is that it would allocate billions of Federal dollars to congressional campaigns, forcing Americans to subsidize the campaigns of politicians with whom they vigorously disagree or simply dislike. Even very wealthy officeholders would be eligible for public financing. Do we really need more money in political campaigns when Federal funds could be used to combat the opioid epidemic or to reduce hunger among children or to spur economic development and the creation of more jobs?

Now, Mr. President, there are, of course, times when it is compelling and

appropriate for Congress to intervene. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is an excellent example.

It was passed at a time when many Americans, particularly Black Americans, faced overwhelming barriers designed to prevent them from voting.

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act is still in effect today. It prohibits voting practices and procedures that are discriminatory. It also allows the Department of Justice to sue any State or local government to enforce this provision.

Certainly, there are improvements that can be made in our election laws. For example, I support efforts to disclose dark money in campaigns. I support mandatory reporting to the FBI if a foreign government contacts a political campaign with an offer of assistance. And I have worked with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to provide generous grants to States so that they could better secure their voting infrastructure against cyber threats and foreign intrusions.

Unfortunately, S. 1 is not legislation that could ever form the basis of a reasonable, bipartisan elections reform bill. And it is far more likely to sow more distrust in our elections than to ease the partisan divisions in our country. For the reasons that I have discussed, I shall cast my vote against this flawed bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon to urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. And I listened to my colleague from Maine on her remarks and I take her at her word. If there would be any chance to work on these election issues in the future, I guarantee we are all ears.

I say that because I come from the State of Washington, and we have a very high election turnout. We have a very high election turnout rate because we have a vote-by-mail system that has been developed over a long period of time. My colleague knew my predecessor, Slade Gorton, who was a three-term Senator. In the 2000 election, I won by 2,229 votes, and I am forever grateful to Senator Gorton for having faith in that election. That election that included provisional ballots and signatures and all sorts of things that people really understood. I think that is the principle here. Our election in the State of Washington is based on your signature.

That is the way it is now when you vote in person, and it is the way it is when you vote by mail. So our system has a lot of security in it, and this legislation that is before us today is to make sure that these rights—these civil rights and constitutional rights of individuals—are upheld throughout the United States of America.

Now, I understand some of my colleagues may not like the ethics reform or campaign finance reform in the underlying bill. I support those provisions. But at the heart of this debate is

whether we are going to fight to make sure that the Federal Government does its job on constitutional rights. I feel like there is a little bit of hiding going on in this discussion about whether we have a role, that this is somehow left up to the States. It reminds me of when Rosa Parks was sitting on a bus. We didn't say it is just up to those individual States. Or when people were denied equal accommodations at hotels, we didn't say it was just up to those States. And we certainly didn't say, when people used police dogs trying to intimidate women to vote in the 1960's, that it was just up to those States.

No, no, no. We did something about it. We passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. We did that because intimidation was happening, and we needed to correct for it. So I hope that our colleagues will think about this issue because to me, it is the same debate we are having on criminal justice reform. So many people on the other side of the aisle said: You know what, this is up to local police departments, and it is just up to the local governments, and that is all there is to it.

No, that is not all there is to this. This is about whether we do our job in upholding these constitutional rights when certain States don't do that.

And so these American voting rights are guaranteed by our Constitution. The 15th Amendment provides that voting rights cannot be abridged on the account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. The 19th Amendment, which turned a hundred years old last year, provides that voting rights cannot be denied on account of sex. The 26th Amendment provides that Americans 18 years of age or older cannot be denied the right to vote on account of age.

Generations of Americans fought for these rights over many decades, and they didn't come easy to us as a Nation. Nor should we overlook, now, these issues as we think that these rights, these constitutional obligations that we should be fighting for and should uphold, are facing challenges at the local level.

I know that my colleagues say that these are State rights to hold these elections. Article I, section 4 of the Constitution empowers Congress to make or alter rules for Federal elections. The U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld this authority as broad and comprehensive. The U.S. Supreme Court has held that the election clause gives Congress the authority to "override state laws to regulate federal elections."

Now, this was in a pretty famous case in 2015. In the majority opinion in the *Arizona State Legislature v. the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission*, Justice Ginsburg wrote, "The dominant purpose of the elections clause, the historical record bears out, was to empower Congress to override state election rules. The clause was

also intended to act as a safeguard against manipulation of electoral rules by politicians and factions in the States to entrench themselves or place their interests over those of the electorate."

So these issues are very clear. It is calling on us to make sure that we uphold those constitutional rights. But according to the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, at least 14 States, from Georgia, Florida, Oklahoma, and many others, have enacted voting rights since the 2020 election to restrict individuals. My colleagues have been out here talking about some of those restrictions, and I think those that place undue burdens on individuals are something that we should be addressing. Yes, States have been at a different pace in allowing vote-by-mail, but we should be empowering people. We should say that we want to empower more people to vote under a system that is fair and gives them those opportunities to do so.

So there are at least 64 bills restricting voting rights moving through 18 State legislatures, and I think that we should be making sure here that we have clarity on what will help us continue to empower the public to cast their vote.

The For the People Act, S. 2093, is a comprehensive bill that makes voting easier. It also authorizes \$1.7 billion in new federal grants to help secure the security of our voting system. Again, I like our vote-by-mail system in Washington State. It is based on my signature to the ballot that is checked at the ballot. I can tell you in the last election because of the ruses and various things that went on, 13 different people said that they voted on my behalf. But they didn't. And our election system caught that. They knew that it wasn't me, and they checked the signature on the ballot, and they knew that it was me. So even though the system has had people who are trying to cause distrust and discord about whether we have the right system, it is working. And the more we empower people, the better our democracy.

This legislation requires the Director of National Intelligence to report on threats to election infrastructure, including cyber threats, and requires the President to develop and implement a national strategy for protecting U.S. democratic institutions. I know that these are things that we should be updating. Throughout our history, following the civil war and reconstruction, there were localities that used discriminatory tactics like poll taxes and literacy tests to keep African Americans from voting. The Black community endured both of this kind of intimidation.

And in the years that followed, Americans have protested and marched for these voting rights. And out of this struggle, Congress passed, and President Johnson, signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act to make sure that we kept these prom-

ises of our constitution. So the Federal Government has had to intervene and we have done so I am glad that we did.

So I hope that we will continue to say that these provisions that are so important to guaranteeing the right to franchise for Americans, are there, and that they are continuing to be modernized. I hope that what we will do today is the start of an effort to focus on this.

I take my colleague at her word. I am sure she is sincere about wanting to vote to help do something on election and our democracy. We need to start that process today. We need to move forward, we need to address these issues. We can't live in a world where we are not allowed to move forward on a very close election in Washington State. That wasn't the only one we had. We had another one, I think, was decided by probably, you know, a few hundred votes. And were there issues? Yes. And guess what. The system resolved it. The system found any mistakes.

I keep mentioning, you know, a gentleman who basically when it got down to that somebody thought this was a Governor's race that was going to get down to 10 or 15 votes, basically decided to say that he had voted for his wife who had passed away, and admitted it because he knew in the end that they were going to find out. And he thought it was better to come forward and say I made a mistake. She had already passed. I sent in her ballot. It wasn't something I should have done, and we have a system that can work based on our signatures. It can and does today. When you go in to vote in person, you sign your name, and that is the signature, and that is the security of the system. And it has allowed us to trace and find and now expand to vote-by-mail. And it is time for us to say: Let's not make voting harder in the United States of America through a system that basically disenfranchises people, but make a system in the United States of America that is about giving people these opportunities so that people can feel this enthusiasm that we see when we successfully pull this off.

And what we need to be doing here is to show States that an 83 percent voter turnout in the State of Washington is a great victory. A high turnout is a great participatory system, and that is what we should be striving for with these reforms that are about security and about our constitutional rights. I hope our colleagues will support them.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to speak prior to the scheduled vote: BLUNT, for up to 15 minutes; MERKLEY, for up to 15 minutes; KLOBUCHAR, for 10 minutes; and Senator SCHUMER, for 5 minutes.

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

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, when I look at this substitute, I am reminded of the adage, the new boss is the same

as the old boss. In this case, the new bill is the same as the old bill. It has a different number, but it still maintains the same flawed policies that S. 1 maintains.

Obviously, the majority would like to pass this bill or they wouldn't have labeled it their most important piece of legislation for this Congress. The House of Representatives labeled the same bill, "H.R. 1," their most important piece of legislation for this Congress.

The changes basically give election officials more time to implement policies that I don't think we need, and I think the changes don't make the bill less bad. In fact, what the bill does is it creates a new boss for elections, but the new boss is the Federal Government. It is not about voting rights. It doesn't add any group or any individuals to the group of people who can vote, the kind of thing that Congress has done in the past, starting in the first century of the country and moving on until today. It is, frankly, a politically motivated, Federal takeover of the election systems that would make, in my opinion, elections more chaotic, less secure, less nimble in their ability to deal with individual circumstances that occur on election day.

(Mr. MARKEY assumed the Chair.)

The strength of the election system is the diversity of the election system. This is what President Obama thought in 2016. He may not still believe that, but I still believe it.

S. 1 would force a single partisan view of elections on more than 10,000 voting jurisdictions across the country, taking control away from States, taking control away from local officials—frankly, they are the closest people to the voters—and instead giving it to people in a far-away national capital without the same sense of importance of the people believing that what happened on election day at your precinct is what the voters intended to have happen that day and that the people who were voting were the people who were legally able to vote, not people who may have voted somewhere else—not people who may no longer live in the jurisdiction they are voting in and no longer qualified to vote for that county official or that State representative or whoever, but people who are legally able to vote.

I think this makes fraud easier to commit and, frankly, harder to detect. What we should be doing is making it easier to vote and harder to cheat. I think what we are doing here is making it easier to cheat and harder to find it out.

We allow, in this bill, if it was the law, unlimited ballot harvesting. This is where anybody can go around and collect ballots and, theoretically, be sure that they get to the election authority, but who knows? Who knows what ballot got lost in the mail and what ballot never got in the mail? One of the things the ballot harvester

would develop a pretty good sense of is how the person voted whose ballot they were harvesting.

This bill undermines popular voter ID laws that more than half of the States have implemented.

It makes it more difficult to maintain accurate voter lists.

It permanently tips the scales in favor of our friends on the other side by politicizing the Federal Election Commission—a Commission that was established, just like our Ethics Commission in the Senate, with an equal number of one party and no imbalance. This politicizes the Federal Election Commission. It makes it a partisan Agency, not a bipartisan policing Agency.

It pours Federal funds into campaigns, and it chills free speech—bad policy, I think, in search of a problem.

Democrats have said this is necessary to increase voting rights, particularly for minorities, but the overall turnout in the year 2020 was about two-thirds of all the voters—the highest percentage of voters who participated in over a century. What we have here is an election that had the highest level of participation in over a century. Most States had their highest voter turnout in 40 years, and we decide we need to change the system.

S. 1 isn't just about bad policy; it is about what Democrats have seen as a political imperative.

Frankly, this has been the bill that Democrats have offered for about the last 20 years. It varies a little bit from time to time, but about 20 years ago and maybe before that. I was a chief election official in our State at that time. I don't remember Democrats offering this before 20 years ago. But starting about two decades ago, every couple of years and certainly every time Democrats get in the majority in the House, they pass this bill or one almost exactly like it.

When asked about what it would take to maintain the current majority in the House, Speaker PELOSI said: Well, it would be better if we could pass H.R. 1 and S. 1. Now, that sounds like she thinks there is a political advantage there. I respect the Speaker's political judgment and always have respected Speaker PELOSI's political judgment. Her judgment would be that this would be better for Democrats than not changing the current election law.

S. 1 is really full of unnecessary and, as it turns out, unpopular provisions under the label "Would you like to vote for a bill that would secure democracy?" Well, of course. Who wouldn't want to be for securing democracy? Fortunately, this bill has been around long enough that people have begun to understand what is in it—the same list that has been out there before.

This bill would render State voter ID laws meaningless by requiring States to allow affidavits in lieu of identification. In other words, you say who you are at the polling place. Well, anybody

who is going to try to cast a ballot at the polling place they shouldn't cast is probably also likely to be willing to say they are qualified to vote at that election.

In a recent poll, a poll that came out this week, 80 percent of Americans supported voter ID laws. Another poll just a couple of weeks ago showed national support for voter photo ID was 75 percent. That included 69 percent of Black voters and 60 percent of Democrats.

So we have a principal position of this bill that 80 percent of all voters—at least 75 percent of all voters and 60 percent of Democrats are for, but this bill changes that law that makes sense to almost everybody.

This bill requires that unlimited ballot harvesting that I talked about just a minute ago. The only time I recall a congressional discussion recently about ballot harvesting was last year when the House of Representatives refused to seat a Republican-elected Member because that campaign had used ballot harvesting. Now we have a law that requires every State not to prohibit ballot harvesting. The risk of fraud, the risk of every ballot not getting to the place ballots need to be certainly increases when you hand them to a ballot harvester—usually somebody paid by a campaign or a party to go around and collect ballots and someone whose motivation to get those ballots all turned in may not be everything you want it to be.

Sixty-two percent of respondents in one poll said ballot harvesting should be illegal. It is another provision in this bill that clearly is not a popular provision if people begin to look at it.

Again, voting to protect democracy—sure, that is popular. But the way this bill does it, when people look at it, is not popular.

The bill requires States to give felons the right to vote in Federal elections when they are out of prison. Some States do that; some States don't. Of course, if this bill passed, every State would have the choice of going ahead and doing that or having two sets of voter rolls, one for Federal elections and another one for non-Federal elections. That, of course, makes no sense at all. What this bill anticipates is that no matter what States wanted to do, this is a provision they would have to adopt.

There is another way to get that done: Go to State legislatures and explain the value of having that changed if that change needs to be made.

This bill restricts the ability of States to maintain accurate voter rolls. Many States—States with Democratic Governors or Democratic secretaries of state, Democratic legislatures—have worked hard to see that they had a system in place where you would periodically check and see if the people who are registered to vote are still where they registered to vote from.

Our State—I think a lot of States—if you move to another county and register to vote there, you are supposed to

say as part of that process who you could notify to get you off the voter rolls, but there is no requirement that that has to happen. A periodic check of the voter rolls was seen not too long ago as a huge protection of democracy. This makes it much harder to do. But a 2018 poll found that 77 percent of Americans supported this kind of voter roll maintenance.

Frankly, it would be pretty hard to come up with a bill that had so many major tenets that were so out of step with what people think the government ought to do and what they want their State government to do and in most cases where State governments are doing this.

This bill provides government funding for campaigns—\$6 of Federal money for every dollar raised from small donors. Small donors is under \$200. Frankly, if you were doing this, there would be—the current Members of the Senate, under this bill, could receive up to, collectively, \$1.8 billion from the Federal Government to run their campaigns, to attack their challenger, or whatever they want to do with their campaign money—\$1.8 billion to do that. It is pretty easy to qualify for this money.

We saw people raise money in the first quarter of this year. That would have qualified—in the case of our friend the Senator from Texas, Senator CRUZ, somewhere between \$25 and \$30 million would go to his campaign. We had a markup on this bill in the Rules Committee. Not a single member of the Rules Committee, Democrat or Republican, including Senator CRUZ, thought Senator CRUZ should get \$24 or \$25 million from the Federal Government for his campaign.

The bill creates a partisan Federal Elections Commission. It gets rid of that bipartisan makeup that has been there from the very start.

This bill chills free speech in that it creates a disclosure document that makes people really reluctant to give money to other groups who aren't candidates who like to talk about elections.

It federalizes redistricting. S. 1 would put in place one set of Federal rules for redrawing congressional districts. That has always been the role of the States. If the State wants to give that to somebody besides the legislature, they can do that, and many States have done that. But States have been the constitutionally designated place to determine how they draw congressional maps in their own States.

Even if a State manages to comply with all these requirements, under this bill, the Justice Department would have to be involved. Under this bill, the court of jurisdiction in all cases on redistricting would be the Federal court in Washington, DC, not the Federal court in the circuit that Missouri is in. You wouldn't even start at the district court in Kansas City or St. Louis. The Federal court in Washington, DC, would be the place you would go.

Of course, the purpose of the bill is to bring all these election decisions to one place. The idea that the best decisions are always made in Washington, DC, on all topics is an idea that most Americans don't agree with. There are things they think we can do and should do and can only do because they can't do them any other way, like defend the country and set big national priorities. But for well over 200 years now, local election officials responsible for the sense of credibility of what happens on election day have done this job. I think they have done it well.

This bill would require States to take burdensome actions and make expensive changes in their election systems. Even if the States have already adopted some of the so-called reforms, they in all likelihood would have to make changes in their system to comply.

So the Federal takeover of elections shouldn't happen. I urge my colleagues not to support it happening. The American people don't want to see the things imposed on our election system that are in this bill. I urge my colleagues to vote against this harmful legislation.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, every day that I have the honor of coming to work in the hallowed halls of this building—a symbol to the country and to the world of America's commitment to liberty and to justice, freedom, and democracy—I am humbled. I am humbled by the faith and responsibility that the people of Oregon have placed in me to advocate on their behalf. I am humbled by the responsibility of exercising the power of this office to use the opportunity to lift up all Americans, to create a foundation for families to thrive, to tackle significant challenges like human rights and global warming.

But among all these responsibilities one is the highest, which is to defend our constitutional Republic, and in that Constitution, the single most important power given to every American is the right to a voice and a vote, a voice and a vote in the decisions of this government and the direction of our Nation.

As we saw all too clearly on January 6, when this very building was attacked by a mob intent on burning the ballots of millions of Americans, democracy based on free and fair elections is far from guaranteed. Each generation, each new set of Senators and House Members has the responsibility to defend it anew.

The sad truth, however, is that a violent mob storming the Capitol isn't the only way to attack our democracy. It can also be attacked by the quiet plotting of powerful and privileged individuals who hate the concept of government of, by, and for the people, and they work to undermine and corrupt the workings of our Republic to produce, instead, government by and for the powerful.

In his inaugural address, our second President, John Adams, remarked that, "we should be unfaithful to ourselves if we should ever lose sight of the danger to our liberties if anything partial or extraneous should infect the purity of our free, fair, virtuous, and independent elections."

Well, my friends, our democracy—our elections are being infected. Our elections are under siege from gerrymandering, which destroys the principle of equal representation. Our system is under siege from dark money, enabling billionaires and powerful corporations to buy our elections. It is under siege by State laws being passed week to week right now that target specific communities to prevent them from voting, thereby manipulating the outcome of elections.

Indeed, at least 22 laws have been enacted in 14 States since January to infect our free and fair elections to deliberately erect barriers meant to make it harder for targeted groups of Americans to vote, to silence the voices of students and low-income Americans, of Native Americans and seniors, of Black and Brown Americans who have fought too long and too hard to have their voice and their vote stolen from them, ripped from them now.

We have a responsibility as United States Senators to ensure every American's freedom to vote, just as this institution sought to do more than half a century ago, when in this Chamber we passed the 1965 Voting Rights Act. We have a responsibility to ensure that every American's voice is heard and that our elections reflect the will of the people.

We can fulfill that responsibility by enacting national standards for voting to ensure that every American can have a say in the key decisions impacting their daily lives, a "say" expressed through the ballot box.

That ballot box is the beating heart of our Republic, and those who seek to erect barriers to citizens having access to it are committing a crime against our democracy. We have to stop that criminal action against the rights of Americans. We must create those national standards by taking up this bill, the For the People bill, debating it, and ultimately passing it, to defend our Constitution.

The For the People Act is comprehensive. It does popular, common-sense things to put the American people back in charge of their government and their country. It sets national standards so every American has equal freedom to vote, no matter where they live. In this country, if you are an American, you have the right to vote, plain and simple, full stop. It doesn't matter what your ZIP code is or your income or the color of your skin or your religious beliefs. You have the right to vote.

Many of the State laws restricting voting are designed to eliminate early voting—in person or by mail—and we know exactly why. It is because the

leaders in these States know how easy it is to manipulate the vote on election day. In these targeted communities, the States' leaders wants to be able to decrease the number of polling places, reduce the hours, change the locations, put polling places in locations with limited parking, put out false information about the date of the election, and purge targeted voters from the roll of registered voters, knowing that when they show up on election day, it is too late to correct the error and be able to exercise their right to vote.

The antidote to these horrendous, racist attacks on the freedom and right of every American to vote is early voting in person and by mail, and this act guarantees 15 days of early voting. It sets forth the opportunity to acquire an absentee ballot, to return the ballot by mail or through dedicated dropboxes.

The second big goal in national standards set forth in the For the People Act is to stop billionaires from buying elections. Elections in America are intended to reflect the will of the people, not the will of the powerful and privileged. Thomas Jefferson once described this as the "mother principle," saying that "governments are republican only in proportion to how they embody the will of the people."

If the megawealthy can flood our campaigns with billions of dollars sent through shell companies, untraceable money, and manipulate the outcome of the elections, then Jefferson's mother principle is murdered because the outcome serves the powerful, not the people.

The For the People Act says the people should have an equal chance of being heard and that the people listening ought to know who is actually behind those voices and those messages. It does that by creating an "honest ads" policy so political ads people see online have to disclose who is paying for them, and it does that by requiring the disclosure of megadonors contributing to political campaigns.

Now, if you or I give a modest donation to a campaign, that campaign has to disclose who we are. Shouldn't the same thing that is true for an average American be true for the megadonors? This standard sets that equal standard.

Third, the national standards set forth in this bill restore equal representation by ending gerrymandering, the process by which we draw congressional districts to favor one party over another and, by doing so, attack the sacred principle of equal representation.

This creates a lot of bias in the House of Representatives down the hall. Take Michigan. In 2012, 2014, and 2016, the majority of the Michiganders voted for one party at every level of government, but because of gerrymandering, the other party held a decisive advantage in the statehouse, in the State senate, and in the congressional House delegation.

The For the People Act defends, restores the principle of equal representation.

It does it by creating independent redistricting commissions, made up equally of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. That means candidates running for office actually have to use the power of their ideas, the persuasion of their personality, not a rigged system to hold power.

Finally, the standards in this bill target corruption by addressing and eliminating conflicts of interest. Public servants should serve the public, not themselves. That includes Members of Congress, the administration, and for the first time ever, the Supreme Court. This bill does that by striking down outrageous and corrupt conflicts of interest, strengthening divestment requirements, saying that the President and Vice President have to use a blind trust or limit their personal holdings to assets that don't pose a potential conflict of interest.

It slows the revolving door between public service and K Street. It requires Cabinet Secretaries to recuse themselves from any issues in which a previous employer or client has a financial interest.

The bill requires candidates for Vice President or President to disclose their tax returns to prevent hidden conflicts of interest. It creates a code of ethics for the Supreme Court, something all other Federal judges already have.

None of these four principles is about helping one political party over the other. In fact, the provisions I have just laid out are wildly popular among the American people. An overwhelming supermajority of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents support these four principles. It is as bipartisan as you can get.

Even when it is broke into specific provisions, three out of four Americans—Democrats, Republicans, Independents—say they support these reforms because they believe in the vision of government of, by, and for the people. It is in our DNA.

Americans believe that dark money should not be able to flood our elections. They believe billionaires and corporations should not be able to buy elections. They believe our Nation is ill-served by corrupt conflicts of interest. They believe in the vision and ideals of our "we the people" Republic, and this bill is meant to do just one thing: make real the promise of democracy for all Americans.

But powerful special interests don't want that. It threatens their hold on power by ending the ways they have rigged the system, and so they are all about striking down this bill.

Why is that? We hear how Republican leaders say that they like this rigged system. Apparently, they like dark money in campaigns helping to buy elections. Apparently, they like targeting groups of individuals to prevent them from voting, taking us back to the racist efforts that existed before the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Apparently, they like gerrymandering, thinking it is a sort of the political

power down the hall, which political scientists says it is. But should it be principle or power that we fight for here?

It should be the principle and the oath of office we took to uphold the Constitution.

Standing before a crowd on a November afternoon to dedicate the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg, 4 months after that momentous battle, President Lincoln remarked that they were gathered together to not only dedicate it to the men who had fallen in battle, but to the ideal for which they gave their lives, "That government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth."

Today, it is our responsibility to carry that ideal forward and to ensure that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the United States of America. We in this Chamber must pass the For the People Act.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, today the Senate is voting on whether to consider the For the People Act, also known as S. 1. I encourage all my colleagues to support Senate consideration of this crucial election reform bill.

This legislation would put a stop to new State laws across the country that are making it harder for Americans to register to vote and to cast their ballots. So far this year, at least 389 bills to suppress the ability to vote have been introduced in 48 States. At least 22 of these new bills have become law in 14 States.

These newly enacted laws undermine the right to vote from every direction: They create new and unnecessarily strict voter ID laws, which make it harder to vote for the 11 percent of U.S. citizens who do not have a government-issued photo ID, many of whom are elderly or low-income. They reduce the timeframes for early voting, a critical method of voting for many working Americans. And they impose severe limitations on voting by mail, a strategy that many States have used to significantly increase voter turnout over recent years.

These attacks have shown no signs of letting up. In Texas, a restrictive voting bill is pending before the State legislature that continues to get worse the longer it is considered. In its current form, the Texas bill would cut early voting hours, ban drive-through voting, limit vote-by-mail, and add new voter ID requirements for mail-in ballots, along with a host of other restrictions on the right to vote.

These restrictions are harmful to our democracy. We should be working to make it easier for more people to vote, not making it harder. The right to vote is a bedrock principle of our democracy. Unfortunately, many States are using unfounded conspiracy theories of voter fraud as an excuse to pass laws to weaken that fundamental right.

That is why we must pass the For the People Act. This bill will help to ensure that all Americans are able to vote, free of unnecessary hurdles and burdens. It includes a number of commonsense reforms that anyone who believes in the health of our democracy cannot possibly oppose in good conscience.

For example, one provision of S. 1 requires that States allow voters to register to vote online. In an age when you can cash a check, buy a car, and conduct a doctor's appointment entirely online, there is no reason a voter should not be able to register to vote online.

The bill also invests in the health of our election infrastructure by securing our voting systems against foreign attacks. The security of our voting systems should not be a partisan issue.

In addition, S. 1 would ban partisan gerrymandering and require States to draw their congressional districts using independent redistricting commissions, like we do in California. Voters should be able to choose their representatives; representatives should not be able to choose their voters.

We need to empower the voice of every American in our democracy. We need to make these commonsense reforms to our elections.

I understand that some of my colleagues have disagreements with specific parts of the bill. I would urge them to let the legislation come before the Senate and seek to amend it. But to deny this body the ability to even debate and consider such an important bill as this is unacceptable.

The time for these reforms is now. I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this important legislation.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I come to the floor to speak in support of proceeding to debate legislation that is critical to our democracy, legislation that is based on two simple ideas: that Americans must be able to freely choose their elected officials and that government must be accountable to the people, not to those with the most money. These are not Democratic or Republican ideas; they are core American ideas. But for too long, these rights have been under attack, which is why we need the critical democracy reforms in the For the People Act.

I am honored to be leading this legislation with Senators MERKLEY and SCHUMER and to have worked with my colleagues as chair of the Rules Committee, worked with my colleagues in the House and civil rights and democracy reform groups and you, Madam President, to bring this bill forward today.

The freedom to vote is fundamental to all of our freedoms. It is how Americans control their government and hold elected officials accountable. It is the bedrock of our government. It is the founding principle of our country, and it has stood the test of wars, of economic strife, and yes, a global pandemic. But protecting this right has not always been easy.

Throughout our country's 245-year history, we have had to course-correct and take action to ensure that democracy is for the people and by the people and that it has lived up to our ideals.

At the beginning of this year, we were reminded on January 6 that it is up to us to protect against threats to our democracy, to ensure that it succeeds.

I still remember that moment at 3:30 in the morning when Senator BLUNT and I and, yes, Vice President Pence walked from this Chamber with the two young women with the mahogany box full of those last ballots to get over to the House to finish our job so that you, Madam President, were declared the Vice President and President Biden was declared the President. That is upholding our democracy. That is doing it together, Democrats and Republicans doing our job. And what this bill is about to me, this bill is about carrying on that torch to protect our democracy.

Today, the vote to begin debate on this legislation will likely get the support of all 50 Democrats. Senator MANCHIN, along with the rest of our caucus, has made clear to the country that standing up for the right to vote is bigger than any one person or thing. It is about us. It is about us as Americans. I deeply appreciate the work he has put into the proposal he is putting forward today, and I look forward to continuing our discussions with him. He is doing this in good faith. There are many good things in that proposal. And today we are here together to reaffirm we will not give up this fight. It is just beginning.

The 2020 election showed that you can make it safer to vote while giving voters the options that work for them. If it is vote-by-mail—I see my colleague Senator SMITH here. Minnesota is so proud of our same-day registration. That has worked for us. It has made us No. 1 in voter turnout in the country time and time again. Many States during the pandemic took steps exactly like that, extending options for voters, like safe vote-by-mail, and now 34 States have no-excuse vote-by-mail—34 States. The result? More than nearly 160 million Americans voted—more than ever before and in the middle of a pandemic.

I still remember those voters in the primary in Wisconsin standing in makeshift garbage bags with makeshift masks over their faces in the middle of a rainstorm, in the middle of a pandemic, standing in line to vote. And in an election that the Trump Department of Homeland Security declared

was the most secure in our history, the American people elected, yes, President Joe Biden and Vice President KAMALA HARRIS.

But in the wake of that historic election, there has been a pervasive, coordinated, and overwhelming effort to undermine the freedoms of voting in future elections, with over 400 bills introduced in legislatures across the country. Twenty-two laws to restrict voting have been enacted in 14 States, and 31 more bills to roll back the right to vote have passed at least 1 chamber of a State legislature.

As Reverend WARNOCK put it in this Chamber in his maiden speech as Senator, "Some people don't want some people to vote." That is what is going on here.

The new law in Georgia makes it harder to request mail-in ballots, drastically limits ballot drop boxes, and makes it a crime to hand water and food to voters waiting in line to cast their ballots, when in previous elections, Georgians have stood in line for up to 10 hours to vote.

One of the new Montana laws ended same-day registration on election day after it had been in practice in the State for 15 years, and Senator TESTER is joining me in trying to bring this practice across—when we introduced that bill—across the Nation.

In the weeks ahead, similar bills are expected to pass in even more States, including Texas, where the Governor has promised to call the legislature into special session to pass a bill to restrict voting that was blocked at the end of regular session thanks to the heroic efforts of Democrats in the Texas State Legislature who blessed us with their presence just last week.

These are not empty threats; they are real efforts to disenfranchise regular Americans from voting—senior citizens, people with disabilities, people who can't stand in line for 10 hours just to wait to vote.

In the face of these efforts to roll back voting rights in so many States, the For the People Act is about setting basic national standards to make sure that all voters in this country can vote legally in the way that works for them, regardless of which ZIP Code they live in, regardless of whether they live in a big city or in a suburb or out in a small town in western Minnesota. It is about reducing the power of Big Money in our elections by ending secret spending by billionaires and special interests. It is about making anti-corruption reforms to ensure that politicians work for the people, not for themselves.

Republicans have said that this bill is designed to provide a political advantage, but, as a former Republican Commissioner of the Federal Election Commission who chaired under George Bush, Trevor Potter, has said in explaining his support for this bill—and he appeared as a witness in my hearing for this bill—he said:

This bill does not give power to any particular party over another; it gives power back to the voters.

Giving power back to the voters is exactly what we need.

There is an amplified attack on the right to vote this year, but we have seen serious efforts to restrict voting rights since the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act 8 years ago. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 marked the cornerstone achievement to the civil rights movement and became a law because of the tireless work of people like John Lewis who put their lives on the line to secure voting rights for all. Fifty-six years later, we are still fighting that battle. At the same time, we haven't had meaningful campaign finance or ethics reform.

Our democracy desperately needs the proposals in this bill. And guess what. The American people agree. Yes, this bill is bipartisan, except right here in this place. It is bipartisan because one poll released recently found that 78 percent of Americans, including 63 percent of Republicans, support making early in-person voting available for at least 2 weeks before election day. That is a proposal in our original For the People, and it is in the managers' amendment that we are voting for closure on, and it is in Senator MANCHIN's proposal.

Another poll found that 83 percent of likely voters support public disclosure of contributions to groups involved in elections—also the DISCLOSE Act in all three proposals. Yet some of my Republican colleagues want to limit disclosures. By the way, disclosures were championed by Justice Scalia. Yet what happened in our committee hearing on this, our markup? Republicans filed amendment after amendment to gut those provisions of the bill.

So while they make claims—my friends on the other side of the aisle—that this isn't popular, it is just not true. They claim it is not bipartisan. It is just not true. The bill contains nine bipartisan bills, including the Honest Ads Act, which I first introduced with Senator John McCain and Senator WARNER, and now Senator LINDSAY GRAHAM took up that cause. Our provision—that provision would finally hold the social media companies accountable to make sure that there are disclaimers and disclosures on political ads.

There is the work that I have done with Senator LANKFORD and with you, Madam President, when you were in the Senate to make sure we have backup paper ballots. We still have eight States that don't have backup paper ballots. That provision is in this bill.

Many of the bill's provisions have already been adopted in red, blue, and purple States and have the support of Governors and election officials from both parties.

Twenty-one States have same-day voter registration, including red States like Idaho, Wyoming, and Iowa. That is great, but our question should be, why don't all 50 States have it, especially when the Constitution of the United

States specifically says that Congress can make and alter rules for Federal elections? It is as clear as the words on the page. Twenty States have automatic voter registration laws, including Alaska, Georgia, and West Virginia. Forty-five States allowed all voters to vote by mail in the 2020 election, and 44 States have early voting.

What this bill does is takes the best of the best and puts in place minimum standards so that no matter what State you call home, you have access to the ballot box. That is why Senator MERKLEY has worked so hard on this legislation. That is why Senator SCHUMER made this bill Senate file No. 1.

The bill that we are voting to advance includes changes that directly respond to concerns about implementation from both Democratic and Republican States and local officials. We heard those concerns, and the Democrats on the Rules Committee, which included Senator WARNER and Senator KING—we worked on that managers' amendment and made it easier for rural areas, extended the time system, and got at their concerns. And then Senator MANCHIN has come up with more ideas and more things we can do to make the bill strong.

We heard from election officials that requiring States to accept mail-in ballots for too long after election day would delay them from certifying the results, so we shortened the window.

I could go on and on and on. In good faith, we have worked to make this bill work for America, and now it is time to allow for debate on this bill.

Our Republican friends on the other side of the aisle say this bill—this is one thing Senator MCCONNELL would say in the hearing—that it would cause chaos. I say this: Chaos is a 5-hour wait to vote. Senior citizens standing in the hot Sun for 5 hours, for 10 hours—that is chaos. Chaos is purging eligible voters from voter rolls and modern-day poll taxes and one ballot box for a county of 5 million people, which is exactly what they did in Harris County, TX. That is exactly what is happening in that State right now. Chaos is voters in Wisconsin waiting in line to vote for hours in the rain in their homemade masks and plastic garbage bags. The angry mob on January 6 that came into this very Chamber, that spray painted the columns, that attacked police officers, that injured people left and right—that is chaos.

As I said from the stage on Inauguration Day under that bright blue sky where you could still see the spray paint at the bottom of those columns and the makeshift windows we had in place—I said this: This is the day our democracy picks itself up, brushes off the dust, and does what America always does: goes forward as a Nation under God, with liberty and justice for all. We cannot do that if Americans are disenfranchised, if they are not part of our democracy.

Republicans have sadly made it clear that this is not legislation they are

willing to negotiate or even debate. They won't even give it a week. They won't even give it a few days. Just last week, they held a press conference to tell the American people that they don't believe Congress should act to protect the right to vote or get rid of secret money in our elections. So, honestly, I would love to get support from the other side of the aisle, but we have to be honest—I don't expect we are going to get it.

So, my Republican colleagues, this is not the end of the line for this bill. This is not the end of the line. This is only the beginning because if you have your way, those voters won't even be at the end of the line. They are not going to be able to vote.

In the Rules Committee, we will be holding a series of hearings—not just one hearing, a series of hearings—and we are taking it on the road for the first time in a long time. We are going to Georgia and holding a field hearing there so we can hear firsthand from people in the State on what is happening and why we must carry out the constitutional duty in this Chamber to act.

I urge my Republican colleagues to recognize the work being done in States to restrict the freedom of Americans to exercise their sacred right to vote. Our Nation was founded on the ideals of democracy, and we have seen for ourselves in this building how we can never take it for granted.

We can't let State legislatures get to pick and choose who votes and what votes get counted. That is not how democracy works. I urge all of my colleagues to do what the American people are asking us to do and to do what is right. Vote today to bring us closer to passing legislation to strengthen our democracy. We can't wait in line, and we can't make the people of America wait in line. The time to do this is now.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, let me thank so many of my colleagues, including our chair of Rules, the Senator from Minnesota; our lead sponsor on this bill, Senator MERKLEY; and so many others who have done so much on this legislation.

Now, what makes a democracy a democracy? It is the right of citizens to choose their own leader; to forge their own destiny, rather than have it decided for them; the right to vote; the right that generations of Americans have marched and protested to achieve; women who reached for the ballot; and marchers who were bloodied on a bridge in Selma; the right that generations of American soldiers fought and died to defend, buried now in patriot graves from Normandy to Gettysburg.

And, right now, it is a fact—a fact—that voting rights are under assault in America in a way that we have not seen in many, many decades. Republican State legislatures are limiting polling hours, locations, and ballot

drop boxes, raising new ID barriers for students, making it a crime to give food and water to voters in line, and in States like Texas, trying to move Sunday voting hours so it is harder for Black churchgoers to go to the polls after services.

It is the most sweeping voter suppression effort in at least 80 years, targeting all the ways that historically disenfranchised voters—Black and Brown Americans, students, the working poor—access the ballot.

We can disagree about solutions to this problem, about which policies might be more effective, but we should all agree this is a problem. We should all agree that protecting voting rights is worthy of debate, and that is what this next vote is about. Should the U.S. Senate even debate—even debate—how to protect the voting rights of our citizens?

The story of American democracy is full of contradictions and halting progress. At the time of our Constitution's ratification, you had to be, in most States, a White, male, Protestant landowner to vote. How many in this Chamber—how many of us would have been able to participate in those first elections?

The truth is, many of us, particularly on our side of the aisle, would not have been able to vote. But ever since the early days of the Republic, Americans launched mighty movements, fought a bloody civil war, and, yes, passed Federal election laws to expand the franchise until there were no more boundaries.

Are we in a backslide here in the 21st century? Are we going to let reactionary State legislatures drag us back into the muck of voter suppression? Are we going to let the most dishonest President in history continue to poison our democracy from the inside or will we stand up to defend what generations of Americans have organized, marched for, and died for—the sacred, sacred right to vote, the thing that makes a democracy a democracy.

I plead with my Republican colleagues. Stand up, my Republican colleagues. Stand up to a man who has lied. We all know he has lied. You know he has lied about our elections. Do not let this man lead you around by the nose and do permanent damage to our democracy. At least have the decency and honor to let this Chamber debate. I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The VICE PRESIDENT. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 77, S. 2093, a bill to expand Americans' access to the bal-

lot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen ethics rules for public servants, and implement other anti-corruption measures for the purpose of fortifying our democracy, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Jeff Merkley, Amy Klobuchar, Jacky Rosen, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard J. Durbin, Jon Ossoff, Tammy Baldwin, Debbie Stabenow, Brian Schatz, Sherrod Brown, Ron Wyden, Elizabeth Warren, Raphael Warnock, Benjamin L. Cardin, Edward J. Markey, Bernard Sanders.

The VICE PRESIDENT. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed on S. 2093, a bill to expand Americans' access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen ethics rules for public servants, and implement other anti-corruption measures for the purpose of fortifying our democracy, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

[Rollcall Vote No. 246 Leg.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—50

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

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 50.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Mr. Majority Leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I want to be clear about what just happened on the Senate floor. Every single Senate Republican just voted against starting debate—starting debate—on legislation to protect Americans' voting rights. Once again, the Senate Republican minority has launched a par-

tisan blockade of a pressing issue here in the U.S. Senate, an issue no less fundamental than the right to vote.

I have laid out the facts for weeks. Republican State legislatures across the country are engaged in the most sweeping voter suppression in 80 years, capitalizing on and catalyzed by Donald Trump's Big Lie. These State governments are making it harder for younger, poorer, urban, and non-White Americans to vote.

Earlier today, the Republican leader told reporters that "regardless of what may be happening in some States, there's no rationale for Federal intervention." The Republican leader flatly stated that no matter what the States do to undermine our democracy—voter suppression laws, phony audits, partisan takeovers of the local election boards—the Senate should not act.

My colleagues, if Senators 60 years ago held that the Federal Government should never intervene to protect voting rights, this body would have never passed the Voting Rights Act. The Republican leader uses the language and the logic of the southern Senators in the 1960s who defended States' rights, and it is an indefensible position for any Senator—any Senator—let alone the minority leader, to hold. Yet that was the reason given for why Republicans voted in lockstep today: Regardless of what may be happening in some States, there is no rationale for Federal intervention.

That is both ridiculous and awful. All we wanted to do here on the floor was to bring up the issue of voting rights and debate how to combat these vicious, oftentimes discriminatory voting restrictions, and today, every single Democratic Senator stood together in the fight to protect the right to vote in America. The Democratic Party in the Senate will always stand united to defend our democracy.

I spoke with President Biden earlier this afternoon as well. He has been unshakeable in his support of S. 1, and I want to thank the President and the Vice President for their efforts. But regrettably—regrettably—our efforts were met by the unanimous opposition of the Senate minority.

Once again, Senate Republicans have signed their names in the ledger of history alongside Donald Trump, the Big Lie, and voter suppression, to their enduring disgrace. This vote, I am ashamed to say, is further evidence that voter suppression has become part of the official platform of the Republican Party.

Now, Republican Senators may have prevented us from having a debate on voting rights today, but I want to be very clear about one thing: The fight to protect voting rights is not over, by no means. In the fight for voting rights, this vote was the starting gun, not the finish line. Let me say that again. In the fight for voting rights, this vote was the starting gun, not the finish line.

As many have noted, including my friend Senator WARNOCK this morning,

when John Lewis was about to cross that bridge in Selma, he didn't know that waited for him on the other side. He didn't know how long his march would be, and his ultimate success was never guaranteed, but he started down that bridge anyway. Today, Democrats started our march to defend the voting rights of all Americans. It could be a long march, but it is one we are going to make.

Today, we made progress. For the first time in this Congress, we got all 50 Democrats unified behind moving forward on a strong and comprehensive voting rights bill. And make no mistake about it, it will not be the last time that voting rights comes up for a debate in the Senate.

Republicans may want to avoid the topic, hoping that their party's efforts to suppress votes and defend the Big Lie will go unnoticed. Democrats will not allow that. Democrats will never let this voter suppression be swept under the rug.

We have several serious options for how to reconsider this issue and advance legislation to combat voter suppression. We are going to explore every last one of our options. We have to. Voting rights are too important, too fundamental. This concerns the very core of our democracy and what we are about as a nation, so we will not let it go. We will not let it die. This voter suppression cannot stand, and we are going to work tirelessly to see that it does not stand.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am delighted to follow the majority leader and his strong remarks about the beginning of the process of passing S. 1, not only to deal with the question of voting rights but to deal with the question of the dark money plague that is infesting our democracy and taking the power over decision making in this body and in this building away from regular people and putting it into the hands of not only special interests but of special interests who are happy to operate in secret.

One of the ways in which this power has been deployed has been with respect to the judicial branch of government. And I am here now for my third speech in "The Scheme" series to draw attention to this problem.

In the first two "Scheme" speeches, I described the corporate power game plan offered by lawyer Lewis Powell to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the subsequent effectuation of that game plan by Justice Lewis Powell, ap-

pointed to the U.S. Supreme Court 2 months—2 months—after his secret corporate power game plan went to the chamber. The execution of the Powell plan was one of three converging threads that led to the scheme to capture the Court.

The Powell plan, thread one, was a political response recommended for America's traditional corporate elite, which had been traumatized by the social upheaval of the 1960s. The second thread, thread two, was a separate strain of American ire that had been simmering on our society's fringe for many decades. The extremists on this simmering fringe were traumatized by things long accepted as mainstream by most Americans.

The fringe resentments shifted with the varying tides of news and events but regularly boiled over against several targets. One was the role of Jewish people in finance, the press, Hollywood, and—after FDR—in government. Another was the improving economic and social condition of minorities. Another was the arrival of immigrants, particularly non-European immigrants; but backlash to immigration from Ireland and Italy had been profound, as my home State experienced back under the Know-Nothings. Other resentments sprang from imaginary events, conspiracy theory delusions, and crackpot ideas.

This persistent strain along the American fringe was chronicled in Pulitzer Prize-winning Richard Hofstadter's 1964 essay, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," later a popular book. This latent strain of paranoid extremism showed itself in groups like the John Birch Society, which never gained social or political acceptance. It was fed and nurtured by a handful of rightwing foundations set up by a few colossally rich and politically irate and frustrated families. It boiled up in the Presidential campaign of Senator Barry Goldwater, which ended in one of the worst landslide defeats in American history. It drove the occasional aspirations of the Libertarian Party, whose extremist platform suffered predictable but humiliating crushings at the polls. All of this defeat, over all of these decades, concentrated the strain, isolated its most persistent and determined elements, and added to it an emotional payload of resentment.

One target of this fringe was the existence of government regulation. The Libertarian Party, in 1980, ran on a platform of ending Social Security, ending Medicare, closing the post office, undoing the American highway program, stopping public education, and eliminating all our public regulatory agencies—even the Federal Aviation Administration that keeps planes from bumping into each other.

This platform barely attracted 1 percent of the vote, an unsurprising but humiliating crushing. That humiliating crushing was suffered by David Koch, Libertarian Party can-

didate for Vice President, and the party's major funder. The Koch family is spectacularly, unimaginably rich. Privately held Koch Industries pours hundreds of millions of dollars into their pockets every year. The family annual income exceeds most families' dreams of lifetime wealth. The Kochs have social ambition, putting their names on educational TV programs, art centers, and university buildings. They are not the sort of people who take humiliation well. They are also not stupid, and the family has long and sometimes dark international experience, including odious efforts in previous decades to build factories for evil regimes.

Made confident by the arrogance of wealth, driven by extremist ideology, spurred by the resentment of humiliating political rejection, experienced in the devious ways of the international world, steeped in the corporate skills of long-term planning and patient execution, and with unlimited resources to indulge themselves, the Koch brothers, Charles and David, were uniquely positioned to take this longstanding, latent, extremist fringe and amplify it and direct it, by plan, in secret, and over decades if need be.

If front groups needed to be set up, so be it; subsidiaries were a familiar concept. If identities needed to be laundered off money they gave, so be it; telling lawyers to find or design a way to do that was familiar. If fringe groups needed to be coordinated to work collectively with each other, so be it; organizing with others through trade associations and lobbying groups was familiar activity. And if money needed to be spent, well, so be it; money was no object, and getting people to do things for you for money is a familiar practice of the very rich.

The nurture and guidance of the Kochs breathed new strength and life—and deregulatory purpose—into the nativist far-right fringe. Meanwhile, in the regulatory arena, waited the third of the three threads. Major corporate interests—from the railroads first to banks, chemical companies, and polluting industries—had assembled, over time, a quietly powerful presence to help them in administrative Agencies; to make sure that regulation was friendly to business, and, even more than that, under the right circumstances, with the right people and pressures, could be turned to advantage of the regulated industry.

In administrative hearings and rulemakings, regulated industries regularly outgunned public interest groups. Law firms dedicated to this lucrative corporate regulatory practice sprouted. Gleaming stables were kept of well-tended professional witnesses who could reliably spout the corporate line in Agency proceedings.

Companies played the long game in these regulatory Agencies, of accreting minor victories, step-by-step, inch-by-inch, but that together summed up to major gains. Many of these gains were deeply buried in the weeds of arcane

policy and technical detail, inscrutable to the general media and so invisible to the general public.

Revolving doors spun between regulatory Commissions and industry, so that Agency decision makers often reflected the values, priorities and interests of the regulated industry, not the general public. At the extreme, the regulatory Agency became servant to the industry master—a phenomenon well known and well documented as regulatory capture. I wrote a separate book on this, “Captured,” so I won’t dwell on it at great length here. It is enough to note that regulatory capture is so common that it has been a robust field of academic research and writing now for decades, both in economics and in administrative law.

So these three socioeconomic strands converged. America’s regular corporate elite took up the Powell memo strategy of emboldened political engagement, seeking to reclaim their power and restrain the unwelcome changes roiling American society. The extremists of great wealth brought to the rightwing fringe and its motley array of extremist groups an unprecedented strategic discipline, unlimited resources, and the tactics of hard-edged corporate organization. The regulatory capture apparatus was there for the hiring, eager to pursue the new prospects offered by big industries and eccentric billionaires. Out of this slumgullion of immense wealth, extreme political ambition, and expertise at regulatory capture, how long would it take for people to start thinking about capturing not just regulatory Agencies but courts—indeed the U.S. Supreme Court?

As it turned out, not long. The Court had made itself a target of the rightwing. *Brown v. Board of Education* provoked massive resistance across the South out to defend segregated public schools. *Roe v. Wade* provoked, as it still provokes, the religious right. So did *Engel v. Vitale*, restricting prayer in schools. *Griswold v. Connecticut* offended those upset by the sixties sexual revolution. *Miranda v. Arizona*, *Mapp v. Ohio*, and *Gideon v. Wainwright* offended the tough-on-crime crowd. To the far right, the Supreme Court offered a bounty of things to hate. Even without the Powell Memo’s corporate plan of “exploiting judicial action” “with an activist-minded Supreme Court,” the Court would likely have been an irresistible target.

But with that plan and that recommendation, it began to come together. And so the scheme was launched, fed by three political tributaries: one, the corporate plan in Lewis Powell’s memo to the Chamber; two, the resurgent Koch-powered, far-right fringe; and three, the eager, available mercenaries of regulatory capture.

The effort to capture the Court has likely been the most effectual deployment of rightwing and corporate resources into our common American political life, and America is now a very

different place as a result of it. Much of it, like the proverbial frog in the proverbial pot, we have even gotten used to, and we accept it now as normal, when it isn’t.

To be continued.

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

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

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate a win for the country. Today, the United States rightfully failed to advance the “Corrupt Politicians Act,” meaning that this bill will not come to the Senate floor for a final vote. This is a huge win for the citizens of the United States. This is a huge win for democracy, and it is a huge win for the integrity of our elections.

The “Corrupt Politicians Act” is the most dangerous legislation we considered in the Senate in the 9 years I served in this body. It is an attempt by Senate Democrats at a brazen power grab. It is an attempt by Democrats to federalize elections and to ensure that Democrats won’t lose control for the next 100 years.

This bill isn’t about protecting the right to vote. It is precisely the opposite. It is about taking away the right to vote from the citizens and giving it instead to the corrupt politicians in Washington who want to stay in power.

The “Corrupt Politicians Act” would strike down virtually every common-sense voter integrity law adopted by States across the country. Thirty-six States have adopted voter ID laws, a reasonable and commonsense step to protect the integrity of elections that over 70 percent of Americans support and over 60 percent of African Americans support. In fact, recent polling now shows support for voter ID at over 80 percent, thanks, no doubt, to the relentless assault to voter ID mounted by Senate Democrats. The “Corrupt Politicians Act” would repeal the vast majority of these voter ID laws.

Likewise, 31 States prohibit ballot harvesting, the corrupt practice of paying political operatives to collect other people’s ballots. What would the “Corrupt Politicians Act” do? It would strike down all of those laws in 31 States and would mandate ballot harvesting nationwide. It would mean that paid political operatives from the Democratic National Committee could go to nursing homes and collect votes—some of those votes, no doubt, from individuals who may be no longer competent to make a decision. The reason 31 States have acted to ban ballot harvesting is it invites voter fraud. An unscrupulous operative can fill out the ballot for a senior citizen who no longer has the capacity to make a deci-

sion, and if that senior citizen has the temerity to vote in a way the operative doesn’t like, there is nothing to prevent the operative from throwing that ballot in the mail and simply not sending it in, only sending in the ballots that happen to comply with their own political preference. If you care even one whit about election integrity, striking down every prohibition on ballot harvesting is precisely the wrong step to take.

The “Corrupt Politicians Act” would also automatically register to vote anyone who comes in contact with the government. So if you get a welfare check, you get an unemployment check, you get a driver’s license, you go to a State college or State university, you are automatically registered to vote. What is the problem with that? The problem with that, as the authors of the bill know, is that would register millions of illegal aliens to vote. Millions of illegal aliens come into contact with the government, and automatic registration is designed to register millions of illegal aliens.

How do we know this? We know this, among other things, because the bill explicitly immunizes the State officials who would be registering illegal aliens to vote. It grants a safe harbor and says, when you illegally register illegal aliens, you will have no liability. If you care about the integrity of elections, registering millions of illegal aliens to dilute and steal the votes of legal American citizens is exactly the opposite way to go.

Not only that, many States have reasonable restrictions on felons and on criminals voting. What does the “Corrupt Politicians Act” do? It strikes all of those down and instead mandates that all felons should be allowed to vote—murderers, rapists, child molesters all allowed to vote because Democrats have made the cynical calculation that if millions of illegal aliens are allowed to vote and millions of criminals and felons are allowed to vote, that those individuals are likely to vote Democrat and Democrats want to stay in power.

The bill also prevents States from correcting voter rolls and from removing people who passed away. You can’t go in when someone’s dead and say, you know, dead people shouldn’t be voting. No, this bill mandates: Leave the dead people on the rolls—another step designed to invite fraud.

Moreover, the “Corrupt Politicians Act” is welfare for politicians. This bill is designed to give hundreds of millions of dollars every year to corrupt incumbent politicians to keep them in power. It matches, for contributions under \$200, 6 to 1 Federal funds so that the Members of this body would receive, collectively, over a billion dollars in Federal funds to stay in power. That is great if you are a corrupt politician who wants to prevent a challenger from ever defeating you. And if you want to prevent the voters from making a different choice, then you flood

them with Federal funds to make it so you can't beat corrupt incumbents, but that is not what you do if you want to protect the right to vote.

This bill is brazen. It is so brazen that the joke really is admitted in one provision of the bill. The Federal Election Commission was created in the wake of Watergate, designed to protect integrity in our elections. It was, from the beginning, designed to be bipartisan—three Republicans, three Democrats—because Congress recognized that a partisan Federal Election Commission would be deeply injurious to our democracy, that to have a Federal Election Commission with any integrity, it needed to be bipartisan, which means you needed a bipartisan majority to act in order to ensure that neither party weaponizes the Federal election laws.

What does the "Corrupt Politicians Act" do? It turns the Federal Election Commission into a partisan body, shifts it from three Republicans and three Democrats to three Democrats and two Republicans. It turns it into an arm of the Democratic Senate Committee, in effect. Nothing in this bill is as cynical as that provision. We are in a 50–50 Senate. We have close elections in this race.

The Presiding Officer is a sophisticated political player. I want you to ask for a second, in a close election, in the weeks before the election, if the Senate majority leader had the ability to launch investigations from the Federal Election Commission, to bring prosecutions from the Federal Election Commission to sue the political opponents of the majority, how much would that invite abuse?

I understand right now Democrats are in power of both Houses of Congress and the White House. Power can be intoxicating. But I do want to point out it wasn't that long ago that the Presiding Officer and I were both in this body—4 years ago—when there was a Republican President and a Republican House and a Republican Senate. You didn't see the Republican majority try anything as brazen as the "Corrupt Politicians Act." You didn't see a Republican majority trying to rig the game, trying to change the rules so that Republicans could never be defeated in the next election. You didn't see the Republican majority trying to turn the Federal Election Commission into a partisan weapon.

I ask you, what level of comfort would you have as an elected Democrat if MITCH MCCONNELL had control of the Federal Election Commission, if it were Republican partisan agents? I think you would be entirely justified in being concerned that it would be used as a political weapon to hurt you. Your last election was a relatively close election. Imagine 2 weeks before the election if a Republican Federal Election Commission had mounted a sweeping investigation in the massive campaign finance violations by the incumbent Senator who happened to be of the

party that was out of power. You would rightly feel that it was grotesquely unfair; yet that is what every Senate Democrat just voted to create.

You know, the most pernicious aspect of this bill has been the racial demagoguery that it has invited. We have heard the Senate majority leader invoke, in booming terms, specters from our sorry history of racial discrimination in the past. The Senate majority leader has used the phrase "Jim Crow 2.0" repeatedly—as has the President of the United States, as has the Vice President of the United States—deliberately inflaming racial tensions, suggesting that laws, commonsense voter integrity laws in States like Georgia and Texas, things like requiring voter ID or requiring signature verification on absentee ballots, are somehow a modern manifestation of Jim Crow. That is a grotesque lie.

The majority leader knows that. The President of the United States knows that. The Vice President of the United States knows—they know they are lying. But, ironically, they inadvertently said something that is accurate about this piece of legislation. Jim Crow legislation was grotesque and ugly. It was legislation that was drafted, without exception, by Democratic politicians. Jim Crow was written by Democratic politicians, and its purpose, when the Jim Crow laws were written, were to prevent the voters from ever voting out of office Democratic politicians. It is one of the ugliest chapters of our Nation's history. And thankfully, we repudiated Jim Crow.

Well, the majority leader used the phrase "Jim Crow 2.0," and inadvertently, he is right, but not about what he is describing. He is right about the "Corrupt Politicians Act." The "Corrupt Politicians Act" follows the exact same pattern that Jim Crow did. It is partisan legislation, written by elected Democrats, designed to keep elected Democrats in office and to steal the right to vote from the citizenry to decide on somebody else. Democracy is too important for that.

And the kind of cynical racial demagoguery that we have seen around this bill, while ignoring the substance of it—and I will point out the media has been eager to ignore the substance of it. The media says: Should we protect the right to vote? Yes, we should protect the right to vote.

This bill takes away your right to vote. This bill is designed to prevent the voters from choosing to throw the bums out—the most fundamental right of any voter to throw the bums out, whether they are one side or the other side. We the people have sovereignty, and this bill, the "Corrupt Politicians Act" was designed to take that power from the people and give it to the politicians in Washington.

So today was a victory. It was a victory for the American people. It was a victory for democracy. It was a victory for the Constitution. And it was a victory for the rule of law.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The Senator from New York.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1520

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I rise today for the 13th time to call for every Senator to have the opportunity to vote on a commonsense, bipartisan bill, the Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act.

This bill would ensure that members of our military would get the justice and the justice system that their sacrifices deserve. We do not have time to delay. I began calling for a floor vote on this bill on May 24. That is 29 days ago. Since then, it is estimated that 1,624 servicemembers will have been raped or sexually assaulted. More will have been victims of other serious crimes.

Many of them will feel that there is no point in even reporting the crime because they have no faith in the current military justice system. That is because right now, if a servicemember reports a crime, the case and their fate will be put into a commander's hands.

This bill argues, instead, that our servicemembers who are victims of serious crimes or who are accused of serious crimes should have those cases reviewed by an impartial, trained, military prosecutor. It does not say that commanders are removed from their responsibility with regard to the military justice system. It doesn't say that commanders are relieved of their responsibility of ensuring good order and discipline. Under this bill, commanders will still have the full array of tools to implement good order and discipline—counseling, restriction, confinement, protective orders, rank reduction, non-judicial punishment, summary court-martial, and even special court-martial. None of these change under the law.

In addition, under today's system, only 3 percent of commanders have the right to do convening authority for general court-martial. So the truth is, it is a small number of commanders who will be even affected by this legislation. But I can promise you, the view from the servicemembers will be significant because they will now see that if they are someone who has been assaulted or harassed or had any justice need, that the person reviewing the case would be highly trained and unbiased. And if you are a Black or Brown servicemember who is disproportionately punished under the current system, you would know that the decision maker was impartial, unbiased, and highly trained. This change is something that will help both victims of sexual assault and also defendants' rights.

For serious crimes, we need both pieces of this puzzle, and this bill provides both. It will still allow commanders to take the administrative steps to send a message to their troops about what is or is not tolerated, and 97 percent of them have to do that

every day without having convening authority for general court-martial. It will allow for victims and their families to get real justice.

The Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act will deliver the results that our servicemembers and their families deserve without compromising command authority. That is what our allies have said. The UK, Germany, Israel, Australia, the Netherlands, and Canada have all testified to our body in various hearings and various committees that they saw no diminution in command control and no diminution in the ability to prepare and train troops.

The truth is that this is a reform whose time has come, and every minute we delay, we are not standing by our servicemembers. It is a change that has been supported by veterans groups across the country. Whether it is the Iraq and Afghanistan association of veterans, whether it is the Vietnam veterans association, whether it is the Foreign Legion or the Veterans of Foreign Wars, military veterans support this bill.

This is a change whose time has come, and I request that we have a floor vote to decide this.

Sixty-six Senators on a bipartisan basis support this. The committee has been addressing this issue for 8 years. We have already passed 250 smaller reforms, none of which has had a dent on the problem. It is time to do the reform that survivors have asked for and that veterans organizations support.

I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate Armed Services Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1520 and the Senate proceed to its consideration; that there be 2 hours for debate equally divided in the usual form; and that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the bill with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REED. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I would like to thank my colleague from New York for her work to move this issue forward. But once again, I would object to the request for the reasons I have previously stated.

In addition, today the ranking member of the committee, Senator INHOFE, released the written views of each member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which he had requested on Senator GILLIBRAND's proposed legislation.

I understand that some in our body might discount these views of senior military leadership, and that is their prerogative. But I do believe it is important that their voices be part of the public discourse. They have dedicated their lives to the service of this Nation. They have led troops in combat. They have experienced all of the issues that

face commanders and face subordinates. They have a unique, I think, position within the system. In addition, the military will have to implement whatever system Congress devises, and it will require their expertise and skill.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Senator INHOFE.

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

CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS
OF STAFF,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JAMES M. INHOFE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR INHOFE: Thank you for your continued support and sincere interest in assessing the impact of proposed legislation on the Armed Forces. As I understand the scope of the "Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act of 2021," the draft bill would remove the commander from decisions for all non-military offenses and felony cases punishable by one year or more, including the following: prohibited activities with military recruits or trainees by a person in position of special trust; wrongful broadcast or distribution of intimate visual images; murder; manslaughter; death or injury of an unborn child; child endangerment; rape and sexual assault; mails; deposit of obscene matter; rape and sexual assault of a child; other sexual misconduct; larceny and wrongful appropriation; fraudulent use or credit cards, debit cards, and other access devices; false pretenses to obtain services; robbery; frauds against the United States; bribery; graft; kidnapping; arson, burning properly with intent to defraud; extortion; aggravated assault; assault with intent to commit murder, voluntary manslaughter, rape, sexual assault, rape of a child, sexual assault of a child, robbery, arson, burglary, or kidnapping; maiming; domestic violence; stalking; perjury; subordination of perjury; obstructing justice; misprision or serious offense; wrongful refusal to testify; prevention or authorized seizure of property; noncompliance with procedural rules; wrongful interference with adverse administrative proceeding; and retaliation.

The Uniform Code of Military Justice exists to provide justice and to maintain good order and discipline, both of which directly contribute to unit cohesion and U.S. military effectiveness in combat. The military is unique in that commanders must maintain good order and discipline in order to successfully perform on the battlefield under the most intense of circumstances. Commanders' orders must have the force or law, and all within his or her unit must acknowledge this authority. With this responsibility to enforce the rule of law comes accountability.

It is my professional opinion that removing commanders from prosecution decisions, process, and accountability may have an adverse effect on readiness, mission accomplishment, good order and discipline, justice, unit cohesion, trust, and loyalty between commanders and those they lead. However, in the specific and limited circumstance of sexual assault, I remain open-minded to all solutions. This is a complex and difficult issue. I urge caution to ensure any changes to commander authority to enforce discipline be rigorously analyzed, evidence-based, and narrow in scope, limited only to sexual assault and related offenses.

As I am sure you are aware, the Secretary of Defense established the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the

Military on February 26, 2021, chartered to address the multiple aspects and factors of this issue. It is my belief we have not made sufficient progress in recent years to eliminate sexual assault, and we have consequently lost the trust and confidence of many Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Guardians in the chain of command's ability to adjudicate these serious crimes. I intend to reserve judgement until I have an opportunity to review the final recommendations of the Independent Review Commission to determine the merits of any such recommendations vis-a-vis proposed legislation currently in the Senate and House of Representatives.

I remain committed to providing you my candid personal views and will do so after I have reviewed the recommendations of the Commission. I look forward to providing you my personal assessment on this matter in the near future.

Sincerely,

MARK A. MILLEY,
General, U.S. Army.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I won't quote from this letter at length now, but I would just point out that the Chiefs are open-minded about changing the way we prosecute sexual assault and harassment within the ranks. So am I. In fact, I think that is something that I hope becomes clear in our progress legislatively moving forward. But they nevertheless stress the importance of ensuring that any change Congress enacts must be carefully tailored to address the problems we are trying to solve, and the critical problem we are trying to solve is sexual assault, sexual harassment, any kind of crime dealing with sexual misconduct.

In addition, adequate time and resources must be afforded for implementing any of the changes that we propose. The nature and the magnitude of change we are contemplating here is complex; we have to make sure we do this right.

Further, we have heard over the past few years from the leadership of the military service Judge Advocate Generals' Corps, who have uniformly opposed these changes in nature and scope. These are the military lawyers, the very military justice experts to whom this bill would invest authority currently reserved to commanders. I believe we should listen to them as well and move prudently and deliberately to address the problem at hand.

So, as I have said a number of times already, I intend to include the administration's recommendations that derive from the President's Independent Review Commission in the markup of the Defense bill, subject to amendment, not to move the bill on the floor without the chance for my colleagues in the committee to have their voices heard. These ladies and gentlemen have dedicated themselves to military policy for many years. They are experts in different dimensions of this issue, and they will add significantly to the debate.

To simply take a bill and send to it the floor without amendments I think is not the way to proceed. I anticipate a bill that will be strengthened through debate and discussion and deliberation by the committee.

With that, I would reiterate my objection to Senator GILLIBRAND's request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I disagree with the chairman because the service chiefs and commanders for the last 8 years have objected to any serious reform. In fact, they have said time and again "Trust us. Trust us. We will get this right" and have objected to any major reform.

In fact, that is what they did anytime we tried to reform the military—they objected on the same basis, using the same words, when we tried to repeal don't ask, don't tell. They objected in the same way when we tried to allow women to get credit for being in combat. They objected in the same way when we integrated the military.

So to hear these objections over and over again after the committee has studied this issue for 8 years and allowed 250 reforms to be put into the NDAA—all of which were OK by the DOD—just flies in the face of reality.

The military has demanded sole responsibility of these cases for the 8 years that I have worked on this issue, and have they denied the problem? No. Sexual assaults were estimated at 20,000 by the military last they counted. Has the rate of cases going to trial increased? No. Has the rate of cases that have ended in conviction increased? No. So under no measurable has the DOD got a handle on this.

For the chairman to say it has to go through the committee, this issue has been going through the committee for 8 years. In fact, when I passed bipartisan reform with people like Senator JONI ERNST on the safe to report language, it was taken out in conference by the same DOD staff who didn't want it in there in the first place.

So under the chairman's view, this bill could certainly go through committee. We have more than half of the members. But I promise you, it will be watered down or taken out in conference because the chairman and the ranking member are against it, and they have the authority to do so. So he is not offering a fair process.

The fact that this bill has 66 cosponsors—how many bills in America, in this body, have the support of TED CRUZ and LIZ WARREN, of MITCH MCCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER? None. This is the kind of bipartisan bill that this country is yearning for, the kind of commonsense reform that can protect servicemembers.

While the chairman is so interested in supporting what the generals and the admirals and the top commanders want, why does he not listen to the servicemembers themselves, to the people who have suffered sexual assault, to the people who have suffered racial bias in prosecution? Those are the people he should be listening to, not the top brass.

We have deferred to them the entire 10 years I have been on this committee,

and in the entire 10 years, our committee has failed. It is time to bring this bill to the floor.

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

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

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, just a short time ago on this Senate floor, we witnessed a low point for this body. We witnessed every Republican Senator voting against moving forward to consider legislation to strengthen our democracy. We witnessed all 50 Republican Senators voting to block consideration of the For the People Act.

I don't know why people are afraid of debating this issue, which is so fundamental to our country at this particular point in time. This bill, the For the People Act, has many important provisions. One of them, of course, is to establish minimum national standards, to make sure that every eligible American voter can access the ballot box. That should be something we all want. We should want every American eligible to vote to be out there exercising his or her right to vote, to participate in the decision making in our democracy. And yet not a single Republican Senator voted to proceed with that debate, even though this bill is more important now than ever before because we see, as we speak, Republican State legislatures, in so many places around our country, voting to erect barriers to the ballot box.

We see this in State after State, a pure partisan power play to rig the rules, to win elections by subtraction—not to win elections through the hurly-burly debate over the issues of the day, not to win elections by talking about the agenda that somebody is advocating and why someone should vote for a particular candidate. That is the way it is supposed to be. But these are legislatures that are putting up barriers to make it harder for people to access the ballot and specifically designing these barriers to try to limit participation by people of color and by younger voters.

We saw that even before the aftermath of this election. We saw it in the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision in *Shelby v. Holder*. We saw Texas and North Carolina and other States adopting these kind of restrictive voting laws. You don't have to take my word for it; the U.S. courts took a look at the North Carolina law that was passed a number of years ago and said that they targeted African-American voters with "surgical precision" to try to keep them from accessing the voting booth, and that is exactly the kind of thing that is going on now in State

after State around the country: trying to win, not by the addition and multiplication of democracy, but by subtraction and by division.

And so why are these States doing this at this moment? They are doing it because of the Big Lie that was perpetrated in the aftermath of our Presidential election, a lie that the former President persists in spewing and repeating to this very moment, the lie that he was somehow cheated or robbed out of an election that led to the attack on this Capitol on January 6.

It is that lie that is giving rise to these actions in State legislatures. It is that lie that sadly led this body just a short while ago to block consideration of a bill to establish a commission to look at what happened on January 6. That bill, too, was filibustered just like this one, in order to prevent the American people from getting to the bottom of the Big Lie. Republican Senators blocked that, too. They don't want the country to know, and they are perfectly happy to allow all these State legislatures to put up barriers to voting as part of that Big Lie narrative.

And we know it is a big lie for so many reasons. Of course, President Trump and his campaign took their claims to courts throughout the country. Over 60 courts said those were ridiculous claims. President Trump's own Justice Department and his Attorney General, former Attorney General Barr, before he stepped down, said there was no wrongdoing in this election that would change any kind of outcome.

The President's point person at the Department of Homeland Security, responsible for monitoring the integrity of elections, has testified before Congress and said very clearly that the 2020 Presidential election was the most secure election in American history—most secure in American history. That is from the person in charge of election integrity in President Trump's own administration.

So why are all these States enacting these barriers to voting after an election that the Trump Homeland Security Department said was the most secure in history? It is because so many people turned out and voted in that secure election and they didn't like the outcome.

So when you don't like the outcome in elections, instead of taking your case to the American people and saying, Vote for us next time because here is our agenda for the country, here is what we are going to do—instead, they decided they are going to try to win by putting up barriers to try to prevent those large turnouts, especially from people of color, and we saw younger voters come out in 2020.

So the decision to block this bill from debate is just a continuation of protecting the Big Lie. It is a continuation of protecting the Big Lie that is being fueled around the country by Donald Trump's continuous fraudulent claims, which unfortunately have seized the Republican Party.

We saw what happened in the House of Representatives. LIZ CHENEY, a stalwart conservative, ousted from her leadership position because she didn't pay homage to the former President. That is what is going on here. That is what is going on in the House, and that is what is reflected in this vote today, the refusal to even debate a bill to strengthen our democracy. Come to the floor, tell us what you don't like, tell us what you want to do. Do you really believe that what these State legislatures are doing is a good thing for our democracy?

I know it is easier not to have to talk about that, easier to ignore that, but we are not going to let this issue go away. We are going to be here week after week to make sure that we continue to push this For the People Act.

Now, in addition to the provisions to establish minimal protections so every eligible voter can access the voting booth, the For the People Act also has a number of very important provisions that are overwhelmingly popular with the American people. One of them is the incorporation of what is known as the DISCLOSE Act.

The DISCLOSE Act does a very simple thing: It gets rid of secret corporate money being plowed into our elections through these secret super PACs. You know what happened after the decision in *Citizens United* were two things. One, corporate money could flow in unlimited amounts into elections, but the Supreme Court at the time said: You can at least be aware of who is spending this money if you pass laws to make sure it is transparent.

In fact, a lot of the Justices who voted to overturn the *Citizens United*—excuse me, voted to allow corporate money in politics, who were the majority in *Citizens United*, have also said in that same opinion that they essentially expected Congress to enact laws to ensure transparency.

In fact, eight of the nine Supreme Court Justices in that case took that position. Yet the Republican leader, who in the early 2000s called for more transparency when it came to money being spent in elections, is taking the opposite idea: We don't want the public to know who is spending all that money. We want it to be secret.

I think most of us would agree and I know the American public agrees that they have a right to know who is spending millions and millions of dollars to try to influence their votes. We know that because survey after survey shows that Republicans, Democrats, and Independents all agree that they should know who is spending all of this dark money.

When you see a TV commercial that says, "Paid for by the Committee for America," you should know who is financing that ad to try to influence your vote. It is a very simple principle. Voters have a right to know. It was a principle agreed to by conservative jurists like Justice Scalia. And yet the position of the Republican Senators

today was: We don't even want to talk about that. We don't even want to debate that provision.

By the way, that provision, the DISCLOSE Act, passed the House back in 2010, and it came here to the U.S. Senate, and the Senate version of the DISCLOSE Act was debated on this Senate floor, and 59 Senators at that time voted to proceed with the bill.

You might say: 59 Senators, that is the majority; why didn't it pass? Because of the filibuster rule. They needed 60. And 59 Senators said: We want disclosure. And 59 Senators said: Get rid of secret money. But because of the filibuster rule, it didn't pass. It couldn't get to final passage on a simple majority.

If that had passed back in 2010, we wouldn't have our airwaves flooded with secret money today. We would have done what the American people wanted. The DISCLOSE Act is in this bill now, and once again, 11 years later, Republican Senators are filibustering the bill for the DISCLOSE Act.

They don't want the American people to know who is spending all of that money, mostly corporate money, flowing underground under the radar screen through our political system to try to elect candidates of the choice of whatever special interests are spending that money. They don't want you to know who they are, who is spending all that money to elect people. So why don't we all agree we are going to get rid of secret money? Apparently, we don't even want to debate that.

Another provision that is universally popular with the American people is the idea that we should have nationwide nonpartisan congressional districting. Let's draw congressional districts not based on politics but based on some nonpartisan criteria.

I think we all heard the line that it should not be the case that politicians are picking the voters. Voters should pick their elected officials. These days, people can draw congressional district maps with incredible precision with the use of computers. You can literally try and draw a congressional district designed to get exactly the electorate they want.

I don't think that is the way the Founders expected it to end up working, to get a computer that could draw these districts with that kind of precision and accuracy. And so one of the other important provisions in the For the People Act is, Let's draw congressional districts so that, we, the people, can make these decisions without the lines having been drawn to predetermine the outcome. That is also in this bill.

It also has some other important provisions that I support to try to reduce the impact and influence of big money contributors to allow people with lesser means to be able to contribute to elections and have some element of public financing so that the system is more geared toward the public interest than relying exclusively on the private

big contributions. That is another provision that is in the For the People Act.

Some people may disagree with that. Come to the floor, debate it, offer an amendment to get rid of it, let's vote. But what we saw today was a refusal to engage in the democratic process of debate in consideration of a bill. They used this provision, the filibuster provision, to block a bill to help protect and strengthen our democracy, and that is a sad and shameful day in the U.S. Senate.

But I am going to end with this. This issue is not going away. I was glad to see that even as every Republican Senator voted no, every Democratic Senator united together to say, We stand for the idea that we should have some minimal national standards for access to the ballot booth to protect our democracy and that we should get rid of secret money in politics.

Every Democrat said, Let's proceed to debate a bill that has those important provisions in it. And so we are not going away. This is a vote that may be a temporary setback, but it is my strong view that, at the end of the day, democracy will prevail in the sense that it will be strengthened and that the American people are not going to stand for a process that reinforces the Big Lie that was perpetrated on this country.

And so the good news—the good news, as I said, is every Democratic Senator said yes to moving forward, and we will find a way to get this done. We will find a way to protect our democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

RECOGNIZING JULY 1, 2021, AS THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 282, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 282) recognizing July 1, 2021, as the 100th anniversary of the Government Accountability Office and commending the service of the Government Accountability Office to Congress and the United States.

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I further 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. 282) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

AMENDING THE SARBANES-OXLEY ACT OF 2002

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2184 introduced earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2184) to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to institute a trading prohibition for certain issuers that retain public accounting firms that have not been subject to inspection by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2184) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 2184

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

SECTION 1. TRADING PROHIBITION FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE NON-INSPECTION YEARS.

Section 104(i) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (15 U.S.C. 7214(i)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A)(ii), by striking "the foreign jurisdiction described in clause (i)" and inserting "a foreign jurisdiction"; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking "3" and inserting "2"; and

(B) in subparagraph (A), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking "3" and inserting "2".

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1251

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader following consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 74, S. 1251; that the only amendments in order be the following: Lee amendment No. 2119.

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that there be 2 hours for debate equally divided on the bill; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the Lee amendment; that the bill be considered read a third time; the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as

amended, if amended; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 115.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ali Nouri, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs).

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate, and if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all without intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

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

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

NOMINATION OF KENNETH ALLEN POLITE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request relating to the nomination of Kenneth Allen Polite to be an Assistant Attorney General at the Department of Justice, PN423.

Last week, at the Senate Judiciary Committee's Executive Business Meeting, I noted my intent to object to Mr. Polite's confirmation not on the basis of his credentials—I happen to find him well qualified for the position—but on the basis of the Justice Department's failure to respond to congressional oversight requests.

To date, the Justice Department has failed to provide a full and complete response to any of my oversight requests.

As one of many examples, on February 3, 2021, and March 9, 2021, Senator JOHNSON and I requested informa-

tion from the Justice Department relating to Nicholas McQuaid. Mr. McQuaid is Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, the position Mr. Polite will hold upon confirmation. In those letters, we raised concerns about potential conflicts of interest in light of the fact that Mr. McQuaid was employed at Latham & Watkins until January 20, 2021, and worked with Christopher Clark, whom Hunter Biden reportedly hired to work on his Federal criminal case.

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

As a part of my oversight, I have requested a recusal memo for Mr. McQuaid. I have also requested to know, as a threshold issue, whether one even exists.

Attorney General Garland has failed to answer and provide the requested records. I have noted to the Department that in 2016 I received from the Department Andrew McCabe's recusal memo to illustrate precedent exists for such a production to Congress. Still, the Justice Department refuses to provide the same for Mr. McQuaid.

There is nothing more eroding of public faith than an unresponsive executive branch that believes it only answers to the President and not the U.S. Congress and, perhaps most importantly, "we the people."

This administration's continued ongoing and blatant lack of cooperation has forced my hand. Thus, unfortunately, I must object to any consideration of this nomination. My objection is not intended to question the credentials of Mr. Polite in any way. The executive branch must recognize that it has an ongoing obligation to respond to congressional inquiries in a timely and reasonable manner.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BAPTIST HEALTH

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Baptist Health of Arkansas's centennial—a significant and commendable milestone.

Today, Arkansans are gathering to celebrate this institution and its staff that have been dedicated to providing exceptional faith-based healthcare to its patients, strengthening communities through compassionate service, and continuously responding to the ever-changing health needs of Arkansans.

On February 16, 1921, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention incorporated Baptist State Hospital to ensure Arkansans had access to quality, faith-

based healthcare. Baptist Health started with a mere 70 beds and in just 1 year more than tripled that number, administering care to more than 300 patients. The hospital's humble beginnings show the diligence of the men and women who, through intense devotion, made this organization what it is today.

The dedication of Baptist Health's providers is a testament to this healing ministry's service and commitment to its patients. For 100 years patients from across the State, Nation and world have relied on the hospital's incredible doctors, nurses and staff to perform lifesaving treatments and surgeries.

This institution has served the State of Arkansas in numerous ways, from creating thousands of jobs to supporting the State economy and saving the lives of countless patients. Baptist Health has created reliable medical service across the State and helped many medical professionals in their educations and careers.

Baptist Health has been a leader in medical advancement in Arkansas, and its community of medical professionals have made tremendous sacrifices to serve and care for patients. Their dedication has been apparent during the COVID-19 public health crisis. This devotion to its mission has made Baptist Health Arkansas's largest and most comprehensive not-for-profit healthcare organization. From the doctors and nurses to the office workers and maintenance staff, each member of the team demonstrates a passion for helping and healing.

Congratulations to Baptist Health on 100 years of service and dedication to helping Arkansans live long and healthy lives. I look forward to its continued excellence in healthcare for our State for many more years.●

REMEMBERING EMMANUEL LARRYN SLACK

● Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, Emmanuel Larryn Slack, age 17, entered into eternal rest on Friday, June 4, 2021, at Oschner LSU Hospital in Shreveport, LA. Emmanuel was born on January 18, 2004, to Melvin G. Slack, Jr., and Bridgette L. Williams in Shreveport, LA. While attending Union Spring Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor Roosevelt Seaberry, he was an active member of the youth choir and the drill team. Upon changing residences, he later accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior under the leadership of Pastor Joey Ketchum at the Western Hills Baptist Church. He was a faithful and active member in the ministry. Gifted with reaching young people, he became active with Bible studies, Vacation Bible School, and Youth Group activities under both leaders. Emmanuel attended Huntington High School, where he was a member of the Yearbook club and participated in JROTC. When thinking of career choices, he was originally cer-

tain he wanted to be a police officer or an FBI agent, but it was after he took an interest in politics and the Republican Party that he began to thrive. He became active with the Texas Young Republicans and Republican Women of Bossier, where he expressed his beliefs in American individualism, rule of law, the Constitution, and the Holy Bible, which guided him to greatness and continual self-improvement. Emmanuel expressed his views across Louisiana and Texas lines and considered himself to be bipartisan, a conservative Republican, a proud soon-to-be Texan, upholding traditional values like bravery, courage, leadership, and principle, and above all, a follower of Christ. Emmanuel was actively working on an internship with Rhonda Anderson of Longview, TX. He was embraced by Governor Greg Abbott's office; Tarrant County Young Republicans of Fort Worth, TX; attorney general of Louisiana Jeff Landry's office; Caddo Parish Commissioner Jim Taliaferro; Commissioner Mario Chavez of District 10; Congressman MIKE JOHNSON of the Fourth District of Louisiana; Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana Billy Nungesser; Republican Women of Bossier; and Ouachita Parish Republican Women. His hope was to become a Governor, Senator, or President.

Preceding Emmanuel in death were his maternal grandmother Marel D. Williams, grandfather Larry N. Williams, Sr., and paternal grandfather Melvin Slack, Sr., a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He leaves to celebrate his life parents Bridgette L. Williams and Melvin G. Slack, Jr.; paternal grandmother Jackie Spivey Slack; brothers Triston M. Williams, Nehemiah C. Slack, and Melvin Slack III; sisters De'Angelique Slack and Jasmine Slack; Godparents Tamra P. Thompson, Michael Pennywell; Pastor Handy Giles and First Lady Charlene Giles; aunt Yolanda Y. Williams-Brown; uncle Larry N. Williams, Jr.; special friends Mario Chavez, Jenna Marie Kimball, Tayler Davis, Clayton Quinn, Parker Ward, and Whitney Scates; mentors, Christ Henry and Joshua Harvey; as well as several uncles, aunts, and loving cousins.●

RECOGNIZING THE INTERNATIONAL FALLS JOURNAL

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, today I rise to honor and pay tribute to the International Falls Journal, the local newspaper of the International Falls and Koochiching County communities that has provided timely, trustworthy, and thorough reporting to Minnesotans for the past 110 years. On June 24, 2021, the International Falls Journal will sadly publish its final edition.

Founded in 1911 by Clarence Burton Montgomery as The Daily Journal, the then-daily paper has been a community staple since its start, informing locals of who was born and who died, local business news, and what happened at

city council and school board meetings. Through different disasters and crises, The Journal made sure they delivered the news to their readers. In 1988, a fire ripped through its office on a Friday night, claiming most of the building and everything inside, including the paper's equipment. Still, that Monday and for weeks following the fire while the outlet was without printers, the paper was published as planned. This was 38 years after the great flood of 1950, when—you guessed it—the paper still ended up on their readers' doorsteps despite the unprecedented circumstance.

The paper went through several owners before landing in the hands of Arlin Albrecht and Phil Duff, The Journal's current publishers, who purchased the paper in 1974.

Regardless of ownership, locals have always been able to count on The Journal. International Falls Area Chamber of Commerce President Tricia Heibel said it well: "From births, deaths, marriages, school events and sporting highlights, from lost pets to everything else, it was just a really central communication tool."

As the daughter of a newspaperman, I grew up knowing just how important local newspapers like the International Falls Journal are. In fact, it is thanks to the presence of a local newspaper—the Duluth Herald—in my dad's childhood home that my grandmother spotted his interest in storytelling when he was just 12. Local papers played an irreplaceable role in my father's life, as they continue to today for countless readers.

But today, newspapers of all sizes are struggling and closing. Ad revenue for U.S. newspapers plummeted from \$49.4 billion in 2005 to \$14.3 billion in 2018. During that time, two other companies, Facebook and Google—worth over \$2.4 trillion combined—became advertising titans. These two companies don't just control the majority of online advertising; they have built power over the news and crushed local news outlets along the way.

With the closure of The Journal, we are once again seeing the impacts of this firsthand. We can't stand by and watch this happen to our independent press. That is why I have introduced bipartisan legislation to let news publishers join together to negotiate fair terms with these giant digital corporations. We must give independent papers the chance to compete.

But even as we work to ensure other papers are able to keep their lights on, the International Falls Journal is a reminder of the value of local journalism. For more than a century, it has empowered its readers by providing them with accurate, relevant information about their communities. It has captured moments big and small that together tell a beautiful story of the region that will live on.

Even as it closes its doors, generations will benefit from the legacy it leaves behind.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

PRIVILEGED NOMINATION
REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary: Kenneth Allen Polite, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Brian Allen Benczkowski.

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-1225. A communication from the Director, Regulations Management Division, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) Grant Program" (RIN0570-AB06) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1226. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Purpleocillium lilacinum strain PL11; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 10023-91-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1227. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tolfenpyrad; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 10024-51-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1228. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1229. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, with respect to North Korea; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1230. A communication from the Sanctions Regulations Advisor, Office of Foreign

Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final rule adding new part 525, the Burma Sanctions Regulations, to 31 C.F.R. chapter V" (31 CFR Part 525) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1231. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the situation in Hong Kong that was declared in Executive Order 13936 of July 14, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1232. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the International Criminal Court that was declared in Executive Order 13928 of June 11, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1233. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Examinations for Risks to Active-Duty Servicemembers and Their Covered Dependents" (12 CFR Chapter 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1234. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Rule on Standards for Business Practices and Communication Protocols for Public Utilities" ((RIN1902-AF72) (Docket Nos. RM05-5-029 and RM05-5-030)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1235. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revision of Fee Schedules; Fee Recovery for Fiscal Year 2021" (RIN3150-AK24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1236. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; California; San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 10024-56-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1237. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Multi-Pollutant Standards Rule, Control of Emissions from Large Combustion Sources" (FRL No. 10024-92-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1238. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Iowa; State Implementation Plan and State Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants" (FRL No. 10024-99-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1239. A communication from the Direc-

tor of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Nebraska; Revisions to Title 129 of the Nebraska Administrative Code; Chapter 39 Visible Emissions from Diesel-powered Motor Vehicles" (FRL No. 10025-00-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1240. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Monitoring requirements" (FRL No. 10024-84-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1241. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Quality Implementation Plan; California; Mendocino County Air Quality Management District; Stationary Source Permits" (FRL No. 10024-19-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1242. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "State of Michigan Underground Injection Control (UIC) Class II Program; Primacy Approval" (FRL No. 10023-18-OW) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1243. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Arizona; Stationary Sources; New Source Review Updates" (FRL No. 10024-21-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1244. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Connecticut; Definitions of emergency and emergency engine" (FRL No. 10024-87-Region 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1245. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Volatile Organic Material Definition Update" (FRL No. 10024-89-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1246. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Emissions Reporting Rule" (FRL No. 10024-93-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1247. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Michigan; Part 9 Miscellaneous Rule" (FRL No. 10024-97-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21,

2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1248. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Lead" (FRL No. 10024-91-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1249. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Improvements for Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle Test Procedures, and other Technical Amendments" (FRL No. 10018-52-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1250. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Lead and Copper Rule Revisions; Delay of Effective and Compliance Dates" (FRL No. 10024-33-OW) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1251. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Nevada: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions" (FRL No. 10024-12-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1252. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rescission of the Source-Specific Federal Implementation Plan for Navajo Generating Station, Navajo Nation" (FRL No. 10024-15-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1253. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2020 report of the Federal Coordinated Health Care Office; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1254. A communication from the Senior Advisor, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1255. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2021-0071 - 2021-0075); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1256. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's annual report concerning military assistance and military exports; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1257. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, fifty-two (52) reports rel-

ative to vacancies in the Department of State, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1258. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Milk and Cream Products and Yogurt Products; Final Rule to Revoke the Standards for Lowfat Yogurt and Nonfat Yogurt and to Amend the Standard for Yogurt" (RIN0910-A140) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1259. A communication from the Director, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2021-06, Introduction" (FAC 2021-06) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1260. A communication from the Principal Deputy Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "System Review Report"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1261. A communication from the Acting Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Performance Plan for fiscal years 2020-2022, and the Annual Performance Report for fiscal years 2020-2022; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1262. A communication from the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Semiannual Management Report for the period from October 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1263. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Lasmiditan in Schedule V" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-558)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1264. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Serdexmethylphenidate in Schedule IV" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-808)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1265. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Olliceridine in Schedule II" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-715)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1266. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Four Specific Fentanyl-Related Substances in

Schedule I" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-806)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1267. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of NM2201, 5F-AB-PINACA, 4-CN-CUMYL-BUTINACA, MMB-CHMICA, and 5F-CUMYL-P7AICA in Schedule I" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-479)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1268. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Remimazolam in Schedule IV" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-658)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1269. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Removal of Samidorphan From Control" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-665)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1270. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Annual Report for fiscal year 2020; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1271. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Office of Economics and Analytics, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Auction of Flexible-Use Service Licenses in the 3.45-3.55 GHz Band; Notice and Filing Requirements, Minimum Opening Bids, Upfront Payments, and Other Procedures for Auction 110; Bidding in Auction 110 Scheduled to Begin October 5, 2021 (Auction 110 Procedures Public Notice)" (AU Docket No. 21-62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1272. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services" ((WC Docket No. 12-375) (FCC 21-60)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. REED for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Ely Stefansky Ratner, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

*Shawn Graham Skelly, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

*Meredith Berger, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

*Gina Maria Ortiz Jones, of Texas, to be Under Secretary of the Air Force.

*Caroline Diane Krass, of the District of Columbia, to be General Counsel of the Department of Defense.

Navy nominations beginning with Rear Adm. (lh) Robert T. Clark and ending with Rear Adm. (lh) Theodore P. LeClair, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 13, 2021.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Eileen H. Laubacher, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nomination of Capt. David R. Storr, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nomination of Capt. Michael J. Schwerin, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Bradley D. Dunham and ending with Capt. Douglas W. Sasse III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 27, 2021.

Navy nomination of Capt. Dennis E. Collins, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Army nominations beginning with Col. Alison C. Martin and ending with Col. George R. Smawley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 27, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Eugene D. Cox and ending with Col. Deydre S. Teyhen, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 27, 2021.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Jonathan P. Braga, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Antonio A. Aguto, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Stuart W. Risch, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. David J. Furness, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Matthew G. Glavy, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Paul A. Chamberlain, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Haldane B. Lamberton, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Joseph A. Dinonno, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Michael N. Adame and ending with Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Winslow, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Robert A. Boyette and ending with Brig. Gen. Jimmie L. Cole, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Michael J. Garshak, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Damian K. Waddell, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Col. Mark G. Alessia, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Rose P. Keravuori, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Mark T. Simerly, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Christopher A. Holland and ending with Col. Chad E. Stone, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Derek L. Adams and ending with Col. Matthew S. Woodruff, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nomination of Vice Adm. William R. Merz, to be Vice Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Francis D. Morley, to be Vice Admiral.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Edwin J. Deedrick, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the Records

on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nomination of Whit A. Collins, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Timothy E. Holland, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Karl J. Vogel, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Nicholas R. Reynolds, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Jeannette M. Watterson, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Jason O. Allen, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Connie Irene Armstrong and ending with Kevin S. Yokley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Ramie K. Barfuss and ending with Dentonio Worrell, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 12, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Eric P. Ahnfeldt and ending with D016011, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 12, 2021.

Army nomination of Christopher A. Blanco, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Curt C. Lane, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with David P. Curlin and ending with Ernest P. West, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 25, 2021.

Army nomination of Michael R. Bean, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Daniel J. Meyers, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of James M. McKnight III, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Craig P. Lanigan, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Lisa M. Kopczynski, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Toby J. Alkire and ending with Joe E. Murdock, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 25, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Jeremy C. Abrams and ending with Brigitta Woodcox, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 25, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Donna M. Alexander and ending with Charles S. Zakhem, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 25, 2021.

Army nomination of Anthony C. Bonfiglio, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with David A. Acosta and ending with Meago H. Y. Yuotang, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 25, 2021.

Army nomination of David R. Evans, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Nicollette A. Dennis, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Waldo D. Galan, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Roger W. Dodson, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Chase D. Crabtree and ending with Travis H. Owen,

which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nomination of Donald A. Vacha, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Michael E. Lane, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Timothy J. Redhair, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Bryce E. Livingston and ending with Gregory K. Persley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Maria I. Bruton and ending with Young J. Yauger, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Ryan S. Bible and ending with Jason C. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Avery J. Carney and ending with Christopher C. Pase, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nominations beginning with Robin L. Burke and ending with Justin R. Schlanser, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Army nomination of Brenton A. Arihood, to be Major.

Army nomination of Tracy R. Norman, to be Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Anthony N. Sama, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Joseph L. Gill II, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Jaclyn N. Urso, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Paul J. Goguen, to be Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Benjamin E. Barr, to be Major.

Navy nominations beginning with Patricia H. Ajoy and ending with Wade C. Thames, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Robin C. Cherrett and ending with Mike E. Svatek, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Joseph B. Harrison II and ending with Brian L. Schulz, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Taylor R. Forester and ending with Danielle S. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with David B. Damato and ending with Anthony J. Toriello, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Roy L. Henkle and ending with Eric T. Ruiz, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Steven J. Dwyer and ending with Randy R. Reid, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Thomas P. Abbott and ending with Stephen V. Yenias, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Daniele Braham and ending with Richard E. Schmitt, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Shawn G. Gallaher and ending with Julie A. Spencer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael P. Aiena and ending with Tyrone Y. Voughs, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Josh A. Cassada and ending with John L. Young III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Kevin D. Bittle and ending with Michael P. Mulhern, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Jodie K. Cornell and ending with Joshua A. Frey, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Jeffrey N. Dugard and ending with Marvin D. Harris, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Kenneth O. Allison, Jr. and ending with Omar G. Martinez, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 28, 2021.

Navy nomination of Anne C. Mooser, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Kelly L. Byrne and ending with Nicolaas A. Verhoeven, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with John A. Allen and ending with Bradley J. Williford, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Jordan M. Adler and ending with Brian P. Worden, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Kyle C. Bachman and ending with Michael B. Zimet, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nomination of Ashley S. M. McAbee, to be Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Antonio Barcelos, Jr. and ending with Alfred J. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Christopher M. Antil and ending with Alan W. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Jemar R. Ballesteros and ending with Emily K. Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Marco A. Acosta and ending with John G. Zilai, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Sung H. Ahn and ending with Jon M. Washko, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Drew R. Barker and ending with Kristen S. Whitesell, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Miguel A. Bernal, Jr. and ending with Phillip A. Zamarripa, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Richard S. Chernitzer and ending with Russell P. Wolfkiel, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Jason K. Bruce and ending with Troy M. Willman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Sylvester C. Adamah and ending with Matthew T. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nomination of Patrick L. German, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Andrew S. Foor, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Kevin M. Bacon, to be Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Abdeslam Bousalham and ending with Charles S. White, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Chabonnie R. Alexander and ending with Jerry R. Tofte, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael J. Arnold and ending with Tamara J. Worlton, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Casey J. Burns and ending with Kirstin C. Wier, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Timothy D. Barnes and ending with Jacqueline P. Vanmoerkerque, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Derek Butler and ending with Brent E. Troyan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Accursia A. Baldassano and ending with Jacqueline R. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Anthony P. Bannister and ending with Michael R. Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Navy nominations beginning with Jennifer D. Bowden and ending with David A. Stroud, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Space Force nominations beginning with Heather J. Anderson and ending with Craig M. Zinck, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 25, 2021.

Space Force nominations beginning with Edward G. Ferguson and ending with Kimberly A. Templer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

Space Force nominations beginning with James J. Watson and ending with Lincoln K.

Miller, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 15, 2021.

By Mr. WARNER for the Select Committee on Intelligence.

*Christine Abizaid, of Maryland, to be Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

*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.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 2156. A bill to eliminate the disparity in sentencing for cocaine offenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 2157. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Center for Mental Health Services of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, to award grants to implement innovative approaches to securing prompt access to appropriate follow-on care for individuals who experience an acute mental health episode and present for care in an emergency department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2158. A bill to extend the authorization for the Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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

S. 2159. A bill to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 400 College Drive, Middleburg, Florida, as the "Andrew K. Baker Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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

S. 2160. A bill to prohibit the Administrator of General Services from establishing per diem reimbursements rates for travel within the continental United States (commonly known as "CONUS") for certain fiscal years below a certain level, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. LEE, and Mr. ROMNEY):

S. 2161. A bill to modify the restriction in section 3326 of title 5, United States Code, relating to the appointment of retired members of the Armed Forces to positions in the Department of Defense to apply to positions at or above the GS-14 level; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2162. A bill to require the Small Business Administration to publish loan default rates by franchise brand, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

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

S. 2163. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a plan to reduce the backlog of requests for information made to the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to section 552 of title 5, United States Code, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. BURR, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. DAINES, Mr. RISCH, Ms. ERNST, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2164. A bill to provide for certain reforms with respect to the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SASSE (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina):

S. 2165. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to allow parents of eligible military dependent children to establish Military Education Savings Accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 2166. A bill to provide that certain orders of the Federal Communications Commission shall have no force or effect until certain conditions are satisfied, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 2167. A bill to establish a national, research-based, and comprehensive home study assessment process for the evaluation of prospective foster parents and adoptive parents and provide funding to States and Indian tribes to adopt such process; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself, Ms. ERNST, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2168. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to modify the definition of navigable waters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 2169. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect more victims of domestic violence by preventing their abusers from possessing or receiving firearms, to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to establish a grant program relating to the removal of firearms from adjudicated domestic violence offenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 2170. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to provide for transparency and landowner protections in the conduct of lease sales under that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SASSE:

S. 2171. A bill to prohibit Presidential appointees from subsequently acting on behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Communist Party, and Chinese military companies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 2172. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve grants, payments, and technical assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to serve homeless veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. COTTON, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 2173. A bill to permit Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-recognized virtual diabetes prevention program suppliers to be included in the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program Expanded Model conducted by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation under section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KING:

S. 2174. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the annual wellness visit under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KING:

S. 2175. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of preventive home visits under Medicare, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 2176. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that floor plan financing includes the financing of certain trailers and campers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 2177. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to ensure sufficient bonding and complete and timely reclamation of land and water disturbed by Federal and Indian oil and gas production, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 2178. A bill to provide collective bargaining rights for fire fighters and emergency medical services personnel employed by States or their political subdivisions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 2179. A bill to provide grants to owners of intergenerational dwelling units, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 2180. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide a civil action against a foreign state for deliberate concealment or distortion of information with respect to an international public health emergency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 2181. A bill to amend the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act to authorize the Elder Justice Initiative, to require that online resources of such initiative are made available in Spanish, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2182. A bill to require the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to establish a national evictions database, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 2183. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate the financing for the Hazardous Substance Superfund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 2184. A bill to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to institute a trading prohibition

for certain issuers that retain public accounting firms that have not been subject to inspection by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. BURR):

S. Res. 281. A resolution recognizing the 25th anniversary of the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health and its critical role in America's biomedical research strategy by advancing biomedical research and the mission of the National Institutes of Health, the world's premier biomedical research agency; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. LANKFORD, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. ROMNEY):

S. Res. 282. A resolution recognizing July 1, 2021, as the 100th anniversary of the Government Accountability Office and commending the service of the Government Accountability Office to Congress and the United States; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 75

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 75, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit discrimination by abortion against an unborn child on the basis of Down syndrome.

S. 150

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 150, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require the inclusion of certain audio-only diagnoses in the determination of risk adjustment for Medicare Advantage plans, and for other purposes.

S. 189

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 189, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 198

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 198, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to incorporate data on maternal health outcomes into its broadband health maps.

S. 346

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 346, a bill to end preventable maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity in the United States and close disparities in maternal health outcomes, and for other purposes.

S. 452

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 452, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 456

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 456, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 464

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 464, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to require a group health plan or health insurance coverage offered in connection with such a plan to provide an exceptions process for any medication step therapy protocol, and for other purposes.

S. 753

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 753, a bill to reauthorize the Highlands Conservation Act, to authorize States to use funds from that Act for administrative purposes, and for other purposes.

S. 773

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

S. 1031

At the request of Mr. WARNOCK, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1031, a bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on disparities associated with race and ethnicity with respect to certain benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1041

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr.

CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1041, a bill to advance the strategic alignment of United States diplomatic tools toward the realization of free, fair, and transparent elections in Nicaragua and to reaffirm the commitment of the United States to protect the fundamental freedoms and human rights of the people of Nicaragua, and for other purposes.

S. 1125

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1125, a bill to recommend that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation test the effect of a dementia care management model, and for other purposes.

S. 1134

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 1134, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Master Sergeant Rodrick "Roddie" Edmonds in recognition of his heroic actions during World War II.

S. 1210

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1210, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, to further the conservation of certain wildlife species, and for other purposes.

S. 1220

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1220, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize and honor the service of individuals who served in the United States Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1315

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1315, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items under the Medicare program.

S. 1530

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1530, a bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to make breakfasts and lunches free for all children, and for other purposes.

S. 1600

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Da-

kota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1600, a bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to make modifications to the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 1641

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1641, a bill to prohibit rescinding the recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

S. 1644

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1644, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish a time-limited provisional approval pathway, subject to specific obligations, for certain drugs and biological products, and for other purposes.

S. 1777

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1777, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to codify the Trump administration rule on reporting requirements of exempt organizations, and for other purposes.

S. 1819

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) 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. 1856

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

S. 1893

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1893, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to support rural residency training funding that is equitable for all States, and for other purposes.

S. 1904

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 1904, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign support for Palestinian terrorism, and for other purposes.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was withdrawn as a

cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reform requirements with respect to direct and indirect remuneration under Medicare part D, and for other purposes.

S. 1934

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1934, a bill to improve public trust in the Federal Government by establishing customer experience as a central measure of performance for agencies and the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

S. 1972

At the request of Mr. KELLY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1972, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve dependent coverage under the TRICARE Young Adult Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2050

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2050, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove silencers from the definition of firearms, and for other purposes.

S. 2084

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2084, a bill to terminate the order requiring persons to wear masks while on conveyances and at transportation hubs.

S. 2106

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2106, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to authorize a national network of Statewide senior legal hotlines, and for other purposes.

S. 2128

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2128, a bill to ensure the humane treatment of pregnant women by reinstating the presumption of release and prohibiting shackling, restraining, and other inhumane treatment of pregnant detainees, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 210

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 210, a resolution designating July 21, 2021, as “Glioblastoma Awareness Day”.

S. RES. 241

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 241, a resolution widening threats to freedom of the press and free expression around the world, and reaffirming the vital role that a free and independent press plays in informing local and international audiences about pub-

lic health crises, countering misinformation and disinformation, and furthering discourse and debate to advance healthy democracies in commemoration of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2021.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

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

S. 2184. A bill to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to institute a trading prohibition for certain issuers that retain public accounting firms that have not been subject to inspection by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

S. 2184

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

SECTION 1. TRADING PROHIBITION FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE NON-INSPECTION YEARS.

Section 104(i) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (15 U.S.C. 7214(i)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A)(ii), by striking “the foreign jurisdiction described in clause (i)” and inserting “a foreign jurisdiction”; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—
(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking “3” and inserting “2”; and

(B) in subparagraph (A), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “3” and inserting “2”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 281—RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH AND ITS CRITICAL ROLE IN AMERICA’S BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH STRATEGY BY ADVANCING BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH AND THE MISSION OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, THE WORLD’S PREMIER BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH AGENCY

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 281

Whereas Congress chartered the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this preamble as the “FNIH”) to support the mission of the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this preamble as the “NIH”), which is to advance research in pursuit of fundamental knowledge that will lead to better health outcomes for all;

Whereas June 26, 2021, marks 25 years since FNIH commenced its work to improve health outcomes for the people of the United States by facilitating groundbreaking research and catalyzing innovation and discovery to answer the toughest scientific questions;

Whereas FNIH is recognized by Congress, NIH, and the biomedical community as a model for aligning public and private partners around a common cause that advances breakthrough biomedical discoveries and improves the quality of people’s lives;

Whereas, among the hundreds of programs FNIH has facilitated, the Grand Challenges in Global Health partnership, founded in collaboration with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, achieved scientific breakthroughs against deadly diseases in the world’s poorest countries and elevated the role of FNIH as a leader in building alliances for biomedical research;

Whereas FNIH, NIH, and the Food and Drug Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services launched the Accelerating Medicines Partnership as a public-private collaboration to pursue new methods to develop diagnostics and treatments for Alzheimer’s disease, type 2 diabetes, autoimmune disorders, Parkinson’s disease, and schizophrenia;

Whereas the FNIH created a new model for clinical trials through initiatives to fight breast cancer and lung cancer, continues to bring together partners to identify, develop, and qualify biomarkers to improve drug discovery and regulatory decisionmaking, and recognizes and supports trailblazing researchers, some of whom have won other prestigious scientific prizes, including the Nobel Prize;

Whereas FNIH supports caregivers of NIH Clinical Center patients through the Edmond J. Safra Family Lodge, a temporary residence for caregivers whose close presence helps to sustain patients who volunteer for NIH research that was constructed and is maintained by the FNIH on the NIH campus;

Whereas FNIH answered NIH’s call to action to address the largest pandemic in a century by launching and coordinating the Accelerating COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions and Vaccines (“ACTIV”) initiative in partnership with numerous government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and biopharmaceutical companies to accelerate the most promising COVID-19 vaccines and treatments; and

Whereas FNIH remains an indispensable institution to the biomedical research mission of the NIH and the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health and its critical role in advancing biomedical research and the mission of the National Institutes of Health, the world’s premier biomedical research agency;

(2) applauds the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health for its leadership and ongoing efforts to advance human health outcomes through innovative public-private partnerships that achieve groundbreaking biomedical research results;

(3) commends the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health for its efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic through the Accelerating COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions and Vaccines initiative and accelerate the development of the most promising treatments and vaccines for COVID-19; and

(4) reiterates that the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health, in partnership with the National Institutes of Health, is a vital and essential component of biomedical research strategy of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 282—RECOGNIZING JULY 1, 2021, AS THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE AND COMMENDING THE SERVICE OF THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE TO CONGRESS AND THE UNITED STATES

Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr.

PADILLA, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. LANKFORD, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. ROMNEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 282

Whereas the General Accounting Office, predecessor to the Government Accountability Office (referred to in this preamble as the “GAO”), opened its doors on July 1, 1921, following the enactment of the Budget and Accounting Act, 1921 (Public Law 67-13; 42 Stat. 20);

Whereas the need, identified by Congress following World War I, for more information and better control of expenditures made by the Federal Government was filled by the creation of the independent GAO;

Whereas Congress provided the GAO with a broad mandate—

(1) to investigate how Federal dollars are spent; and

(2) to review all Federal expenditures;

Whereas, as the size and expenditures of the Federal Government grew during the Great Depression and World War II, the GAO became overwhelmed with fiscal audits, which pushed Congress to amend the authority of the GAO to enable it to assist Federal agencies with improving their accounting and spending controls;

Whereas Congress amended the authority of the GAO to expand its work beyond financial audits to performance audits to determine how Federal agencies and programs performed and met their objectives in the wake of the Great Society programs of the late 1960s;

Whereas the GAO shifted its priorities in the late 1990s and early 2000s—

(1) to highlight high risk areas for Federal Government waste and operation failures; and

(2) to work to improve Federal financial management and budgeting;

Whereas, as of the date of adoption of this resolution, the GAO is known around the world as a leader and source of objective, nonpartisan information on government operations through its work examining cost, effectiveness, and other factors related to the success of Federal programs;

Whereas, in addition to its field offices across the United States, the GAO operates field offices around the world to make it easier to access and monitor Federal Government operations that extend across the globe;

Whereas the GAO employs approximately 3,200 people and has been recognized as being one of the top workplaces in the Federal Government for several years by its multidisciplinary workforce, which includes analysts, auditors, lawyers, economists, scientists, actuaries, law enforcement and security personnel, healthcare experts, and education, public policy, computer science, and cybersecurity personnel, among others;

Whereas the GAO averaged a \$165 return on every \$1 invested in the GAO between fiscal years 2016 and 2020 as a result of Federal agencies and Congress acting on recommendations made by the GAO;

Whereas the financial benefit to the Federal Government resulting from the work of the GAO totaled—

(1) in fiscal year 2020, \$77,600,000,000; and

(2) in the past 20 years combined, over \$1,200,000,000,000; and

Whereas, in addition to serving as the preeminent independent government watchdog agency in the world, the GAO provides additional services, which include—

(1) writing legal opinions at the request of Congress or in response to a bid protest;

(2) authoring resources and standards for auditors around the world;

(3) operating a hotline for the public to report waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement of government funds; and

(4) providing testimony before Congress on a multitude of topics: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 100th anniversary of the Government Accountability Office (referred to in this resolution as the “GAO”) on July 1, 2021;

(2) commends the GAO for 100 years of service to Congress and the United States as the preeminent independent government watchdog agency in the world;

(3) offers its continued support to allow the GAO—

(A) to fulfill its mandates as required by law;

(B) to respond to requests made by Members of Congress; and

(C) to aid the Federal Government in improving its stewardship of taxpayer dollars;

(4) recognizes Eugene Dodaro, the Comptroller General and head of the GAO as of the date of adoption of this resolution, and the dedicated and professional staff of the GAO who work diligently to produce fact-based reports, thoughtful recommendations, and sound legal decisions; and

(5) will continue to partner with the GAO in the pursuit of its mission—

(A) to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities; and

(B) to help improve the performance and accountability of the Federal Government for the benefit of the people of the United States.

Ms. HASAN. Mr. President, it is my great honor, as Chair of the U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committees Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight to recognize July 1, 2021, as the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and commend it for its service to the people of the United States. I am grateful to Comptroller General Gene Dodaro and to GAO's 3,200 employees who work hard to ensure that federal programs are well managed and fiscally responsible. As we recognize the GAO, I also encourage my colleagues to continue to partner with the GAO as we work together to help improve the performance of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. I urge my colleagues to join me in adopting this resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2119. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1251, to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a program to reduce barriers to entry for farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners in certain voluntary markets, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2119. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1251, to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a program to reduce barriers to entry for

farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners in certain voluntary markets, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Growing Climate Solutions Act of 2021”.

SEC. 2. GREENHOUSE GAS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER AND THIRD-PARTY VERIFIER TRANSPARENCY PROGRAM.

(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

(1) to increase access to informational resources for farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners regarding voluntary environmental credit markets, including through the Program;

(2) to provide informational resources relating to technical assistance through covered entities to farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners in overcoming barriers to entry into voluntary environmental credit markets; and

(3) to establish the Advisory Council to advise the Secretary regarding the Program and other related matters.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADVISORY COUNCIL.—The term “Advisory Council” means the Greenhouse Gas Technical Assistance Provider and Third-Party Verifier Transparency Program Advisory Council established under subsection (f)(1).

(2) AGRICULTURE OR FORESTRY CREDIT.—The term “agriculture or forestry credit” means a credit derived from the prevention, reduction, or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions or carbon sequestration on agricultural land or private forest land that may be bought or sold on a voluntary environmental credit market.

(3) BEGINNING FARMER OR RANCHER.—The term “beginning farmer or rancher” has the meaning given the term in section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a)).

(4) COVERED ENTITY.—The term “covered entity” means a person or State that either—

(A) is a provider of technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, or private forest landowners in carrying out sustainable land use management practices that—

(i) prevent, reduce, or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions; or

(ii) sequester carbon; or

(B) is a third-party verifier entity that conducts the verification of the processes described in protocols for voluntary environmental credit markets.

(5) GREENHOUSE GAS.—The term “greenhouse gas” means—

(A) carbon dioxide;

(B) methane;

(C) nitrous oxide; and

(D) any other gas that the Secretary, in consultation with the Advisory Council, determines has been identified to have heat trapping qualities.

(6) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means the Greenhouse Gas Technical Assistance Provider and Third-Party Verifier Transparency Program established under subsection (c).

(7) PROTOCOL.—The term “protocol” means a systematic approach that follows a science-based methodology that is transparent and thorough to establish resources—

(A) for the development of projects to prevent, reduce, or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon that include 1 or more baseline scenarios; and

(B) demonstrating how to quantify, monitor, report, and verify the prevention, reduction, or mitigation of greenhouse gas

emissions or carbon sequestration by projects described in subparagraph (A).

(8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(9) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The term “technical assistance” means technical expertise, information, and tools necessary to assist a farmer, rancher, or private forest landowner who is engaged in or wants to engage in a project to prevent, reduce, or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon to meet a protocol.

(10) VOLUNTARY ENVIRONMENTAL CREDIT MARKET.—The term “voluntary environmental credit market” means a voluntary market through which agriculture or forestry credits may be bought or sold between private sector entities.

(c) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date that is 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and after making a positive determination under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall establish a voluntary program, to be known as the “Greenhouse Gas Technical Assistance Provider and Third-Party Verifier Transparency Program”, to publicize common practices and common qualifications of covered entities that the Secretary determines are related to the activities described in subsection (d).

(2) DETERMINATION.—The Secretary shall establish the Program only if, after considering relevant information, including the information collected or reviewed relating to the assessment conducted under subsection (g)(1)(A), the Secretary determines that the Program will further each of the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a).

(3) REPORT.—If the Secretary determines under paragraph (2) that the Program would not further the purposes described in paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a) and does not establish the Program, the Secretary shall publish a report describing the reasons the Program would not further those purposes.

(d) COMMON PRACTICES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS.—

(1) PROTOCOLS AND QUALIFICATIONS.—After providing public notice and at least a 60-day period for public comment, the Secretary shall, during the 90-day period beginning on the date on which the Program is established, publish—

(A) a list of, and documents relating to, generally recognized protocols for voluntary environmental credit markets that are designed to ensure consistency, reliability, effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency, including protocol documents and details relating to—

- (i) calculations;
- (ii) sampling methodologies;
- (iii) accounting principles;
- (iv) systems for verification, monitoring, measurement, and reporting; and
- (v) methods to account for additionality, permanence, leakage, and, where appropriate, avoidance of double counting; and

(B) descriptions of qualifications of covered entities that provide assistance to farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners in accomplishing the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a).

(2) ACTIVITIES.—The activities described by the Secretary under the Program shall include current and future activities that prevent, reduce, or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon, which may include—

- (A) land or soil carbon sequestration;
- (B) emissions reductions derived from fuel choice or reduced fuel use;
- (C) livestock emissions reductions, including emissions reductions achieved through—
 - (i) feeds, feed additives, and the use of by-products as feed sources; or

- (ii) manure management practices;
- (D) on-farm energy generation;
- (E) energy feedstock production;
- (F) fertilizer or nutrient use emissions reductions;
- (G) reforestation;

(H) forest management, including improving harvesting practices and thinning diseased trees;

(I) prevention of the conversion of forests, grasslands, and wetlands;

(J) restoration of wetlands or grasslands;

(K) grassland management, including prescribed grazing;

(L) current practices associated with private land conservation programs administered by the Secretary; and

(M) such other activities, or combinations of activities, that the Secretary, in consultation with the Advisory Council, determines to be appropriate.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In publishing the generally recognized protocols and description of qualifications under paragraph (1), the Secretary, in consultation with the Advisory Council, shall ensure that the descriptions for covered entities to be described under the Program include maintaining expertise in all relevant information relating to market-based protocols, as appropriate, with regard to—

- (A) quantification;
- (B) verification;
- (C) additionality;
- (D) permanence;
- (E) reporting; and
- (F) other expertise, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Advisory Council.

(4) PERIODIC REVIEW.—As appropriate, the Secretary shall periodically review and revise the list of generally accepted protocols and description of qualifications published under paragraph (1) to include any additional protocols or qualifications that meet the requirements described in paragraph (3).

(e) WEBSITE AND PUBLICATION OF LISTS.—

(1) WEBSITE AND SOLICITATION.—During the 180-day period beginning on the date on which the Program is established, the Secretary shall publish, through an existing website maintained by the Secretary—

(A) the generally accepted protocols and description of qualifications published by the Secretary under subsection (d)(1); and

(B) instructions and suggestions to assist farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners in facilitating the development of agriculture or forestry credits and accessing voluntary environmental credit markets, including—

- (i) through working with covered entities described under the Program; and
- (ii) by providing information relating to programs, registries, and protocols of programs and registries that provide market-based participation opportunities for working and conservation agricultural and forestry lands.

(2) PUBLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—During the 1-year period beginning on the date on which the Program is established, the Secretary, in consultation with the Advisory Council and following the review by the Secretary for completeness and accuracy, shall use an existing website maintained by the Secretary to publish—

- (i) a list of covered entities self-identified as technical assistance providers; and
- (ii) a list of covered entities self-identified as verifiers of the processes described in protocols for voluntary environmental credit markets.

(B) PROHIBITION ON CLAIMS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A person, regardless of whether the person is described under the Program, shall not knowingly make a claim that the person is a “USDA-certified tech-

nical assistance provider or third-party verifier for voluntary environmental credit markets” or any substantially similar claim.

(ii) PENALTY.—Any person that violates clause (i) shall be subject to a civil penalty equal to such amount as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, not to exceed \$1,000 per violation.

(3) UPDATES.—Not less frequently than quarterly, the Secretary, in consultation with the Advisory Council, shall update the lists published under paragraph (2)(A).

(4) SUBMISSION.—The Secretary shall notify Congress of the publication of the initial list under paragraph (2)(A).

(5) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section authorizes the Secretary—

(A) to compel a farmer, rancher, or private forest landowner to participate in a transaction or project facilitated by a covered entity described under the Program; or

(B) to act as a covered entity.

(f) GREENHOUSE GAS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER AND THIRD-PARTY VERIFIER TRANSPARENCY PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—During the 90-day period beginning on the date on which the Program is established, the Secretary shall establish an advisory council, to be known as the “Greenhouse Gas Technical Assistance Provider and Third-Party Verifier Transparency Program Advisory Council”.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Council shall be composed of members appointed by the Secretary in accordance with this paragraph.

(B) GENERAL REPRESENTATION.—The Advisory Council shall—

(i) be broadly representative of the agriculture and private forest sectors; and

(ii) be composed of not less than 51 percent farmers, ranchers, or private forest landowners.

(C) MEMBERS.—Members appointed under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) not more than 2 representatives of the Department of Agriculture, as determined by the Secretary;

(ii) not more than 1 representative of the Environmental Protection Agency, as determined by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;

(iii) not more than 1 representative of the National Institute of Standards and Technology;

(iv) not fewer than 12 representatives of the agriculture industry, appointed in a manner that is broadly representative of the agriculture sector, including not fewer than 6 active farmers and ranchers;

(v) not fewer than 4 representatives of private forest landowners or the forestry and forest products industry appointed in a manner that is broadly representative of the private forest sector;

(vi) not more than 4 representatives of the relevant scientific research community, including not fewer than 2 representatives from land-grant colleges and universities (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)), of which 1 shall be a representative of a college or university eligible to receive funds under the Act of August 30, 1890 (commonly known as the “Second Morrill Act”) (26 Stat. 417, chapter 841; 7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.), including Tuskegee University;

(vii) not fewer than 12 experts or professionals familiar with voluntary environmental credit markets and the verification requirements in those markets;

(viii) not more than 3 members of non-governmental or civil society organizations with relevant expertise; and

(ix) not more than 3 members of private sector entities or organizations that participate in voluntary environmental credit markets through which agriculture or forestry credits are bought and sold.

(D) CHAIR.—The Secretary shall designate a member of the Advisory Council to serve as the Chair.

(E) TERMS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The term of a member of the Advisory Council shall be 2 years, except that, of the members first appointed—

(I) not fewer than 8 members shall serve for a term of 1 year;

(II) not fewer than 12 members shall serve for a term of 2 years; and

(III) not fewer than 12 members shall serve for a term of 3 years.

(ii) ADDITIONAL TERMS.—After the initial term of a member of the Advisory Council, including the members first appointed, the member may serve not more than 4 additional 2-year terms.

(3) MEETINGS.—

(A) FREQUENCY.—The Advisory Council shall meet not less frequently than annually, at the call of the Chair.

(B) INITIAL MEETING.—During the 90-day period beginning on the date on which the members are appointed under paragraph (2)(A), the Advisory Council shall hold an initial meeting.

(4) DUTIES.—The Advisory Council shall—

(A) periodically review and recommend any appropriate changes to the list of generally recognized protocols and description of qualifications published by the Secretary under subsection (d)(1);

(B) make recommendations to the Secretary regarding the best practices that should be included in the descriptions of generally recognized protocols and qualifications described in subparagraph (A); and

(C) advise the Secretary regarding—

(i) the current methods used by voluntary environmental credit markets to quantify and verify the prevention, reduction, and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions or sequestration of carbon;

(ii) additional considerations for describing covered entities under the Program;

(iii) means to reduce Federal barriers to entry in the business of providing technical assistance or the verification of the processes described in protocols for voluntary environmental credit markets for covered entities;

(iv) means to reduce Federal compliance and verification costs for farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners in entering voluntary environmental credit markets, including through mechanisms and processes to aggregate the value of activities across land ownership;

(v) issues relating to land and asset ownership in light of evolving voluntary environmental credit markets; and

(vi) additional means to reduce barriers to entry in voluntary environmental credit markets for farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners.

(5) COMPENSATION.—The members of the Advisory Council shall serve without compensation.

(6) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—The Secretary shall prohibit any member of the Advisory Council from—

(A) engaging in any determinations or activities of the Advisory Council that may result in the favoring of, or a direct and predictable effect on—

(i) the member or a family member, as determined by the Secretary;

(ii) stock owned by the member or a family member, as determined by the Secretary; or

(iii) the employer of, or a business owned in whole or in part by, the member or a fam-

ily member, as determined by the Secretary; or

(B) providing advice or recommendations regarding, or otherwise participating in, matters of the Advisory Council that—

(i) constitute a conflict of interest under section 208 of title 18, United States Code; or

(ii) may call into question the integrity of the Advisory Council, the Program, or the technical assistance or verification activities described under subsection (d)(2).

(7) FACA APPLICABILITY.—The Advisory Council shall be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), except that section 14(a)(2) of that Act shall not apply.

(g) ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall—

(A) conduct an assessment, including by incorporating information from existing publications and reports of the Department of Agriculture and other entities with relevant expertise, regarding—

(i) the number and categories of non-Federal actors in the nonprofit and for-profit sectors involved in buying, selling, and trading agriculture or forestry credits in voluntary environmental credit markets;

(ii) the estimated overall domestic market demand for agriculture or forestry credits at the end of the preceding 4-calendar year period, and historically, in voluntary environmental credit markets;

(iii) the total number of agriculture or forestry credits (measured in metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent) that were estimated to be in development, generated, or sold in market transactions during the preceding 4-calendar year period, and historically, in voluntary environmental credit markets;

(iv) the estimated supply and demand of metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent of offsets in the global marketplace for the next 4 years;

(v) the barriers to entry due to compliance and verification costs described in subsection (f)(4)(C)(iv);

(vi) the state of monitoring and measurement technologies needed to quantify long-term carbon sequestration in soils and from other activities to prevent, reduce, or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in the agriculture and forestry sectors;

(vii) means to reduce Federal barriers to entry into voluntary environmental credit markets for small and beginning farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners and the extent to which existing protocols in voluntary environmental credit markets allow for aggregation of projects among farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners;

(viii) the potential impact of Department of Agriculture activities on supply and demand of agriculture or forestry credits;

(ix) the extent to which existing protocols in voluntary environmental credit markets, including verification, additionality, permanence, and reporting, adequately take into consideration and account for factors encountered by the agriculture and private forest sectors in preventing, reducing, or mitigating greenhouse gases or sequestering carbon through agriculture and forestry practices, considering variances across regions, topography, soil types, crop or species varieties, and business models;

(x) the extent to which existing protocols in voluntary environmental credit markets consider options to ensure the continued valuation, through discounting or other means, of agriculture and forestry credits in the case of the practices underlying those credits being disrupted due to unavoidable

events, including production challenges and natural disasters; and

(xi) opportunities for other voluntary markets outside of voluntary environmental credit markets to foster the trading, buying, or selling of credits that are derived from activities that provide other ecosystem service benefits, including activities that improve water quality, water quantity, wildlife habitat enhancement, and other ecosystem services, as the Secretary determines appropriate;

(B) publish the assessment; and

(C) submit the assessment to Congress, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives.

(2) QUADRENNIAL ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Advisory Council, shall conduct the assessment described in paragraph (1)(A) and publish and submit the assessment in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (1) every 4 years after the publication and submission of the first assessment under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (1).

(h) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the Program is established, and every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary shall publish and submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives a report describing, for the period covered by the report—

(1) a review of the outcomes of the Program, including—

(A) the ability of farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners, including small and beginning farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners, to develop agriculture or forestry credits through covered entities described under the Program;

(B) methods to improve the ability of farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners to overcome barriers to entry to voluntary environmental credit markets; and

(C) methods to further facilitate participation of farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners in voluntary environmental credit markets; and

(2) any recommendations for improvements to the Program.

(i) CONFIDENTIALITY.—

(1) PROHIBITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary, any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture or any agency of the Department of Agriculture, or any other person may not disclose to the public the information held by the Secretary described in subparagraph (B).

(B) INFORMATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the information prohibited from disclosure under subparagraph (A) is—

(I) information collected by the Secretary or published by the Secretary under subsection (g) or (h);

(II) personally identifiable information, including in a contract or service agreement, of a farmer, rancher, or private forest landowner, obtained by the Secretary under this section; and

(III) confidential business information in a contract or service agreement of a farmer, rancher, or private forest landowner obtained by the Secretary under this section.

(ii) AGGREGATED RELEASE.—Information described in clause (i) may be released to the public if the information has been transformed into a statistical or aggregate form that does not allow the identification of the

person who supplied or is the subject of the particular information.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not prohibit the disclosure by an officer or employee of the Federal Government of information described in paragraph (1)(B) as otherwise directed by the Secretary or the Attorney General for enforcement purposes.

(j) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to the amount made available under paragraph (2), there is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026.

(2) DIRECT FUNDING.—

(A) RESCISSION.—There is rescinded \$4,100,000 of the unobligated balance of amounts made available by section 1003 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law 117-2).

(B) DIRECT FUNDING.—If sufficient unobligated amounts made available by section 1003 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law 117-2) are available on the date of enactment of this Act to execute the entire rescission described in subparagraph (A), then on the day after the execution of the entire rescission, there is appropriated to the Secretary, out of amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$4,100,000 to carry out this section.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. STABENOW. Mr. President, I have 12 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 AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is author-

ized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, 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 Tuesday, June 22, 2021, 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 Tuesday, June 22, 2021, 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 Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

The Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE, CUSTOMS, AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

The Subcommittee on International Trade, Customs, and Global Competitiveness of the Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 2021

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m., Wednesday, June 23; 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; further, upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Boardman nomination; further, that if cloture is invoked on the Boardman nomination, all postcloture time expire at 5:45 p.m.; finally, that if the nomination is confirmed, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 2 P.M. TOMORROW

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:40 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, June 23, 2021, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

CARLTON WATERHOUSE, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF SOLID WASTE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, VICE PETER C. WRIGHT.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. DANIEL W. DWYER

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO BE A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

GABRIEL J. ALLISON, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC D. BORGMAN, OF NEW YORK
HEATHER D. BROOKS, OF FLORIDA
PATRICK GENE BURLINGAME, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
KAREN E. CASTRO, OF OHIO
JOSEPH MEDFORD CLATANOFF, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH EVAN DE BERNARDO, OF VIRGINIA
AARON C. EASLICK, OF MICHIGAN
AYANDA NGOZI FRANCIS GAO, OF GEORGIA
PAUL ROBERT GIBLIN, OF ARIZONA
SHEIMALIZ E. GLOVER, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DAVID C. GUTIERREZ, OF GEORGIA
SALMAN R. HAJI, OF TEXAS
AMY R. HOCKING, OF TEXAS
PORTER NELSON ILLI, OF UTAH
JOSHUA P. JOHNSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MPAZA SICHILIMA KAPEMBWA, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT OWEN KEANE, OF MASSACHUSETTS
DONALD D. KIM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RAQUEL JACQUELINE KING, OF FLORIDA
IAN M. KITTERMAN, OF MICHIGAN
JEFFREY T. KRAMB, OF VIRGINIA
JERICA J. LAMAR, OF MARYLAND
ORIANA LUQUETTA, OF FLORIDA
JONATHAN A. MCCLELLAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
SEAN H. MCBOB, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KEVIN S. MOSS, OF FLORIDA
CAITLIN E. NETTLETON, OF FLORIDA
SITA ALETHEIA RAITER, OF CALIFORNIA
JAMES K. ROGERS, OF ARIZONA
KYLE J. ROHRICH, OF NEBRASKA
JOHN JOSEPH RYAN, OF CALIFORNIA
SKARRN RYVNINE, OF FLORIDA
EDDY SANTANA, OF ILLINOIS
JAMES CARL SMYTHERS, OF VIRGINIA
CHARLES L. SPECHT, OF ILLINOIS
MICHELLE N. STOKES, OF TEXAS
MICHAEL FELDING TEMPLEMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH MELODY TROBAUGH, OF WASHINGTON
JAMES LEVERING TYSON III, OF WASHINGTON
AMANDA M. ZEIDAN, OF GEORGIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

JIM NELSON BARNHART, JR., OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANDREW M. HERSCOWITZ, OF MARYLAND
TERESA L. MCGHIE, OF NEVADA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

ARTHUR W. BROWN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JOHN J. CARDENAS, OF CALIFORNIA
MARY EILEEN DEVITT, OF VIRGINIA
KARL W. PICKENSCHER, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID GOSNEY, OF CALIFORNIA
SEAN M. JONES, OF NEW JERSEY
JENNIFER M. LINK, OF ILLINOIS
HELEN MARY PATAKI, OF CALIFORNIA
ANNE ELIZABETH PATTERSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KERRY A. PELZMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN A. PENNELL, OF FLORIDA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

JEFF R. BRYAN, OF VIRGINIA
ALEXIOUS M. BUTLER, OF GEORGIA
ALISA MAUTNER CAMERON, OF MARYLAND
JEREMIAH CAREW, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN L. CARNEY, OF FLORIDA

THOMAS MARK CRUBAUGH, OF WISCONSIN
 NATASHA M. DE MARCKEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 PATRICK K. DISKIN, OF FLORIDA
 SHERI-NOUANE B. DUNCAN-JONES, OF WASHINGTON
 NANCY JANE ESLICK, OF WASHINGTON
 MERVYN ANTHONY FARROE, OF FLORIDA
 SCOTT D. HOCKLANDER, OF ALASKA
 CATTIE C. LOTT, OF WASHINGTON
 MARTIN G. MCLAUGHLIN, OF VIRGINIA
 RICHARD L. NELSON, OF TEXAS
 HANH N. NGUYEN, OF CALIFORNIA
 ANUPAMA SPATIKA RAJARAMAN, OF TEXAS
 MATTHEW D. REES, OF MARYLAND
 LUIS A. RIVERA, OF MARYLAND
 DANA H. ROSE, OF COLORADO
 KIMBERLY ANNE ROSEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ZEMA SEMUNEGUS, OF VIRGINIA
 JULIE A. SOUTHFIELD, OF VIRGINIA
 PETER C. TRENCHARD, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

WADE C. MARTIN, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

DANNIELLE R. ANDREWS, OF CALIFORNIA
 BRIAN E. ANSELMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 AMY E. ARCHIBALD, OF CALIFORNIA
 SUZANNE M. INZERILLO, OF ILLINOIS
 ILA S. JURISSON, OF VIRGINIA
 ALEXANDER I. KASANOF, OF NEW YORK
 JAMES D. MULLINAX, OF WASHINGTON
 MARTINA C. POLT, OF TENNESSEE
 ALAN S. PURCELL, OF VIRGINIA
 ROBERT A. RAINES, OF MARYLAND
 SCOTT M. RENNER, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, AND A CONSULAR OFFICER AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

EDWARD R. DANEK, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 FERNANDO OSPINA, OF CALIFORNIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO BE A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

RAHEL ABOYE, OF VIRGINIA
 PHILIPPE ACCILLEN, OF FLORIDA
 CHRISTOPHER B. ADAMS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 YIKEE ADJE, OF CALIFORNIA
 MINAL AMIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LENNA NEAT ARANGO, OF TEXAS
 MARIALICE BONITA ARIENS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 JEAN-JACQUES BADIANE, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 SCOTT CHARLES BARTOS, OF VIRGINIA
 DANIELLE RENEE BASH, OF INDIANA
 MIRANDA STEPHANIE ODENDAHLL BECKMAN, OF UTAH
 JASON EDWARD BENNETT, OF OREGON
 ROBYN BERTHOLON, OF TEXAS
 NADIA NOUR BLACKTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JACQUELINE GAYLE BONY, OF FLORIDA
 ELIZABETH M. BRENNAN, OF FLORIDA
 SIMONE BROWN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 KATHLYN BRYANT, OF NEVADA
 JOHN GREGORY BUTLER, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTINA M. CAIRNS, OF CALIFORNIA
 JOLIE MARIE CAREY, OF NEW YORK
 PRIYA MACHIMADA CARIAPPA, OF FLORIDA

JENNIFER CARVALHO, OF MARYLAND
 JOSEPHINA GARCIA CERVANTES, OF CALIFORNIA
 DAVID H. CHARLES, OF GEORGIA
 AMENA AYOUBI CHENZAIE, OF VIRGINIA
 JOSEPH S. CHON, OF MARYLAND
 BETTY Y. CHUNG, OF VIRGINIA
 JONATHAN L.R. CONE, OF VIRGINIA
 ELLEN AMANTE DE GUZMAN, OF MARYLAND
 SCOTT DEPIES, OF VIRGINIA
 MARK R. DOYLE, OF ILLINOIS
 NATHAN S. DRURY, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 KENNETH MARK DUNN, OF KANSAS
 STEPHEN YAWO DZISI, OF NEW YORK
 PAUL ELLIOT EDWARDS, OF VIRGINIA
 ALAA HAMID EL-BASHIR, OF MINNESOTA
 DIJANA ELLIOTT, OF VIRGINIA
 IFEOMA CARMELLE EZEHE, OF TEXAS
 ALI EZZATYAR, OF CALIFORNIA
 PAMELA M. FOSTER, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHLEEN KNIGHT FRANK, OF MAINE
 MELISSA ERIN FREEMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 OLIVIA CATHERINE GILMORE, OF TEXAS
 MICAH ANDREW GLOBERSON, OF CALIFORNIA
 ANDREW GOLDA II, OF NEW JERSEY
 MARK S.R. GRAY, OF CALIFORNIA
 JULIE REBECCA GRIER-VILLATTE, OF FLORIDA
 GERALD WILLIAM GUGERTY, OF COLORADO
 ANDREA NOEL HALVERSON, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
 JOHN K.B. HARRIS, OF OREGON
 TRACY R. HAWRY, OF ILLINOIS
 CATHERINE H. HAYFORD, OF GEORGIA
 ROCKFELER P. HERISSE, PH.D., OF NEW YORK
 PLATO R. HIERONIMUS, OF MARYLAND
 NATHAN R. HILGENDORF, OF WASHINGTON
 DAVID JAMES ISAAK, OF FLORIDA
 TANYA L. JACKSON-TYSON, OF MARYLAND
 KATHERINE ELISE JOHNSON, OF WASHINGTON
 JENNIFER CLAIRE KARSNER, OF FLORIDA
 BRUCE H. KAY, OF MARYLAND
 SASCHA KEMPER, OF TEXAS
 MICHAEL C. KOFFMAN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 DUSTIN A. KOHLS, OF VIRGINIA
 ANTHONY A. KOLB, OF VIRGINIA
 AMY KOLER, OF WASHINGTON
 NATALYA KOMAROVA, OF WASHINGTON
 KAREN KOPRINCE, OF NORTH DAKOTA
 MURIEL MOODY KOROL, OF NEVADA
 JAMES SCOTT KOVAR, OF VIRGINIA
 JONA LAI, OF WASHINGTON
 STEPHANE LAROCHE, OF FLORIDA
 AMY HOPKINS LARSEN, OF WYOMING
 MORGAN M. LIMO, OF MARYLAND
 EYOLE N. LUMA, OF MARYLAND
 MAUREEN CLARET MALAVE, OF NEW YORK
 KATE MALONEY, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHAEL S. MANELLA, OF VIRGINIA
 NORA CHRISTINE MARESH, OF FLORIDA
 TIMOTHY BRIAN MARLOWE, OF GEORGIA
 DIEGO MARQUEZ, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 JOHN F. MCKAY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 MARGARET RAMALHO MCMORROW, OF CALIFORNIA
 C. LANE MEARS, OF TEXAS
 BRANDON EDWARD MILLER, OF FLORIDA
 CHRISTOPHER ROBERT MOORE, OF CALIFORNIA
 ALEJANDRO P. MORA, OF FLORIDA
 JACOB BRUCE HENRY MORRIN, OF NEVADA
 FERNANDO MOYLE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JOSEPH NGANGA MWANGI, OF WASHINGTON
 ALI NADER, OF TEXAS
 KATHERINE L. NICHOLS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JAMES A. NOEL, OF VIRGINIA
 JEANETTE N. NORMAND, OF OREGON
 HEIDI O' BRA, OF FLORIDA
 JAIME MICHELLE OBERLANDER, OF WASHINGTON
 NOELLE OLIVE OJO, OF FLORIDA
 FREDRICK O. ONYANGO, OF TEXAS
 KRISTINA ORTIZ, OF CALIFORNIA
 TANIECE BALDWIN OWUSU, OF NEW YORK
 ALEXANDER PAO, OF GEORGIA

ROBERT CHARLES PARKER, OF OREGON
 GARTH OWEN PATTERSON, OF VIRGINIA
 EDEL PEREZ-CAMPOS, OF FLORIDA
 DEBORAH GAIL PERLMAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 JESSICA L. PETTTT, OF FLORIDA
 ALEXIS E. POLOVINA, OF HAWAII
 HEELA RASOOL-AYUB, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ANDREW READ, OF WASHINGTON
 EMILY RUDGE REVIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 SOLEDAD VANESA ROGERS, OF CALIFORNIA
 COURTNEY E. ROY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LOUAY SAMOUE, OF CALIFORNIA
 PRISCILLA ASHAMU SAMPIL, OF VIRGINIA
 CARTER AMES SAUNDERS, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHELLE MARIAN SCHAAN, OF NEVADA
 JOSHUA BRAUN SCHRAMM, OF MICHIGAN
 AMY VON KEYSERLING SCOTT, OF VIRGINIA
 ADMIR SERIFOVIC, OF TEXAS
 RYAN SHELBY, OF MARYLAND
 TIMOTHY ANDREW SIKES, OF VIRGINIA
 BENJAMIN ALAN SKOLNIK, OF MARYLAND
 ANDRE-GUY SOH, OF FLORIDA
 JOHN D. SPEARS, OF MARYLAND
 SCOTT WILLIAM SPENCER, OF FLORIDA
 FRIEDARICKA MIAN STEED, OF VIRGINIA
 ANDREA C. STERNBERG, OF MINNESOTA
 KAARLI KARAEN SUNDSMO, OF CALIFORNIA
 ALIOU TALL, OF CALIFORNIA
 TAKELE TASSEW, OF TEXAS
 SHANNON J. TAYLOR, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 NATHAN TENNY, OF VIRGINIA
 SAVANNAH THOMASARRIGO, OF COLORADO
 KATHERINE TILOUT, OF NEW YORK
 JAY MICHAEL TOTTE, OF MICHIGAN
 GREGORY SAMUEL VAUGHAN, OF ILLINOIS
 JOSHUA JOHN VETTER, OF OHIO
 JACOB VEVEKA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ADRIANA VIECO, OF NEW YORK
 SAMANTHA DENISE WAPNICK, OF NEW YORK
 DIANA MARTT WEED, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 RONALD O. WIETECH, OF VIRGINIA
 LAURA A. WILKINSON, OF TENNESSEE
 ELIZABETH ISIMHEN WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
 ANGELA D. WILLIAMS-BOSTIC, OF VIRGINIA
 IAN CHRISTOPHER WINBORNE, OF FLORIDA
 HEATHER MARIE WIRICK, OF WASHINGTON
 TIZETA WODAJO, OF MARYLAND
 ROBERT ALLEN WORKS, OF KENTUCKY
 CHARLES D. YESOLITIS, OF VIRGINIA
 JONATHAN W. YOUNG, OF VIRGINIA
 JEFFREY ZAHKA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ESTHER BEATRIZ ZELEDON, OF FLORIDA
 KYRA TURNER ZOGBEKOR, OF CONNECTICUT

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate June 22, 2021:

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

KIRAN ARJANDAS AHUJA, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

ALI NOURI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (CONGRESSIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS).

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

CHRISTOPHER CHARLES FONZONE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.