

political theater. So American workers and farmers are still waiting.

However, while our Democratic colleagues block these bipartisan priorities, at least they are not shy about what they do support. We have seen what Democrats prioritize. We remember the Green New Deal, an effort to grab unprecedented control over American families' daily lives. Designing, building, or furnishing a home or business? Democrats want Washington to dictate how you do that. Commuting, traveling for vacation, mowing your lawn? They would like you to do that without gasoline or jet fuel sooner rather than later. Make a living producing, refining, or delivering affordable American energy? They want you to find another line of work whether you like it or not. That is the Green New Deal.

There is also the matter of Medicare for None. That is the scheme that would take the program that millions of American seniors rely on, throw away everything except the label, and paste that onto a new, one-size-fits-all, Washington-run insurance plan that would be mandatory for every American. Medicare, gone. Private plans and the popular Medicare Advantage Program, gone. Every health insurance plan that Americans get on the job, which over 180 million people depend on, gone.

This is literally what several of the leading Democratic Presidential contenders have endorsed—a new nationwide experiment in socialism. And every single American—man, woman, and child—would be the subject of this experiment, whether that is what we want for our families or not. From this mandatory one-size-fits-all insurance plan to new price controls that would limit lifesaving cures, our Democratic colleagues are rallying around policies that would leave American families paying more to wait longer for worse care. That is their prescription—paying more to wait longer for worse care.

Then, if these plans weren't bad enough on the merits, there is the small issue of the crushing new tax burden you would have to pile onto the U.S. economy in order to make some effort to pay for all of this. One leading Democrat released a breathtaking proposal last week that illustrates the road they would like to head down. This candidate's Medicare for None plan on its own, notwithstanding all the other socialist plans—just the healthcare plan—would cost \$52 trillion over the first 10 years alone. That is the candidate's own estimate—\$52 trillion over 10 years.

Even after cannibalizing everything the government currently spends on healthcare, the plan's author admits there would still be a staggering \$20-plus trillion left over to finance. Other experts say it would be more. For some perspective, if you add up every cent that is deposited in every commercial bank across the United States of America, that is about \$13 trillion. So you

could literally seize—seize—every dollar that Americans have deposited in banks and you would have nowhere near enough money to pay for even the first decade of this crazy experiment. Democrats are confident they can produce this huge sum of money through historic tax increases on job creators and on the American people. It would be an enormous—enormous—new tax burden dumped on the U.S. economy that would kill jobs, depress workers' wages, and make America less competitive literally for generations to come.

At the exact time when Republican tax reform has made the United States more competitive and boosted prosperity here at home, Democrats want to take us backward and make our Nation a less attractive place to create jobs.

Here is what Larry Summers, a former Treasury Secretary under President Clinton, wrote about this far-left plan in the Washington Post:

[It] will discourage hiring, particularly of low-skilled workers. . . . There is . . . the real risk of an economic contraction following a sharp market decline.

That is Larry Summers, the Clinton Treasury Secretary. Particularly, it would discourage hiring, particularly of low-skilled workers, and a sharp market decline. So in order to take away employer-sponsored insurance from 180 million Americans, Democrats want to kill American jobs and bring the economy to a screeching halt.

Look, I would implore my friends across the aisle to put aside this destructive socialism and join us in the current work that needs doing right now for the American people. We have a landmark trade agreement that needs passing. We have U.S. Armed Forces that need funding. We are just waiting on our Democratic colleagues to show up.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, let me begin by echoing what the leader said earlier about the importance of passing the Defense appropriations bill.

I just came from a meeting with members of our Defense Department where we talked about how important it is that the appropriations process moves forward. The Defense authorization bill, the broader bill that sets the priorities for military spending, is also stalled out here. That is something that both sides have agreed to for 58 years. It sets out how we are going to make sure that we take care of our men and women in uniform and that they have the equipment, the weaponry, and the training they need to do their jobs and to keep America safe. The authorization bill is stalled right now. That is the priority bill.

The appropriations bill, the part that funds all of that—that, too, has been blocked last week, most recently by the Senate Democrats, who filibustered the Defense appropriations bill.

So both the authorization bill and the funding bill are now both stalled out here in the Senate because of obstruction and delays by the Senate Democrats. That is unfortunate for the men and women in uniform in this country because in that Defense appropriations bill is the largest pay increase in a decade for our men and women in uniform, not to mention all of the important priorities that are funded when it comes to the weapons systems and the most sophisticated technology that is necessary, again, to keep Americans safe both here at home and around the world.

I can't emphasize enough how important it is for our Democratic colleagues to come to their senses and conclude that taking care of America's military is job No. 1. If we don't get national security right, the rest is conversation. It really is. All these other things that we talk about are secondary and pale in comparison to making sure that we are taking the steps necessary to protect Americans, as I said, both here at home and around the world.

The Defense appropriations bill funds all of those priorities, all those things that are important, from pay and benefits for our men and women in uniform to, again, all the things that are necessary for them when it comes to training, equipment, and weaponry to do their jobs and to do them well, to continue to keep Americans safe both here at home and around the world, and to be able to project American power where necessary in a world that is increasingly dangerous.

I would just urge the Democrats here in the Senate to allow this appropriations process to move forward. Give us a vote. Let's vote on it. Let's get the military funded. Every day that goes by where it is not funded is lost time, and there are resources that can't be put into those important priorities

that are so essential to America's national security interests.

We have a filibuster being conducted by the Senate Democrats. It needs to be stopped. We need to move forward with the Defense appropriations bill, and I hope the Senate Democrats will come to the conclusion that this is the right thing to do, not only for the Senate but, more importantly, for our country.

FILTER BUBBLE TRANSPARENCY ACT

Madam President, the internet has brought Americans a host of benefits: a wealth of information at our fingertips, unparalleled convenience, new opportunities for education and commerce, and innumerable new methods of communication. But I don't need to tell anyone that along with the countless benefits of the internet have come a number of concerns.

One thing that is on the mind of many consumers is privacy. As the internet gradually permeates every area of our lives, internet companies become the repository for an ever-increasing amount of our personal data and our personal information, from what we ate for dinner last night to the temperature we like to keep in our house.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation and the Internet of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, I spent a lot of time focused on data privacy issues. This past June, I convened a hearing entitled "Optimizing for Engagement: Understanding the Use of Persuasive Technology on Internet Platforms."

At that hearing, we heard from a variety of experts about the ways companies use consumers' personal data to determine what individuals see online. As I said at the time, one reason I decided to hold the hearing was to inform legislation I was developing that would require internet platforms to give consumers the option to engage without having the experience shaped by algorithms that are driven by their user-specific data.

Last Thursday, I introduced that legislation, called the Filter Bubble Transparency Act, here in the Senate. I am proud to have a number of bipartisan cosponsors on this bill. Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator MORAN, Senator BLACKBURN, and Senator WARNER have all cosponsored this legislation, and I am grateful for their support.

The Filter Bubble Transparency Act is designed to address one aspect of the privacy problem, the issues that arise from internet companies' use of consumers' personal information to shape what consumers see on their platforms. Many people are unaware that much of the content they see on the internet is determined by sophisticated algorithms and artificial intelligence that draw on data about each consumer's online activity.

For example, a recent Pew Research Center study found that 53 percent of U.S. adults don't understand how

Facebook News Feed works. Many of us know that Netflix is curating information and recommendations specifically for us based on the movies and the shows that we watch. They use past behavior to project what future behavior is going to be, and they take all that information and they aggregate it. Then, they use that to recommend certain things that we might want to see.

A lot of us are aware that Amazon is delivering product recommendations based on our purchase history. In other words, when you buy things online, you see the ads for the types of things that you buy online. But the reality is that internet companies have moved far beyond just recommending TV shows or just recommending things that you might want to purchase. Increasingly, every aspect of our online experience is personalized based on the vast amount of information that companies collect about us—from our age and occupation to how many times we visit certain websites.

The data used by these companies to make predictions about us comes from a wide range of sources—from smart devices like Alexa, Google Assistant, Ring doorbells, and Nest devices; scanned emails and documents; data acquired from third parties, like banks, credit card processors, and health data services, among many other sources. This data is used to make statistical predictions about how we are going to behave in the future.

This statistical prediction-making is happening on a massive scale. For example, Facebook has stated that the artificial intelligence that it uses for its News Feed can make 6 million predictions per second. Billions of people are being fed content on internet platforms that is basically selected for them by algorithms trying to make predictions about what will keep each user engaged on the platform. Clearly, the powerful mechanisms behind these platforms, meant to enhance engagement, also have the ability, or at least the potential, to influence the thoughts and behaviors, literally, of billions of people.

That is why there is widespread unease about the power of these platforms and why it is important for the public to better understand how these platforms use the information they collect to make predictions about our behavior.

As I said, a significant cause for concern is that most people are not always aware that the information they see is being filtered. We are trapped in what one observer has termed the "filter bubble," our own private world of filtered search results and tailored content, without even knowing that we are there.

There are real concerns that the ever-increasing use of filters to shape our internet experience contributes to political polarization, social isolation, and addiction, as well as permitting companies to manipulate user behavior.

My bill, the Filter Bubble Transparency Act, takes aim at these concerns by requiring major internet platforms to notify consumers that the information they are seeing has been selected for them using filters based on their personal data. It would also require these sites to give consumers the option of seeing unfiltered results.

Twitter provides a good example of what the Filter Bubble Transparency Act will do. Twitter gives consumers an option to view an unfiltered timeline through the use of a prominently displayed icon that is easy to access throughout a user's time on that particular platform. Consumers have the option of viewing the timeline that Twitter has curated for them, which pushes the posts that Twitter thinks they want to see to the top of their feed or viewing an unfiltered timeline that features all posts in a chronological order.

That is the kind of option that my bill would give the consumers on other types of social media platforms. Consumers will be able to choose whether to see an unfiltered social media feed or search results or whether to view the curated or personalized content that the site chooses for them. It would be an option. We believe this gives consumers more choice and more control. They would be able to easily switch back and forth between the two options whenever they wanted. After all, consumers may want to see the filter-driven content in some cases. I mean, I would certainly prefer to see Netflix recommendations that are tailored to my viewing history, and if you have 1,000 tweets to read, it can be useful to see the ones that you are most likely to be interested in at the top of that feed. But consumers should also have the option to escape from that filter bubble and to see information that has not been selected specifically for them.

I strongly support a light-touch approach to internet regulation that allows the free market to flourish. The internet would not have grown the way that it has had it been weighed down with heavy-handed government regulations. In order for free markets to work effectively, consumers need as much information as possible, including a better understanding of how internet platforms use artificial intelligence and complex filters to shape the information that those users see and receive.

My bill would provide transparency and consumer control without jeopardizing the opportunity and innovation that we have come to expect from the tech industry. As internet companies collect and make use of more and more of our personal information, it is important that consumers know how their data is being used. At an even more basic level, it is important for consumers to know that their data is being used to curate the content they see.

That is exactly what the Filter Bubble Transparency Act would do—allow

consumers online to know, one, that their information is being filtered and that they are seeing content that is being curated for them by that particular social media platform, and, two, give them an option to see unfiltered and uncensored content that would just come to them in normal chronological order.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance this legislation. I think it is an important first step in making sure that consumers know more about their information as it is being collected and how it is being used by internet companies. I will continue to work as we try to deal with this broader debate on data privacy, which is so important in the online world in which we live.

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.

LEGISLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I return to the floor again this week to discuss Congress's progress on important legislation—or, rather, the lack of it—since the obsession with impeaching the President began.

When the House decided to proceed full steam ahead on impeachment, they promised that it wouldn't interfere with our ability to get other important work done for our constituents. While it has been less than a week since the House formally authorized their impeachment inquiry, the crusade to impeach the President and remove him started nearly 3 years ago.

For example, on January 20, which was actually Inauguration Day, 2017, at 12:19 p.m. the Washington Post ran the story with the headline "The Campaign to Impeach President Trump Has Begun." That was on Inauguration Day in 2017. Nineteen minutes into his Presidency, the writing wasn't only on the wall. It was on the front page of the Washington Post.

Our Democratic friends are on a kamikaze mission to get President Trump out of office less than a year before the next election, and, in the process, they are preventing Congress from solving the big problems facing the American people.

The latest casualty of this impeachment-at-all-costs strategy is a bill I introduced with my Democratic colleague from Connecticut, RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, called the Affordable Prescriptions for Patients Act. This legislation would lower the cost of Americans' prescription medication and save more than a half billion dollars in taxpayer money.

Here, in the Senate, it counts the Democratic whip, Senator DURBIN from Illinois, as well as the Assistant Demo-

cratic Leader, Senator MURRAY from Washington State, as cosponsors. With that kind of lineup, you would think this would be a no-brainer. Unfortunately, drug pricing legislation isn't the only consensus effort that has gotten caught up in impeachment mania.

For a quarter of a century, the Violence Against Women Act has provided resources to assist women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Unsurprisingly, this program has consistently maintained broad bipartisan support. There is agreement that we must do more to provide services and protection for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, but it is safe to say that there are disagreements on how best to accomplish that goal.

Those differences in opinion came to a head in February of this year. We were fresh off the heels of the longest government shutdown in history and working to fund the government through the remainder of the year, but our Democratic colleagues threw a curve ball when they insisted that we should not include a temporary extension of the Violence Against Women Act, which had expired in September of 2018.

Even amid the political jockeying we have been seeing in this Congress, this was a shocking omission. Republicans were in favor of a short-term reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act to provide time and space for bipartisan negotiations for a long-term reauthorization. Surprisingly, our Democratic colleagues in the House blocked this reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. So it expired.

Fortunately, though, our friends on the Appropriations Committee have continued to fully fund these programs, but the authorizing statute has expired because of this gamesmanship. Despite continued bipartisan negotiations led by the Senator from Iowa, Ms. ERNST, over the last 8 months, we haven't been able to come up with a consensus agreement to reauthorize the program on a long-term basis.

This has been an 8-month negotiation. This isn't all that complicated. We should be able to do it in the space of an afternoon, but, clearly, there is no desire to get this resolved.

Reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act is a top priority for Members on both sides of the aisle, and I hope we will work harder to make it happen rather than to use this important law to play partisan political games. Sadly, the Violence Against Women Act is not the only program to get caught up in the political crosshairs.

The Debbie Smith Act, another traditionally bipartisan bill here in the Senate, expired at the end of September because of the refusal of the House to take up the Senate-passed version and to send it to the President.

The Debbie Smith Act, you will recall, provides funding to State and

local crime labs to test DNA evidence and reduce the rape kit backlog. The Senate unanimously passed the bill in May to reauthorize this program, but the House simply refused to act. At a roundtable I held in Houston, a few months ago, I heard from rape victims and their advocates about how troubling and, frankly, how insulting all of this was.

After months, the House has now finally relented and voted to reauthorize the Debbie Smith Act, after the pressure on them became unbearable. I am glad they changed their minds, and I am hopeful we can get this bill to the President's desk soon. Although I would have welcomed less drama this time around, the Debbie Smith Act reauthorization will hopefully be an example of what Congress can accomplish when you put partisan political fights aside and work for our constituents; in other words, do the job we were elected to do when our constituents sent us here.

It is really disappointing that some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would rather relitigate the 2016 election—again, less than a year before the next election—rather than do the work of the American people. This obsession with impeachment mania has consumed our Democratic colleagues and is preventing us from getting work done on a nonpartisan basis. That is what our constituents want us to do.

Texans are worried about high prescription costs, worried about the state of our roads and bridges, and worried about our national security. In the case of the Democratic leader, I would be willing to wager that New Yorkers are worried about many of these issues too. So it is time to stop the partisan games. They don't result in pay raises for our troops, which have now been voted against two times by our Democratic colleagues. They don't advance victims' rights and give justice to survivors like the reauthorization of the Debbie Smith Act and the Violence Against Women Act would do. They don't increase the public's trust in our institutions of government and assure them that we really have their best interests at heart. Definitely, these games don't help make Americans' lives better.

We have heard our Democratic colleagues say ad nauseam that impeachment will not interfere with their ability to legislate, but the evidence suggests otherwise. What Americans want is action. What Americans want is for us to do our job. We can give them what they want by allowing legislation we know has a chance of becoming law, such as my drug pricing bill, the Debbie Smith Act, and the Violence Against Women Act, to come to the floor, get passed, and sent to the President. That would be doing our jobs, and I believe that is what our constituents want from each of us—not this single-minded obsession with impeachment that started the day the President was

sworn into office, less than 1 year before the next election.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, before I begin my remarks today, I do want to thank the senior Senator from Texas for his remarks on the Violence Against Women Act and the Debbie Smith Act. I think it is vitally important that both of these acts are reauthorized this year and the sooner the better so our advocates can get their work done. Thank you very much for those remarks.

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Madam President, last week we saw our Democratic colleagues once again playing politics ahead of the defense of our great Nation. They are putting their actions ahead of the support that we need to give to those who defend our Nation. For the second time this year, as has already been stated today, Senate Democrats have blocked funding for our servicemembers. The kicker, folks, is that the vote they blocked was one that would have simply allowed us to debate the issue. It sounds unbelievable even while saying it now, folks, but it is the sad reality of where we are today.

What message does it send to our men and women in uniform when every single Senator of the Democratic Party votes against providing the funding our troops need for training, for new defense programs critical to our national defense strategy, for the largest military pay raise in 10 years—which our troops more than deserve after nearly two decades of fighting for their country.

When I was deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in the early days of the war on terror, the most important thing was not only to ensure my soldiers and I had the right training and equipment to carry out our missions but knowing, without a doubt, that the American people and the policymakers of government who sent us to war stood behind us and supported us every step of the way. It was placing faith in our country's leadership to make the sound decisions to effectively employ military force and to have the will, the resolve, and the tenacity to make tough decisions without regard to politics.

The decision of the Democrats last week to not even open debate on what our troops need to fight and win is so sorely disappointing. What will it take in order to get our servicemembers at home and abroad the resources they need? Will we really deprive our troops of critical training opportunities to hone their readiness in the most dangerous strategic environment since the end of the Cold War?

Will we actively aid our enemies by failing to fund those things which we have identified as critical to maintaining an edge against our adversaries? It is absolutely unacceptable that Democrats would even entertain these possibilities.

If they want to have a debate, then let's have a debate, but to say they support the troops and then obstruct the ability to discuss in this Chamber what our servicemembers need doesn't even add up.

That is why I am on the floor today to call upon all of my colleagues who sank the prospects of defense funding to come down and do the job that all of us were sworn to do when we took our oath of office. It is time to give our troops what they need to do their jobs, and it is time to stop running this government through wasteful continuing resolutions in an increasingly dangerous world.

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. CARDIN. 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.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 2486

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, we need to pass the FUTURE Act to help students in historically Black colleges and universities, minority-serving institutions, and we need to do that now.

I am here to advocate on behalf of Maryland's four HBCUs that face a funding cliff due to congressional inaction. Without the immediate passage of the FUTURE Act, Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore face a collective \$4.2 million funding shortfall now that the Higher Education Act's authorization for mandatory funding for these institutions lapsed October 1 of this year.

This clean, bipartisan, and paid-for 2-year authorization gives breathing room to continue to negotiate the full reauthorization of the Higher Education Act without holding these historically underfunded institutions hostage.

Our HBCUs and MSIs know they can count on this mandatory funding each year to strengthen their course offerings and in-demand STEM programs, make infrastructure improvements, and provide academic counseling and student support services to first-generation and historically underrepresented students.

Throwing the budgets of these institutions into chaos directly harms their ability to serve their students and communities. Institutions would have to make decisions about potentially reducing levels of academic services, delaying needed infrastructure investments, and make longstanding staffing decisions. These decisions are being made all across the country at schools of each of our States. Collectively, the MSIs risk losing out on \$255 million in mandatory funding. This is an unnecessary obstacle our HBCUs and MSIs do

not need to face. We have a paid-for available for us today to address this issue.

We can get this done now. The House is prepared to accept this 2-year extension, which gives us a chance to negotiate a complete reauthorization of the Higher Education Act but does not hold these institutions hostage with the mandatory funding that is provided by law.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 212, H.R. 2486; that the Murray amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

I thank the distinguished Senator from Maryland for giving me this opportunity to present the right way to help historically Black colleges and universities, and I intend to do that when he is finished speaking about this and explain what we can do together.

Unfortunately, the bill he proposes is a shortcut the House took, which has no way to pass the Senate. It is based upon a budget gimmick and uses a method of funding that many Senators object to. It creates a new funding cliff within 23 months, and it is unnecessary because the Secretary of Education has written all of the heads of historically Black colleges and universities to say that there are sufficient funds until next September so there is no funding problem.

This gives me an opportunity—which I will do in a just a moment—to suggest the right way to do it. The right way to do it is to do permanent funding of historically Black colleges and universities in a package of bills I have introduced. That package includes other legislation—which I will discuss when my time comes—which include simplifying the FAFSA.

It is a bill Senator JONES and I have introduced which will help 20 million families, including almost every student at a historically Black college or minority-serving institution. The bill package also includes grants for prisoners and short-term Pell grants, and it simplifies the student aid letters.

This package is ready. It includes short-term Pell grants, as I mentioned. This package has been put together by a number of Democratic and Republican Senators. It is ready to pass the Senate and ready for the President to sign it. It permanently funds Black colleges and universities instead of this shortcut.

In a moment, I will talk more about that, but in the meantime, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I greatly respect the chairman of the committee. I know of his sincerity in dealing with higher education and education in our country, but the issue is pretty simple. Without the continuation of mandatory funding as provided by current law, historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions cannot rely upon the funding source the chairman is talking about. There are going to be tough decisions that have to be made on infrastructure improvements, tough decisions on staffing, and there is no need for it.

We all agree that mandatory funding should continue. I am all for permanent extension. This UC will give us the 2-year window to make sure we pass the Higher Education Act reauthorization to fund that.

The issues the chairman is going to talk about are all matters that are under discussion and debate that have to be worked out between the members of his committee, the floor, and reconciliation between the House and the Senate. In the meantime, historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions will suffer.

I fully support what the chairman is trying to do getting matters accomplished, but if I understand the unanimous consent he will be asking for, it doesn't deal with all the issues that need to be dealt with. We have to fully address the challenges students face with college access, affordability, accountability, and campus safety. The chairman's bill does not meet that test and limits what we could do in the future to meaningfully address the cost of attending and succeeding in colleges. The bill continues to let the realities of getting a college degree—the challenges of childcare, housing, food, textbooks—go unaddressed for our country's growing diversity of students, including student veterans, students with disabilities, students of color, and students of low-income families or those who are the first in their families to attend college.

I agree with the chairman. Let's bring the Higher Education Act forward and debate it but don't hold these institutions that have historically been discriminated against hostage to a program we all agree needs to be continued.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, why would we hold hostage bipartisan legislation that would simplify the FAFSA from 108 questions to 18 to 30—the Federal aid that 20 million families fill out every year in this country—unnecessarily? Why are we holding that hostage? Why are we holding hostage the legislation introduced by Senator PORTMAN and Senator KAINE and co-sponsored by CARDIN, GILLIBRAND, HASSAN, KLOBUCHAR, STABENOW, BALDWIN, BROWN—these are all Democrats—here is a Republican, CAPITO, COONS, ERNST, JONES, MORAN, SHAHEEN, SINEMA, SMITH, WICKER, and BRAUN.

This is legislation we all agree on—or at least that many agree on—on short-term Pell grants. Then we have Senators GRASSLEY, SMITH, CASSIDY, ERNST, HASSAN, JONES, KLOBUCHAR, MANCHIN, and RUBIO, who would like to simplify the Federal aid letters so you don't get a letter in the mail, if you are living in Maryland or Tennessee, and think you have a grant you don't have to pay back, when in fact it is a loan you do have to pay back.

We also agree on increasing the maximum Pell grant. We also agree on how to pay for it. We also agree on permanent funding for the historically Black colleges and institutions in a way that the Budget Committee can easily approve, and it can pass the Senate.

If we can agree on all that and it all helps students at historically Black colleges and minority-serving institutions, then why don't we pass it? Why don't we do that? Why do we come up with a short-term, gimmick-supported, House-passed bill that sets up a new cliff? Why don't we take a permanent funding, with a Budget Committee-approved way of paying for it, and do some other things that we have been working on for 5 years in a bipartisan way? This is not an Alexander proposal. This is a package of proposals by 29 Senators—17 Democrats and 12 Republicans. It is ready to pass the Senate; it is ready to be worked on with the House of Representatives; and it is ready to be signed by the President of the United States.

Let me add to this. The Secretary of Education, and people seem to ignore this, has written all the presidents of the historically Black colleges and said there is enough money in the bank to pay for all their funding until next September. So we have nearly a year to do this the right way instead of the wrong way. We are not on vacation. I know everybody is talking about impeachment, but we have lots of students around this country who would like to have a simpler way to go to college. We have lots of historically Black institutions and minority-serving institutions that would like to have a permanent method of funding. We have lots of employers and potential employees who want a short-term Pell grant.

Simplifying FAFSA would actually add, according to the Congressional Budget Office, 250,000 Pell grants, and it would increase the number of Americans who are eligible for the maximum Pell grant. All that is ready to go. All that is ready to go so why don't we do that instead?

I thank the Senator from Maryland for giving me an opportunity and a reason to bring up my package of bills with permanent funding of the historically Black colleges and universities paid for, not by a gimmick, but by a Budget Committee-approved method that President Trump and President Obama both had in their budgets.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2557

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health,

Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 2557—that is my bill—and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I ask unanimous consent that the bill providing permanent funding for historically Black colleges and universities and other matters be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, in reserving the right to object and for the reasons I have already stated, there will be ample time to bring up the permanent reauthorization of the funding for historically Black colleges and universities and minority institutions. That is why the unanimous consent for which I asked was for 2 years.

My party doesn't control the activities on the floor of the Senate. This reauthorization bill is going to take some time on the floor. We are going to have to deal with amendments, and we are going to have to reconcile the differences between the House and the Senate. There is no other category of expenditures that is mandatory of this nature to underserved and historically discriminated institutions that is being held hostage as we debate a broader bill. I think this is a truly unique circumstance and should not be held hostage.

We need to have a way of debating the issues to make sure that in a reauthorization that occurs only every so often within the Higher Education Act that we deal with the current gaps we have for diversity—for students with disabilities, for students of color, for students from low-income families, and for those who are the first in their families to attend college.

For those reasons, I object to the request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, we have been working for 5 years, for example, on simplifying the Federal aid form that students fill out to go to college—5 years. We have bipartisan support for it in the Senate and in the House. We have families who, in my State, will be discouraged from going to college because of this complex form.

Why don't we pass it? It is important to fund historically Black colleges; that is true. They have funding for another year. So why don't we add to that the simplifying of the FAFSA form, which, I would imagine, 95 percent of the students in historically Black colleges have to fill out every year? In addition to that, they have this verification process that they go through during which somebody catches them telling the IRS one thing and the Department of Education another so that they jerk their aid. They think that is important.

I have the president of a community college in Memphis who tells me he loses 1,500 students a year because of the burdensome nature of the application.

Former Governor Bill Haslam, of Tennessee—our State—has the highest percentage of students who fill out the FAFSA, which is the Federal aid form for grants and loans. He says the single biggest impediment toward there being free tuition for 2 years of college in our State is the complex FAFSA.

I don't think it is unreasonable to say, while we help students at historically Black colleges, that we help those same students by simplifying their FAFSAs. Why don't we give them the short-term Pell grant that Senator KAINE and Senator PORTMAN and a dozen other Senators, including the Senator from Maryland, have introduced? Why don't we increase the size of the Pell grant in a way that we agree in a bipartisan way?

In other words, we don't have to discuss something until we find something we can't agree on. Why don't we take the things we do agree on, which are considered in the package that the Senator just objected to, and pass them?

There are 29 Senators—more Democrats than Republicans—who have formed these bills. If we can add to that other pieces of legislation, let's do it. Yet let's take the permanent funding for historically Black colleges—the simplification of the FAFSA, the short-term Pell grants, and the Pell grants for prisoners—and pass that.

As I said, we are not on vacation. We should be able to do this in the next few weeks or in the next few months. I mean, how long does it take just to pass something we already agree on? It shouldn't take us very long.

I am disappointed that the Senator has objected. I hope to keep coming to the floor and asking for the Senate to approve it. More importantly, I hope to keep working with the distinguished Senator from Washington State on our Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. We have often been able to work these matters out even when they are contentious and offered to the Senate a bipartisan package. I hope we can do that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL JEFF BURTON

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate MG Jeff Burton, a man of remarkable achievement and character, on a career dedicated to public service. After 7 years of serving as the adjutant general of the Utah National Guard, Major General Burton leaves behind a distinguished legacy.

The Utah National Guard provides military forces that are ready to assist both State and Federal authorities in times of emergency and in times of war. It is comprised of 7,300 soldiers and airmen from the Utah Army National Guard and the Utah Air National Guard.

As adjutant general, Major General Burton oversaw the training and military preparation of soldiers and airmen throughout the State. He is a principled and dedicated leader who has set a high standard of conduct for the men and women under his command.

Major General Burton and his wife, Charn, have always cared for and supported Guard members and their families, particularly in the tragic times of loss. Their devotion to the servicemen and servicewomen of Utah cannot be overstated.

Major General Burton's life of service extends beyond his time as adjutant general. He was an assistant professor at both Brigham Young University and Utah Valley University, where he taught military science.

He was awarded the Bronze Star for his exceptionally meritorious service as the commander of the 1457th Engineer Combat Battalion during Operation Iraqi Freedom, during which his unit played a significant role in the initial ground war. Under his leadership, his unit also helped to rebuild the country after its having been devastated by conflict.

Our great State of Utah owes Major General Burton a debt of gratitude for his decades of service. We wish the honorable general all the best in his next chapter.

Thank you, Major General Burton, for your service to our State and to our Nation.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last week, the House of Representatives voted in favor of a set of procedures to govern its impeachment inquiry, laying out a formal process to examine the facts in a deliberate and fairminded process.

Our Republican colleagues keep changing their arguments as to why they are opposed to what the House is doing. First, there needed to be a vote. There was a vote. Second, make it public. Now it is public. Third, there is no quid pro quo. Now there is a quid pro quo, they even admit.

So now they are saying it is not impeachable. The shifting stands of the Republicans' argument in the House and Senate, which seems to shift all the time, indicates they don't seem to have a real interest in following the facts to where they lead but rather just defending Trump, regardless of the facts. That is a huge mistake for the Republic and for the Senate and how we should conduct ourselves.

So let me elaborate. For weeks, congressional Republicans criticized House Democrats for not scheduling a vote. As soon as the vote was taken, the same Republicans criticized the process once again.

Republicans criticized House Democrats for conducting classified hearings, even though the material discussed concerns our national security and Republicans readily participated in those hearings. Then once the House voted on the plan for open hearings, predictably, the same Republicans kept criticizing the process, coming up with a new argument: The idea that there was no "quid pro quo," which the President himself stated, although he was contradicted by Mr. Mulvaney, and that seemed to be the linchpin of their defense of the President in the last few days and weeks.

But now, all of the sudden, knowing maybe what is coming out, all of the sudden, our Republican colleagues are saying: Yes, there was a quid pro quo, but it doesn't matter. It is not impeachable. Some of them even think it is not even wrong, which is absolutely absurd.

So instead of the shifting sands of defenses of the President on a near daily basis, my Republican friends should let all the facts come out and make their judgments based on the facts. Instead of changing their argument every third day when faced with new facts, they should remain dispassionate and say we are going to look at the facts, instead of just jumping to find a new defense of the President no matter what the facts.

If you are defending the President because there is no quid pro quo and there is quid pro quo, maybe you should be saying: Maybe something is going on here. But, no, a new argument pops up.

The investigation is not yet complete. Jumping to conclusions before all the facts come out is misguided. It is unbecoming of a Senator's role as judge and juror of a potential impeachment case.

Now, last night, the President held a political rally in Kentucky with several Republican elected officials, including the junior Senator from Kentucky who publicly and explicitly urged the media to expose the identity of the Federal whistleblower. The President, of course, quickly praised the Senator's idea.

I cannot stress just how wrong this is. We have Federal whistleblower laws designed to protect the identity and safety of patriotic Americans who come forward to stand up for the Constitution. There are Members on the other side of the aisle, including senior Members and chairs of committees, who spent their entire careers defending whistleblowers and the laws that protect them and their families.

So where are they now? I was pleased to hear that my colleague, Senator THUNE, spoke out and said that whistleblowers must be protected. I believe

that Senator GRASSLEY is saying the same. They are both right. But there should be bipartisan outrage at the public attempts by the President and a Member of this body to expose the identity of a Federal whistleblower. You do not get to determine when our whistleblower laws apply or do not or whether you like what the whistleblower said or you do not. They are laws. This whistleblower, whose complaint was deemed “credible” and an “urgent matter” by a Trump appointee, is protected by these statutes. Every single Member of this body should stand up and say that it is wrong to disclose his or her identity.

Our rhetoric can sometimes be overheated, but I am appalled by these developments. There is no other word for it. We are in a moment of history when the Republicans, over only a few weeks, have shifted from saying that no laws were broken to saying that laws were broken, but it is not impeachable, to outright advocating that laws be broken.

Where is the internal gyroscope, the clock of decency and honor on the other side? They are twisting themselves in contradictory pretzels to defend this President who is going to bounds that we have rarely seen in this body with any party with any President.

I don't understand what sort of effect President Trump has on people of integrity and some degree of strength, who just fold whenever he says something, twist their arguments, change their arguments, do 180-degree hairpins about their arguments, all because they are afraid of telling the truth to power, the truth to this President who never likes to hear it.

GUN LEGISLATION

Mr. President, on guns, on August 5, days after mass shootings in El Paso and Dayton, President Trump declared that “we cannot let those killed in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, die in vain.” He said, “Republicans and Democrats must come together and get strong background checks.”

Those were the words of President Trump. A few weeks later, Leader MCCONNELL promised that a debate on background checks would be “front and center” in the Senate after the summer work period. These were Leader MCCONNELL's words. He said, “What we can't do is fail to pass something,” he said.

Well, it has been 3 months since those statements. Leader MCCONNELL's Senate has not only failed to pass them, it has not even debated some of them. And then on Friday, the Washington Post released a story that all but confirms the worst fear of families torn apart by guns violence—the headline of the Washington Post: “Trump abandons proposing ideas to curb gun violence, after saying he would, following mass shootings.”

According to the Washington Post, the President has abandoned his brief flirtation with supporting expanded

background checks because his advisers believe it will hurt his chances of reelection, “a reversal from the summer when the President insisted he would offer policies to curb firearm deaths.”

Maybe it is not surprising with this President—it isn't unfortunately; he goes back on his word day after day—but it is profoundly disappointing. Democrats, despite our skepticism, tried to work in good faith with our Republican colleagues to respond to the tragedies in El Paso and Dayton. Many of my colleagues, Senator MURPHY and Senator MANCHIN and others, worked with Republican Senators and ferried back and forth to the White House to find a proposal that could become law that would save American lives. We gave the White House every chance to get to “yes.”

But despite those efforts, Leader MCCONNELL has not moved even one gun safety bill to the floor, and President Trump is opposing votes on any—any—potential compromise, just like on infrastructure, just like on immigration reform, just like on a myriad of other issues, President Trump would rather do nothing to help the American people because it would upset political allies like the NRA.

He will make bold and sometimes surprising promises in the heat of the moment. When there was a huge pressure to do something about background checks because of the shootings across the country, he said he would, but then this man who tries to portray himself as a tough guy backs off when lobbyists say he can't do it. That doesn't show strength. It shows weakness and shows a lack of candor and honesty to the American people. It shows he is using the American people for his own political purposes, which he does over and over again.

Only time will tell how many lives it will take before President Trump and the congressional Republicans come to their senses and work with us to finally do something about the epidemic of gun violence in America.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Now, climate—yesterday, the Trump administration formally sent a notice to the UN that the United States will withdraw from the Paris Agreement in 2020. In the long list of dangerous policy decisions that President Trump has advanced over the years, this ranks as one of the very, very worst.

Future generations will look back on this decision as a dramatic step backward in the fight to address climate change. Future generations would note this date and how it hurt our planet, our economy, and our national security in the decades that followed.

President Trump has been an enemy of climate science in ways that no other President has been. Before becoming President, he called climate change a hoax, and unfortunately, his Presidency has treated it like one. He has stuffed his administration to the brim with lobbyists for Big Oil and Big

Coal; he has crippled the Federal Government's ability to research climate change. He rolled back emission standards and used fake science to underreport the effects of climate change.

Instead of protecting the interests of the people, President Trump has catered shamelessly to the interests of oil companies and corporate polluters. History will look harshly on President Trump's failure to lead the United States through our planet's climate crisis, and they will equally look on the Republican Senators who have just stood mute as he has done this.

Mr. President, 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. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the U.S. relationship with Turkey and certain actions that the U.S. must consider in order to protect our national security interests and those of our true allies in the region.

Today, more than ever, we need strong allies and partners in Europe. As the Trump administration does nearly everything in its power to erode our alliances and denigrate our closest friends, we find increasingly emboldened regimes in Russia and China. The U.S. cannot stand up to them alone. Throughout the Cold War, our diplomats worked assiduously to build strong bonds with allies, knowing that having close partners was better than having enemies on the world stage.

Our strongest allies should be those in NATO, those that have made a treaty commitment to mutual defense, those who share our values, those who work in concert with us to face the threat from countries like Russia and Iran with common cause. Unfortunately, Turkey under Erdogan embodies none of those things. Today, I would like to lay out a fact pattern that so many of my colleagues have come to see in recent weeks, that Turkey under Erdogan should not, Turkey under Erdogan cannot be seen as an ally.

How many more times do we need to see Turkey betray the values upon which NATO was established? How many more times do we need to see President Erdogan visit Moscow, Sochi, or any other Russian city to kiss Putin's ring? How many more journalists need to be locked up by Erdogan before we stop calling Turkey a democracy?

Enough is enough. Over my 27 years in the House and the Senate, I have followed developments in the Eastern Mediterranean quite closely. Turkey's

invasion of Cyprus in 1974 was a shocking attempt to redraw borders in Europe in the wake of World War II. To this day, Turkey's invasion of northern Cyprus must be seen for what it is: an illegal occupation that must end. Turkey's action over those days in 1974 were not the actions of a democratic country. They were not the actions of a reliable ally. They were not the actions of a responsible actor on the world stage.

But the events of 1974 would only presage Turkey's aggressive posture in the eastern Mediterranean in the years to come. To this day, Turkey under Erdogan continues to aggressively bully international energy companies, including U.S. companies, and the Republic of Cyprus. Their sin? Conducting completely legitimate exploration in the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone. This is not territory under dispute or an issue for debate. Turkey's hostility towards these companies is the kind of gunboat diplomacy that belongs to eras past and has no place in today's world.

Examples abound where Turkey continues to operate in bad faith when it comes to Cyprus. It could abide by UN Security Council resolutions to transfer the fenced area of Varosha, Farmagusta to the administration of the United Nations.

These calls to return this area to its original inhabitants, whom Turkey ejected during the 1974 invasion, have gone unheeded. Instead, several Turkish Ministers have recently visited and threatened to move forward with commercial development—a true affront to those forced from their land more than 40 years ago, as well as to the U.N. Security Council resolution.

In the eastern Mediterranean, for years Turkey has also aggressively violated the airspace of neighboring Greece, also a NATO ally. These dangerous maneuvers have threatened the lives and safety of Greek pilots, as well as civilians living on the islands below. Greece wants a good neighbor in Turkey and has sought to find common ground upon a constructive relationship. But with these airspace violations, Turkey has shown its true colors, and the international community must come to terms with this.

We have seen Turkey's belligerence abroad manifest itself even here in the United States. Who can forget when President Erdogan's bodyguards attacked U.S. citizens in a Washington park peacefully demonstrating, as is their constitutional right? And as momentum builds following the passage of the Armenian genocide resolution in the House of Representatives, Turkey and its lobbyists are working overtime to block it in the Senate because they know that if this resolution, which both I, Senator CRUZ, and bipartisan Members on both sides have sponsored, were to come to the floor for a vote, it would pass resoundingly and send a clarion message that recognizes the truth. The Armenian genocide happened, it was a monstrous act, and

those who deny it are complicit in a terrible lie. Genocide is genocide. The Senate should not bow to this pressure. It cannot bow to this pressure. Let's pass this resolution today.

Erdogan's behavior abroad has roots inside of Turkey, where the democratic process has significantly eroded and religious freedom is under sustained pressure. In particular, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of the Greek Orthodox Church—and its community—faces dire consequences as the spiritual head of the world's second largest Christian church. His church properties have been confiscated, and President Erdogan restricts his religious freedom. This is wrong, and his All Holi-ness deserves our attention and our ongoing support. For those who speak about religious freedom in this Chamber—and I admire the many who have—as well as on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, this is also an issue of religious freedom.

Of course, Erdogan's repression of his own citizens does not stop with restricting religious freedom. Following its emergency decree after a failed coup attempt, Turkish authorities engaged in a draconian crackdown and roundup of citizens across the country. The U.N. reports that close to 160,000 people were arrested in an 18-month period, including over 100 women who were pregnant or had just given birth, often on grounds of nothing more than that they were associated with their husbands, many of whom were suspects on trumped-up charges.

As we examine Turkey's increasingly destructive role in the world, we must never turn a blind eye from those Turkish citizens who want a more democratic future for themselves and their families.

In July, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed my Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act with a strong bipartisan vote. We are working for full passage in the Senate, and I understand the House Foreign Affairs Committee will mark up the legislation soon.

I traveled to Greece and Cyprus in the spring and told leaders in both places that this was not—not an anti-Turkey bill and that we all wanted Turkey to be a constructive and democratic partner in the region. At the time, this vision seemed a long ways off, but now, given Erdogan's recent choices, it has become virtually impossible. Let's review events since my visit to the region in the spring of this year.

First, Erdogan took delivery of the S-400 air defense system from Russia. Let me repeat. Turkey, a supposed NATO ally, purchased an air defense system from NATO's main adversary—the reason that NATO largely came to be. This choice endangered the security of the United States and other NATO partners. The United States made a good offer of the Patriot missile system—an offer that would have maintained the security equilibrium in the

region and enabled Turkey to remain a NATO member in good standing. That offer was rejected.

The Trump administration did the right thing in removing Turkey from the F-35 program. It was clear to all involved that the S-400 could not be parked next to an F-35. After all, it is meant and it is intended to be able to shoot down an F-35—this from a NATO ally.

But the administration has fallen well short of its obligations under the law. Under the CAATSA law, which I helped write, the administration is required to sanction any entity that conducts a significant transaction with the Russian military or intelligence sectors. This provision of law is not permissive. It is not optional. Under no credible definition would the purchase of an S-400 Russian system not be considered significant. The administration is breaking the law by ignoring this provision and kowtowing to Ankara. According to U.S. law, Turkey must be sanctioned for the S-400 system, and it should happen today. Otherwise, it will send a global message that we are not serious about sanctioning significant transactions with the Russian military.

Some have said that such an approach is unwarranted and unwise lest we push Erdogan into Putin's arms. He is already there. He clearly is already there.

In a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing in Syria, I held up this poster, and I asked the Secretary of State: What is wrong with this picture? This picture of President Erdogan, President Putin, and President Rouhani of Iran says everything—says everything. They are two of our biggest foreign policy challengers. And who is there with them? Erdogan. I argued that we were ceding American leadership in Syria and the region to leaders and countries whose policies were intrinsically at odds with our own. Unfortunately, today we are seeing the terrible consequences of this abdication of leadership.

Erdogan's warm relationship with Putin should ring alarm bells across the NATO alliance, raising concerns about NATO's exposure at Incirlik and intelligence vulnerabilities with respect to the alliance's presence in Turkey. It raises concerns about how Erdogan and Putin may be working together to counter U.S. interests across the Middle East, in the Balkans, and around the world. NATO is an alliance of shared values. None of those values are respected—none of them—by the current occupant of the Kremlin or in Ankara.

Second, provided with a green light from the Trump administration, President Erdogan's invasion of Syria to attack our Kurdish partners is an unconscionable act of brutality that has caused death and untold suffering among our Kurdish friends and partners. Tens of thousands have fled the area, creating an even greater problem

of refugees in that war-torn region. The consequences of these actions by Turkey and its proxies will persist for years to come.

Turkey's incursion poses a direct threat to U.S. national security interests in the region, not the least of which is by facilitating Russian foreign policy ambitions in the region and opening the door for ISIS to reconstitute.

At its inception, Turkey did not take the threat of ISIS seriously enough, and in the early days, ISIS's ability to easily traverse the Turkish-Syrian border bolstered its ability to grow in strength and numbers. Turkey did nothing—nothing—to stop them, did nothing to stop foreign fighters going into Syria. While Turkey has legitimate security concerns from the PKK, its singular focus on extending this feat to the whole Kurdish population risks its ability to effectively confront other terrorist organizations, including ISIS and al-Qaida.

There must be a full accounting by Turkey of these atrocities. That is why I am today introducing an expedited resolution of request for the Secretary of State to inform the Senate in 30 days of the extent of Turkey's human rights abuses in Syria. This resolution invokes statutory authority under the Foreign Assistance Act to require the Secretary of State to assess and report to Congress on Turkey's human rights abuses in Syria. This resolution calls for the administration to provide all available information concerning alleged violations of internationally recognized human rights by Turkey, its armed forces, and associated groups in Syria. It calls for a description of the steps the United States has taken to promote Turkey's respect of human rights in its Syria operations. The resolution also calls for a determination of whether Turkey's actions have resulted in the release of ISIS or other extremists inside of Syria.

I am also working closely with the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Risch, on the Promoting American National Security and Preventing the Resurgence of ISIS Act of 2019, which would impose targeted sanctions on Turkey for its actions in Syria. A similar bipartisan measure passed the House last week, and I urge the Senate to deliberate on the measure. Based on changing circumstances on the ground, we are updating the language to condition sanctions based on Turkey's actions. I hope it will be marked up in the coming days.

For years, the world held out hope that Turkey could be the bridge between east and west—a democratic, secular country that could be a democracy in Europe and a responsible actor on the world stage. I, for one, was always skeptical but certainly supported the sentiment. Today we are the furthest from that dream we have ever been. The most imprisoned journalists in the world—in the world—are not in

North Korea, Russia, or Iran; they languish in Turkish prisons. This doesn't happen in a democracy.

As international pressure mounted following Turkey's invasion of northern Syria, Erdogan threatened to unleash thousands of refugees onto the European Union's shores, a wave like we saw in 2015. These aren't the statements of a rational, responsible actor. Yet where is U.S. policy? The Trump administration was its normal erratic self in recent weeks as it flailed from sanctions on Turkey to claiming victory. The Kurds are the ones who emerged as the clear loser. Erdogan was eager to sign on to the Pence-Pompeo plan because it gave him all he wanted—full control of the Kurdish areas of Syria and *carte blanche* to wipe out swaths of the community.

In addition to claiming victory, President Trump now wants to invite Erdogan to Washington with open arms. Stunning. The photo of Trump and Erdogan in the Oval Office will not only be the nail in the coffin for any Kurdish aspirations to live in peace and security, it will also be the death knell for any credibility the United States hopes to maintain with any combat partners in the future.

President Trump, I urge you to cancel this invitation and side with the bipartisan consensus in the Senate and the House that Turkey, under Erdogan, is no friend to the United States. Do not ruin our reputation further by fawning over yet another authoritarian leader. You want to repair the damage that has been done? Show our commitment to our allies by inviting the Syrian Kurdish leadership to the Oval Office for a meeting on how we prevent a resurgence of ISIS. That is how you protect our interests. That is how you protect our national security.

It is time to challenge Erdogan to live up to NATO's values and to respect the international order. It is time to stop enabling Turkey to be a bad actor. It is time for the Senate to act.

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

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

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

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 David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Tim Scott, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Braun, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, John Boozman, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Kevin Cramer, John Barrasso, Michael B. Enzi, Chuck Grassley, Mitch McConnell.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. Risch), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 83, nays 9, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 343 Ex.]

YEAS—83

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