

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 73, nays 25, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 121 Leg.]

YEAS—73

Alexander	Gillibrand	Roberts
Baldwin	Graham	Rosen
Bennet	Grassley	Rubio
Blumenthal	Harris	Sanders
Blunt	Hassan	Schatz
Booker	Heinrich	Schumer
Boozman	Hirono	Scott (SC)
Brown	Hoeven	Shaheen
Burr	Jones	Sinema
Cantwell	Kaine	Smith
Capito	King	Stabenow
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Loeffler	Thune
Collins	Manchin	Tillis
Coons	McConnell	Udall
Cortez Masto	McSally	Van Hollen
Cotton	Menendez	Warner
Cramer	Merkley	Warren
Daines	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Murphy	Wicker
Durbin	Perdue	Wyden
Ernst	Peters	Young
Feinstein	Portman	
Gardner	Reed	

NAYS—25

Barrasso	Hawley	Risch
Blackburn	Hyde-Smith	Romney
Braun	Inhofe	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Sasse
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Crapo	Lankford	Shelby
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—2

Markey	Murray
--------	--------

The bill (H.R. 1957), as amended, was passed.

AMENDMENT NO. 1618

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the title amendment No. 1618 be considered and agreed to 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?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 1618) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: “An Act to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Indian Education, and to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and for other purposes.”.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Justin Reed Walker, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Tom Cotton, John Boozman, Joni Ernst, Todd Young, Steve Daines, Cory Gardner, Jerry Moran, James E. Risch, Shelley Moore Capito, David Perdue, Ben Sasse, Kevin Cramer, Tim Scott, Lamar Alexander, Mike Rounds, Pat Roberts.

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 Justin Reed Walker, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 122 Leg.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—46

Baldwin	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Hassan	Schatz
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schumer
Booker	Hirono	Shaheen
Brown	Jones	Sinema
Cantwell	Kaine	Smith
Cardin	King	Stabenow
Carper	Klobuchar	Tester
Casey	Leahy	Udall
Collins	Manchin	Van Hollen
Coons	Menendez	Warner
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Peters	Wyden
Feinstein	Reed	
Gillibrand	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—2

Markey	Murray
--------	--------

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Justin Reed Walker, of Kentucky, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate narrowly invoked cloture on the nomination of Justin Walker to the DC Circuit. Within the week, the Senate is expected to confirm, by the thinnest margins, both Judge Walker and a separate nominee, Cory Wilson, to the Fifth Circuit. That fills the final two available seats on the circuit courts. In one case, there isn't a vacancy yet, but he is preemptively filling it. This will complete Leader MCCONNELL's rush to pack our appellate courts with President Trump's nominees.

I want to speak about this because I have had more experience on nominations, only because of tenure, than anybody else in this body. I note that both Judge Walker and Judge Wilson are partisan ideologues who have given no indication that they will leave their politics outside the courtroom. This has become par for the course under this President—choosing nominees not for their judicial qualifications and in spite of their political leanings but because of those partisan leanings. Extreme partisanship has become a qualifier, not a disqualifier. It is a prerequisite.

My Republican friends may consider these confirmations a great achievement; however, I fear that the damage left in the wake of their effort—to the courts, to the Senate, to the country—is going to remain with us for years to come after most of us have probably left this body.

Let us consider the backdrop in which we consider these nominees. We are in the throes of a global pandemic that has taken almost 120,000 American lives. It has plunged our economy into a deep recession. It has deprived nearly 45 million Americans of their jobs, something I have never seen in my years here in the Senate. Yet are we here today considering legislation that further assists Americans struggling during this pandemic? Indeed, we have done nothing to respond to COVID-19 for months even though the House passed \$3 trillion in further assistance last month.

The Senate today is not working together to find bipartisan meaningful ways to address the plagues of racial and social inequality, despite the fact that we see millions of Americans of all backgrounds, ages, creed, and color who flood our streets and squares with protests in the wake of the murder of George Floyd.

What are we doing to respond as a body? We are busy processing and confirming an endless stream of partisan ideologues, such as Justin Walker and Cory Wilson, to our Federal courts. I think it has to be noted, again, that Judge Walker, who is a protege of Senator McCONNELL, has been nominated to a seat that isn't even vacant until September.

It would be one thing if we were coming together in the Senate across party lines to confirm mainstream nominees, something we have done so many times in years past, but nothing about Judge Walker and Judge Wilson is mainstream. Judge Walker is not shy about his overt partisanship. He is openly hostile to the Affordable Care Act, even though the Affordable Care Act has provided a critical lifeline to millions of Americans during this pandemic. He has dangerously suggested that the FBI Director—whom we provided with a 10-year term to avoid politicization—“must think of himself as an agent of the President.” One can see why President Trump is interested in a nominee like him. People should worry about somebody who would want the FBI Director—who is supposed to treat everybody the same and just uphold the law—to be, instead, an instrument of whoever is present. Even if we ignore his hyperpartisan writings and countless cable news appearances before he became a district court judge—and that was just a few months ago, last fall—he has already shown he does not leave politics at the door when he puts on his robes. Even his judicial investiture ceremony could have been a lead-in for a Trump campaign rally, where he lamented that his legal principles have not yet prevailed and feared losing “our courts and this country” to his critics. These may be the words of Judge Walker, but they are not the words of any other judge I have ever known, Republican, Democrat, Independent. This judge wears his partisanship as a badge of honor, knowing that it will only appeal to a President who knows nothing of the role of the Federal judiciary and, sadly, knowing it will not deter this Senate from confirming him.

Judge Cory Wilson is no better. Again, I spoke about the Affordable Care Act, which has provided help to millions of Americans during the coronavirus epidemic. What does he call it? He calls the Affordable Care Act “perverse” and “illegitimate.” Golly, how would he vote on that? I wonder if those Americans—Republicans and Democrats alike—who are receiving lifesaving care through the ACA would call the law perverse.

He has attacked President Obama in ugly, personal terms, berating him as a “fit-throwing teenager” and “shrill, dishonest, and intellectually bankrupt.” That is a good attitude to hold when you are coming to the Senate as a Federal judge where you are supposed to be impartial. Such baseless accusations were laughable when he made them. They are beyond parody today.

Judge Wilson has a long record of undermining minority voting rights and dismissing the scourge of voter suppression, which we saw again last week during primary elections. He dismisses that as “phony,” even though everybody watching the news, from the right to left, can see it happening.

What message do these nominees of President Trump send to the country in this moment? Well, it says that the Republicans in the Senate are fast-tracking nominees who are eager to overturn the Affordable Care Act in the midst of a public health pandemic. They are fast-tracking nominees who are dismissive of racial injustices in the midst of a national reckoning on racial injustices.

The Senate has a constitutional duty to provide advice and consent to a President's nominee. When I came to the Senate, that meant something. It meant something under both Republican leadership and Democratic leadership. It meant something with both Republican and Democratic Presidents. But under this President, that constitutional duty has meant no more than serving as a mindless conveyor belt to rubberstamp nominees, however unqualified, however extreme, and however inappropriate at the moment.

You couldn't have two more inappropriate nominees at a time when we need healthcare because of the coronavirus or so inappropriate at a time when we are trying to do away with racial tensions and address the racial tensions of our country. It says that we don't believe in our standing as a coequal branch of government and that the Senate is willing to have that position as a coequal branch of government diminished.

Worse is the damage we inflict upon our courts. The Senate has now reshaped our Federal courts, especially our appellate courts, to resemble an extreme partisan arm of the Republican Party. For generations, Americans have valued our judiciary for its independence, a place where all Americans—of any political party or background, race, or belief—believed they could obtain fair and impartial justice. That is changing every day under President Trump.

When I tried cases before Federal courts at the district level or the appellate level—and the same with State courts at the trial level and the appellate level—I never worried that I would come before that court and my political beliefs would in any way affect the outcome. What I thought would affect the outcome would be the facts and the law. I have appeared before courts of appeals and Federal courts of appeals. Most of the time I had no idea what the political position or political party of the judge was. Yet today, anybody who comes in trying a case or appealing a case has to say: No matter what my facts are or no matter what the law is, I have to face a partisan ideology with a judge who is supposed to be non-partisan. We have seen fair and impar-

tial justice, as I said, changing every day under President Trump.

I have to hope that the Senate can rediscover its better angels. I can hope that we can again reassert ourselves as the crucible in which the great issues of the day are debated heatedly but resolved amicably, across party lines. I hope that one day the Senate will again serve as the conscience of the Nation, as it has during so many moments of upheaval and uncertainty in our history.

Today, more than any other time since I have been here, when we should be the conscience of the Nation, we are keeping that conscience locked up behind closed doors.

I hope, one day soon, the Senate will again demand—as it has under Republican and Democratic leadership in the past—that our President's judicial nominees are deserving of lifetime appointments to our Federal courts, possessing the qualifications and temperament that, until now, were rarely in question and now, time and again, are in question.

I ask my colleagues to go back to being the U.S. Senate. We owe it to ourselves. We owe it to the Constitution. Most of all, we owe it to the American people. Let the Senate once again be the conscience of the Nation, as it should be.

JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT

Mr. President, I also looked at the policing bill that Senator SCOTT announced today and Leader McCONNELL will proceed to next week. I am still reviewing the text. From the descriptions I have heard, the bill may be well-intentioned but falls far short on the reforms we need. It fails to meet this moment. That doesn't mean we can't come together and make it meet this moment.

We need more than a Rose Garden signing of an Executive order that has no authority and does nothing except look good. Millions of Americans in both parties are demanding real change. This moment doesn't call for a handful of studies and some grant programs; it calls for fundamental reforms to ensure our accountability and restore our trust. It requires a thoughtful debate, a real debate in which we have a real amendment process. Let Senators stand up and vote yes or no on amendments. Let the American people know where they stand. Let them take a position.

If our Republican leadership won't commit to such a real debate and such real votes or amendments—a real amendment process—they fail the American people at a critical time; they fail them in favor of partisan politics.

Each one of us has to cast votes on this floor. Some are very routine and easy to do, but so many are monumental. We have to speak to our conscience. We have to speak to our background. We have to speak to who we are. I will look at my background as a former prosecutor. I will look at my

background as one who has served as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I will look at my background as one who has listened to Republicans and Democrats alike in my State, but then I will call upon my conscience to vote for what is best.

Don't fail the American people by having something that feels good, that says nice things but doesn't make any change. If there were ever a time America needs changes—we have two crises. One, of course, is COVID-19, and we are not addressing that. The other is, once again, every American, of all races, has to look at racism in policing. We are better than that. Most of our police departments want to be better than that.

Let us stand up. Let the U.S. Senate be the conscience of the Nation. Again, I note we have been in the past. Wouldn't it be nice to be so in the present?

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.

(Mrs. LOEFFLER assumed the Chair.)

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

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

THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act. The passage of this historic legislation marks a once-in-a-generation step by this body to restore and conserve our national parks, as well as our country's national heritage. It builds on an American tradition of conserving our natural wonders and shared public spaces. It reaffirms our commitment to preserve them for future generations.

It is also important to note that this is a jobs bill. According to a recent study, the Great American Outdoors Act will help create or support 100,000 jobs all over the country, including 10,000 in my home State of Virginia, at a time when millions of Americans are out of work.

Currently, the National Park Service has a deferred maintenance backlog of \$12 billion. A chronic lack of funding from Congress has forced the Park Service to defer maintenance on countless trails, buildings, and historic structures, as well as thousands of miles of roads and bridges. Today, over half of all Park Service assets are in desperate need of repair.

To address these needs, a little over 3 years ago, I approached my colleague and friend, Senator ROB PORTMAN, with an idea. What if we took unobligated Federal energy revenues and used them to address the maintenance backlogs at our national parks. So we came together, in a bipartisan partnership, and introduced the National Park Services

Legacy Act. A little over a year later, we combined our efforts with Senator ALEXANDER and Senator KING to introduce our Restore Our Parks Act. Earlier this year, this legislation was combined with Senator GARDNER and Senator MANCHIN's Land and Water Conservation Fund legislation to form the Great American Outdoors Act.

This legislation represents one of the largest investments in the infrastructure of our national parks in its over 100-year history. Over the next 5 years, the Great American Outdoors Act will fund more than half of all the deferred repairs and completely fund the Park Service's highest priority needs. As my friend from Maine, Senator KING, has noted, deferred maintenance is really simply a debt for future generations. With the passage of this bill today, we are one step closer to paying down that debt.

Few States in the country are as impacted by the Park Service's deferred maintenance backlog as the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the Commonwealth, we have a maintenance backlog of over \$1.1 billion. That is the third largest behind California and DC. I want to give a few examples of how this legislation will help preserve our historical heritage and create jobs in my State.

Here in the National Capital Region, the George Washington Memorial Parkway, which is managed by the National Park Service, has over \$700 million in deferred maintenance. As a matter of fact, anyone in this Chamber who travels on that road actually knows that we had a sinkhole appear in the parkway within the last year—an enormous safety threat, as well as an enormous inconvenience to anybody who travels on this important road. Our legislation would help rebuild this critical transportation route between Virginia, Washington, DC, and Maryland—reducing traffic and, again, creating jobs.

Further south on I-95, the Richmond National Battlefield Park has over \$5 million in deferred maintenance. The nearby Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site—this is the site actually of the first African-American-owned bank created by Maggie Walker, as well as the first bank owned by an African-American woman. I visited it last year, and it has maintenance needs approaching \$1 million. At the nearby Petersburg National Battlefield Park, the maintenance needs have grown to \$9 million over the years. This legislation will help support critical infrastructure needs of these parks, preserving these important pieces of our heritage while again supporting our local economies.

Let me take you a little farther west, out to one of the real gems of our National Park Service—probably one of the parks best known in Virginia around the country—and that is the Shenandoah National Park. It is one of the crown jewels of our Park Service. Again, the maintenance backlog there

in the Shenandoah sits at over \$90 million. Our legislation will put people to work on these overdue repairs, including to Skyline Drive and stretches of the Appalachian Trail, which are really at the heart of Virginia's outdoor tourism industry.

Let me take you a little farther down Skyline Drive, down farther in Southwest Virginia. As you head southwest, the Blue Ridge Parkway right here, which has accumulated over \$500 million in deferred maintenance—that is, as a matter of fact, over \$1 million of deferred maintenance for every mile of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Great American Outdoors Act will, again, put Virginians to work on these repairs so visitors can continue to appreciate the beauty of Southwest Virginia and support the local economy.

Let me end my visual tour of Virginia going to the eastern part of the Commonwealth. This is one final example. Colonial National Historical Park, which is home to historic Jamestown and the Yorktown battlefield—some of our country's most significant sites from the birth of our Nation. At this park and along the Colonial Parkway, there are deferred maintenance needs totaling over \$430 million. With this legislation, the wait on many of these repairs is over. We are going to create jobs, make sure this important part of our history is around for years to come, and make sure we leave our kids and grandkids that sense of who we are as a nation.

Now, before I close, I want to touch on the other half of this legislation, which provides full mandatory funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the LWCF.

For decades, the LWCF has been the most important tool of the Federal Government that States have had to protect critical natural areas, water resources, and, again, cultural heritage. Virginia has received over \$368 million in LWCF funding, which has helped preserve and expand critical recreation areas within the Commonwealth.

For example, the American Battlefield Protection Program, which is funded through the LWCF, has been vital for communities across Virginia, providing them with technical assistance and funding to help them preserve their history and, again, attract tourists. LWCF has also allowed us to expand and preserve land within the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests and along the Appalachian Trail. These efforts support the health of unique wildlife habitats and provide new access for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation.

Through this combination of the parks bill and the permanent funding for the LWCF, the Great American Outdoors Act ensures that we will continue to make these important investments in conservation in our parks for years to come.

In closing, I thank my colleagues, again, for supporting this historic legislation with an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote and a piece of legislation

that is supported by the administration. My hope is that the House will move quickly on this. What better present to our Nation than to have this legislation signed into law, hopefully, by July 4.

As we all know, at a time of significant division in our country, the fact that this body was able to come together and pass this bill with over 70 votes gives me a little bit of hope. Again, I am proud of my colleagues for stepping up to restore our national parks and public lands, and as I mentioned at the outset, this legislation will create over 100,000 jobs, jobs that are extraordinarily needed at this critical moment when our economy has been shattered. So for current Americans and future Americans, job well done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

JUSTICE ACT

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. President, I woke up this morning, Wednesday morning, June 17, 2020, and for so many Americans, this is just another Wednesday morning. You wake up; you get ready for work—but not in South Carolina.

In South Carolina, this Wednesday, June 17, is the fifth anniversary of when a racist walked into Mother Emanuel Church, sat through a Bible study for an hour and listened to believers talk about their love of God. At the end of that Bible study, he pulled out a weapon and killed nine people. So for me and so many South Carolinians, this is a hard day.

I will tell you this: Standing on this floor, remembering the words of one of the victims' son, Daniel Simmons, Jr., 5 years ago on a Wednesday, 1 week later—I asked Daniel Simmons, Jr., whose father, Daniel Simmons, Sr., had been killed in an attempt to start another race war at the home of the Civil War: What should I say to the people who would be watching around the country?

He said what I could not believe. It was this: Please remind them of Romans 8:28—that all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

I was standing at those doors on my cell phone. I could not believe the words he was speaking. In an act of true, unconditional love, he inspired me. He encouraged me. He taught me lessons of strength and courage and mercy our Nation needs to remember.

I came to the floor today to speak about my new bill, the JUSTICE Act, our Republican response to police re-

form. I was sitting in my office when the Senator from Illinois talked about the “token” legislation on this day, the day that we remember Mother Emanuel Church and the nine lost lives and my friend, the pastor of the church, Clementa Pinckney—the first person ever to call me a Senator, the pastor of that church, a Democrat pastor of that church said to me “My Senator,” in December of 2012—and reflect back on the fact that I have on my phone today the text for Clementa in which I said: Are you OK? He didn't answer because he was already dead.

To think that on this day, as we try to make sure that fewer people lose confidence in this Nation, to have the Senator from Illinois refer to this process, this bill, this opportunity to restore hope and confidence and trust to the American people, to African Americans, to communities of color—to call this a token process hurts my soul for my country, for our people.

To think that the concept of anti-lynching that is a part of this legislation would be considered a token piece of legislation because, perhaps, I am African American and the only one on this side of the aisle—I don't know what he meant, but I can tell you that, on this day, to hear those comments, again, hurts the soul.

To think about how, in the same year, 2015, Walter Scott, in my hometown of North Charleston, running away from the police, was shot five times in the back—I sponsored legislation then, and I don't remember a single person saying a single thing on that side of the aisle about helping to push forward more legislation on body cameras. But, today, this is a token piece of legislation. I think it is important that we stand up and be counted and make sure that we have more resources available for every officer to have a body camera because, as we saw in Georgia with Mr. Arbery, had it not been caught on video; in Walter Scott's case, had it not been caught on video; in George Floyd's case, had it not been caught on video, we might be in a different place.

On the other side, they are wanting to race-bait on tokenism, while this legislation would provide resources for body cameras, for anti-lynching, and for deescalation training. But, no, we can't concern ourselves with the families I sat with at the White House yesterday and in my office yesterday. Instead, we want to play politics because this is 2020, and we are far more concerned about winning elections than we are about having a serious conversation on reform in this country. No, we would rather have a conversation about tearing this country apart, making it a binary choice between law enforcement and communities of color instead of working for the American people, bringing the reforms to the table so that we have a chance to balance this Nation and direct her toward due north. No, that is too much to ask on June 17, 5 years later.

I started this conversation on body cameras in 2015, in the Walter Scott Notification Act in 2015. But, no, we want to have a political conversation. I reject that. I reject that.

I will tell you that I believe my friends on the other side of the aisle are serious about police reform. There are just some who are more interested in scoring political points than they actually are in getting a result.

It is not the majority of them. The majority of them have the same heart that we have for the American people. That is where we should be focusing our attention, not the color of my skin, not tokens. It is cool when you are out in the public. I get it all the time on Twitter. I am used to it. But on this day, my heart aches for my State. My heart aches for my uncle's church, which he attended for 50 years before he passed. So I am a little riled up.

I sit here quietly trying to pass good legislation that was based on the House bill because I knew that if I wanted a chance to get something done, we had to do it in a bipartisan fashion. I am not running for anything. I am not up for reelection. I am not trying to support someone for their victory. I am simply saying to the families I met with yesterday at the White House without a camera and in my office yesterday without a camera: I hear you. We see you. You are not simply sitting there silent. We are working on serious, tangible, measurable results.

Why is that not enough? Why can't we just disagree on the three or four items that we disagree upon? Why can't I say what I have been saying, which is that the House bill is, in fact, the blueprint for some progress? It goes too far for me in some areas, but, yes, I like the concept of more information. This is a good thing. The House does it; we do it. That is a good thing. I like the concept of more training. The House does it; we do it. I like the fact that we are looking for a way to ban choke holds. We do it by taking money from different departments; they do it in a different fashion. We are about 90 percent there.

But where do we go? Where do we go? People wonder why our country is so divided. It is because it is so easy to walk onto this floor and say “token” and send the same race-baiting message that we have heard for a very long time.

If you are a Democrat, hey, it is OK. That is not ever OK. It is not OK to say to our kids: You can't think what you want to think and be who you want to be. If you are not in line with one idea and the way they think, it is bad news. Then you are a sellout.

What message do you send the kids? I am going to be OK, but what message are we sending the kids throughout our country—that you can't be taught just to think; we have to teach you how to think. That is the kind of conclusion that is wrong. It is toxic. It is pushing our country toward an implosion that is avoidable.

That is why I started my legislative day today with remembering Mother Emanuel. It is why I read my Bible next—because I knew I needed a little extra strength. That is why I turned immediately to my first interview trying to talk about police reform because, as a guy who has been stopped 18 times in the years of the 2000s, I take it seriously. Being stopped seven times in a single year, being stopped this year, being stopped last November, being stopped coming into the Senate with my pin on—sure, I get it. But I don't point fingers at the other side, saying that they are just not serious about the issue. It is just not what we should do.

I assume that everybody should be serious about the issue, but I have to tell you, it is with a heavy heart—it is with a heavy heart that I believe that, had we had more money for body cameras, we would be in a different position today than we were in 2015. But I didn't have anybody who wanted to have this conversation or, at least, they didn't have this conversation.

I believe there are good people of good intent on the other side of the aisle. I think there are people of good intent on our side of the aisle. I think the fact is that most Americans are tired of Republicans and Democrats talking about Republicans and Democrats. I think most Americans are tired of our talking about election outcomes and polls. "What about me?" is what they are saying.

I am suggesting that this bill, the JUSTICE Act, is a serious nationwide effort tackling the issues of police reform, accountability, and transparency. It is grounded in bipartisan principles because I believe that the other side has some stuff we have to hear and that our side has some stuff they need to hear. If we do that, we will have the votes to have a real debate next week on this bill, but if we don't do that, we will just talk about scoring political points, and you will go on MSNBC or CNN, and we will go on FOX, and everybody will have their chatter, and more people in the communities of color will have less confidence in the institutions of power and authority in this Nation because we missed the moment. We missed it 5 years ago. We don't have to miss it now.

As you know, I am not really into theatrics. I don't run toward microphones. I have had a lot of them these last 7 days. I don't talk a lot in conference because, why say what other people are saying? They have probably said it better. I don't demonize the other side because I know that in order to get anything done in this conference, on this committee, in this Senate, you have to have 60 votes. Plus, if you have a grievance with your brother, talk to them. Talk to them. I have tried to do that.

As I am sure I am running out of time, let me just say that the families I sat down with yesterday—they don't think working on body cameras is a

token experience. They don't think sitting down with the President of the United States, with tears filling their eyes, running down their cheeks, talking about their lost loved ones is a token experience. The law enforcement officers in that meeting with those families do not believe that having a serious conversation about police reform is a token experience. They don't believe that corresponders for the one man who was in the room, whose son was having a mental episode, who was shot on the scene—he doesn't think this was a token experience.

Shame on us. Shame on us if we are unwilling to have a serious conversation about a serious issue that, in my opinion, is a greater threat to this Nation than perhaps anything we have seen. We have never solved it because we are all having political points. That is wrong. It is just not right.

Let me say to all of my colleagues, Senator LANKFORD, Senators CAPITO, SASSE, LINDSEY, BARRASSO, and ALEXANDER: Thank you. Thank you for giving a voice to a serious issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, first, I would like to associate my remarks 100 percent with everything Senator SCOTT just said. Somehow I am supposed to speak after he just said it.

The frustration that I have had over the past couple of days as we have worked very hard in pulling the legislation together is we have talked to people all over. I have talked to people of all backgrounds all over Oklahoma. I have talked to members of the community. I have talked to law enforcement. I have talked to leadership in law enforcement. We have worked to build a coalition of ideas, things that would pass, answering the question that TIM SCOTT started with: Could we pull together a piece of legislation that would actually help—not to just pass something so we can walk away, pat each other on the back and say "We passed something," knowing quietly that it really isn't going to make any difference? Is there something we could do that would actually make a difference?

Over the weeks we have worked to identify what could pass, what could make a difference, what answers the questions everyone is asking. We didn't look at whether it was a Republican or Democratic idea. We just asked the question, what would make the difference, because I don't believe equal justice under the law is owned by a party. It has been fascinating to me, the questions I have had over the past couple of days as members of the media would quietly pull me aside and say: Hey, are Republicans going to be able to pass a bill on race? Quietly, they are asking the question: We know all those Republicans are racist, so are you going to be able to pull something off? That is really what they are saying in the background. Over and over again, I heard it through the media and have

seen it put out there: You know those Republicans are all racist. I don't think they are going to be able to pass something dealing with race.

As this dividing message continues to go out, we continue to do our work because we also believe in equal justice under the law. As a friend of mine said to me a couple of weeks ago, we also believe we should be able to work toward a more perfect Union.

For me, it is not only a practical issue, not only a family issue; it is not only a friendship issue; it is not only a basic freedom and liberty issue; it is not just a constitutional issue. For me, it is also a Biblical issue. You can go back as many pages as you want to in Scripture and work your way from beginning to end, and you are going to find some very consistent themes. Throughout the book of Deuteronomy, there is a statement about how God's affection is "for equal weights and measures." His first challenge to government when literally the Jews were establishing their first government, God spoke to them, saying, make sure there are equal weights and measures. It is a simple way of saying, whether you are rich or poor, whether you are a foreigner, whether you are a member, whether you are in or out, everyone is to be treated the same, equal weights, equal measures. Find that passage over and over and over again through the Old Testament. Read it all the way to the Book of the Revelation at the end.

At the Book of Revelation at the end, there is a gathering around the throne that is pictured. At the very end, there is the gathering of the Kingdom of God. As they gather around the throne, it is described as every tribe, every nation, every language, every people, all gathered.

For me, this is a Biblical issue as well as being a personal issue, but for us as a nation, it is a legal issue. It is about where we find inconsistencies in the application of the law, we are to correct it, and we do what we can to make it right.

This bill is designed with a simple statement in mind. How can we provide accountability, transparency, and training in law enforcement so that the good cops shine and those who are bad apples in the mix, the light shines on them.

That is all we are asking. We want to see things change. People in my towns across my State want to see things change and want to know that this is not just a vote that is a partisan vote; it is a vote to actually get something solved.

It wasn't that long ago that this body was gathering and voted unanimously on an almost \$3 trillion bill dealing with a major problem in America, COVID-19. Why don't we get together again, hash out the issues, and unanimously come to some decisions again on a major problem in America, injustice?

We can't pass something that bans racism. I wish we could. We would have

all taken that vote. We can't ban racism. That is passed on through families and individuals. Children are not born racist. They are raised racist. Families have to make a decision about what they are going to do in their family. The national conversation about race doesn't happen in this room. The national conversation on race happens in kitchens and dining rooms.

We can do something about justice. There are simple things we tried to gather, a set of ideas that aren't partisan. They are ideas and solutions that have come from all over the place, some Democratic and some Republican, and we pulled these things together, and we are asking a simple question: Will our Democratic Members take a vote with us next week to move to this bill to amend it, debate it, talk about it, have a real dialogue, and pass something that we think will work? Will this bill look exactly like this? It probably will look a lot like this because there are aspects of this that look like this in the House right now. Will there be additional ideas? Probably. Why don't we debate it and talk about it? Why don't we both open it up and discuss it and why don't we actually try to solve it?

There are things such as, if there is bodily injury or death in police custody, that all of that information has to come in to the FBI so we can disseminate it and get transparency in the country. In fact, 40 percent of the departments report that, but a lot of them do not.

There are a lot of places that do no-knock warrants. We don't have information about that. We know it is happening all over the country, and there is some conversation about maybe we should end part of it or keep part of it. What would that look like? We don't have the information gathered. Why don't we get information on no-knock warrants so that we can make an informed decision and then act on it?

Why don't we deal with some basic problems that are out there that we have seen several times in some of the worst moments? Something happens, and law enforcement is not wearing a body camera, and it is one opinion against another opinion. Why don't we get more body cameras in the streets, and why don't we make sure those body cameras are actually turned on all the time? There is new technology in body cameras so that they automatically turn on when there is a call. Law enforcement doesn't have to worry about, "I forgot to turn it on." It turns itself on. Why don't we incentivize it to encourage new body cameras with automatic features to turn it on so we always have footage?

Why don't we hold people to account if there is a false police report that is filed? In several cases of late, when the incident was over, a written police report was filed. Later, cell phone video came out that was completely different from the original police report. Well, that is a false report. Why don't we hold that bad apple to account?

Why don't we end choke holds? Most departments already have. Why don't we just end it nationwide? Why don't we say to departments: If you want to get a Federal grant for any law enforcement purpose, you can't get that or you get a reduced amount or you get a big deduction unless your department has already banned choke holds. Basically, we lay the marker out there and say: We expect you to take action on this.

Why don't we deal with the issues that are before us that people are asking questions about, and where we lack information, let's go get it.

It was several years ago that Senator PETERS, on the Democratic side, and Senator CORNYN, on the Republican side, put out a proposal to have a Commission study these issues and more, to gather information and make recommendations and to start passing legislation in a unified way. It passed in the Senate unanimously and died in the House. Let's bring that legislation back up.

We tried to do some work in the Senate to head this off. Let's do it again and see what we can actually do. Where we find departments that are recruiting officers and the department doesn't match the ethnicity of their community, why don't we provide grants for that community and that police department to be able to have a Black recruiter recruit more Black officers and to help them financially in the earliest days through the police academy to make sure that department profile matches that community?

One of the great gains of the last 30 years has been community policing, allowing officers to be able to get out of their car and meet their community and to engage so communities are policing together. Why don't we do that?

I did a ride-along with an officer several years ago, and I will never forget it. As we were riding through his community and his neighborhood where he always patrolled, we drove by an elderly lady as sweet as she could be sitting on her front porch. As we drove by I asked: Does she sit out there every day?

The police officer laughed and said: Yep, she sits out there every day.

I asked: Have you ever stopped to meet her?

He hesitated for a long time, and he said: No, I never have.

Community policing does make a difference. When you get a chance to meet the people in the community, get to know them, and share the responsibility together for actually working to solve problems that we face.

We are laying down a set of ideas that we feel will make a difference, not just make a message. Other people have other ideas. Bring them. Let's open it up.

Let's not have heated debate. Let's have debate that solves the problems so that at the end of this, we know what we are solving. We solve it, and then we keep going.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, for one, I would like to say something about Senator SCOTT. I know how hard it is to work on this, and it has not been an easy enterprise for Tim. He is a conservative Republican, who happens to be African-American, and he has decided to take the lead on something that is very important to the country.

He has had experiences that I don't have. He has been stopped multiple times on Capitol Hill. I have never been stopped. One year, he was stopped seven times for lane changes. The point is that Tim believes—and every African-American male I have talked to in the last couple of weeks is told early on, if you are stopped by the cops, watch what you do; keep your hands on the wheel and don't go toward the dash because that could end badly. I don't know how that happened, but it is real. For us not to realize that would be a huge mistake.

Let me be on record as saying I understand that if you are an African-American male, your experience with the police is different than mine. It is unacceptable, and it needs to stop.

So how do you stop it? You bring about change. So what kind of change are we looking for? Our Democratic friends have a list of changes. I think it is Justice in Policing. The House is marking it up. Here is what I would say to my Democratic colleagues: Stop lecturing me. You had 8 years under President Obama to do the things in the Justice in Policing Act, and 90 percent of it you never brought up. I am not saying we are blameless, but there has not been this sense of urgency to deal with these problems institutionally like there is today. Why? Because of Mr. Floyd and a few other things all happening together.

Tim said in 2016 we had our chance. These episodes come and they go. The question for the country is, Will anything ever change? The only way it is going to change is to find common ground. So the proposal Senator SCOTT has collected, along with other colleagues, has bipartisan support, but if it is not enough, I am willing to listen regarding doing more.

Senator SASSE was with me yesterday. We had a 5-hour hearing, and I learned a lot. I learned that a police department looking like the community is important, Senator LANKFORD, but, more importantly, is that you live where you police.

I asked a gentleman from New Jersey: What is more important, race or community attachment? He said: Community attachment. You are less likely to hurt somebody in a community you feel a part of.

Now, having said that, we need more African-American police personnel. We need more women. Apparently, women do their jobs a lot better than men. I haven't heard one person come forward and say: I had a bad experience with a

policewoman. More women would be helpful. But the main thing is, we need people from the community being in charge of policing that community with a system that is more accountable.

So CORY BOOKER and I have worked together on a lot of things—great guy. TIM and CORY are good friends, and I admire the heck out of TIM SCOTT. I am not going to take any more time. He is one of the most decent people I have ever met, and we are lucky to have him in South Carolina and the country is lucky.

The bottom line, as CORY said, there are two issues that have to be addressed or everything else doesn't matter—242 and qualified immunity. I wrote them down. For those who are not conversant in 242 or qualified immunity, there is nothing wrong with you. This is a very archaic area of the law. Qualified immunity is a judicial doctrine that has developed over time that relates to the 1983 civil rights statute that allows people to sue governmental entities for abuse of force, for excessive force.

There is nothing in the statute about an objective standard where the reasonably prudent police officer in the same circumstances acted accordingly. There is nothing about good faith.

Justice Thomas is a pretty conservative guy. He wanted to revisit qualified immunity. I don't know how he would substantively come out on the issue, but in his dissent denying certiorari of the concept, he explains how this judicial concept has exploded beyond every attachment of common law analysis. This is Clarence Thomas. If you presented to me qualified immunity in its current form as a legislative proposal, I would vote hell, no. Police officers need not worry about losing their house or being sued if they act in good faith in performing duties that are hard on any good day, but when police departments time and again fail to do the things necessary to instill good policing, I think they should be subject and accountable like any other business. There is common ground here.

Not one Democrat has suggested to me to make the individual officer civilly liable under 242, but I had Democrats suggest to me that the standard has become almost absolute immunity.

The Presiding Officer has run all kinds of businesses. Being in the policing business is not your normal business. There needs to be a filter when it comes to lawsuits. It can't be about outcome. But it is now time, in my view, to look at the development of the qualified immunity doctrine as it relates to the 1983 underlying statute and see if we could make it better, not gut it.

To my Democratic friends, if you want to eliminate qualified immunity, it will be a very short conversation. If you want to reform it so that municipalities and agencies and organizations running police departments will have some protection but not absolute im-

munity, let's talk. Maybe we can get there if it is that important. Let's at least try. That is what the legislative process is all about.

Section 242 allows the Federal Government to bring charges against an individual for denying another American their constitutional rights. This is about policing but not exclusive to policing.

The Presiding Officer is from Georgia. I am from South Carolina. There was a time in the South where juries would nullify all the evidence in front of them because the victim was a Black man and the perpetrator was White. A mountain of evidence could be presented, and there would be an acquittal in like 15 minutes. So we came up with a concept to allow the Federal Government to intervene in cases like that and hold somebody liable for violating the constitutional rights of another American under law Federal law.

The standard to prosecute is "willful." You have to prove that the police officer willfully understood the constitutional right and violated it. My friends on the other side want to lower the standard to "reckless." What I would say is, this is not 1965. The police officer involved in Mr. Floyd's death is going to be prosecuted. So while it is important to talk about section 242, most States where these events have occurred have acted responsibly. We don't need the Federal Government sitting in judgment of every cop in the country. What we do need is a system of accountability. I will talk to you about 242, but I think that is not the issue.

What is the issue? It is that police departments that are immune from liability when they engage in abusive conduct over and over are unlikely to change until that changes. You can throw all the money you want to at training and improving best practices, and they will gladly accept your money. If they don't do it right, they don't get the money. Add one thing to the mix. By the way, if you shoot a dog and you wind up killing a kid—your police officer shouldn't have shot the dog anyway in a fashion to kill the kid who was right by the dog—you are going to wind up having your ass in court. That will change things.

I have been a lawyer, and I know how people feel about this. If you are exposed, in terms of your conduct being subject to a review by a court and a jury, you are all of a sudden going to think differently.

Don't misconstrue what I am saying. I am not for abolishing qualified immunity; I am for revisiting the concept because I think it has grown too much from judicially created fiat. It is time for the legislative body—for us to speak as to what we would like to have happen to the statute that we create that now has a component to it that was never envisioned when it was originally passed. That is what Clarence Thomas is telling us as a nation we need to do.

To my friends on the other side, if it is about qualified immunity, let's talk. If it is about 242, let's talk. If it is about keeping this issue alive, don't waste my time. We have all had plenty of time around here to do better. Now we have a chance to actually do some good. The only way we are going to do some good is talk. The only way you get a law passed is to engage in debate. If you don't want to debate the topic, if you don't want to have amendments about the topic, that tells me all I need to know about where you are coming from.

I yield to the Senator from Nebraska. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I want to start by saying thank you to my friend from South Carolina—LINDSEY GRAHAM, chairman of the Judiciary Committee spoke, but I mean my desk mate, Senator SCOTT from South Carolina—not only for his leadership and hard work and the hard work of Jennifer and the rest of that their team. Over the course of the last 2 weeks, they have been working around the clock to lead our six-person working group on this project.

I want to thank Tim, not just for his leadership, but for his speech 30 minutes ago and for his spirit. That speech is a speech that needs to be watched by every American.

I sincerely hope that the 100 people in this room will come together and try to get an outcome and not just maintain a political issue as has happened so often around here. I think if we had the process that was the custom in the Senate until a few decades ago of committees happening in the morning and the Senate convening for most of the afternoon—if this room were actually full when TIM SCOTT delivered his speech, it would be real tough for people to be talking about not voting on the motion to proceed next week and getting on this piece of legislation where we could then debate it and argue about it and fight about technical pieces here and there and figure out how we make it better. We would be on a piece of legislation, and we would be trying to get an outcome. I sincerely hope that is true. I sincerely hope people listen to TIM SCOTT's speech from today.

George Floyd's murder, obviously, shocked the nation. It shocked us in two ways. It shocked us, on the one hand, because we saw a man being murdered for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, and we saw three other police officers stand by while he was murdered. But it also shocked us because it reminded us, yet again, that America's struggle for equal justice under the law is far, far from over.

The American creed is a beautiful thing. The American creed celebrates the dignity, the inherent self-worth, the fact that we believe, as so many of our Founders believed, that people were created *Imago Dei*—created in the image of God as image bearers. That

dignity is male and female, Black and White. Every man, woman, and child in this country is created with inherent dignity. They are beautiful, and that creed is beautiful. That proposition that all men are created equal should inspire every generation of Americans. We aren't doing a very good job right now of passing on the glories of that creed to the next generation. It is a beautiful and profound creed, but throughout our history, our failures to live up to that creed have been ugly over and over again.

George Floyd's murder was horrific for that man and for his family and for everyone in his communities—Minneapolis, Houston, and other places where that man had made a mark. But it was also horrific because it was yet another reminder of all the ways that we fail to live up to our creed. The creed is beautiful, and our execution has so often been ugly.

When communities of color have lost faith in law enforcement, we aren't living up to that creed. When an American tells you that he fears being pulled over for driving while Black, we need a lot more conversations in a lot more communities so people know this experience.

Again, Senator SCOTT is one of my closest friends in this body. The experiences he has had with law enforcement in South Carolina are different from the ones I have had with law enforcement in Nebraska. The experiences he has on Capitol Hill with law enforcement have been different from the experiences I have had on Capitol Hill. No one should be wearing skin pigment or racial heritage as something that changes our experience of law enforcement, yet it is regularly the case. That is ugly. The creed is beautiful.

Our attempts to become and to be a more perfect Union and to live up to the glories of that creed are an important part of our shared project together. At the risk of sounding too theological, east of Eden, sin is always ugly, and that includes America's original sin. That tells us that we have work to do together.

We have work to do as 330 million Americans, but we have work to do as 100 Senators. What that should mean is that next week we are going to be in this body trying to live up to that creed and to do more.

There is a lot of technical stuff inside this bill. As Senator SCOTT said, 70 percent of what is in this bill is pretty darn noncontroversial, largely because it is lifted and summarizing many pieces that are also in the House of Representatives' Democrat bill.

The JUSTICE Act puts forward a number of commonsense reforms that seek to force more accountability. This has been stated on the floor many times today, but I want to say it again: When police use lethal force, there is a voluntary opportunity today for them to report that to the FBI. We want to make that mandatory. We want all that data to be captured and to be

passed along so there is a lot more transparency on all lethal uses of force.

The commonsense reforms include increasing police resources. There is a lot of training that needs to be done better across this country. There are a lot of practices in local law enforcement—when you look at the 15,000, 16,000, whatever the current number is of local entities that have the capability and capacity to have law enforcement authorities, those policing powers, there is a lot of diversity in their practices. Some of those practices are improving but are still bad. Senator SCOTT and our legislation want to try to use the Federal grant-making powers to squeeze out some of those bad practices.

We want to see trust rebuilt between this Nation's communities and the police. We reject the false binary that you have to make a choice between being on the side of communities of color or being on the side of law enforcement. No, we don't want that to be the choice. We want the choice to be law enforcement to get better and communities of color to have more trust. We want to see more collaboration. We want to see more progress. Frankly, that is what the vast majority of individual police and that is what the vast majority of police departments want.

The overwhelming majority of Americans—Republican and Democrat, women and men, Black and White—the overwhelming majority of Americans want us to build more trust. We can do that in this body next week.

We want to strive toward equal protection under the law. That starts with trying to narrow the differences and figuring out what we can do to move forward together. That is what this bill does. This bill is an architectural frame to do a bunch of good things that are pretty darn noncontroversial and to do a bunch of things that we can build on in a debate and amendment process.

We should be passing something 100 to 0. There will be debate. There will be amendment votes underneath that will be contentious, but we should ultimately be getting onto a piece of legislation to start the process 100 to 0, and at the back end we should be passing something 100 to 0 even though, in the middle, there should be a bunch of amendments where people argue about the best way that we do the particulars.

There is no reason we shouldn't be moving forward. We can get this done. We can take another step to make America's beautiful creed a reality for every single one of God's children. That is what we should do, and we should do it without delay.

I yield to the Senator from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I am pleased to be here with my fellow Senator from Nebraska and the other Members of the small team that was

really blessed to be asked to join Senator SCOTT as he led us to where we are today, which is introducing the JUSTICE Act.

I am thinking about where the great talents lie in the Senate. One of the things we all know all of us do well is talk. We know how to talk. Sometimes we talk too much. Senator SCOTT doesn't talk that much. He even said that about himself. I can tell you the skill that he has that a lot of us need more of. Always, when I am asked by school children "What is the best skill to have?" I say it is the ability to listen. He has listened for years and years. He has not just lived this; he has listened. He said, just yesterday, he was with the family of one of the victims, and it was a very moving day for him.

I am here today to rise with my colleagues in support of the JUSTICE Act. I join the overwhelming majority of Americans and West Virginians who, in sadness and frustration and sorrow, witnessed the horrifying video of the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis Police Department. It was absolutely unacceptable.

The vast majority of our law enforcement officers here and around the country are just like us. They want to have a great and peaceful nation. They want to have great and peaceful communities. They want their families to feel safe in their homes and out in the streets of their communities just as we do. A lot of them take their oath seriously and do their best to protect our communities.

It is not enough to say that the death of George Floyd was a terrible, isolated tragedy because we know many of these have preceded this date. I have said it is almost like popping a balloon and revealing all of this unrest underneath, all the questions and sorrow that have been festering.

Here we are today. I think the great majority of us want to put all this energy and frustration into action. We want to have something substantive so we can tell the American people: We listened. We heard. We feel this. And we want to find solutions.

We have to recognize that every time force is used inappropriately by law enforcement, our justice system has eroded. We have to understand our history, wherein Black Americans have been too frequently denied their basic rights. It is our job to make sure that Americans, regardless of race, can feel that law enforcement is there to protect them and their families and that they trust that. The trust factor is where the erosion has been most remarkably in view of all of us—the lack of trust.

It is our job to hear these voices and to act. In my opinion, it doesn't mean defunding the police; it means improving the police and improving equal protections so that everybody has basic protections and we are all equal in the eyes of justice and the law.

We have seen the looting. We have seen officers who have lost their lives.

We have seen an underbelly to our country that has been difficult to watch. Yet what we have seen, too, is an outcry of the American citizens peacefully protesting what they see as inequities in their lives. When I look in the crowd—I was right there in Washington last week when a crowd of about 150 protesters walked by me very peacefully with signs and chanting in solidarity. Most of the people in that group were probably under 30 years old. There were a lot of Black faces, a lot of White faces, men and women, young people who felt that lack of trust. We look at how people have exercised their First Amendment rights. It is a beautiful thing to see. Unfortunately, it has been eroded by some of the destructive things that have come along with it, but at the base of it, we are hearing the same things in our States every day.

While we want to know that our Declaration of Independence has lived up to—and that the 14th amendment, which guarantees that no government, including State and local governments, can deny basic constitutional rights, we haven't quite lived up to all of that.

A century passed before we passed major civil rights legislation in 1964. One of the sources of great pride for me is that my father was one of the leading Republicans in the House of Representatives representing West Virginia in 1964 who helped make sure that passed. In my office, I actually have a pen that was used in signing that and a picture of my dad at the White House when it was signed.

Our job is not done. When I hear the voices of mothers who say that they are fearful their son might not survive a simple traffic stop or they must have certain behaviors—as Senator SASSE said, it is so different from what he learned growing up as a young man about how to interact with police officers in that situation. We can't have those anguished cries and that double system anymore. That is what this bill is about.

I am proud to be with Senator SCOTT introducing the JUSTICE Act. It has been interesting to watch him and all of us listen to the different segments of our society who have talked to us—friends, neighbors, police, members of communities of color, our religious communities, our news commentators. I did six interviews today on the TV about this. Every single one of them asked me one fundamental question, and I wish some of my friends on the other side of the aisle would be here. They asked: You don't have a very good history in this body of having Republicans and Democrats joining together to get something done. How do you think you can do this now? I said: Well, today we did. We did the Great American Outdoors Act. Several months ago we did the CARES Act. We can do it. Where there is a will, we can do it.

If we don't do it, we are failing so many people. We are failing ourselves. We are failing our country, our com-

munities, failing our law enforcement communities. I would say that we need to begin this job of a difficult conversation and make sure that we get this bill onto the Senate floor and debate it in front of the general public.

When we start debating things on the Senate floor in front of the general public, do you know what happens? The same thing that happened during the impeachment trial. I know all of us were getting all kinds of input from people all around. People are watching it. They are seeing what is actually going on. That is what we need. If we want to have discussions on qualified immunity, if we want to ban choke holds, which I want to do and our bill does, essentially, but if you want something more definitively, yes, I am all for that. Let's have the discussion and talk about it in front of the American people.

I believe that law enforcement has a lot of great people who work in and around law enforcement. They need the equipment. They need the cameras. They need to have the realtime evidence—the realtime evidence of wrongdoing and evidence of doing it right. It is a protective device. Everybody should have the availability of that in law enforcement.

We also require that law enforcement agencies retain disciplinary records on officers and make sure that they check an officer's record from other agencies before making a hiring decision. I kind of thought that was going on anyway. I sort of did. We need to make sure and make clear that is what we absolutely want to do.

The bill incentivizes State and local police agencies to ban choke holds. As I mentioned earlier, I am for even more definitive language on that.

It also provides training in all kinds of areas—deescalation or if an officer is in a situation where another officer is using overwhelming force improperly, that officer is trained on how to interdict that situation. We saw that happen in Minneapolis. Sadly, the officers did not, but maybe they didn't know how to do it, when to do it, what form it should take. Let's explore that.

To keep our communities safe, we need our police officers. We need trust in our law enforcement. There should be no conflict between a pro-civil rights bill and a pro-law enforcement bill. They should be able to be joined together. This supports our police officers while bringing about positive change that will guarantee equal protection to all of our citizens. The police reform bill will make a real difference in advancing our constitutional ideals and in making our communities safer.

I am proud to stand with Senator SCOTT, but I want to stand with the entire body to talk about the ways to make this bill even better, to take the 70 percent of this bill that we have shared ideals on and shared ideas and put those into action and to not dither here, to not score political points, and to say to the American people: These

are tough decisions, and we are going to make them. We are going to have this where you can see it, right here on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

So thank you very much. I am proud to be with my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

NOMINATION OF JUSTIN REED WALKER

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, we are in the middle of a pandemic. The President of the United States doesn't act like it, but Americans are still dying by the hundreds—several hundred almost every day.

We are in the middle of an economic crisis. Again, the President of the United States doesn't act like it. He crows about the unemployment numbers when they are the worst since World War II.

And we are in the middle of a crisis of conscience. Millions of Americans have taken to the streets to protest the murders of Black and Brown Americans by the people supposed to protect them.

With all of these challenges, the President of the United States is failing. The Senate should be stepping in right now to fill that leadership void, to get more help to families and to communities that are going bankrupt, to protect workers—to use every tool we have to force the administration to get some kind of test trace isolate regime in place to truly stop the spread of the coronavirus. We should be listening to the protestors demanding justice in communities all across the country, large and small.

They remind us this pandemic isn't a separate issue from racial justice—it is all connected. It is not a coincidence that President Trump stopped even pretending to try to fight the coronavirus once he realized it was disproportionately Black and Brown Americans dying, not very often one of his rich friends.

In the Senate, we have plans to get help and protections to workers; we have plans to fund a scale-up of testing that gets us closer to the level we need; we have plans to work to hold police accountable; we have begun to tackle the systemic racism in our justice system.

Look at it this way: The last time I was on an airplane was in mid-March. I live close enough—6-hour drive between Cleveland and Washington. In mid-March, there were about 90 coronavirus cases diagnosed in the United States—halfway around the world from where the Presiding Officer likes to emphasize it came from, Wuhan. About 900 miles from Wuhan is the capital of South Korea—Seoul. In South Korea, around that same time, there were 90 cases. So South Korea had 90 diagnosed cases; the United States had about 90 diagnosed cases.

Since that date in March, fewer than 300 Koreans have died of the coronavirus; over 110,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus.

In Korea, their unemployment rate now is under 4 percent; our unemployment rate is somewhere between three and four times that.

That is clearly the incompetence—this is not a partisan statement. I have watched my Republican Governor of Ohio, who has done a good job, teamed up with Dr. Amy Acton, the health director, in combating this virus early, while the President of the United States was still blaming the virus on—saying it was a hoax or not real or whatever he said, and then his inept leadership didn't scale up testing, didn't have any national program to provide protective equipment to our people.

So we have seen the bungled leadership out of the White House—110,000 Americans passed away, an unemployment rate higher than at any time in my lifetime—but we are not doing anything about that here in this body. Why? Because Leader McConnell doesn't want to do anything about it, for whatever reason. Instead of rising to meet the crisis of the pandemic or unemployment or the protests on our streets, Senator McConnell wants to create a new crisis by confirming more extreme judges that are trying to take away America's healthcare.

The challenges we are facing as a country are bad enough. Imagine if Leader McConnell and President Trump get their way—their handpicked judges throw tens of millions of Americans off of their health insurance in the middle of a pandemic. That sounds farfetched? Well, no, it isn't.

In the middle of a pandemic, this President continues his lawsuit to try to overturn the Affordable Care Act, even though the voters have ratified it through a number of elections in 2012 and 2014 and 2016 and 2018. It still stands, but the President of the United States is trying to take away people's healthcare. They are trying to sneak ACA repeal through the courts since they couldn't do it in Congress.

While the rest of the country is distracted just trying to keep their families safe, judges are deciding the fate of America's health coverage right now.

The nomination we are considering this week—right now on the floor—of Judge Walker is part of that effort. Judge Walker has served in the Western District of Kentucky for just 6 months.

What makes him qualified for the DC Circuit? It is not the 6 months he served in Kentucky. In fact, the bar association in Kentucky said he wasn't qualified for that job. He has only had it for 6 months. What makes him qualified?

Just go down the hall. I am sure you could have seen many, many times Judge Walker when he was Law Clerk Walker or Young Man Walker or Grandson of Contributor Walker going in and out of Senator McConnell's office. He is a protege of McConnell's. He thinks the way McConnell thinks; he acts the way McConnell acts; and that is what it is all about.

Before his nomination to the district court, Walker praised then-Judge Kavanaugh for providing a roadmap the Supreme Court could use to strike down the ACA. So it isn't just that Judge Walker is a young, unqualified, extremist, far-right protege of the majority leader. It is not just that. I mean, talk about the swamp. That is what that is.

What it is all about is putting another vote in a key place to overturn the Affordable Care Act. He is calling upholding the ACA indefensible and catastrophic.

I don't know how, in the middle of a pandemic, you look at the American landscape, you see how many people have been sick—millions of Americans have been sick—110,000 Americans have died, hundreds more every day, and you think one of the most important things you can do is strip millions of Americans of their healthcare.

He has continued his attacks on American healthcare protections since he joined the Federal bench. In March 2020, at his formal swearing-in ceremony as district judge, Judge Walker said the worst words he heard while clerking for Justice Kennedy on the Supreme Court were the Chief Justice's rationale for upholding the ACA. The worst words he heard from the man for whom he was working were his words to uphold the ACA, the Affordable Care Act.

Now, what I forgot to mention was that when Judge Walker said that at his swearing-in ceremony, there were a couple of important visitors there.

Although the Senate should have been in session and finished our work on the first round of the coronavirus, Senator McConnell—his office is down the hall. As we know, Senator McConnell decided to adjourn the Senate and go back to Kentucky for this swearing-in. Judge Kavanaugh, another protege, if you will, of Senator McConnell's was there too.

So don't forget, Senator McConnell is on the ballot this year. Senator McConnell faces an opponent who is running neck and neck with him. It is a very Republican State, but Senator McConnell is not a particularly well-liked figure in his State, as we have seen through many years.

So Senator McConnell didn't do his job here. It is not just he didn't do his job. He stopped us from doing our jobs so he could fly back, be with Supreme Court Justice Kavanaugh, to remind the voters in Kentucky that he is the strong man who got Judge Kavanaugh on the Supreme Court and then to celebrate the swearing-in of just another young judge to a Federal district court. That is where Senator McConnell's priorities are.

We know Judge Walker is the latest in a long line of judges pushed by President Trump, rammed through by Leader McConnell, as his minions, shills, obedient junior Senators or sheep—you choose the noun for your colleagues—all vote yes so you could

put another member on another Federal court who is trying to take away Americans' healthcare.

Chad Readler, from my State, who is now serving on the Sixth Circuit, led the Trump administration's efforts to dismantle the entire Affordable Care Act, and David Porter, who holds a Pennsylvania seat on the Third Circuit, wrote that the ACA "violates the Framers' constitutional design."

What kind of law training do you have, and what kind of upbringing do you have—what kind of way do you think?—that you would think that providing healthcare to citizens is a violation of the Framers' constitutional design? Who thinks that way? On and on it goes.

The American people want to keep their healthcare. They have made that clear. They especially want to keep that healthcare in the middle of, for gosh sakes, a pandemic. Leader McConnell needs to stop trying to take it away through the courts and start letting us actually get to work to make people healthier.

Let's get to work to save lives from the coronavirus. Let's get to work to save lives from police violence. Let's get to work to save lives from all of the inequities in our healthcare system. Let's get to work to put money in people's pockets, help them pay the bills and stay in their homes, and help State and local governments from laying off thousands and thousands of workers.

Leader McConnell, let us do our job, the job for which we were elected.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—S. RES. 596
AND S. 3798

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about the death of democracy, and I am here today to talk about how we can stand with those who are fighting to preserve it.

In the United States, the death of democracy might seem like a distant and unfamiliar thing. We study examples in the history books. We read of nations and peoples who are forced, through no choice of their own, to surrender their basic liberties. We remind ourselves of the need always to stay vigilant, to stay aware, but we are seeing today the death of democracy unfold in realtime, right before our eyes, in the city of Hong Kong.

A diverse and global city, rich in culture and arts and commerce and people, Hong Kong is an outpost of liberty. For decades, under a special set of laws and protections, it has stood as a haven of liberty—a beacon, a light—but I fear that light is fast dimming, nearly overcome by darkness and by tyranny.

This body, along with all free peoples, has a special responsibility to take a stand for the freedom-loving people of Hong Kong. We must take a stand to ensure that the light of Hong Kong does not go out forever. We must take a stand to ensure that this outpost of liberty lives on. We must take

a stand so that the flame of freedom is not extinguished forever by the Chinese Communist Party.

On May 28, Beijing announced that it would adopt legislation that will essentially jettison the basic law under which Hong Kong has been governed for decades. It is legislation that will trample upon Beijing's own treaty commitments in the 1984 Sino-British Treaty, legislation—they call it legislation, but, of course, what it really is is just fiat, fiat by the Chinese Communist Party in Beijing—that will strip Hong Kong of its basic liberties, strip Hongkongers of the right to freedom of speech, strip Hongkongers of the right to peacefully assemble, strip Hongkongers of their rights to redress in fair and open courts with some process of law.

Beijing wants to deny the people of Hong Kong all of these things because liberty is a threat to the authoritarian Communist regime in Beijing. Oh, it fears the people. It fears the will of the people, and it fears the liberty of the people. It is trying to destroy the last outpost of liberty in its nation—the great city of Hong Kong.

Now, we were promised that it would not come to this. We were told, when China joined the World Trade Organization, when China was given permanent normal trade relations, when China was ushered into this so-called community of nations, that it would liberalize China and that it would make the Chinese Communist Party more moderate. Well, I think we know how that has turned out.

After decades now of stealing our jobs, decades of ripping us off in trade, decades of impoverishing our own workers here in this country while stealing our intellectual property, decades of building its military on the backs of our middle class and our working people, now Beijing wants to dominate its region, snuff out Hong Kong, and then turn to the rest of the world.

We have to send a clear message that we will not stand idly by. We will not allow Beijing to erase the history of its misdeeds. We will not allow it to erase the history of Tiananmen. We will not allow it to erase the history of the concentration camps it is running at this very moment, and we will not stand by while it destroys the liberties and the rights of the people of Hong Kong.

It is time now for this body to stand and send a clear message that will call the other free nations to stand in support of the values we hold dear, in support of all that this country stands for, in support of the liberty of the people of Hong Kong.

I yield to my colleague Senator BLACKBURN of Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Missouri for the work he is doing as he brings forward this resolution for Hong Kong.

I want to take just a couple of minutes to remind those of us who have been watching this issue and have concerns about this resolution that the aggression we are seeing now is not something that is new. This is newly realized.

As those of us who have followed this and followed the dealings of the Chinese Communist Party know, the newest so-called national security law is nothing more than the party's response to the threat that uprisings and protests in Hong Kong pose to its hold on power. It just can't stand it. It watches the freedom fighters in Hong Kong, and it thinks: What if it gets away from us?

Hong Kong is our financial center, and it is watching what is happening in the rest of the free world. Australia, Canada, and the UK all have signed the official joint statement with us, the United States of America, expressing deep concern with this so-called national security legislation, which really is the Communist Party's way of stepping into Hong Kong and usurping the power—of going back on a deal it made long ago.

Beijing claims that it needs this law to control against "subversion of state power," but, again, anyone who has been paying attention knows that it will use this standard as an excuse to redefine "subversion" and engage in the violent repression of speech, association, and movement—with no cause and without mercy. This is how it has kept control. It is a pattern, and there is no reason to believe it is going to do anything differently this time around.

Over the past year, we have seen how willing Chinese officials are to trample every international norm, every law, every principle of diplomacy to force their hand on their own people and on other countries. Now, against all odds, forces in Beijing have found a way to make life in Hong Kong more dangerous than it has been by delegitimizing peaceful and nonviolent protests and journalism that doesn't mirror party propaganda. They have seized even more hope away from the freedom fighters who have captured the world's attention in their stunning displays of defiance.

It is really quite a battle that is taking place, and I thank my colleagues for the good work they have done in standing against the Chinese Communist Party's aggression.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Tennessee for her tremendous work on this issue. I thank her for her leadership and for her strong stance in favor of the people of Hong Kong and their basic liberties, guaranteed to them by the international treaty commitments that Beijing has ascribed to, that Beijing has signed up for, and that it now seeks to violate with impunity.

Let's be clear about what Beijing wants. It says that Hong Kong is its

plaything to do with as it chooses. That is not the case. Beijing has undertaken internationally binding commitments, agreements, by which it has agreed to protect and honor the basic liberties of the people of Hong Kong, and it is those commitments that it is seeking to violate today with impunity. It is those commitments Beijing is seeking to wriggle out of just as it has, time and again, violated its agreements with this country, just as it has, time and again, cheated on its obligations to Americans.

That is another reason I am calling on the Senate today to pass a resolution that makes it our position that China has gone too far. We must go on record and tell the world that this new national security law—this fiat that has been issued by Beijing—is a violation of what Beijing has committed to. It is a violation of the fundamental liberties of the people of Hong Kong, and nothing less than freedom is at stake.

My resolution also calls on this administration to use every diplomatic means available to stay Beijing's hand. The President has already begun the process of downgrading Hong Kong's special trade status. We must build on that effort now by rallying nations—the free nations of the world—to pressure China to back down from their attempt to strip away the basic liberties of the people of Hong Kong because, in the end, Hong Kong's struggle is the struggle of all free people.

Do you know what I said when I had the chance to visit the city, see the protests, and be out on the streets myself last fall? That sometimes the fate of one city defines the struggle of a generation. In the 1960s, that city was Berlin. Today, that city is Hong Kong, and it is time for this body to take a stand.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. HAWLEY. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I now ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 596. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I am reserving the right to object.

As I listened carefully to the statements made by the Senator from Missouri about the aggressive and unacceptable conduct of the Government of

China, or Hong Kong, he is absolutely right, I believe, that it is important that the U.S. Senate—in fact, that the U.S. Government take action strongly expressing our disapproval but also take action to actually show the Government of China that there will be a price to pay if they continue down that path of aggression and try to snuff out the freedoms of the people of Hong Kong.

That is why, immediately after the Government of China announced its intentions to move in that direction, we introduced a bipartisan bill. Senator TOOMEY introduced the bill. I am proud to join him as a cosponsor. We have other Democratic and Republican cosponsors to the bill. I am pleased to see the Senator from North Dakota on the floor. He is a cosponsor of that bill. It is called the Hong Kong Autonomy Act.

In addition to expressing the sentiments that the Senator from Missouri lays out in his Senate resolution, it proposes that we take action as the Government of the United States. While we have heard statements from Secretary Pompeo, the reality is that this administration has not exercised any of its existing sanctions authority that it could take to express our strong disapproval of the actions the Government of China is proposing to take with respect to Hong Kong. That is why we introduced the bipartisan bill, again, outlining all the transgressions the Senator from Missouri talked about but actually doing something about them by requiring that the administration impose sanctions on individuals in the Government of China who are undermining the rights of the people in Hong Kong and requiring them to impose sanctions on Chinese Government entities that are depriving the people of Hong Kong of the freedoms the Senator talked about. It goes beyond that. It says that any bank that is aiding and abetting the Government of China in snuffing out the rights of the people of Hong Kong can be subject to sanctions.

Now, I know the Senator from Missouri knows the Government of China well enough to understand that the Senate passing a resolution and leaving it at that is not going to change their conduct. I think the Senator is enough of a student of the Chinese Communist Government to recognize that. So that is exactly why we introduced this bipartisan legislation because if we want to have any chance of influencing the conduct of the Government of China, we have to make it clear there will be a price to pay. There is no price to be paid in the Senate passing a resolution. It is a nice statement. I support the statement, but I am also a little tired of this body passing a lot of resolutions, sometimes thinking we have actually done something when we haven't changed a thing.

That is why I am here on the Senate floor to ask my colleagues to support what is a bipartisan bill that actually

has some teeth in it. It is not just a statement from the Senate. It is an action that will be taken by the Senate and the House and, hopefully, by this administration, which apparently doesn't want to take action. We have heard them already express concerns about this legislation.

I would hope that if our colleagues on the Republican side feel as strongly as the Senator from Missouri does, they would want to back up those words with legislative action, and they would want to back up those words with something that is more meaningful and something that tells the Government of China that we stand together in making sure there is a price to pay.

I know the Senator from Missouri has worked on other bills making it clear that we do not find acceptable all sorts of conduct by China. I have as well—bipartisan bills. I hope we can join together right here, right now, to support the expression—the statement—that the Senator from Missouri has brought to us but also go beyond that and send a signal right now that we, the U.S. Senate, want to be joined by the House and by the administration in putting action behind those words. That is exactly what the bipartisan Hong Kong Autonomy Act does.

So I would respectfully request that the Senator from Missouri modify his request to ask, in addition to what he proposed, that the Banking Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 3798, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons involved in the erosion of certain obligations of China with respect to Hong Kong; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Missouri so modify his request?

Mr. HAWLEY. I do.

Is there objection to the request as modified?

Mr. CRAMER. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, reserving the right to object, it is clear to the five or six of us Senators who are in the room right now that there is passion, that it is an important issue, and that there may even be unanimous consent in the hearts and minds, certainly, of the Senators with regard to both the spirit of the resolution and perhaps the letter of the bill, of which I am a cosponsor, that has been introduced by UC by the Senator from Maryland.

I think it is clear that we all have the same objective here, but I also know there is just a handful of us in the room talking about a very important issue that may seem simple but we know is very complicated.

We know that the administration has provided both technical and policy

views on the bill, and I think with such an important issue that so many of us care deeply about, it deserves a little more discussion and debate than just to come to the floor with a UC.

I am committed, as a member of the Banking Committee and as a cosponsor, to working with both committees and with the chairs of both committees of jurisdiction over the resolution and the bill to make sure we get it right as opposed to this UC.

I want to work hard. I know you all do. I think we should work at looking at the comments from the administration, working together as Republicans and Democrats who care about this country, care about the people of Hong Kong, and who are concerned about the behavior of China. So I object to adoption of this bill before we have a chance to do exactly that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Minnesota.

JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT

Ms. SMITH. Madam President, it has been a little bit over 3 weeks since my constituent, George Floyd, was murdered by the Minneapolis police, and for a little over 3 weeks, millions of people have marched on the streets, raising their voices in grief and anguish to protest the police brutality and systemic racism that killed George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Philando Castile, Jamar Clark, and so many others. But the killing hasn't stopped.

Just last Friday, police in Atlanta killed Rayshard Brooks, shooting him twice in the back. Just moments ago, it was announced that this officer will be charged.

The killing will not stop until we take action. The Senate needs to act now to take up and pass the Justice in Policing Act.

I joined my colleagues, Senators BOOKER and HARRIS, in introducing this bill last week. I am grateful for their strong leadership toward creating a more fair and equitable justice system.

The scale of the injustice can feel overwhelming, and the path can seem very long, but passing the Justice in Policing Act would provide concrete steps on that path. It is a necessary step toward stopping the killing and advancing our work to make transformative changes that we need to fulfill the promise of freedom and equality in America.

The Justice in Policing Act would make some of the changes that we urgently need to stop the scourge of police violence against communities of color. This legislation would prohibit some of the most dangerous police practices. It would strictly limit the use of force, and it would begin holding law enforcement accountable in a system that was designed to shield them from accountability.

First, the bill prohibits the most dangerous police practices. It would ban the use of choke holds like the ones the police used to kill George Floyd and

Eric Garner. It would also ban no-knock warrants like the one the police used when they killed Breonna Taylor in her own bed.

Choke holds pose an unacceptable risk, and that risk is not borne equally. Black men are nearly three times more likely to be killed by police use of force than White men.

The use of no-knock warrants also disproportionately harms communities of color. The practice was popularized in the 1990s as a tool in the war on drugs so that officers pursuing drug charges could enter a person's home unannounced, with guns drawn, inherently and unnecessarily endangering their lives.

Communities and activists have been warning us about the inherent danger and injustice of choke holds and no-knock warrants for decades. It is long past time to end the debate and to ban these practices nationally, but experience has shown us that it is not enough to ban egregious practices. When Los Angeles banned choke holds in 1982, officers took up batons to beat and subdue civilians.

In 1991, the officers who beat Rodney King actually argued that their actions were necessary because they weren't permitted to use a choke hold, and those officers were never held fully accountable.

American policing resists reform and accountability, so it is not enough for us to ban the most dangerous practices; we need to set a national standard for police use of force. That is what the Justice in Policing Act does.

Today, the current standard in law asks only if an officer's use of force was reasonable, and this makes it nearly impossible to hold officers accountable because the system—a system designed to protect officers, not Black and Brown bodies—has built up decades of precedent excusing officers from the harm that they cause. So if we are serious when we say that Black lives matter, if we are serious about our commitment to equal justice, we need to hold police officers to a higher standard of care in their use of force. That is why the Justice in Policing Act would set a national use of force standard that asks whether the force was necessary and hold officers accountable for exhausting other options before resorting to violence.

The Justice in Policing Act would eliminate qualified immunity for law enforcement officers and reset the impossibly high standard for convicting law enforcement officers of a crime. Today, our system effectively puts cops above the law by insulating them from civil and criminal liability when they violate the rights of those who they are sworn to serve. No one should be shielded from accountability for their actions in a free society.

When we change these rules, we will finally be able to provide long denied justice for victims of police brutality, their families, and their communities. But we will also be able to prevent such brutality in the first place.

When law enforcement officers believe that they will never face consequences for crossing the line, they will continue to ignore that line. The Justice in Policing Act will begin to make this change.

The House is poised to pass the Justice in Policing Act next week, and I urge this Senate to take it up. Let's debate it, and let's pass it.

We are at a crossroad, and we cannot fail to act. Four hundred years of structural racism cannot be erased by a single piece of legislation or with a single generation of legislators, but passing this bill is a crucial step toward ending the killing and the violence against communities of color. It is a necessary step on the path toward racial justice.

The path toward justice leads us toward transformative changes to redefining the role of policing in America. Reimagining policing means recognizing that not every social ill and every emergency is answered by calling in the armed officers. We have other better and more effective tools when dealing with the hurt of mental illness, of substance abuse, of homelessness, of economic insecurity. Reimagining policing means asking whether outfitting officers with military-grade weapons and equipment makes it safer—or does it escalate conflict and violence and encourage officers to see the communities they serve as hostile enemies?

Reimagining policing means addressing the overpolicing of communities of color. It means that we ask questions about whether anyone is really safer when we surveil neighborhoods, searching for possible violations. This only feeds the system of mass incarceration.

Reimagining policing means that we reassess our criminal code, our justice system, and our sentencing laws that irrevocably disrupt lives and communities for minor offenses with minimal impacts on public safety.

Above all, reimagining policing means recognizing that our current system is not inevitable; it is the result of thousands and thousands of policy choices made over, literally, hundreds of years, designed to control and punish Black and Brown and indigenous communities—choices that compound injustice and unequal opportunity.

As we imagine a new way forward, we need to face some uncomfortable truths about the history of policing in our country. We can, and we must, make different choices this time. We know better, and we have to do better.

I want to close by thanking the community leaders and young activists who are showing us the path forward. This path requires us to be courageous. It requires us to be humble. It requires us to be uncomfortable. It requires us to listen. But it is a path rooted in love and in trust and in hope.

I am committed to walking this path with my constituents, and I am hopeful that my colleagues and my fellow American citizens will join me.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

TELEHEALTH

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, it is hard to think of much good that has come out of the 3-month experience with COVID-19, but here is one thing: the number of patients who have seen their doctors remotely through the internet, FaceTime, and all of the other remote technologies we have, including the telephone. We call that telehealth.

Our Health Committee this morning had a fascinating hearing on telehealth. There was a lot of bipartisan interest from the Senators—Democrat and Republican Senators. The Senator from Minnesota was the ranking member of the committee today at the request of Senator MURRAY. My sense at the end of the hearing was that there were a number of things we agreed on.

I ask unanimous consent that my opening statement at the hearing today be included in the RECORD following my remarks.

My colleague, the Senator from Tennessee who is presiding today, and I both know Tim Adams, who is the CEO of the Saint Thomas hospital system in Middle Tennessee.

He told me on the phone last week that Saint Thomas employs about 800 physicians in its several hospitals. During the month of February, there were 60,000 visits between physicians and patients in the Saint Thomas system. Only 50 of those 60,000 were by telehealth, were remote. But during the 2 months of March and April, Ascension Saint Thomas conducted more than 30,000 telehealth visits. That is 50 to 30,000—more than 45 percent of all of the visits between patients and doctors during that time.

Tim Adams expects that to level off, but there will still be probably 15 to 20 percent of all of Saint Thomas 60,000 visits a month by telehealth.

I talked to the CEO of the largest hospital in San Francisco a few weeks ago, and he said that during February, about 5 percent of their visits between doctors and patients were telehealth. He said that was a very high percentage for a hospital. But in March, it was more than half, more than 50 percent.

Think about that for just a moment. There were 884 million visits in 2016 between doctors and patients, according to the Centers for Disease Control. If 15 to 20 to 25 percent of those were suddenly by telehealth instead of in-office visits, that would mean hundreds of millions of visits a year would be by telehealth. It is hard for me to imagine that there has been a bigger change in the delivery of healthcare services in recent history or maybe in our country's history than the sudden shift to telehealth in visits between patients and doctors.

Telehealth has been around for a long time. Our witnesses testified to that. We had some excellent witnesses. Dr. Rheuban from the University of Virginia; Dr. Kvedar from Harvard, who is

the new president of the American Telemedicine Association; Dr. Arora, who is the founder of Project ECHO, which is well known across the country; and Dr. Andrea Willis, who is the chief medical officer of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee, which apparently is the first major insurance company to say that it will insure telehealth visits in the same way that it insures other visits.

What I recommended following the hearing was that two of the policy changes—which I judge to be the two most important changes in policy that the Federal Government made—be made permanent.

The first is that physicians can be reimbursed for a telehealth appointment wherever the patient is, including the patient's home. That would change the originating site rule, as it is called.

The second is that Medicare, during COVID-19, has begun to reimburse providers for nearly twice as many types of telehealth services. That rule, those changes, I believe, also should be made permanent.

What has happened is that we have had an incredible pilot program on telehealth. We have crammed 10 years of experience into 3 months, and we have a rare opportunity to look at the 3 months of experience and make a decision about what works, what doesn't work, and right the rules of the road for the future.

It is not just the Federal Government changing, I think, a total of 31 different policies, all of which we should examine, but States have made some changes too. Those changes involve allowing individuals to cross State lines more easily to get appointments with doctors with whom they need to talk.

Then the private sector is beginning to change too. I don't know of other insurance companies that have done what Tennessee Blue Cross Blue Shield did, but I know there will be some who decide on their own to begin to move to cover those services.

Senator BRAUN and Senator CASSIDY on our committee brought up the point that we want to watch carefully to see that we are not just adding to the cost of healthcare by telehealth; in fact, we ought to have an opportunity to reduce it. Our goal is always, when delivering healthcare services, to have as an objective a better outcome, a lower cost, and a better patient experience. It may very well be possible that telehealth not only improves the patient experience—we have had very few complaints about the experience of that—and improves the outcomes, but it may also lower costs, which is a major objective of our committee.

Last week, 10 days ago, I issued a white paper about the changes I thought we needed to make—Congress needs to make—so that we could be well prepared for the next pandemic after COVID-19, the one we know will surely come. We don't know when, we don't know what the name of the virus will be, but we know it will come, and

we need to take a number of steps to be as well prepared for that virus as we can.

Whether its accelerating treatments and testing and finding a vaccine or collecting data in a different way or better coordination of Federal officials, all of those things are part of what we need to examine, and we need to do that this year—this year—because our attention spans are short in this country. We move on quickly to the next crisis. While COVID-19 is fresh on our minds, we should do whatever we need to do to get ready for the next crisis. We should do those things this year.

Among those things we need to do this year is to make permanent the changes in Federal policy on telehealth that allowed this explosion of doctor and patient meetings by remote visits. People have been trying to think of ways to do this for a long time. Unfortunately, it took a pandemic to cause it to happen. Now, while we can see the result, make sure we don't have unintended consequences that are unfortunate. While we are doing that, we need to make those changes.

So I recommend to my colleagues, the testimony from our excellent witnesses this morning. There were 884 million doctor-patient visits in 2016 in the United States, and very few of them were by telehealth. In the future, the estimates are there could be as many as 20, 25, 30 percent of all of them, hundreds of millions of doctor-patient visits, by telehealth. That most likely is the largest change in the delivery of medical services that our country has ever seen.

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

OPENING STATEMENT

TELEHEALTH: LESSONS FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC—JUNE 17, 2020

I spoke recently with Tim Adams, the CEO of Ascension Saint Thomas Health, which has 9 hospitals in Middle Tennessee and employs over 800 physicians, who told me that in February before COVID-19, there were about 60,000 visits between patients and physicians each month.

Almost all of those visits were done in person. Only about 50 were done remotely through telehealth using the internet.

But during the last two months, Ascension Saint Thomas conducted more than 30,000 telehealth visits—or around 45 percent of all its visits—because of changes in government policy and the inability of many patients to see doctors in person during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tim Adams expects that to level off at 15-20 percent of all its visits going forward.

The largest hospital in San Francisco told me that 5 percent of its visits in February were conducted through telehealth—and the hospital considered that to be a very high number. Then in March, telehealth visits made up more than half of all its visits.

Because of COVID-19, our health care sector and government have been forced to cram 10 years' worth of telehealth experience into just the past three months.

As dark as this pandemic event has been, it creates an opportunity to learn from and act upon these three months of intensive telehealth experiences, specifically what perma-

nent changes need to be made in federal and state policies.

In 2016, there were almost 884 million visits nationwide between patients and physicians, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If, as Tim Adams expects, 15-20 percent of those were to become remote due to telehealth expansion during COVID-19—that would produce a massive change in our health care system.

Our job should be to ensure that change is done with the goals of better outcomes and better experiences at a lower cost.

Part of this explosion in remote meetings between patients and physicians has been made possible by temporary changes in federal and state policies. The private sector, too, has made important changes. One purpose of this hearing is to find out which of these temporary changes in federal policy should be maintained, modified, or reversed—and also to find out if there are any additional federal policies that would help patients and health care providers take advantage of delivering medical services using telehealth.

Of the 31 federal policy changes, the three most important are:

1. Physicians can be reimbursed for a telehealth appointment wherever the patient is, including in the patient's home. That change was to the so-called "originating site" rule, which previously required that the patient live in a rural area and use telehealth at a doctor's office or clinic.

2. Medicare began to reimburse providers for nearly twice as many types of telehealth services, including: emergency department visits, initial nursing facility visits and discharges, and therapy services.

3. Doctors are allowed to conduct appointments using common video apps on your phone, like Apple FaceTime, or phone texting apps, or even on a landline call, which required relaxing federal privacy and security rules from the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA.

Many states made changes as well, most importantly making it easier for doctors to continue to see their patients who may have traveled out of state during the pandemic.

For example, a college student from Memphis, who attends college in North Carolina and has a doctor she sees in Chapel Hill, was able to go home to Tennessee during the pandemic and continue seeing her Chapel Hill doctor by FaceTime. Or, a patient in Iowa has been able to start seeing a new psychiatrist in Nashville.

The private sector adapted to these changes, too. One of our witnesses today is from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee, which has already begun to make permanent adjustments to its telehealth coverage policies based on some of the temporary federal changes in Medicare.

Looking forward, of the three major federal changes, my instinct is that the originating site rule change and the expansion of covered telehealth services should be made permanent.

One purpose of this hearing is to hear from the experts and discuss whether there may be unintended consequences, positive or negative, if Congress were to do that.

It's also important to examine the other 28 temporary changes in federal policy.

The question of whether to extend the HIPAA privacy waivers should be considered carefully. There are privacy and security concerns about the use of personal medical information by technology platform companies, as well as concerns about criminals hacking into these platforms. When HIPAA notification requirements are waived, a person might not even know that their personal information has been accessed by hackers.

Additionally, several of these technology platforms have said they want to adjust their platforms to conform with the HIPAA rules.

Another lesson from these three months is that telehealth or teleworking or tele-learning is not always the answer, especially for people in rural areas or low-income urban areas who do not have access to broadband.

And still another lesson is that personal relationships involved in health care, education, and the workplace cannot always be replaced by remote technology. Children have learned about all they want to learn over the internet, patients like to see their doctors, and workplaces benefit from employees actually talking and working with one another in person. There are some limits on remote learning, health care, and working.

There are obvious benefits to allowing health care providers to serve patients across state lines during a public health crisis. As a former governor, I am reluctant to override state decisions, but it may be possible to encourage further participation in interstate compacts or reciprocity agreements.

Last week I released a white paper on steps that Congress should take before the end of the year in order to get ready for the next pandemic. One of those recommendations was to make sure that patients do not lose the benefits that they have gained from using telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even with an event as significant as COVID-19, memories fade and attention moves quickly to the next crisis, so it is important for Congress to act on legislation this year.

Because of this 10 years of telehealth experience crammed into 3 months—patients, doctors, nurses, therapists, and caregivers can write some new rules of the road, and should do so while the experiences still are fresh on everyone's minds.

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

THE COOL ONLINE ACT

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I rise today to encourage all Americans to join the fight to support our Nation and our jobs and stand up against the growing threat of Communist China. I have been saying it for months, but the best way each and every one of us can make a difference is to buy American products whenever possible. It is time we addressed the new Cold War occurring between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party and be crystal clear about the negative impacts of continuing to buy Chinese-made products.

Communist China is stealing American jobs and technology and spying on our citizens. Data collected by Chinese companies is shared with the Communist Government of China, which is focused solely on global domination. Xi, the General Secretary of the China

Communist Party, is a dictator and human rights violator who is denying basic rights to the people of Hong Kong, cracking down on dissidents, militarizing the South China Sea, and imprisoning more than 1 million Uighurs in internment camps simply because of their religion.

The coronavirus pandemic should be the last straw. We can no longer rely on other countries like Communist China for our critical supply chain. Washington politicians have been too concerned with short-term political success and have long ignored the long-term threats to our way of life.

It is time for action. Now, more than ever, Americans must remember that every time we buy a product made in China, we are putting another dollar into the pockets of the people who steal our technology, deny people their basic human rights, and are propping up dangerous dictators like Maduro in Venezuela.

I am proud to lead my colleagues in a bipartisan resolution calling on Americans to buy products made in the United States whenever possible. Buying American is not partisan, and I am glad my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are coming together to encourage Americans to take a stand.

I know it is not always easy, but it is an important step we can all take at home to support American jobs, American producers, and American manufacturers and help build up the U.S. supply chain.

I am also working with Senator BALDWIN to pass our COOL Online Act, which will make sure all goods sold online list their country of origin to create more transparency for American consumers.

In my State, we take immense pride in products made in Florida. It is a driving force that led to our incredible economic turnaround. A return to this pride in homegrown businesses ensures America remains strong and the undisputed leader in the global economy. We must all do our part to support our Nation and make it clear to Communist China that the United States will not stand for their behavior.

I am committed to supporting American businesses over Chinese products. I hope my colleagues will join me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Tennessee.

PROTESTS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, for more than 200 years, the American people have exercised their right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. We understand how very vitally important it is for each of us to have that right to petition our government, to have our say.

But just as we learned from our moms and dads when we were kids, there is a right way and there is a wrong way to get things done when we feel that, in our opinion, the government has fallen short. I would understand if this differentiation between right and wrong sometimes causes con-

fusion because, although the American people are united in their desire for justice and equality, that sense of unity, they feel, is under attack.

Over the past few weeks, we watched thousands of protesters peacefully march in the memory of George Floyd and countless other Black Americans who have been killed—who have lost their lives at the hands of law enforcement. Sometimes these protests are vigils, and they are very quiet. There are other times they fill the streets and they are a bit disruptive and they demand accountability from their government in a way that has really captured the attention of the entire world.

On the other side, however, we have watched professional agitators who have come into some of these protests, and then they have turned them into riots. The self-prescribed culture warriors silence anyone and anything that deviates from their own chosen narrative, and that is very unfortunate.

The paths we take to achieve our desired outcomes are informed by the goals we have, not the other way around. This is why we must question the goals of those whose activism has taken a repressive turn because peaceful protest is an essential element of addressing government. That is how you achieve change. That is how you get people with you and working with you. It is a part of who we are.

This absolute protection against suppression in any form makes the recent dismantling of meaningful public discourse all the more disturbing because as you look back through our Nation's history, you realize freedom and freedom's cause has been well served by robust, respectful, bipartisan debate—hearing all voices.

Do you remember how sometimes we would joke about the cancel culture because it was the product of social media influencers and overenthusiastic fan clubs? What we see now is that has taken hold of the entertainment industry, corporations, and editorial boards. Outrage manufactured along partisan lines dominates every news cycle, all in an intentional and targeted effort to divide the American people and, thereby, what would that do? It destroys our cultural identity. If this isn't what chilling speech looks like, then I don't know what does.

I would like to be able to say this body stands united against this wave of malice or that I am confident we have demonstrated a commitment to real reform, but I fear that we have not yet arrived at that place. In spite of everything, in spite of it being clear that those who seek to divide and destroy this country are working just as hard as those who seek to unite it, other priorities remain in play. This has become especially evident today.

JUSTICE ACT

Last week, my friend and colleague Senator TIM SCOTT from South Carolina announced that he was leading a working group with the goal of drafting a comprehensive police reform bill.

You all know what happened next. He spoke about it just a few hours ago, but I think it is important to get on the record just one more time today that he deserves our thanks, and he deserves credit.

Before Senator SCOTT had a chance to write a single word of his bill, some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle were ready to shut it down. It was stunning. Let me read you a few of these statements.

Someone said they suspect it “is going to be window dressing.” Another said: “It’s so far from being relevant to really the crisis at hand.” Another: “This is not a time for lowest common denominator, watered down reforms.” And then there was another unfortunate comment for which an apology was offered late today, and that apology was accepted. All of this is disappointing. It is hurtful, yes, but disappointing because this is a time when we have to carry on. We have to move forward.

Senator SCOTT announced the introduction of the JUSTICE Act. I am honored to be a cosponsor of that legislation, and I think it is imperative that we move forward with our discussions and our deliberations just as we would with any other bill. This Chamber is going to find a way to move forward with suggestions, but, above all, I urge my colleagues to consider some of the words that have been said. I urge them to take those words to heart, and I urge them to remember what we are fighting for and to stop focusing so hard on whom you have convinced yourself that you should be fighting against.

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

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

POLICING REFORM

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as everybody knows, this country faces an extraordinary set of crises—crises that are unprecedented in the modern history of our country.

Over the last several weeks, hundreds of thousands of Americans have taken to the streets and courageously demanded an end to police murder and brutality and to urge us all to rethink the nature of policing in America. In the midst of all that, we continue, of course, to suffer from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has taken the lives of over 115,000 Americans and infected over 2 million of our people.

Then, on top of that, we are experiencing the worst economic meltdown since the Great Depression of the 1930s, with over 32 million Americans having lost their jobs in the last 3 months. In the midst of all of that, enough truly is enough.

The U.S. Senate must respond to the pain and the suffering of our constituents. Let us begin work today, not next week, not next month but right now in addressing the unprecedented crises our people are facing. If there is anything that the torture and murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police has taught us, it is that we have to fundamentally rethink the nature of policing in America and reform our broken and racist criminal justice system.

Let us be clear—and I think everybody understands this—the murder of George Floyd is not just an isolated incident. It is the latest in an endless series of police killings of African Americans, including Rayshard Brooks, Eric Garner, Sandra Bland, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, Alton Sterling, Freddie Gray, Rekia Boyd, Walter Scott, and many, many others.

The American people are rightly demanding justice and an end to police brutality and murder. And we have to hear that cry coming from all across this country, from large cities and small towns, and the Senate must act and act now.

Here is some good news in the midst of a lot of bad news, and that is thanks to a massive grassroots movement, the Senate will finally begin to debate legislation dealing with the police. That is a good thing. The bad news is that the Republican legislation, at least what I have seen this morning, goes nowhere near far enough as to where we need to go.

Now is not the time to think small or respond with superficial, bureaucratic proposals. Now is not the time for more studies. Now is the time to hold racist and corrupt police officers and police departments accountable for their actions. Now is the time to implement far-reaching reforms that would protect people and communities that have suffered police brutality, torture, and murder for far too long. Now is the time to act boldly to protect the First Amendment right to protest.

Let me very briefly describe some of the areas in which I think the Congress should move with regard to police brutality and the whole issue of policing.

First, and maybe most importantly, every police officer in our country must be held accountable, and those found guilty must be punished with the full force of law. That includes officers who stand by while brutal acts take place. Every single killing of a person by police or while in police custody must be investigated by the Department of Justice.

We must create a process by which police departments look like the communities they serve and be part of those communities, not be seen as invading, heavily armed, occupying forces. That is not what police departments should look like. We must, therefore, prohibit the transfer of Department of Defense military equipment to police departments.

Further, we need to abolish qualified immunity so police officers are held

civily liable for abuses. We need to strip Federal funds from departments that violate civil rights. We need to provide funding to States and municipalities to create a civilian core of unarmed first responders to supplement law enforcement.

For too long, we have asked police departments to do things which they are not trained or prepared to do, and we have criminalized societal problems like addiction and homelessness and mental illness, severe problems that exist in every State in the country. But these are not problems that will be solved by incarceration. We are not going to solve the crisis of addiction or homelessness or mental illness by incarceration. We have done that for too long, and it is a failed approach.

We need to make records of police misconduct publicly available so that an officer with a record of misconduct cannot simply move two towns over and start again. We need to require all jurisdictions that receive Federal grant funding to establish independent police conduct review boards that are broadly representative of the community and that have the authority to refer deaths that occur at the hands of police or in police custody to Federal authorities for investigation. We need to amend Federal civil rights laws to allow more effective prosecution of police misconduct by changing the standard from willfulness to recklessness. We need to ban the use of facial recognition technology by the police.

Finally, and certainly not least importantly, we need to legalize marijuana. In the midst of the many crises we face as a country, it is absurd that, under the Federal Controlled Substances Act, marijuana is at schedule 1, along with killer drugs like heroin. State after State have moved to legalize marijuana, and it is time for the Federal Government to do the same. When we talk about police department reform, we must end police officers continuing to arrest, search, or jail the people of our country, predominantly people of color, for using marijuana.

We need to ban the use of rubber bullets, pepper spray, and tear gas on protesters. The right to protest, the right to demonstrate is a fundamental, constitutional right and a right that must be respected.

RACISM

But let us be clear. Police violence is not the only manifestation of the systemic racism that is taking place in America today. Just take a look at what is going on with the COVID-19 pandemic. In recent months, we have seen Black and Brown communities disproportionately ravaged by this virus. We have seen workers, who earn starvation wages, forced to go to work day in and day out in unhealthy workplace environments because, without that paycheck, they and their families would go hungry. These working class families have, with enormous courage, kept our economy and society together in hospitals, in meat-packing plants, in

public transportation, in supermarkets, gas stations, and elsewhere.

These workers—again, disproportionately Black and Brown—have risked infection and death so that the rest of us can continue to get the food that we need, get our medicines, or put gasoline in our car. In the wealthiest country in the history of the world, workers should not have to choose between going hungry on one hand or getting ill or dying on the other.

When we talk about starvation wages in this country, I was happy to hear today that Target has raised its minimum wage for its many, many thousands of workers to \$15 an hour. That is something that I and many others here have long advocated for. This follows a decision 2 years ago by Amazon to raise the minimum wage for their workers to \$15 an hour and the effort in seven States across this country to raise their minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Now is the time for Walmart—the largest employer in America, owned by the wealthiest family in America—to also raise their minimum wage to \$15 an hour. I should add that the Walton family, the family that owns Walmart, can more than afford to do this because, since Donald Trump has been President, their wealth has increased by about \$75 billion. Let me repeat. Their wealth has increased by about \$75 billion in the last 3-plus years, and they are now worth some \$200 billion as a family. You know what? I think the Walton family can afford to pay their workers \$15 an hour.

By the way, when we talk about racial justice, please understand that about half of Black workers in this country earn less than \$15 an hour.

Further, the House has done the right thing by passing legislation to raise the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. The time is long overdue for the Senate to do the same.

CORONAVIRUS

Despite what we hear from the Trump administration, the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over. In fact, as you may know, nine States today—nine States—hit record highs for new cases in a single day. What we have seen unfold over the last several months and continue to see unfold is an administration that continues to ignore the recommendations from scientists and physicians.

No one doubts anymore, for example, that masks can play an important role in cutting back on the transmission of the virus. We need to utilize the Defense Production Act and manufacture the hundreds of millions of high-quality masks our people and our medical personnel desperately need. As part of the Defense Authorization Act, I will be offering an amendment to do just that. Other countries around the world are sending masks on a regular basis to all of their people. We can and should do exactly the same thing.

Not only do we need to act boldly and aggressively to address this horrific

pandemic that we are experiencing, not only do we need to act boldly to fix a broken and racist criminal justice system, but we need to respond with a fierce sense of urgency to the worst economic crisis in the modern history of our country.

Over the last 3 months, over 30 million Americans have lost their jobs, and because half of our people live paycheck to paycheck, having virtually nothing in savings, many of those people are now facing economic desperation. Today, all across our country, tens of millions of Americans are in danger of going hungry. In Vermont and in States all over America, we are seeing long lines of people in their cars lining up in order to get food that the Federal Government is now supplying.

But it is not just food. Millions of Americans are frightened to death that they will soon be evicted from their apartments or lose their homes to foreclosure. Imagine that. In the middle of an economic meltdown, in the middle of a pandemic, millions of people are in danger of being thrown out onto the streets.

Further, as part of the economic crisis, we are in danger of losing over half the small businesses in this country within the next 6 months—impossible to contemplate. Half of all small businesses in America are threatened with destruction.

I would say to Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican leadership here in the Senate that the American people cannot afford to wait. They need our help now, not a month from now, not 2 months from now. We need to respond vigorously to the enormous economic pain and suffering and anxiety that the American people, today, are experiencing.

What does that mean specifically? It means, among other things, that the Federal Government must guarantee 100 percent of the paychecks and benefits of American workers up to \$90,000 a year through a Paycheck Security Act, which is legislation that I introduced with Senators WARNER, JONES, and BLUMENTHAL. Countries in Europe that have taken this approach have not experienced the skyrocketing levels of unemployment we have seen here in the United States.

As a result of the economic downturn, we know that over 16 million Americans have already lost their health insurance. Further, there are estimates that that number could go as high as 43 million people losing their health insurance, and that is on top of the 87 million Americans who were already uninsured or underinsured before the pandemic.

Responding with a fierce sense of urgency to the economic crisis means that, in the midst of the horrific pandemic, every man, woman, and child in this country must receive the healthcare they need, regardless of their income. That means that Medicare must be empowered to pay all of the healthcare bills of the uninsured

and underinsured until this crisis is over. If this crisis has taught us anything, it has taught us that we are only as safe as the least insured among us.

Responding with a fierce sense of urgency means providing every working-class person in America with a \$2,000 emergency payment each and every month until this crisis is over, so that they can pay the rent, feed their families, and make ends meet. A one-time \$1,200 check does not cut it. An emergency \$2,000 monthly payment will serve also as a major stimulus in reviving the economy.

Responding with a fierce sense of urgency means making sure that no one in America goes hungry, which means that we have got to substantially expand the Meals on Wheels program, the school meals program, and SNAP benefits.

Responding with a fierce sense of urgency means making sure that the Postal Service receives the emergency funding that it desperately needs. If we could bail out large corporations, if we could provide over \$1 trillion in tax breaks to the wealthy and the powerful, please do not tell me that we cannot save and strengthen the Postal Service, an agency of huge importance to our entire economy.

Acting with a fierce sense of urgency means extending the \$600 a week in expanded unemployment benefits that expires in July. Failure to extend these benefits would slash the incomes of millions of Americans by 50, 60 or even 70 percent. You can't do that in the midst of an economic crisis.

Here we are today. We are in the midst of the worst public health crisis in over 100 years, and the Republican Senate is doing nothing about it. We are in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. People all over this country in every State in America are financially hurting, and the Republican Senate today is doing nothing about that. We continue to see African Americans brutally murdered and tortured by racist police officers, and the Republican Senate leadership proposes a woefully inadequate solution.

Now, I understand that not everyone in America is hurting, not everyone in America needs help from the Senate. While over 32 million Americans have lost jobs during this horrific pandemic, 630 billionaires in America have seen their wealth go up by \$565 billion—amazing, but true. Over the first 3 months of this horrific pandemic, America's top 630 billionaires have seen their wealth go up by \$565 billion—hard to believe.

In other words, at a time of massive income and wealth inequality, which is already today worse than at any time since the 1920s, a horrific situation is becoming much worse. During the last 3 months, while the very, very rich have become much richer, American households have seen their wealth go down by \$6.5 trillion. Billionaires see their wealth increase by over \$600 billion; American households see their

wealth go down by \$6.5 trillion. In the midst of everything else that we are experiencing, we are currently witnessing what is likely the greatest transfer of wealth from the middle class and the poor to the very rich in the modern history of our country.

In the midst of these unprecedented crises, it is time for the Senate to act in an unprecedented way. In every State in this country, our constituents are hurting, and they are calling out for help. Let us hear their cries. Let us hear their pain. Let us act and act now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

CHINA

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here on the floor this evening to talk about China and to talk about how we can have a better relationship with China, one that is fair and equitable.

I am going to talk specifically about some of the investigations and reports that we have worked on here in the U.S. Congress over the past couple of years. I am going to be talking about four specific reports that came out of what is called the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. I chair that subcommittee. It is under the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and it is a committee that takes these investigations seriously. We do a fair, objective, thorough job. All of our investigations are bipartisan. I am going to talk a little about why these investigations that we have done have led me to the conclusion that we need to do much more here in this country to be able to respond to China and to be able to have the kind of fair and equitable relationship that we should all desire.

A lot of China's critics talk about the fact that China needs to do things differently, and I don't disagree with most of that, but the reality is there is much we can do right here in this country to create a situation in which we do not have the issues that I will talk about tonight—some of the unfair activities that have occurred here in this country. Frankly, I think we have been naive and not properly prepared. I will also talk about some legislation that we are proposing tomorrow morning, which will focus on how to make America more effective at pushing back against a specific threat to our research and our intellectual property.

Our goal is not to have China as an enemy. Our goal is to actually have China as a strategic partner, wherein there is a fair and equitable and sustainable relationship, but it is going to require some changes. Again, I am going to focus tonight on some changes we need to make right here, changes that are within our control.

Our investigations have been thorough—in fact, driven—and our reports have been objective, bipartisan, and eye-opening, and I encourage you to go on the PSI website—psi.gov—and check it out.

Our first report was in February of 2019. It detailed a lack of transparency

and reciprocity, among other concerns, with the Confucius Institutes that China operates here in this country. These Confucius Institutes are at our colleges and universities. Some people are aware of that, but some may not be aware that they are also at our elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Our reports show how these Confucius Institutes have been a tool to stifle academic freedom where they are located, toeing the Chinese Communist Party line on sensitive issues like Tibet or Taiwan or the Uighurs or Tiananmen Square.

By the way, when I talk about China tonight, I hope people realize I am not talking about the Chinese people. I am talking about the Chinese Government; therefore, I am talking about the Chinese Communist Party. With regard to the Confucius Institutes, for example, which are spread around this country, ultimately, they report to a branch of the Chinese Government that is involved with spreading positive propaganda about China. Ultimately, it is controlled by whom? The Chinese Communist Party.

So I hope the comments I make tonight will not be viewed as comments that are regarding the Chinese people as much as a small group in China, the Chinese Communist Party, that, with regard to the Confucius Institutes and other approaches it has taken to the United States, have led to these issues.

By the way, it is thanks to our report and to the broader scrutiny that followed that we learned about the lack of academic freedom and about the fact that history is being taught a certain way at the Confucius Institutes. By the way, it also pointed out that the Chinese language is taught. It is a good thing to have this intercultural dialogue and the opportunity to learn more about China, but there needs to be, again, an understanding and a history of China that is fair and honest, which does include discussions of what happened in Tiananmen Square or what is happening today with regard to the Uighurs—a minority group in China that is being oppressed.

In the year that followed our scrutiny—so, really, in the last year and a few months—23 of the, roughly, 100 Confucius Institutes on college campuses in America have closed, and others have made some positive changes as to how they operate. So I believe our report made a significant difference in terms of how we relate to the Confucius Institutes.

I said earlier that one of my concerns about the Confucius Institutes was the lack of reciprocity. When our State Department has attempted to set up something comparable on Chinese university campuses, it has been unable to do so. In fact, whereas the Confucius Institute employees and members of the Chinese Government are able to come on our college campuses, we are told that U.S. Government officials and, for that matter, private citizens cannot go on Chinese campuses with-

out having a minder, somebody to be there to monitor what they are doing. Sometimes they are not permitted to go at all, which goes to the lack of reciprocity.

Yet my goal, really, is to, again, talk about what we can do here. I would urge those tonight who are watching and who are connected with a college or a university that still has a Confucius Institute—or a high school or a middle school or an elementary school—to check it out. Check out our report in which we have many instances when the American students who are learning there are not getting the full story. That may not be true in the case of all Confucius Institutes, but I would recommend that you do the research yourself.

Then, in March of 2019, after the Confucius Institute report, our report into the Equifax data breach here in America showed how China had targeted private U.S. companies and stolen the information of millions of Americans. In the Equifax data breach of 2017, which we studied and which is one of the largest in history, the personal information of 147 million Americans was stolen by IP addresses that originated in China. So we should just be aware of that, and we should take precautions and protections and encryptions and security measures here to avoid it. Again, this is about our doing more here in this country to be prepared for the reality of the 21st century.

Then, in November of last year, we released another eye-opening report, this one detailing the rampant theft of U.S. taxpayer-funded research and intellectual property by China by way of its so-called talent recruitment programs—meaning, China systematically finds promising researchers who are doing work on research that China is interested in, and China recruits them. These programs have not been subtle. The Thousand Talents Plan is the most understood of these programs, although there are a couple hundred others. Yet we showed, in studying the Thousand Talents Plan, how this problem has been ongoing for two decades in this country. Through this program, much of what China has taken from our labs and then taken to China has gone directly toward fueling the rise of the Chinese economy and the Chinese military.

Again, this is about China, but it is really about us. How have we let this happen?

Specifically, we found that the Chinese Government has targeted this promising, U.S.-based research and its researchers. Often, this research is funded by U.S. taxpayers. As taxpayers, we spend \$115 million a year on research to places like the National Institutes of Health or to the National Science Foundation or to the Department of Energy for basic science research. It has been a good investment because, through some of these investments, we have discovered cures to particular kinds of cancer and technologies that have helped our military,

but it is not good if the U.S. taxpayer is paying for this research and then China is taking it.

China has not just taken some of this research funded by U.S. taxpayers but has paid these grant recipients to take their research over to the Chinese universities in China—again, universities that are affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party. This is not about the people of China. This is about the Chinese Communist Party, and it has been very clever. It wants to make sure that China is a stronger competitor against us, so it literally takes the research from the United States to a lab in China where it tries to replicate the research and provide the money to these researchers.

Just last week, we released a fourth PSI report that showed that this problem of China's not playing by the rules extends to the telecommunications space as well. Let me explain that situation. Then I will go back to the Thousand Talents Program.

You may remember that, in May of last year, the FCC prohibited a company called China Mobile and its U.S. subsidiary from providing telecom services from the United States on the grounds that doing so would jeopardize our national security—the first time such a ruling had been issued. The fact that this was only the first time that a foreign telecommunications company had been denied approval to operate in the U.S. on national security grounds prompted us to investigate other Chinese state-owned carriers that were already authorized to operate in the United States. We asked an important question: Why was China Mobile USA any different than these other three Chinese companies?

We discovered in our report, which again we issued just a month ago, that it wasn't different. We conducted a yearlong investigation into the government processes for reviewing, approving, and monitoring Chinese state-owned telecommunications firms operating here in the United States, and we found, once again, over the years, the Federal Government had been lax when it comes to securing our telecommunications networks against risks posed by Chinese state-owned carriers. Again, it is what we can do here in this country that we haven't done.

In fact, three Chinese state-owned carriers have been operating in the U.S. for nearly 20 years, but it has only been in recent years that the FCC, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Homeland Security have focused on the potential risks these firms bring when they operate in the United States. What we didn't know 20 years ago, we do know today, and we should use that information to protect ourselves.

We now know that the Chinese Government views telecommunications as a strategic industry and has expended significant resources to create and promote new business opportunities for its state-owned carriers. We also learned

in our investigation and said in our report that Chinese state-owned telecommunications carriers are “subject to exploitation, influence, and control by the Chinese government” and can be used in the Chinese government's cyber and economic espionage efforts aimed at the United States.

This isn't a surprise. We have seen this time and time again that the Chinese Government targets the United States through cyber and economic espionage activities and enlists its state-owned entities in these efforts. The Chinese telecommunications firms have been part of our U.S. telecommunications industry as a result, and, of course, that is critical to our everyday life. Its services from cellular networks to broadband internet connections help break down barriers between people, nations, and continents. That is good. It has helped our economy and the economies of many other countries grow immensely. We all benefit when telecommunications are global.

It makes sense then that the Federal Government has tasked the FCC with ensuring that foreign telecommunications can establish a foothold in the United States, but only if it is done in a fair and safe manner. Again, what we have learned is that the FCC and other Federal agencies have been slow to respond to the national security threats these telecom companies can pose in terms of cyber security and economic espionage.

As we detail in our report, the FCC, which lacks the national security and law enforcement expertise required to assess these risks, has turned to other executive branch agencies to assess them, specifically the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense, a group commonly known as the Team Telecom.

Team Telecom was an informal arrangement and has lacked formal authority to operate, making it overall an ineffective solution to assessing these risks. The informality has resulted in protracted review periods and a process FCC Commissioners have described as broken and an inextricable black hole that provided “no clarity for the future.”

For example, Team Telecom's review of China Mobile USA's application lasted for 7 years. This points to a troubling trend we have found in all of these reports—how, frankly, our government and our institutions over a space of time, the last couple of decades, have permitted China to take advantage of lax U.S. oversight, be it on our college campuses, our research labs, or in cyberspace.

At our PSI hearing on the Thousand Talents report, the FBI witness before us acknowledged as much saying:

With our present day knowledge of the threat from Chinese talent plans, we wish we had taken more rapid and comprehensive action in the past. And the time to make up for that is now.

That is our own Federal Bureau of Investigation. Again: “We wish we had taken more rapid and comprehensive action in the past.” They don't say that often, but it is true, and I commend them for saying it at the hearing and for starting to make up for it now because they have made a number of arrests just in the past few months with regard to the Talents program.

It is my hope that PSI's work has opened the eyes of our government to these systemic problems, and I think that is the case, as what we have seen in the Trump administration is they have taken a firmer stance towards the Chinese Government in every one of the four areas I talked about.

As PSI was nearing the end of its telecom investigation, for example, the responsible Federal agencies announced that they would review whether these Chinese state-owned carriers that we were studying should continue to operate in the U.S., given the national security threats. The Trump administration also recently issued an Executive order to establish Team Telecom as a formal committee, which is a good idea, as well as addressing many of the issues the subcommittee report identified in Team Telecom's processes.

Again, these are good steps, and I am pleased to say that they were prompted by the thorough and, again, objective, nonpartisan inquiry that we made through PSI. These four investigations combined show us that China, frankly—and, again, the Chinese Government and the Chinese Communist Party, not the people of China—is not going to play by the rules unless we require it. Until we start to clean up our own house and take a firmer stance on foreign influence here in this country, we are not going to see much improvement. Rather than pointing the finger at China, we ought to be looking at our own government and our own institutions and doing a better job here.

Along those lines, I found it interesting that, just last week, 54 NIH-funded researchers nationwide have resigned or have been fired because they had been found to be hiding their ties to foreign research institutions as part of an NIH investigation into this problem. Again, after our PSI investigation talking about how the Thousand Talents program and other programs work, there are now 54 people just last week who have been fired or have resigned.

Of the cases NIH has studied, 70 percent of the researchers failed to disclose foreign grant funding, while more than half failed to disclose participation in a foreign talent program like Thousand Talents. By the way, the FBI just recently warned universities across the country that China may be attempting to steal our research on the coronavirus—therapies, antiviral therapies, vaccines, other research. This problem is ongoing.

I think, in a fair and straightforward manner, we have got to insist that

there be a level playing field. We have got to insist that there be fairness and accountability, again, in an objective manner and a straightforward manner.

At the same time, our law enforcement officials and other Federal entities that are working to hold China accountable are limited in the actions they can take. That is part of cleaning up our own house. We need to make some changes around here, including in our laws, which has to come through this body.

In the case of the Thousand Talents plan, we have seen first-ever arrests related to Thousand Talents recently. They followed our investigation, our report, and our hearings. We even saw it in my home State of Ohio. All of the arrests in connection with the Thousand Talents plan, by the way, had been related to peripheral financial crimes, like wire fraud and tax evasion—not the core issue of a conflict of commitment, the taking of American taxpayer-paid research.

Why? Because amazingly, it is not currently a crime to fail to disclose foreign funding of the same research on Federal grant applications. In other words, if you are doing research and paid by the taxpayer of the United States in your research and also being paid by China to do the same research and to have the research go to China, you don't have to disclose that under law.

These arrests that have been made haven't been about that core issue. They have been about other things like tax evasion or wire fraud, kind of like they went after the gangsters in the old days on tax evasion because they couldn't get them on a RICO statute.

We need to change the laws so that we can give our law enforcement community the tools they need to be able to do the job that all of us expect is being done. It is incumbent upon Congress to work in a bipartisan manner to pass those laws and to put a stop to this behavior.

This shouldn't be a partisan issue, and it isn't. It is about defending the interests of the United States, and that is something we should all agree on. The good news is we are starting to do just that. Tomorrow, we plan to introduce bipartisan legislation called the Safeguarding American Innovation Act based on recommendations from our Thousand Talents report from late last year to protect U.S. taxpayer-funded research.

First and foremost, our bill is going to help the Department of Justice go after Thousand Talents participants by holding them accountable for failing to disclose their foreign ties on Federal grant applications. Again, it is a tool that they desperately need. Our bill goes directly to the root of the problem. It makes it punishable by law to knowingly fail to disclose foreign funding on Federal grant applications.

This isn't about more arrests. We should all agree that transparency and honesty on grant applications are crit-

ical to the integrity of U.S. research and the U.S. research enterprise. These provisions will help promote those principles as well.

Our bill also makes other important changes from our report. It requires the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, to streamline and coordinate grant making between the Federal agencies so there is more continuity and accountability in coordination when it comes to tracking the billions of dollars of taxpayer-funded grant money that is being distributed. This kind of transparency is long overdue.

We have worked closely with the National Science Foundation, with the National Institutes of Health, with the Department of Energy, and others on this legislation, and they agree this is very important. Our legislation also allows the State Department to deny visas to foreign researchers who they know are seeking to steal research and intellectual property by exploiting exemptions in our current export control laws.

This may surprise you, but the State Department can't do that now. Career Foreign Service Officers and employees at the State Department have asked us to please provide them this authority. They testified before our hearing, asking us to help them to be able to do what they know needs to be done.

Our bill also requires research institutions and universities to provide the State Department basic information about sensitive technologies that a foreign researcher would have access to. Providing this information as part of the visa process should help streamline the process for the State Department and for the research institutions.

This allows for college campuses to rely on the State Department to do some of the vetting for these applicants and to help keep bad actors off the campus. This is why many research institutions and universities will be endorsing our legislation tomorrow because we have worked with them on this issue and others, including new transparency standards for universities.

They are now going to be required to report any foreign gift of \$50,000 or more, which is a lower level from the current threshold of \$250,000, but it is also going to empower the Department of Education to work with these universities and research institutions to ensure that this can be complied with in a way that doesn't create undue red-tape and expenditures. It also allows DOE to fine universities that repeatedly fail to disclose these gifts.

I believe this legislation can be a model going forward as to how we use the lessons we have learned from these, again, objective and straightforward PSI reports to get to the root causes of these cases. We have gotten widespread support across my home State of Ohio, from research leaders, hospitals, colleges and universities, and other stakeholders who want to see us continue to have an open and transparent research

system and have the United States be the center in the globe for innovation and research, but to ensure that can continue to happen, they want to be sure we are holding China accountable.

We are now at work on this legislation to codify into law some of the steps taken by the Trump administration in response to our new telecommunications PSI report as well. This legislation we will introduce tomorrow will be led by myself and Senator TOM CARPER, my colleague from the other side of the aisle from Delaware, who was also my partner on this report with regard to the Thousand Talents program and the hearing.

We also have five other Democrats who will be joining us tomorrow, all of whom have an interest and understanding of this complicated issue. We will also have about an equal number of Republicans joining us, probably six to eight Republicans. So, again, this is going to be a bipartisan effort—I would say even a nonpartisan effort—to ensure that, in a smart, sensible, practical way, we can respond to the threat that we are facing, in this case, from China taking our intellectual property, our innovations, our ideas, and taking them to China and using them in China, sometimes against the United States.

In addition to the four examples we discussed tonight, the subcommittee will continue its work to shine a light on other examples where China and other countries aren't living by the rules, so we can ensure that, with regard to China and in regard to other foreign governments, we can create a more durable and a more equitable and a more sustainable relationship between our countries.

Again, we don't want to be enemies with China, but what we do want is to have a relationship with mutual respect. When we have the right to ask them that they treat us with the same respect that we treat them, at the end of the day, that is what is going to be best for the Chinese people, best for the American people, and best for all of us moving forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

THE DECLINE OF U.S. LEADERSHIP

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to call the Senate's attention to a letter published by my friend Sir Peter