

certain kinds of leadership only America can contribute.

Fortunately, we are not in this alone. The huge progress we have won in recent years against ISIS and the Taliban has come by partnering with local forces, with support from a broad international coalition. America has only provided limited specialized capabilities to reinforce the local partners that do the heaviest lifting. This approach is sustainable.

Unfortunately, we know exactly what happens when America forgets these lessons and simply decides we are tired of sustaining the fight. Abandoning Afghanistan in the 1990s helped create the conditions for al-Qaida's ability to grow and plan the September 11 attacks from a safe haven far from our shores. President Obama's retreat from Iraq allowed ISIS to rise from the still-warm ashes of al-Qaida in Iraq.

If not arrested, withdrawing from Syria will invite more of the chaos that breeds terrorism and creates a vacuum our adversaries will certainly fill.

It will invite the brutal Assad regime to reassert its oppressive control over northeastern Syria, repressing Sunni Arab communities and creating the same conditions that led to ISIS's growth in the first place.

Russia will gain more leverage to amass power and influence throughout the Middle East, project power into the Mediterranean, and even promote its interests in Africa.

Iran-backed forces could have access to a strategic corridor that runs all the way from Tehran to the very doorstep of Israel.

So where do we go from here? Many of us in the Senate were ahead of the game on the need to reaffirm American global leadership in the ongoing fight against radical terror. At the beginning of this year, a bipartisan supermajority of Senators warned about exactly this course of events. The McConnell amendment to S. 1 earned 70 votes back in February. We specifically warned against a precipitous withdrawal from either Afghanistan or Syria and noted the need for an American presence. Congress should affirm—actually, reaffirm—the same truths today, and we should do so strongly.

Unfortunately, the resolution crafted by House Democrats is simply not sufficient. It is not so much wrong as it is badly insufficient. It focuses solely on the Kurds, ignoring the critical Sunni-Arab community that suffered under both Assad's regime and ISIS and vulnerable minority communities like the Christian Arabs of Syria. The House was silent on the key matter of maintaining an actual physical U.S. military presence in Syria.

Perhaps the goal was to paper over disagreements within the Democratic Party. After all, our colleague, the senior Senator from Massachusetts, recently told a national television audience—this is the senior Senator from Massachusetts—"I think that we ought

to get out of the Middle East." "I think we ought to get out of the Middle East," said the senior Senator from Massachusetts, and almost all of our Democratic colleagues currently running for President refused to sign on to the McConnell amendment that earned 70 votes earlier this year.

We can't afford to dance around the critical question of a U.S. presence in Syria and the Middle East for the sake of Democratic Presidential primary politics. The Senate needs to speak up. We cannot effectively support our partners on the ground without a military presence. Senators who thought we should withdraw from Syria and Afghanistan in February do not get to criticize President Trump for withdrawing from Syria today unless they go on the record, admit they changed their minds, and say it is too dangerous to quit.

So, today, along with Chairman INHOFE, Chairman RISCH, Chairman BURR, and Senator GRAHAM, I am introducing a stronger resolution that acknowledges hard truths and focuses on our strategic interests in the Middle East.

Our resolution acknowledges the vital role our Kurdish and Arab Syrian partners have played in rooting out and destroying the ISIS caliphate. It condemns Turkey's decision to escalate hostilities in Syria, warns against the abandonment of our allies and partners in Syria, and urges President Trump to rethink his invitation for President Erdogan to visit the White House.

It also acknowledges Turkey's legitimate national security concerns emanating from the conflict in Syria and the significant risks to the United States if such a strategically consequential ally were to fall further into Moscow's orbit. It recognizes the grave consequences of U.S. withdrawal: the rising influence of Russia, Iran, and the Assad regime and the escape of more than 100 ISIS-affiliated fighters detained in the region.

We specifically urge the President to end—the drawdown, something that, fortunately, appears to be underway. We urge a reengagement with our partners in this region. We highlight the need for international diplomatic efforts to end the underlying civil wars in Syria and Afghanistan on terms that address the conditions that have allowed al-Qaida and ISIS to thrive. We cannot repeat this mistake in Afghanistan.

I am aware there is some appetite on both sides of the aisle to quickly reach for the toolbox of sanctions. I myself played a critical role in creating sanction regimes in the past, but I caution us against developing a reflex to use sanctions as our tool of first, last, and only resort in implementing our foreign policy. Sanctions may play an important role in this process, and I am open to the Senate considering them, but we need to think extremely carefully before we employ the same tools

against a democratic NATO ally that we would against the worst rogue state.

Do we know what political impacts such sanctions will have inside Turkey? Will they weaken President Erdogan or rally the country to his cause? Do we know the impact sanctions will have on U.S. companies or on the economies of our closest allies that have deeply integrated their economies with Turkey?

If we are going to use sanctions against a democratic ally, we are going to have to be careful. We are going to have to be smart. We are going to have to be thoughtful and deliberate. We don't want to further drive a NATO ally into the arms of the Russians.

Serious conversations about the use of sanctions must involve our colleagues on the Foreign Relations, Banking, and Finance Committees to ensure that this tool is used correctly.

The most important thing the Senate can do right now is speak clearly and reaffirm the core principles that unite most of us, Republicans and Democrats, about the proper role for American leadership in Syria, in the Middle East, and, for that matter, in the world.

We hope the damage in Syria can be undone, but perhaps, even more importantly, we absolutely must take steps so the same mistakes—the same mistakes are not repeated in Iraq or Afghanistan.

I feel confident that my resolution is a strong and sorely needed step. I feel confident my colleagues will agree, and I urge them to join me.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PROTOCOL TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON THE ACCESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following treaty, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Calendar No. 5, Treaty document No. 116-1, Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 946, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 947 (to amendment No. 946), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the Republican leader in recent days has charged that because the House of Representatives is now engaged in its constitutional duty to examine Presidential wrongdoing, that somehow Democrats are not interested in legislating.

It is a curious criticism coming from Leader MCCONNELL. Democrats not interested in legislating, from the man who proudly calls himself the “grim reaper.” Since the midterms, the Democratic House majority has passed hundreds of bills with bipartisan support while Leader MCCONNELL has deliberately focused the Senate on anything but legislation. He has turned this Chamber into a legislative graveyard.

Democrats want to vote on things. Gun safety, how about it? Healthcare, how about it? Infrastructure, how about it? Improving our democracy. On none of these things will Leader MCCONNELL even dare put a bill on the floor, let alone the House bills, which would have a chance of getting something done.

This very week, we have an example of how Democrats plan to work with our Republican colleagues to advance legislation. The Republican leader has indicated, finally, alas, that he may bring several appropriations bills to the floor this week. Democrats want to move forward and debate those bills in an open and vigorous fashion.

There are several appropriations bills that don't have any bipartisan support. The Republican leader knows why. We need to have bipartisan support on the 302(b)s, the allocations to the various agencies, to move forward on bills like Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, Military Construction, and Defense. That negotiation, to succeed, must be bipartisan. That is what the history of this Chamber shows. That is what commonsense and logic shows. House leaders have suggested a conference—Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate—on these 302(b)s. That is a good idea. If Republicans are willing to engage with us on 302(b)s, we get negotiations back on track to fund the government.

In the meantime, Democrats want to move forward on the noncontroversial appropriation bills—the bills that have had bipartisan agreement—and we hope Leader MCCONNELL will allow a fair and robust amendment process. It would be nice to consider something on the floor besides an endless parade of rightwing judges—who side with a special powerful interest, time and time again, not working Americans—and Executive appointments.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Madam President, on Syria, today the 5-day pause on hostilities in northern Syria is set to come to an end. What happens next is completely unknown. Will Erdogan continue his military incursion into Syria? Will the Kurds—facing another Turkish offensive—leave their posts guarding ISIS prisoners to once again defend themselves, allowing ISIS prisoners, dangerous to America, to escape? Will Presidents Erdogan and Putin cut a new deal that is bad for America and our allies? Nobody knows the answer to any of these.

What we do know is that the situation has rapidly deteriorated compared to just a few weeks ago.

What caused this deterioration? One thing: the President's abrupt decision to withdraw U.S. troops from the region after a phone call with President Erdogan. When ISIS had been degraded and more than 10,000 detainees—many of them hardened ISIS fighters—were under lock and key, to undo that is putting America's security at risk. That is what President Trump has done. This so-called tough warrior backed off in a call with a much lesser power, President Erdogan. He has done this before. We don't know how many of these 10,000 detainees and their families have escaped. We don't know where they have gone, nor is there any plan to get them back into detention facilities. These are dangerous people—dangerous to our homeland, dangerous to New York and Chicago and Miami and Dallas and Denver and Los Angeles—and we don't know where they are or what they are doing all because of President Trump's precipitous action. I get excited about this—angrily excited, negatively excited—because my city has suffered from terrorists 7,000 miles away, a small group, who did such damage.

As the New York Times reported after ISIS had been on the run, “Now, analysts say that Mr. Trump's pullout [of U.S. troops from northern Syria] has handed the Islamic State its biggest win in four years.”

President Trump has handed ISIS its biggest victory in 4 years. How can any American support that? How can so many of our Republican colleagues and Republican supporters of President Trump shrug their shoulders?

Let me repeat: President Trump's “pullout has handed the Islamic State its biggest win in more than four years and greatly improved its prospects.”

The President's incompetence with Erdogan and Syria has handed ISIS a

“get out of jail free” card and has simply put American lives in danger. For the sake of our national security, President Trump and his administration need to get a handle on this situation.

I believe Senators from both parties have been trying to get the administration's top officials, including Secretary of State Pompeo, Secretary of Defense Esper, and General Milley, to give the Senate a briefing on its Syria policy and a plan to contain and further degrade ISIS. They canceled the scheduled briefing last week, pulled the plug on a briefing that was supposed to be this afternoon, and have so far refused to commit to a new date. We need that briefing to happen.

Secretary Pompeo, Secretary Esper, General Milley, and CIA Director Haspel have the responsibility to report to Congress on what is happening in this dangerous situation, and, once again, this administration is withholding vital information. It is a disgrace. It is probably because they don't have a plan, so they don't know what to do. But bringing them here may help formulate that plan or push them to get a plan.

In the meantime, Democrats are set to meet with Brett McGurk, the Presidential envoy in charge of countering ISIS, at a special meeting Wednesday so that we can try to come up with some answers, even though it should be the administration doing that.

The American people should be very concerned that the Trump administration does not seem to have any plan to secure the enduring defeat of ISIS in Syria. Senate Democrats will try to learn as much as possible from the experts available to us—folks like Mr. McGurk—but, ultimately, the President alone has the authority to correct our Nation's course.

So it is still very important for the Senate to pass the House resolution condemning the President's decision to precipitously withdraw from northern Syria. The President tends to listen when the Republicans here in Congress express their disapproval. That is what happened in the House, where over 120 Republicans voted with Democrats on a bipartisan resolution, including Leaders MCCARTHY, SCALISE, and CHENEY, hard-war Republicans, but at least they knew how bad this was for America. I wish our Senate Republican colleagues would have shown the same bit of courage that MCCARTHY, SCALISE, and CHENEY showed.

If the House resolution is tough enough for House Republican leadership, surely it is good enough for the majority of Senate Republicans. So we will keep trying to pass the House resolution here in the Senate because it means we could send a bill to the President's desk that shows him a bipartisan majority of Congress is against his reckless decision to consider it in Syria. This is extremely, extremely troubling, and I am very angry—very angry.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Madam President, later this week, Senate Democrats are going to use their authority under the Congressional Review Act to force a vote to repeal the IRS's harmful rule that effectively eliminates State charitable tax credits all across the country.

I know my Republican colleagues want to frame this CRA vote as a vote on the State and local tax credit cap they put in place in tax reform. I disagree. I vehemently disagree with that policy and will look to change it as soon as possible.

It has hurt so many people who are middle class and not wealthy in New York and also in suburbs throughout the country. By the way, it is probably one of the major reasons the House flipped from Republican to Democrats. So many of those districts in New Jersey, California, New York, and Pennsylvania were affected by the SALT cap, and people throughout rebelled against their Republican Congress, and they put new people in.

But it affects other things as well. The regulation we will be voting on impacts State charitable credits virtually across every State, ranging in areas from education to conservation, to child care, and more.

Do not take my word for it. In Kentucky, the Community Foundation of Louisville, a major philanthropic organization, has warned that IRS's rule will effectively extinguish the endowed Kentucky program, which has generated more than \$31 million in charitable donations.

Look at South Carolina, where my friend Senator GRAHAM has made clear that this rule will have devastating consequences for the South Carolina Research Authority, which helps start-up companies in his State create new jobs.

Let's go to Colorado, where the Boys and Girls Club of Chafee County warned that "these proposed regulations will severely limit the effectiveness of our Colorado Child Care Contribution Tax Credit," which they say will "limit our ability to address an issue which is fundamental to the economic health of the community." The list goes on and on.

I ask my Republican colleagues, before we vote on the CRA tomorrow, to look at how it affects their State, not just in terms of State and local taxes but charitable contributions, education, homeschool, and many other areas.

The vote is about getting rid of an IRS rule that hinders State programs, like the ones I have mentioned. My Republican colleagues have always proclaimed that they are defenders of States' rights and the 10th Amendment. Here is an opportunity for them to walk the walk and to stop the IRS from making life harder on both taxpayers and local economies. I urge them to vote with us to repeal this rule.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, over in the House today, the Ways and Means Committee is marking up Speaker PELOSI's drug bill, the latest installment in Democrats' campaign for government-run healthcare.

Like Democrats' other plan for government takeover of healthcare, the so-called Medicare for All vote, the Pelosi drug bill will ultimately leave Americans worse off when it comes to access to care.

There is no question that the American healthcare system isn't perfect. High drug costs are a problem, and one in four seniors reports difficulty affording medications. Stories of patients being forced to ration pills or abandon their prescriptions at the pharmacy counter are unacceptable, but upending the entire American healthcare system is not the answer.

A strong majority of Americans are happy with their health insurance coverage and the quality of the healthcare they receive. Americans have access to treatments that individuals in other countries simply don't have access to. Take cancer drugs, for example. Between 2011 and 2018, 82 new cancer drugs became available. U.S. patients have access to 96 percent of those new drugs. In Germany, by contrast, patients have access to just 73 percent of those new cancer drugs. In France, it is just 66 percent, and in Japan, patients have access to only 54 percent of these new cancer drugs. In other words, Japanese patients are missing out on access to roughly half of the new cancer drugs that emerged between 2011 and 2018.

So why do Americans have such tremendous access to new drugs while other countries trail behind? Because the U.S. Government doesn't dictate drug prices or drug coverage. That is also the reason American companies lead the world in medical innovation.

Back in 1986, investment in drug research by European drug companies exceeded U.S. investment by approximately 24 percent, but all of that changed—all of that changed—when European governments stepped in and started imposing price controls.

Today, European investment in drug research and development is almost 40 percent lower than U.S. investment. It was 24 percent higher in 1968, and, today, it is 40 percent lower.

Speaker PELOSI's bill would start the process of destroying the system that has produced so much access and innovation for American patients. Her legislation would impose government price controls on as many as 250 medications.

If progressives in her caucus have their way, the bill would impose government price controls on all medications. Either way, the result is likely to look much the same as we have seen before—reduced access to lifesaving treatments and substantially reduced

investment for the prescription drug breakthroughs of the future.

Under the Pelosi bill, Americans could look forward to a future where we might be the ones losing out on a quarter or more of the new cancer drugs that are coming to market.

There is no question that we need to find solutions to drive down drug costs, but the answer to the problem of high drug costs is not to destroy the system that has given American patients access to so many new cures and treatments.

Republicans want to develop bipartisan legislation focused on lowering prescription drug costs without—without—destroying the American system of access and innovation.

The Senate Finance Committee, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, and the Senate Judiciary Committee have spent a lot of time this year working on this issue, and work on truly bipartisan solutions remains ongoing.

Earlier this year, House committees advanced drug pricing legislation on a bipartisan basis, but, unfortunately, House Democrats have made it clear that they are more interested in playing politics than in cooperating on legislation to address the challenges that are facing American families.

Democrats know that the Pelosi drug bill has no chance of passing the Senate, but they have chosen to pursue this socialist fantasy instead of working with Republicans to develop a bipartisan prescription drug bill that isn't just price controls and that might actually go somewhere.

Like the Democrats' larger socialist fantasy, Medicare for All, the Pelosi drug bill will ultimately hurt the very people it is supposed to help, in this case, by restricting their access to lifesaving drugs and future prescription drug innovations. The Pelosi drug bill is a bad prescription for the American people.

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

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

DRUG CAUCUS HEARING

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, this Congress, I have the great honor of cochairing the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics with my friend and colleague from California, Senator FEINSTEIN.

As our country continues to battle the scourge of the opioid epidemic, fight drug trafficking at our borders, and attack illicit drug sources abroad, the work of this caucus could not be more timely or more important. We must do more, I believe, to treat addiction, and we need to do more to stop Americans from using illegal drugs in the first instance.

Earlier this year, we had a hearing to examine the global narcotics epidemic—and it is a global one—and discuss our country's counternarcotics strategy. At this first hearing, we were lucky to have the Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, as a witness. He spoke in depth about the scope of this problem and how the State Department is working with our friends and allies abroad to curb the supply of these illicit drugs. We learned a lot from Secretary Pompeo and our other expert witnesses about the complexity of this problem and a need for a whole-of-government approach. It was a strong way to kick off our agenda.

I am looking forward to our second hearing tomorrow, which I will talk about briefly, where we will have experts testifying on the public health effects of the most commonly used illicit drug—marijuana.

A 2018 report found that an estimated 43.5 million Americans used marijuana in the last year. That is the highest percentage since 2002. While marijuana is still a prohibited drug under Federal law, we know that more than half of the States have legalized it in some form, making the rise in usage not all that surprising.

Now, there is no shortage of people who claim that marijuana has endless health benefits and can help patients struggling with everything from epilepsy to anxiety to cancer treatments. This reminds me of some of the advertising we saw from the tobacco industry years ago where they actually claimed public health benefits from smoking tobacco, which we know, as a matter of fact, were false and that tobacco contains nicotine, an addictive drug, and is implicated with cancers of different kinds.

We are hearing a lot of the same happy talk with regard to marijuana and none of the facts that we need to understand about the public health impact of marijuana use. We have heard from folks here in Congress, as well as a number of our Democratic colleagues who are running for President, about their desire to legalize marijuana at the Federal level. But for the number of voices in support of legalization, there are even more unanswered questions about both the short-term and long-term public health effects.

Between 1995 and 2014, THC concentration—that is the active ingredient in marijuana—has increased threefold, making today's version of the drug far stronger and more addictive than ever before. It is true that for some people marijuana can indeed be addictive.

There has been an effort throughout the medical and scientific communities to learn more about the public health effects of marijuana use, but the results of these studies haven't provided any definitive evidence. I must say that among all the discussion at the State and Federal level about marijuana use and its benefits and its hazards, Congress really hasn't had an op-

portunity to soberly and deliberately consider this question, which, hopefully, we will be enlightened about tomorrow, about what the public health benefits are of this trend in our country.

A few years ago, the National Academy of Sciences convened an expert committee to review the health effects of cannabis and cannabis-derived products. The committee members were experts in the fields of marijuana and addiction, as well as pediatric and adolescent health, neurodevelopment, public health, and a range of other areas. Their findings were released in January of 2017, and while I will not read you the entire 468-page document, I will tell you that it raised more questions than it provided answers.

For many of the claimed medicinal uses of marijuana, the committee found that there was insufficient evidence to conclude its effectiveness, which is a pretty basic question. The benefits aren't the only thing clouded in mystery—so are the risks. There is simply a lack of scientific evidence to determine the link between marijuana and various health risks. That is something, I would think, Congress and the American people would want to know before we proceed further down this path.

This is especially concerning when it comes to marijuana's youngest users and the impact, for example, on the adolescent brain as it develops. We don't know enough about how this could impair cognitive function or capacity or increase the risk of mental illness or perhaps serve as a gateway for other drugs that are even more damaging to the health of a young person.

With increasing use and a growing number of States giving the green light for marijuana use, we need better answers. At our hearing tomorrow, I am eager to dive into this subject and learn more from our witnesses to help us fill the knowledge gaps that exist when it comes to this subject.

We are honored to have Surgeon General Jerome Adams among our distinguished witnesses. Surgeon General Adams has raised concerns in the past about the increasing use of recreational marijuana among adolescents and its impact on the development of cognitive functions in a growing and developing brain.

We will also hear from Nora Volkow, who is the director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Our second panel includes experts in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, pathology, and epidemiology. So we will get a holistic look at the potential health implications. There is simply too much we don't know about the risks and the claimed benefits of marijuana use, and I am looking forward to hearing from our witnesses tomorrow to get a better sense of the facts as Congress contemplates future legislation.

I appreciate the bipartisan commitment of my colleagues on the com-

mittee, particularly the cochair of the Caucus on International Narcotics Control, Senator FEINSTEIN, so that we can get to the bottom of the risks and benefits associated with marijuana use, and I believe tomorrow it will get us moving in the right direction.

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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ELECTION SECURITY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to urge the Senate to take action on election security legislation immediately.

It has been 1,005 days since Russia attacked our elections in 2016, and we have yet to pass any kind of comprehensive election security reform. The next major elections are just 378 days away, so the clock is ticking. We must take action now to secure our elections from foreign threats.

Let's review what happened.

In 2016, Russia invaded our democracy. They didn't use bombs, jets, or tanks. Instead, they spent years planning a cyber mission to undermine the foundation of our democratic system. This mission has been called "sweeping" and "systematic" by many, including Special Counsel Mueller. Our military and intelligence officials from both Democratic and Republican administrations, as well as Special Counsel Mueller, made clear and confirmed over and over again that Russia launched sophisticated and targeted cyber attacks that were authorized by President Putin. This includes former Director Coats, President Trump's former intelligence head; Director Wray, the head of the FBI; and the head of Homeland Security. One by one, officials in the Trump administration have confirmed that this happened.

What exactly did Russia do? They conducted research and reconnaissance against election networks in every single State. We used to think it was just 21 States, but this year, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security under the Trump administration issued a report that confirmed that all 50 States were targeted.

Russia was successful in hacking into databases in Illinois. The Chicago board of elections reported that names, addresses, birth dates, and other sensitive information on thousands of registered voters were exposed. Russia launched cyber attacks against U.S. companies that made the software we use to vote, and they tried to hack into the email of local officials who have elections in their purview.

Investigations are ongoing, but we know Russia hacked into election systems in the Presiding Officer's home

State of Florida. Senator RUBIO has publicly confirmed that Russian hackers not only accessed voting systems in Florida but were in a position to change voter rolls.

These are just the attacks on our election infrastructure.

So we should look at it this way: No. 1, they tried to get into the infrastructure. No. 2, we know they spread propaganda about things. One of the main ways they did that was through social media. This month, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a bipartisan report detailing Russia's widespread social media campaign to spread disinformation and divide our country. Remember, you have hacking into things at the local level and at the State levels, and then you have this disinformation campaign. These are two things with the same intent—to interfere in our democracy.

Think about what I just described. A foreign country attacked our democracy in multiple ways. Our military leaders and law enforcement officials all say that Russia hasn't paid a sufficient price for the attack, so they are now "emboldened," in the words of former Director Dan Coats—a former Republican Senator—in continuing efforts to undermine our political system.

Congress hasn't passed a law—aside from providing election equipment funding with no strings attached—to address the problem. This isn't just wrong; this is legislative malpractice. We have a common set of facts about what happened. Now we need common-sense solutions to make sure it doesn't happen again.

This week, a number of us are coming to the floor to urge the Republican leader to bring election security legislation to a vote. That must happen, but much more must happen as well.

Today, I am going to focus on the need to improve transparency and accountability for online platforms like Facebook and Twitter, but before I turn to that, I would like to take a moment to describe why it is imperative that we update our election infrastructure.

Right now, the majority of States rely on electronic voting systems that are at least 10 years old. In 2020, voters in eight States will cast their ballots on machines with no paper trail, so there will be no reliable record to go back and audit the election results. So if something goes wrong, if they hack in, there will be no paper ballots to back up what actually happened. Problems for that State or that county? Yes. Well, how about problems for our national Presidential election?

By the way, am I telling any secrets? No. Russia knows exactly which States and counties don't have backup paper ballots.

Sixteen States have no statewide audit requirement to confirm the results of the election. These statistics are alarming because experts agree that paper ballots and audits are the

baseline of what we need to secure our election system.

FBI Director Wray recently testified in the Senate. I asked him whether he thinks having things like paper ballots makes sense in the event that Russia—or any other foreign country, for that matter—decides to go at us again. He said, yes, that would be a good thing. Maybe we should think of listening to the head of the FBI and figure out what we can do to make this better. Even the President has expressed his support for paper ballots. But I think we need more than words; I think we need action. We need this body to say to those States: It is time to get your act together now and get those backup paper ballots.

I have introduced multiple pieces of legislation—some of them bipartisan—that would secure our election by requiring paper ballots, mandating post-election audits, and modernizing our election infrastructure. One of those bills, the Secure Election Act, is cosponsored by my colleague Senator LANKFORD and also by the head of the Intelligence Committee, Senator BURR, and Senator WARNER, the ranking member, as well as Senator GRAHAM, the chair of the Judiciary Committee, and Senator HARRIS is also a cosponsor. In spite of all of these leaders being on this bill, it was blocked last year by Senator MCCONNELL, who made calls, along with the White House general counsel, to Republican Senators asking them not to support the bill. This is wrong.

I am glad that my colleagues Senators WYDEN and DURBIN will be coming to the floor this week urging the Senate to take up the bills, such as the bills I introduced, the SAFE Act and the Election Security Act, that would modernize our election infrastructure.

Remember, Russia didn't just try to hack into our elections system; they also launched an extended and sophisticated information war designed to divide our country and destroy America's confidence in our political system. Russia also knew that our social media platforms would be easily exploited for that purpose.

I am going to ask unanimous consent to pass this bill, which is a bipartisan bill that I lead along with Senator GRAHAM, the Republican chair of the Judiciary Committee, and that is also cosponsored by Senator WARNER, the ranking leader on the Intelligence Committee.

Why are we doing this bill about the social media platforms? Well, the place where Russia was most successful in undermining our democracy was right there in front of you on your Facebook page. We know that some of the brightest minds in our country built remarkable platforms where people can share information, like Twitter, Google, and Facebook. Unfortunately, these platforms failed to build adequate protections against the bad guys, kind of like building a bank but not putting any locks on the doors, and our democracy is worse because of it.

Our social media platforms are not well regulated. In fact, they are hardly regulated at all and are ripe for exploitation. Countries like Russia, Iran, North Korea, and China are taking advantage of that as we speak.

The Senate Intelligence Committee, led by Chairman BURR and Vice Chairman WARNER, recently released its second report on Russian interference in the 2016 election. This wasn't a partisan report. No one could call it that at all.

The first report details attacks and threats to election infrastructure. This second report details the sophisticated disinformation campaign Russia used to pit Americans against each other, and the committee found that Russia's targeting of the 2016 U.S. Presidential election was "part of a broader, sophisticated, and ongoing information warfare campaign designed to sow discord in American politics and society." The report notes that Russia conducted "a vastly more complex and strategic assault on the United States than was initially understood."

What did they do? They hired trolls. They hired buildings full of people to go online and pretend to be Americans and then submit things and buy things and buy ads that ended up on your Facebook pages and your Twitter feed. Russia specifically focused on hot-button issues and used falsified stories and memes to foster distrust of our democratic institutions. So maybe they would target a conservative person and put up a bunch of things that would make that person mad, but they were fake or maybe they would target a liberal person, and they would put up a bunch of ads about rallies and about things like that which were actually fake.

They targeted African-Americans more than any other group through individual posts, location targeting, Facebook pages, Instagram accounts, and Twitter. Their internet research agency focused on stoking divisions around race.

One of my best examples is an ad that they bought in rubles. Facebook let them buy it in rubles. It was an ad that we didn't even see until months after the election. It had an innocent woman's face on it. I know because she called our office later when it came out in Judiciary. She was just a woman. They found her face—an African-American woman—and put it on the ad. The ad reads: Why wait in line on election day? You can text your vote for Hillary Clinton. They gave the text number. That is a lie. It is more than a lie. It is a crime. They are trying to suppress people's votes and make them not go vote, and instead, text to a fake number. That is a crime. People have gone to jail for simply jamming the lines on election day. That is what this is. It is a high-tech version of a crime. No one was prosecuted because we didn't even know the ad existed that was targeting African-American Facebook pages in

swing States until way after the election. They could do the same thing on the conservative side of the aisle.

That is why I am simply asking for some solution, because one time it is going to be one side, and the next time it will be the other. Why would the people in this Chamber let this go on? Why would we do that? We have sworn and taken an oath—an obligation—to stand up for our country. That is what this is about.

It continues. Intelligence officials are once again sounding the alarm that adversaries are using social media to undermine the upcoming elections. Just yesterday, Facebook announced that it removed a network of Russian-backed accounts posing as locals weighing in on political issues in swing States. It never ends. Russia has a playbook, and they are using it to attack us. We have to stop them. How do we do that? Well, I have a very good solution. It is not the only solution. There are a lot of other bills we can do too.

But this is called the Honest Ads Act, which I am leading with Senator GRAHAM. I want to thank Senator WARNER for all the work he did on this bill as well. The goal is simple: Bring our laws into the 21st century to ensure that voters know who is paying to influence our political system. Right now, the political ads that are sold on TV, radio, and newspapers are disclosed so that the public knows what they are. They are actually kept in an archive so campaigns and reporters can go over and see what they are. They can actually figure out what this ad is and why somebody was putting this ad against me. I believe in the competitiveness of our election system, and if you disclose things, then, you are going to get more information about what is wrong with those things.

The ads also have to say who paid for them. That is why you see those little disclaimers at the bottom or you see elected officials or their challengers saying who paid for this ad: My name is this; I paid for this ad. That is what that is.

Guess what. If those things go on radio, TV, or newspaper, you have to follow all those rules. If they end up on Facebook or Twitter or another large social media platform, there are no rules in play. Sure, a few of those companies right now are voluntarily disclosing it, but there are no actual rules in place about how it should be done.

When I asked them why they wouldn't favor the bill, some of them have since changed their minds and do favor it, but when I asked at the beginning, they said they couldn't figure out what an issue of Federal legislative importance is. That is what the standard is. It is about candidate ads and the issue ads that you see on TV that bug you all the time. When asked about ads and why they couldn't do it, they said they couldn't figure out what that was. I said: Really? My radio station in Deep River Falls, MN, can figure it out.

These are some of the biggest companies in the world. Please tell me you don't have the expertise to figure that out.

That is why it is important that we pass this bill. It is about issue ads, and it is also about candidate ads. All it does is this. As we look at where the money is going to go in advertising, in the last 2016 Presidential election, \$1.4 billion was spent online on these kinds of ads. It is supposed to go to \$3 billion or \$4 billion in 2020, and there are no rules of the road. It is not only unfair, but it is criminal if this continues.

It is so easy to do. This is something we could fix right away. This is why John McCain led this bill with me. When we introduced it, he said:

I have long fought to increase transparency and end the corrupting influence of special interests in political campaigns, and I am confident the Honest Ads Act will modernize existing law to safeguard the integrity of our election system.

This Congress, as I mentioned, Senator GRAHAM took his place. It is time to get this done. There are many other bills that I will come back and discuss in the next few weeks that would help on foreign influence in our elections, but, today, I want to focus on this one because election security is national security, and it is well past time that we take action. The American people should expect nothing less from us. We should be able to get this done.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1356

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 1356 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senate majority whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, there are Members who object to this. They can't be here to object on their own behalf. I object on their behalf.

I say to the Senator from Minnesota that, like her, I also want to do everything we can to ensure that our elections are fair and transparent in this country. I think there are a number of solutions, as she pointed out, that are out there. I think there is a lot of good work that is being done and can be done, hopefully, on a bipartisan basis. As a former chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, I have worked with the Senator from Minnesota on a number of issues where we have been able to fashion solutions that are bipartisan in nature. I suspect work on this will continue.

As I mentioned, we have a couple of Members on our side who do have objections to the bill in its current form or the process of trying to do it this way. I do think there is a way in which we can come together and work toward solutions that will help do what I think

all of us have as an objective, and that is to keep our election process in this country fair and transparent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I appreciate the words from my colleague from South Dakota. I point out that the act is a bipartisan bill, with the other cosponsor being the Republican chair of the Judiciary Committee, and I think we should be focused on election security instead of protecting these social media companies. I think we should be protecting the American people.

We need to be a united front. I appreciate his words, and I look forward to working with him to get 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ELECTION SECURITY ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Mueller report made crystal clear that the Russian Government interfered in the Presidential election of the United States of America in the year 2016. They called it a "sweeping and systematic fashion" of interference.

I know this better than some because, in my home State of Illinois, the Russian intelligence service literally hacked into our State Board of Elections' voter file and gained access to a database containing information on millions of voters in my State. Then the Russians extracted the data on thousands of those voters. They also targeted other State election authorities, county governments, and election equipment and technology vendors.

Federal law enforcement and intelligence officers have repeatedly warned us that these interference efforts will continue into the election of 2020. In fact, former KGB Agent Vladimir Putin recently mocked us and openly joked that Russia would definitely interfere again in the U.S. elections. Congress cannot sit back and ignore this threat. We must take action to help State and local election officials prepare for the 2020 elections and those beyond.

I am pleased that the leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, of Kentucky, finally relented on his opposition to any further funding to assist State and local election officials with election security efforts. Yet the \$250 million included in the fiscal year 2020 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill is clearly inadequate. We need to boldly invest in our election security. It is literally the cornerstone of our democracy, and we need to provide sustained funding to State and local election officials so they may respond

to these threats that are far beyond any State's capacity to deal with.

There are 40 of us who cosponsored the Election Security Act that Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR, of Minnesota, introduced in May. I was proud to join her as one of the original cosponsors.

The legislation would provide critical resources to election officials through an initial \$1 billion investment in our election infrastructure, followed by \$175 million every 2 years for infrastructure maintenance. It would also require the use of voter-verified paper ballots, strengthen the Federal response to election interference, and establish accountability measures for election technology vendors.

Let me bring this down to Earth in simple words. If we cannot trust the outcome of an election to accurately reflect the feelings of those in America, we have lost the cornerstone of our democracy. There are nations, including Russia, that have proven they are doing everything in their power to stop us from having safe, accurate election counts.

The question for this Senate and for this Congress is, Do we care? Do we care enough to spend the resources so our States can protect the integrity of voters? I am not just talking about blue States from the Democratic side of the aisle. Every State, red and blue alike, would benefit from this legislation. If the Republicans want to demonstrate that they are joining us in putting country over party, they should join us today and protect our democracy by passing this legislation.

I have been asked to make a unanimous consent request at this point before I finish my remarks, and I thank the Senator from Louisiana for being on the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1540

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 1540, the Election Security Act; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, in reserving the right to object and with all of the respect I can muster, this bill has more red flags than the Chinese Embassy. Despite my great admiration for the senior Senator from Illinois, I am objecting for three reasons.

The first reason I can best explain by telling you a story.

An oilman was talking to his banker one day, and the banker said: Mr. Oilman, you know, the bank loaned you \$1 million to rework all of your old oil wells, and they went dry.

The oilman said: It could have been worse.

The banker said to the oilman: Mr. Oilman, we loaned you a second \$1 mil-

lion to drill brandnew wells, and they all went dry. What do you say about that?

The oilman said: It could have been worse.

Then the banker said to the oilman: Our bank loaned you a third \$1 million to buy new drilling equipment, and it all broke down. What do you say about that?

The oilman said: It could have been worse.

The banker was now very upset. He said: What do you mean it could have been worse? We loaned you \$3 million, and you lost all of it. What do you mean it could have been worse?

The oilman said: It could have been my money.

The cost of this bill is \$1 billion—nine zeros. If I started counting to a billion right now by one numeral a second, I wouldn't finish until 2051. I would be dead as a doornail. I wouldn't make it. A billion is a lot. We toss around "a billion" these days like it was a nickel. A billion seconds ago, it was 1986. Ronald Reagan was President. That is how much a billion is. A billion minutes ago, the Romans were conquering Mesopotamia. As I made the point the other day on the Senate floor, a billion hours ago, the Neanderthals were roaming the Earth. A billion is a lot.

We have a \$22 trillion deficit—12 zeros. We have to pay this money back. I am running out of space, and we are probably going to run out of digits if we keep borrowing.

My first concern is the money. Now, if we had not given any money to our colleagues at the State level, that would have been one thing. Yet, as my good friend knows, 2 years ago, we gave the States \$380 million to combat election fraud. They haven't even spent it all yet. So, yes, I have concerns about the money.

Point No. 2, we did have problems in 2016, and I join the senior Senator in wanting to do everything we possibly can to keep it from happening again, which we did in 2018. We all had a classified briefing down in our room. I don't know the particular name of it, but it is in the Capitol Visitor Center. It is classified. You have to leave your phone and your iPad outside. We had the Director of National Intelligence there and the FBI Director, and I think we had every general there from the Western Hemisphere. We went over the 2018 elections. They went off without a hitch.

Have you read any articles about our having problems in 2018 like we had in 2016? No. Do you think if we had problems in 2018 that the members of our press would have pounced on it like a ninja? Yes. Yet you haven't seen those articles because 2018 went off without a hitch. This was, in part, because we gave the States \$380 million to solve the problem, and they have not spent it all. So a reasonable person would wonder why we would want to give them another \$1 billion of American taxpayer money at this juncture.

We also asked the Director of National Intelligence, the FBI, and every general who was there: Are you ready for 2020? Every single one of them said, categorically, unequivocally, unconditionally, yes. Every single Senator, both my Republican friends and my Democratic friends, walked out of that classified hearing impressed.

The third reason I, regretfully, have to object to this bill—and I am not ascribing this intention to the Senator from Illinois. I am not—is that some of my friends on Capitol Hill would like nothing better than to take over elections in America, to have our election system federalized. Right now, we don't have one election system; we have 50 election systems. Every State runs its elections its own way, usually by the Secretary of State. Now, I believe that is a matter of federalism. I don't see anywhere in the U.S. Constitution or in the Federalist Papers where it reads the U.S. Government ought to be running elections for States.

No. 2, our States do a great job. Yes, we had a lot of activity on Facebook and Google and within other aspects of social media, but we haven't heard one allegation—or at least any proof of an allegation—that any votes were stolen in 2016, much less in 2018. That is because our Secretaries of State did a good job. It is also safer to have every Secretary of State and every State in charge of its own election system because, if a foreign government wants to hack your system, it has to go to 50 different States. It has to do it 50 times. If we nationalize elections—yet again, give the Federal Government more power—all a foreign national has to do is to hack one system.

Again, I am not ascribing this motive or this intent to my good friend from Illinois. I am not. Yet there are some who would like nothing better than to nationalize State elections and have them run by the Federal Government. Then the Federal Government could tell the States what to do—what kinds of machines to use, whether they need paper ballots, how to order the ballots. If they have electric machines and one has to walk into a booth, the Federal Government could tell the States what kinds of and what color of curtains they would have to have. Then they would have a Federal agency get involved, and it would start promulgating regulations. Before you would know it, casting a vote would be like building a bridge.

It is a matter of federalism. Those who disagree with me will say: Oh, KENNEDY. You are exaggerating. This bill doesn't do that. It doesn't federalize elections.

Yes, it does.

Do you know how we federalize things around here? We get the object of the federalization hooked on the money. Those who want the Federal Government to run everything never go right at it. They sneak up on them. We say we are going to give them \$380

million, and they get a little addicted. Then we are going to give them \$1 billion, and they get a little more addicted. Sooner or later, they are addicted to the money, and then the Federal Government has got them.

And that is what worries me about this bill.

I am going to offer another bill after we are done today that I hope my good friend from Illinois will at least consider supporting. This bill is not going to cost \$1 billion, I can assure you. This bill is going to require the chief election official of every State—usually, that is the Secretary of State, as the senior Senator knows better than me—to disclose to the Election Assistance Commission the identity of any known foreign national who has physically handled ballots, machines, or has had unmonitored access to storage facilities or tabulation centers used to support elections or unmonitored access to election-related information or communication technology.

What does that really mean? That means that if a foreign national at any stage of the chain of custody has access to the machine or has access to the ballot, that has to be disclosed.

Now, if you want to do something to stop foreign nationals from interfering with our elections, we don't need to spend \$1 billion. We need to pass this bill.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, is there an objection?

Mr. KENNEDY. Yes, sir. I am getting to that.

For the reasons I described and with great respect for the senior Senator from Illinois, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. DURBIN. First, let me say this. I do respect the Senator from Louisiana. We have been cosponsors on important legislation. I hope we will be again. We see eye-to-eye on many things but not on this bill.

A billion dollars? The Federal Government spends \$1,500 billion every year. Is the integrity of our voting system worth \$1 billion?

Do you know what it has cost us to reach this point in our history where our democracy is reliable and respected around the world? It has cost more than money. It has cost the lives of men and women who went to war to fight for that, to make sure that we had the last word when it came to the future of our democracy.

A billion dollars is an overwhelming number; right? Divide it by 50, and understand what is at stake here. What is at stake here is whether we care enough to invest money in our election process—not with Federal mandates. We say to the States: You decide how to spend it. You have the authority over the State election procedure and

the color of the curtain on your booth. If you want to mandate that by State law, be my guest.

But what it comes down to—and I have to disagree with my friend from Louisiana—is that the money we have sent to the States already has all been obligated, and it is going through the purchasing and procurement policies of each of the States. It isn't as if they can't figure out what to do with it.

Upgrading our voting machines to make sure that they reflect technology today makes a difference. Have you bought a new cell phone recently? Have you watched any ads on television talking about the security of your cell phone? Have you listened to anyone talk about the privacy of you as an individual? It is because every single day, every single minute, and every second someone is trying to figure out how to get into your mind and into your life, and we are trying to keep technology up with this reality.

Now, what is the reality of the technology we use for voting? In my State, we have paper ballots to verify what is actually cast, but our technology is 20 years old. The Russians know that; the Iranians know that; and the Chinese know that, and they are mocking us. They are laughing.

If you were amused by the story of the Senator from Louisiana—and he is the best storyteller in the Senate—think about how amused Vladimir Putin is to listen to this debate.

We can't afford to spend the money to ward off Vladimir Putin's next attack in 2020. That is what I hear from the other side of the aisle. I disagree. I think what is at stake here is so basic and so fundamental that shame on us if we will not invest the money to make sure we keep up with the attackers.

Now, people say: Well, 2018 went off without a hitch. It was not only the good work of State election officials. It was the hard work here in Washington of our intelligence agencies, and the Senator knows that. We didn't sit back and say: Well, I sure hope they don't hit us again. We went after them. I can't be more specific because we are told not to be more detailed in our response.

We invested a heck of a lot of money in stopping them from ruining the 2018 election, and we are bound to do it again, and I hope we do. But to say we can't afford to protect the integrity of our vote—then, what is a democracy worth? What is it worth?

It is worth human lives, and it is worth our investment in this generation to make sure that those votes count, whether you live in a red State or a blue State. I am not talking about just sending this to Democratic State officials. I am talking about across the country. I want an election to truly reflect the way the American people feel about candidates and issues that are before them, and that is why I am so disappointed by the Senator's objection.

Yes, I will carefully consider his bill. Maybe there is some room here. But

when we say \$1 billion disqualifies you from being considered seriously, when it comes down to the integrity of our voting system—\$1 billion is too much—it turns out the Republican leader has suggested one-fourth of that amount, and nobody blinked.

I happen to think \$1 billion is more realistic in terms of helping our voting systems across this country. Shame on us if the result of the Presidential election is later found to have been tampered with by our enemies overseas. Shame on us if we didn't do everything we were supposed to do in the Senate, in the House, and in this government to protect that God-given right for a democracy that we cherish so much.

The Mueller report made crystal clear that the Russian Government interfered in the 2016 presidential election in a "sweeping and systematic fashion."

In Illinois, the Russian intelligence service hacked into our State Board of Elections, gained access to a database containing information on millions of Illinois voters, and then extracted data on thousands of those voters.

They also targeted other State election authorities, county governments, and election equipment and technology vendors.

And Federal law enforcement and intelligence officials have repeatedly warned that these interference efforts will continue in 2020.

In fact, former KGB Agent Putin recently mocked us, openly joking that Russia would definitely interfere again in the U.S. election.

Congress cannot sit back and ignore this ongoing threat—we must take action to help State and local election officials prepare for future elections.

I am pleased that Leader MCCONNELL finally relented on his opposition to any further funding to assist State and local election officials with election security efforts.

But the \$250 million included in the FY 2020 Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) appropriations bill is not nearly enough.

We need to boldly invest in our election security—and we need to provide sustained funding to State and local election officials to respond to these evolving threats.

That is why 40 of us have cosponsored the Election Security Act, which Senator KLOBUCHAR introduced in May. I was proud to join as a lead cosponsor.

The legislation would provide critical resources to election officials through an initial \$1 billion investment in our election infrastructure, followed by \$175 million every 2 years for infrastructure maintenance.

It would also require the use of voter-verified paper ballots, strengthen the Federal response to election interference, and establish accountability measures for election technology vendors.

If Republicans want to demonstrate that they are capable of putting country over party, they should join us

today and protect our democracy by passing this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I agree so much with what the Senator from Illinois has said, but we are on top of this.

Let me say it again. We gave the States \$380 million to address the problems in 2018. They haven't spent all of it. It is 3 gallons of crazy to give them another billion dollars.

We have been assured by all of the relevant Federal officials that we are ready for 2020. I am going to repeat once again: We had no problems in 2018.

If I thought for a second that our voting system was in jeopardy, I would be joining with my good friend the Senator, but I am not much for just spending taxpayer money, with a \$22 trillion deficit, just to be spending it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes, followed by Senators JOHNSON, RISCH, and MENENDEZ, for 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROTOCOL TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON THE ACCESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, today, we will vote on whether or not to admit North Macedonia into NATO. I, for one, think we already have enough dead weight in NATO and that adding North Macedonia to NATO adds absolutely nothing to our collective security.

In his farewell address, George Washington stated: "It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world." This was echoed by Thomas Jefferson in his inaugural address, who wished for "peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations . . . entangling alliances with none." As we watch the most recent developments in Syria unfold, it is a good moment to remember the guidance that Washington and Jefferson attempted to pass along.

Turkey, a nation that we have been locked in a permanent alliance with since the Cold War, has launched an offensive, a war of choice, by further invading Syria.

While they are clearly acting in their own self-interest, their actions place our Nation one mistake or one small incident away from a hot war with at least one major global power. Does it make sense for American men and women to potentially have to defend Turkey over their war of choice?

I believe that when Jefferson spoke of entangling alliances, one could not pick a better example than how we have expanded NATO. Since 2004, we have expanded NATO ever closer to the border of Russia. In the process, we have added the so-called military might of countries such as Slovenia,

Latvia, Albania, Montenegro, and now, today, North Macedonia.

What benefit is it to the United States to add countries that barely have enough military might to defend themselves? I say that adding North Macedonia to NATO adds absolutely nothing to our national security.

The best-case scenario we can hope for with these countries is that an incident that triggers a major land war never occurs. If you think this is far-fetched, remember that World War I began when a Serbian nationalist assassinated the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Within months, the very system of entangling alliances that our forefathers warned about turned Europe into a killing field, which ultimately killed upward of 19 million people. Adding yet another small country to NATO does nothing to dissipate the chances of catastrophic war and, in fact, encourages that possibility.

What military capabilities does North Macedonia bring to the table? Some 8,200 active-duty soldiers. Additionally, in 2018, they spent a whopping \$120 million a year on their military. By comparison, the Chicago Cubs spent \$221 million on their payroll. Additionally, 15 other Major League Baseball teams spent more on their rosters than North Macedonia spends on defense. Even if North Macedonia brought their military spending in line with NATO guidelines, it would still only be \$227 million.

But if the goal of NATO is to have these countries spend 2 percent, why don't we wait until they are spending 2 percent to admit them instead of admitting them and saying: Please, increase your defense spending.

If they come up to 2 percent, they would only be spending \$227 million, which is \$103 million less than Bryce Harper's contract with the Philadelphia Phillies.

NATO is supposed to be about mutual defense, not just blanket security guarantees to smaller states.

How much would North Macedonia give in monetary terms to NATO? Less than \$1 million. We foot the bill. We pay for everything. We are going to get less than \$1 million of direct contributions from North Macedonia. It doesn't seem hardly fair; does it?

It is clear that North Macedonia adds little, if any, value to the NATO alliance in terms of manpower or military capabilities, which means that the only reason they are being added is to be a tripwire that would only ensnare us in a rapidly escalating wider war in which they would not be able to carry their own weight. So I don't think North Macedonia adds anything to our national security, but they are out there on the edge of Europe as a tripwire to ensnare us in a wider war.

If the recent events involving Turkey were not enough to validate the guidance laid down by our Founding Fathers, then adding North Macedonia to a tangled network of permanent alli-

ances certainly is. We would be wise to revisit and heed our Founding Fathers, who said getting involved in entangling alliances in Europe does not add to our security; it threatens our security.

I urge a "no" vote. I don't think we need to expand NATO. We certainly don't need more people that the American taxpayer will be asked to pay for.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of North Macedonia's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

North Macedonia's path to NATO accession has been a long one. Despite being regarded early on as a leading candidate for NATO membership, Macedonia's name dispute with Greece became a huge roadblock. A disagreement over a country's name may not seem like a big deal to those looking in from the outside, but getting over this hurdle required significant political courage.

In 2017, Greece's Prime Minister Tsipras and Macedonia's Prime Minister Zaev displayed that level of political courage when they committed to settle the nearly three decades-long dispute. Because of their leadership, these two nations signed the Prespa agreement last year. Greece agreed to remove its objection and approve Macedonia's accession to NATO in exchange for Macedonia agreeing to change its name to North Macedonia.

This dispute resolution between Greece and North Macedonia demonstrates that NATO is not only an effective defensive alliance, but it has been a tremendous force for stability in Europe. North Macedonia is poised to soon become NATO's 30th member because it worked to resolve a longstanding bilateral disagreement.

I support NATO's longstanding open-door policy, and I hope that the goal of NATO membership will continue to guide other aspirants to solve longstanding disputes, fight corruption, and make difficult necessary domestic reforms.

Beyond North Macedonia's accession, I would like to speak more broadly on how important the NATO alliance is to the United States. NATO is based on the principle of collective defense. Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty states that an attack against one member is an attack against us all.

NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg detailed NATO's value when he addressed a joint meeting of Congress earlier this year and both started and ended his speech by saying: "It is good to have friends." I couldn't agree more.

In the wake of the attacks of 9/11, our friends, our NATO allies, invoked article 5 for the first and only time in the alliance's history. Our NATO allies and many of the aspirants stood shoulder to shoulder with us in Afghanistan. They lost 1,000 of their sons and daughters in honoring their commitment by fighting alongside us. The United States should never forget our NATO allies' contribution and sacrifice.

A strong NATO alliance is just as important and relevant today as it was at its founding in 1949. I am pleased that the full Senate is taking up this measure to approve North Macedonia's accession to NATO, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor with a resounding yes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

NOMINATION OF ANDREW P. BREMBERG

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor to express my opposition to the nomination of Andrew Bremberg to be Representative of the United States to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva. He is not qualified for this position, and his views on women's rights and access to reproductive healthcare conflict with longstanding positions of the U.S. Government and more than three-quarters of the American public.

I take my position as ranking member for the Foreign Relations Committee seriously. I have a duty to thoroughly vet all nominees who come before the committee whether they be political nominees like Mr. Bremberg or career civil servants.

The criteria I use to determine their fitness to represent our country abroad include their foreign policy experience, their core values, and whether they will be responsive and honest with Congress as we conduct our oversight. I am disappointed to say that Mr. Bremberg fails even these basic criteria. He has no relevant foreign policy experience.

I repeat, the nominee to represent the United States at Geneva has no foreign policy experience. Mr. Bremberg has served as Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for Domestic Policy at the White House and as a political appointee to the Department of Health and Human Services in the Bush administration.

When it comes to Mr. Bremberg's core values, his nomination hearing left me deeply troubled. Our voice at Geneva must stand up for the core principle that reproductive rights are human rights; yet Mr. Bremberg made clear that he opposes access to reproductive health services for women and girls who are victims of sexual violence in conflict in the world. This radical view of women's rights and access to reproductive healthcare is totally outside the mainstream, not just for the Democratic Party but the Republican Party and the American people at large. That is why 40 reproductive health groups wrote a joint letter opposing Mr. Bremberg's nomination.

Moreover, in his positions at the White House, Mr. Bremberg led and advanced divisive and incendiary policy proposals, such as the infamous Muslim ban Executive order and the addition of a citizenship question on the census.

When questioned on these subjects, Mr. Bremberg frequently cited confidentiality interests and declined to elaborate further. When pressed by

Senators on whether he was exerting any form of privilege or executive privilege, he insisted he was not; yet he continued to refuse to answer questions. Clearly, we cannot rely on this nominee to be honest and forthright with this body.

Beyond Mr. Bremberg's lack of experience, his extreme far-right views, and his lack of respect for Congress, there is the issue of his erroneous declarations on government documents. Indeed, his nomination was significantly delayed because my staff discovered Mr. Bremberg's claim that he had terminated from his political consulting company—of which Trump for America was a client—when the truth is he did not. In fact, Mr. Bremberg did not terminate his political consulting firm until forced to as part of the Foreign Relations Committee's vetting process.

Once again, the Trump administration has displayed a basic inability to conduct even the most cursory vetting to ensure that a nominee is qualified and fit to hold office, free from potential financial or ethical conflicts of interest.

We have nominees with restraining orders, nominees who have failed to mention sexual harassment lawsuits, and nominees whose virulent, troll-like approach to social media should disqualify them from holding any office, much less a Senate-confirmed representative of the American people.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration has decided to advance unqualified and unfit nominees even as it withdraws a number of qualified civil servant nominees from consideration.

The failure of the political leadership at the State Department to stand up and defend qualified, veteran Ambassadors when they come under fire from the White House is nothing short of cowardice.

It was reported last week that Fiona Hill, the former White House foreign policy adviser, concluded that one Trump administration Ambassador was so unprepared for his job that he actually posed a national security risk. Mr. Bremberg is cut from the same mold.

If his performance before the Foreign Relations Committee demonstrated anything, it is that his views are completely outside those of mainstream America. He is unprepared to represent our Nation on the world stage, and he has little to no respect for the Senate and the role of Congress as a coequal branch of government. Surely, we can do better than this. The American people certainly deserve better than this.

I urge my colleagues to oppose his nomination and to demand that this administration nominate an ambassador to the United Nations organization in Geneva who is worthy of representing our country on the world stage.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that amendment Nos. 946 and 947 be withdrawn.

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

The amendments (No. 946 and No. 947) were withdrawn.

PROTOCOL TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON THE ACCESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise today to support the accession of the Republic of North Macedonia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to encourage my Senate colleagues to vote in favor of this protocol.

As we know, this past April marked the 70th anniversary of the NATO alliance, the world's strongest and most successful political military alliance in the history of the world.

In honor of this, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing to reflect on the alliance's successful past and to consider its future. The Senate also passed and recognized NATO's many accomplishments, and the resolution I authored, S. Res. 123, did so. I am grateful to have another opportunity to demonstrate strong Senate support for NATO by welcoming North Macedonia as a new member. As we all know, this matter has been in the works for a long time.

NATO was founded by the United States and 11 other countries after the shock of the Soviet blockade of Berlin. The Berlin airlift in 1948 made us realize the significant and real threat that the Soviet Union posed to peace and prosperity. That conflict is far behind us, but NATO has remained a critical piece of the framework that supports our collective security.

NATO worked to help the United States in Afghanistan after the attacks of September 11 and has ended genocides and maintained peace in the Balkans. It has trained troops of the new Iraqi Government; it has run air policing missions on Europe's eastern flank; it has helped end the genocide in Darfur; and it provided assistance to the United States after Hurricane Katrina. Most importantly, it has maintained a period of unprecedented peace among the major European powers.

NATO has proven to be not only a military success but also a political and economic one. NATO's security umbrella has provided the kind of stable environment necessary for economic growth and investment. Former Soviet bloc countries clamored for—and continue to clamor for—NATO membership, not only for the protection against Russia that they sought and seek but for the economic strength that membership could foster.

U.S. trade with fellow NATO members remains vital to the U.S. economy. NATO allies remain the largest

source of foreign, direct investment to the United States.

NATO is not perfect. It faces several challenges from within. First is the need to invest more in defense. Those of us who serve on the Foreign Relations Committee have for many, many years urged our friends and colleagues—the majority of whom are not in compliance—about the need to invest more in defense. But the number of allies spending 2 percent of their GDP on defense and 20 percent of their defense budget on equipment has increased, adding more than \$100 billion in European defense spending. Eight allies currently meet this pledge, but it is critical that all allies meet their Wales Summit commitment by 2024.

Second, NATO faces different security threats in different parts of the alliance. Southern Europe is understandably worried about migrant flows, while Eastern Europe faces the challenge of Russian military buildup along its borders and domestic disinformation campaigns sowing disorder by the Russians, just as we know Russia has attempted to do here in the USA.

NATO has recently begun to think about security risks that China poses to individual allies and the alliance as a whole.

Tackling all of these security risks will be challenging. But if NATO allies commit to the alliance and needed reforms, NATO will be up to the task.

Bringing a new member into the alliance also prompts us to reassess the status of current members, and I feel compelled to address the growing discussion regarding NATO allies that do not uphold the democratic principles enshrined in the treaty's preamble.

I agree that there are NATO allies whose democracies are weakening instead of strengthening and whose recent behavior does not demonstrate a commitment to the alliance. To fix these issues, the alliance must work from within.

There is no other alliance in the world like NATO. China and Russia do not have allies. They have short-term, transactional-only partners they have bullied into cooperation. NATO's strength and success come from its commitment to the allies and to working through problems when they arise.

On the expansion of NATO itself, which is what we are here to deal with today, since 1949, NATO has expanded 7 times and now includes 29 countries. The entrance of North Macedonia will make 30. Adding a 30th member during the alliance's 70th year sends a strong signal to our fellow allies and enemies alike of the continued strength of this alliance.

The U.S. Senate's consideration of North Macedonia as a member of NATO is a piece of long-delayed and unfinished business. North Macedonia was originally eligible for NATO entry in 2008 and was to have joined the alliance alongside Croatia and Albania. As we know, an ongoing dispute about North

Macedonia's name prevented that from happening. But the leaders of both North Macedonia and Greece demonstrated great political courage in concluding the Prespa agreement earlier this year, which has made today's decision possible.

The courage of Prime Minister Zaev and former Prime Minister Tsipras to move the situation in the Balkans forward should be applauded. I met with both leaders this year to thank and congratulate them.

Not only does Prespa pave the way forward for North Macedonia into both NATO and the European Union, but it is an excellent example of how other conflicts in the region could be resolved.

When the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held its hearing earlier this year to consider North Macedonia's eligibility for alliance, the committee heard strong and unequivocal testimony from top officials at the Departments of State and Defense that North Macedonia would be a strong partner to the allies and is ready for the requirements of NATO membership.

After reviewing all relevant facts and holding hearings and meetings with NATO, U.S., and North Macedonian officials for the better part of this year, I am confident that North Macedonia is ready to fulfill its NATO obligations and will benefit the alliance. It was ready in 2008 and is ready now. North Macedonia has a credible plan to meet the 2-percent spending requirement by 2024 and is already on track to spend 20 percent on equipment. It hosts the Krivolak training area, a top-notch Army training facility that has already been utilized by many U.S. soldiers. Strategically, North Macedonia's membership would provide NATO a direct land path from the Aegean to the Adriatic Sea, facilitating military movements should they ever be needed. It will continue to contribute soldiers to NATO's international mission as it has done in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2002.

North Macedonia isn't perfect. As a small country with a young democracy, it will certainly require further government reforms and military modernization as have most new NATO allies. For example, it will need to continue its transition from legacy Soviet equipment, further reform its intelligence services, and above all, resist Russian interference and continue to strengthen its anti-corruption efforts. I urge North Macedonia to make these reforms and to continue on its positive path inside the alliance with the help of its other democratic NATO allies.

Expanding NATO to include North Macedonia is about what the country will bring to the alliance and what the alliance brings to North Macedonia, but it is not just about North Macedonia and its qualifications for membership. Through its open-door policy, NATO has promised membership to any European country that fulfills the requirements of the alliance. Accepting

North Macedonia as a new member is a strong symbol and a message for European countries with NATO aspirations that with hard work and perseverance, along with the willingness to make tough reform decisions, they can provide a better future for their people. As long as countries honor this commitment, NATO's door should and will remain open.

It is important to note that this is a strong anti-Russian vote. Standing here today, I can tell you the Russians are very much opposed to this, not the least of which is exemplified by the way they resisted this and pushed back against this as North Macedonia attempted to get this done for their people.

I say to the Presiding Officer and colleagues, this day is a long time in the making, and I am pleased it is finally here.

I urge all of my colleagues to support North Macedonia's bid to become our newest NATO ally, No. 30, by voting in favor of this protocol.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will state the resolution of ratification.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

SECTION 1. SENATE ADVICE AND CONSENT SUBJECT TO DECLARATIONS, AN UNDERSTANDING, AND CONDITIONS.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia, which was opened for signature at Brussels on February 6, 2019, and signed that day on behalf of the United States of America (the "Protocol") (Treaty Doc. 116-1), subject to the declarations of section 2 and the conditions of section 3.

SEC. 2. DECLARATIONS.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declarations:

(1) REAFFIRMATION THAT UNITED STATES MEMBERSHIP IN NATO REMAINS A VITAL NATIONAL SECURITY INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES.—The Senate declares that—

(A) for 70 years the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has served as the pre-eminent organization to defend the countries in the North Atlantic area against all external threats;

(B) through common action, the established democracies of North America and Europe that were joined in NATO persevered and prevailed in the task of ensuring the survival of democratic government in Europe and North America throughout the Cold War;

(C) NATO enhances the security of the United States by embedding European states in a process of cooperative security planning and by ensuring an ongoing and direct leadership role for the United States in European security affairs;

(D) the responsibility and financial burden of defending the democracies of Europe and North America can be more equitably shared through an alliance in which specific obligations and force goals are met by its members;

(E) the security and prosperity of the United States is enhanced by NATO's collective defense against aggression that may threaten the security of NATO members; and

(F) United States membership in NATO remains a vital national security interest of the United States.

(2) STRATEGIC RATIONALE FOR NATO ENLARGEMENT.—The Senate declares that—

(A) the United States and its NATO allies face continued threats to their stability and territorial integrity;

(B) an attack against North Macedonia, or its destabilization arising from external subversion, would threaten the stability of Europe and jeopardize United States national security interests;

(C) North Macedonia, having established a democratic government and having demonstrated a willingness to meet the requirements of membership, including those necessary to contribute to the defense of all NATO members, is in a position to further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area; and

(D) extending NATO membership to North Macedonia will strengthen NATO, enhance stability in Southeast Europe, and advance the interests of the United States and its NATO allies.

(3) SUPPORT FOR NATO'S OPEN DOOR POLICY.—The policy of the United States is to support NATO's Open Door Policy that allows any European country to express its desire to join NATO and demonstrate its ability to meet the obligations of NATO membership.

(4) FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP IN NATO.—

(A) SENATE FINDING.—The Senate finds that the United States will not support the accession to the North Atlantic Treaty of, or the invitation to begin accession talks with, any European state (other than North Macedonia), unless—

(i) the President consults with the Senate consistent with Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the advice and consent of the Senate to the making of treaties); and

(ii) the prospective NATO member can fulfill all of the obligations and responsibilities of membership, and the inclusion of such state in NATO would serve the overall political and strategic interests of NATO and the United States.

(B) REQUIREMENT FOR CONSENSUS AND RATIFICATION.—The Senate declares that no action or agreement other than a consensus decision by the full membership of NATO, approved by the national procedures of each NATO member, including, in the case of the United States, the requirements of Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the advice and consent of the Senate to the making of treaties), will constitute a commitment to collective defense and consultations pursuant to Articles 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

(5) INFLUENCE OF NON-NATO MEMBERS ON NATO DECISIONS.—The Senate declares that any country that is not a member of NATO shall have no impact on decisions related to NATO enlargement.

(6) SUPPORT FOR 2014 WALES SUMMIT DEFENSE SPENDING BENCHMARK.—The Senate declares that all NATO members should continue to move towards the guideline outlined in the 2014 Wales Summit Declaration to spend a minimum of 2 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense and 20 percent of their defense budgets on major equipment, including research and development, by 2024.

(7) SUPPORT FOR NORTH MACEDONIA'S REFORM PROCESS.—The Senate declares that—

(A) North Macedonia has made difficult reforms and taken steps to address corruption, but the United States and other NATO member states should not consider this important

process complete and should continue to urge additional reforms; and

(B) North Macedonia and Greece's conclusion of the Prespa Agreement, which resolved a long-standing bilateral dispute, has made possible the former's invitation to NATO, and the United States and other NATO members should continue to press both nations to persevere in their continued implementation of the Agreement and encourage a strategic partnership between the two nations.

SEC. 3. CONDITIONS.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following condition: Prior to the deposit of the instrument of ratification, the President shall certify to the Senate as follows:

(1) The inclusion of North Macedonia in NATO will not have the effect of increasing the overall percentage share of the United States in the common budgets of NATO.

(2) The inclusion of North Macedonia in NATO does not detract from the ability of the United States to meet or to fund its military requirements outside the North Atlantic area.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this resolution:

(1) NATO MEMBERS.—The term "NATO members" means all countries that are parties to the North Atlantic Treaty.

(2) NON-NATO MEMBERS.—The term "non-NATO members" means all countries that are not parties to the North Atlantic Treaty.

(3) NORTH ATLANTIC AREA.—The term "North Atlantic area" means the area covered by Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as applied by the North Atlantic Council.

(4) NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY.—The term "North Atlantic Treaty" means the North Atlantic Treaty, signed at Washington April 4, 1949 (63 Stat. 2241; TIAS 1964), as amended.

(5) UNITED STATES INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION.—The term "United States instrument of ratification" means the instrument of ratification of the United States of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of North Macedonia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the adoption of the resolution of ratification of Treaty Document No. 116-1.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 91, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 327 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Alexander	Gardner	Portman
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Roberts
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rosen
Boozman	Heinrich	Rounds
Braun	Hirono	Rubio
Brown	Hoeven	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schumer
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Jones	Scott (SC)
Carper	Kaine	Shaheen
Casey	Kennedy	Shelby
Cassidy	King	Sinema
Collins	Klobuchar	Smith
Coons	Lankford	Stabenow
Cornyn	Leahy	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Moran	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Wicker
Enzi	Murphy	Wyden
Ernst	Murray	Young
Feinstein	Perdue	
Fischer	Peters	

NAYS—2

Lee Paul

NOT VOTING—7

Bennet	Isakson	Whitehouse
Booker	Sanders	
Harris	Warren	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 91, the nays are 2.

Two-thirds of Senators present, a quorum being present, have voted in the affirmative. The resolution of the ratification to the protocol of the North Atlantic Treaty of the Republic of North Macedonia is agreed to.

The Senator from Indiana.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess following the cloture vote on the Bremberg nomination until 2:15 p.m. and that if cloture is invoked, the postcloture time expire at 2:45 p.m. and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination; finally, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Andrew P. Bremberg, of Virginia, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, with the rank of Ambassador.

Mitch McConnell, Rick Scott, Roger F. Wicker, Tim Scott, John Hoeven, Deb