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## Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Sovereign God, You are wisdom without end and mercy without limit. We worship You.

Lord, have compassion on our Nation. Heal our physical, mental, and spiritual wounds. We are worn out from this challenging season. Restore us to the vision of a liberating freedom that enables justice to flourish. Hear the prayers of our Senators, and give them Your peace. And, Lord, thank You for the degree of resolution that has occurred in our Nation's election process. Remind us all of the wisdom of Mark 3:25 that says, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute in morning business.

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

### PFIZER VACCINE TRIAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this morning, Pfizer announced positive results from its eagerly awaited coronavirus vaccine trial, with early data suggesting the vaccine is 90 percent effective.

This trial is taking place at over 120 sites, including at the University of Iowa's medical school. The University of Iowa's portion is being led by Dr. Patricia Winokur, an infectious disease expert and associate dean. The trial involves about 250 Iowans who have volunteered to participate. The trial is not yet complete, but this is exciting news and an important step to halting the virus.

I am proud of Iowa's role in making sure the vaccine will be safe and effective.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

### NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, November is National Adoption Month.

Each November, families across the country finalize adoptions and celebrate the creation of new families and connections. On National Adoption Day, which is celebrated on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, a special effort is made to finalize as many pending adoptions as possible. Last year, over 4,000 adoptions were finalized on that day. While I am sure that this day will look a little different this year due to the coronavirus, I am confident that family courts and child welfare agencies will still make it a special day for many, many families—happy families—because they will be able to bring new ones into their families.

The pandemic has created significant challenges for the children and families in our child welfare system. With travel restrictions and limits on visitors in hospitals, adoptive parents are meeting

their children for the first time ever over video chat instead of in person. Kids in foster care are having to wait longer for placements, and foster parents are facing the added stress of school closures. Court proceedings are taking place over Zoom. Despite the challenges, both new challenges and old challenges that can accompany adoption, parents in Iowa and across the country are still making the choice to open their hearts and homes to children in need.

Congress has worked in the past to reduce barriers that would-be adoptive parents face. I will continue my efforts of making sure adoption remains an option for children in foster care who can't be reunited with their families, women who are facing unexpected pregnancies, and all parents who are willing and able to provide safe and loving homes for kids in need. There were over 100,000 children in the foster care system who were waiting for adoption in 2019. That 100,000 was approximately one-fourth of the number of kids in foster care. Congress must work in a bipartisan way, as it has for many years, to make sure adoption can become a reality, not just a dream, for all of these kids. We must also make sure that child welfare agencies have the tools and flexibilities they need to serve the families in their communities.

For years in the Senate, I have worked to elevate the voices of youth in the foster care system. These young people are their own best advocates, and they can tell you that the thing they want the most is a caring and loving family and a permanent home. What would you expect from any of these young people who are moved from home to home maybe two or three times in a given year?

As I continue to work in Congress toward the goal of helping all children find their forever families, I will always keep the best interests of children at the forefront.

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



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

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

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The legislative clerk read the nomination of James Ray Knepp II, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I see the majority leader on the floor, and while I have the floor, of course, as a matter of courtesy, I will yield to him if he has some comments he wants to make and ask that I then be recognized.

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, before I do yield, I understand Senator SCHUMER is coming. So I will yield the floor to accommodate our two leaders, but then I would ask I be recognized.

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

#### ELECTIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week record numbers of Americans exercised the right which generations risked everything to hand on to us. I want to spend a few minutes this morning talking about what we saw last week, where we are now, and where our great country will go from here.

There is one aspect of last week that has gotten lost that I want to single out right at the start. By every indication, the 2020 election appears to be have been free from meaningful foreign interference. There is no suggestion that our foreign adversaries were allowed to undermine the integrity of our process.

According to the Director of the Cyber Security and Infrastructure Se-

curity Administration, “we have no”—no—“evidence any foreign adversary was capable of preventing Americans from voting or changing vote tallies.”

GEN Paul Nakasone, the head of the NSA and U.S. Cyber Command reported Tuesday night, “The actions we have taken against adversaries . . . have ensured they’re not going to interfere in our elections.”

The Trump administration and the Senate spent 4 years supporting the State and local election authorities on the frontlines: new tools and information-sharing partnerships; unprecedented coordination; hundreds of millions in new funding; new, painful consequences for bad actors, like Russia, if they interfere.

The absence of any reports of foreign interference is a ringing endorsement—a ringing endorsement—of our bipartisan work, and it slams the door on the embarrassing, irresponsible rhetoric that some Washington Democrats spent 4 years broadcasting.

Too many voices tried to talk down our progress, urged Americans actually not to have confidence, and smeared anyone as unpatriotic who opposed far-left proposals to rewrite election laws.

Well, the people who pushed this hysteria could not have more egg on their face than they do right now. None of their demands became law—none of them. The Speaker of the House did not get to personally rewrite election law. And yet, because of the sensible, bipartisan steps that some of us championed, our defenses and counter-measures proved to be in radically better shape than back in 2016.

So let’s talk about where we are now. According to preliminary results, voters across the Nation elected and re-elected Republican Senators to a degree that actually stunned prognosticators. Likewise, the American people seemed to have reacted to House Democrats’ radicalism and obstruction by shrinking the Speaker’s majority and electing more Republicans.

And then there is the Presidential race. Obviously, no States have yet certified their election results. We have at least one or two States that are already on track for a recount, and I believe the President may have legal challenges underway in at least five States.

The core principle here is not complicated. In the United States of America, all legal ballots must be counted, any illegal ballots must not be counted, the process should be transparent or observable by all sides, and the courts are here to work through concerns.

Our institutions are actually built for this. We have the system in place to consider concerns, and President Trump is 100 percent within his rights to look into allegations of irregularities and weigh his legal options.

Let’s go back 20 years ago. Twenty years ago, when Florida came down to a very thin margin, we saw Vice President Gore exhaust the legal system and wait to concede until December.

More recently, weeks after the media had “called” President Bush’s reelection in 2004, Democrats baselessly disputed Ohio’s electors and delayed the process here in Congress.

In 2016 election laws saw recounts or legal challenges in several States.

If any major irregularities occurred this time of a magnitude that would affect the outcome, then every single American should want them to be brought to light. And if the Democrats feel confident they have not occurred, they should have no reason to fear any extra scrutiny.

We have the tools and institutions we need to address any concerns. The President has every right to look into allegations and to request recounts under the law, and, notably, the Constitution gives no role in this process to wealthy media corporations.

The projections and commentary of the press do not get veto power over the legal rights of any citizen, including the President of the United States.

Now, more broadly, let’s not have any lectures—no lectures—about how the President should immediately, cheerfully accept preliminary election results, from the same characters who just spent 4 years refusing to accept the validity of the last election, and who insinuated that this one would be illegitimate too, if they lost again—only if they lost. So let’s have no lectures on this subject from that contingent.

In late August, Secretary Hillary Clinton said: “Joe Biden should not concede under any circumstances . . . I think this is going to drag out, and . . . he will win it if we don’t give an inch.”

That same month, Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader both stated: “[President Trump] needs to cheat to win.”

In October, when Speaker PELOSI was shopping some conspiracy theory about the Postal Service, she recklessly said—listen to this: “I have no doubt that the president . . . will lie, cheat, and steal, to win this election.”

Now, does this sound like the chorus that has any credibility whatsoever to say a few legal challenges from President Trump represent some kind of crisis?

At this time last week, small business owners in cities across America were boarding up their windows in case President Trump appeared to win and far-left mobs decided to reprise their summer rioting.

Suffice it to say, a few legal inquiries from the President do not exactly spell the end of the Republic.

Here is how two professors from Fordham Law School and New York Law School put it: “For centuries, we have asked people who are unhappy with their fellow citizens or government agencies and institutions to bring their claims to court.” President Trump’s is “a traditional response that affirms rather than undermines American institutions.”

This process will reach its resolution. Our system will resolve any recounts

or litigation. In January, the winner of this election will place his hand on a Bible, just like it has happened every 4 years since 1793.

What we know for sure is that the outcome is guaranteed to delight tens of millions of Americans and disappoint tens of millions of Americans. But we also know that we will wake up on January 21, still blessed to live in the greatest Nation the world has ever seen. And in no small part, that is because we respect the rule of law, we trust our institutions, and neither of those things is outweighed by pronouncements from partisans or the press.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Now, on an entirely different matter, Mr. President. The last several days have brought huge good news in our fight to beat this terrible virus.

This morning, one drug manufacturer announced that ongoing trials suggest their candidate for a COVID-19 vaccine may be more than 90 percent effective—90 percent effective.

This is a huge testament to the ingenuity of the American private sector and their global partners and to the historic efforts of Congress and the Trump administration. We flattened regulatory roadblocks, we sped up trials, and laid ground work to buy and distribute a vaccine as fast as possible.

Last week, we learned the unemployment rate has fallen to 6.9 percent—6.9 percent—with more than 630,000 new jobs added just in the month of October. Now, remember back in the springtime, many experts estimated we would still be saddled with double-digit joblessness through the end of this year. It turns out the news is a whole lot better, another testament to the strong economic foundations that Congress and the Trump administration spent 3 years laying before the pandemic struck and most of all to the resilience—the incredible resilience of the American people.

So, to be clear, our work is not finished. Too many Americans are still suffering economically, and infections are climbing across the country. We cannot give up on commonsense measures like wearing masks just because we have grown tired of them.

The Senate is going to have a busy few weeks. I hope our Democratic colleagues will finally put aside their all-or-nothing obstruction and let the targeted pandemic relief—targeted pandemic relief is what we need—let it move forward.

In any event, we will need to fund the government, reach agreement with the House on the National Defense Authorization Act, and confirm more thoroughly qualified nominees.

So I welcome all my colleagues back to the Chamber, and I look forward to finishing this year strong. Our States and our country are counting on us.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### 2020 ELECTIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last Tuesday, our country conducted the most sacred process in our democratic system of government, a national election.

It was an election unlike any other in modern history. Much of the voting was done before election day itself, as the global pandemic forced States to adjust their balloting and voting procedures. The counting of the vote took a little longer than most Americans might have expected or hoped. Indeed, some of the final tabulations are not yet complete. It is still to be determined which party will hold the majority in this Chamber.

But we do know a few things. First and most importantly, former Vice President Joseph Robinette Biden will become the 46th President of the United States. Our dear colleague, the distinguished Senator from California, KAMALA HARRIS, will be the next Vice President of the United States. And on January 20, the country will finally—finally—turn the page on one of the most divisive and chaotic chapters in our history.

President-Elect Joe Biden has told the country that it is time to come together and heal, to unify once again to fight not our political opponents but our common enemies: disease and poverty and injustice. There is no person better suited to the task than the former Vice President. He will be a great President for all Americans.

Vice President-Elect HARRIS, meanwhile, has just made history four times over. She will be the first African-American woman, the first Asian-American woman, the first biracial woman, and the first woman, period, to ever serve as Vice President of the United States.

I congratulate the former Vice President, his wife Jill, our colleague Senator HARRIS, and her husband Doug on their hard-fought victory.

More Americans voted for President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect HARRIS than any ticket in our Nation's history. They have given them an enormous burden and a decisive mandate to take the reins of the executive branch and marshal this government into action—for they will assume the high offices of the Presidency and the Vice Presidency at a time of unprecedented challenge.

Our great Nation faces the greatest economic crisis in 75 years and the greatest public health crisis in a century. Extraordinary inequalities of wealth and income strike at the heart of the idea of America as a land of equal opportunity. Racial disparities in our society strike at the heart of the

idea of America as a place of equal justice. Climate change threatens the very future of our planet.

The American people have placed their faith in President-Elect Biden to confront those challenges head-on: to relieve their suffering, to repair our democracy, to recover our economy, and rebuild the country and a planet for this generation and for the next. I have no doubt their faith will be rewarded, but I also have no doubt that the task ahead is daunting.

#### CORONAVIRUS

While the country prepares for a change in administration, it must also brace for the darkest days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the weekend, the United States recorded its 10 millionth case. We are now confirming nearly 100,000 new cases of COVID per day, on track to eclipse more than a million cases per week.

As exhausted and impatient as we all are for our lives and livelihoods to return to normal, experts are warning us that the worst phase is still ahead. The quickest way to turn the tide, crush the virus, and get back to normal is to do what we should have been doing all along: take the virus seriously, listen to the scientists, and dedicate the necessary resources to get the job done.

President-Elect Biden is already preparing to do just that. Today, he named several health experts and scientific advisers to serve on a COVID-19 task force. It sends the right signal that while the President-elect will not assume office for another few months, his administration will hit the ground running, and its policy on COVID-19 will refreshingly be dictated by facts and by science.

It is a major turning point that soon we will have an administration that actually acknowledges that this is a healthcare crisis; that knows our economy won't fully recover until we solve it. I am confident that a Biden administration will do that, but Congress must play its part too.

Nearly 15 million Americans have lost health insurance through their employer. Democrats have a solution to that problem. Let's get it done and make sure those families have health coverage.

Medicaid Programs across the country are experiencing a huge influx of new enrollees, while State budgets struggle to bear the added costs. The Heroes Act ensures that Medicaid is strengthened and secured for the duration of this pandemic. Let's get that done too.

And today, we received news that the entire world has been waiting for. A U.S. company has developed a vaccine for COVID-19 that, according to the preliminary research and the news reports, is 90 percent effective. The FDA said it would approve a vaccine that was 50 percent effective. So while the FDA needs to review the vaccine, to have a vaccine that is 90 percent effective is about as good as it gets.

We Democrats will do everything we can to make sure this vaccine or any

vaccine is distributed quickly, fairly, equitably, and the challenge is now one of scale and one of delivery. Congress should fund a national vaccination program, and the administration, whether it is the Trump administration or the Biden administration, must do everything to reach minority and underserved communities, combat vaccine hesitancy, and ensure that the vaccines are free to everyone. This will be a massive and complex undertaking unlike anything that our country has seen, and we must all work together—from the President to Congress, down to local community health departments—to ensure that it gets done right and it gets done fairly and it gets done equitably.

So while the incoming administration prepares to take on the surge of COVID-19, Congress should pass a strong, comprehensive COVID relief bill that actually meets the needs of the American people.

When it comes to health care, education, testing, tracing, unemployment benefits, and many other critical issues, this Republican majority has proposed totally inadequate solutions. As the disease surges across our country once again, there is no time for inadequate solutions.

I hope, now that the election is behind us, our colleagues are ready to come together in a search for an adequate bipartisan solution rather than the partisan, stunt-voting legislating we have suffered these past few months.

#### 2020 ELECTIONS

Now I must spend a moment on something that will garner too much attention over the next few weeks: baseless claims by the President and his supporters that there has been widespread voter fraud and that the election was somehow rigged or stolen from President Trump.

That kind of rhetoric is extremely dangerous and extremely poisonous to our democracy. As in any campaign, the President has a right to bring legal challenges or request recounts where State law allows. However, there is no legal right to file frivolous claims. Lawsuits must have a basis in facts and evidence. And make no mistake, there has been no evidence of any significant or widespread voter fraud.

Joe Biden won this election fair and square. The margins of his victory are growing by the day, and former President George W. Bush, commendably, acknowledged that fact when he congratulated President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect HARRIS on their victory.

Now Republican leaders in Congress should also do the right thing. Republican leaders must unequivocally condemn the President's rhetoric and work to ensure the peaceful transfer of power on January 20. I have been heartened to see a few of my Republican colleagues—it is three, I believe—congratulate the winning ticket, but too many, including the Republican leader,

have been silent or sympathetic to the President's fantasies.

Even some nonpartisan members of the current administration have refused to move forward with the formal process for the incoming administration. According to the Washington Post, the Administrator of the General Services Administration has declined to sign a letter allowing President-elect Joe Biden's transition team to formally begin its work.

It does not matter whether the President is happy about the results of the election. The peaceful transfer of power is a hallmark—the bedrock—of our democracy, and it must proceed unimpeded. The GSA Administrator should sign the paperwork immediately in order to allow the important work of the Presidential transition to proceed.

America remains in the middle of a worsening health and economic crisis, and there is no excuse—none—for the outgoing administration to impede the new administration's preparations to deal with these urgent challenges. There is no law or requirement that President Trump concede the election or leave the Office of the Presidency with grace, but as history prepares to write the final few sentences on the Trump Presidency, it will surely note how this President and his Republican allies here in Congress treated our democracy on his way out the door.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I believe under our original agreement, I am recognized next. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate what the Democratic leader has said. I was willing to step aside earlier when I had the floor because I understood the two leaders were coming to speak. It was a matter of courtesy to them, and I know the Democratic leader, at least, appreciated that.

Let me agree with what he said. You know, when I came here, the President of the United States was an unelected President, and there was an unelected Vice President. It was Jerry Ford. And then, under the change in our law since President Kennedy's death, he was able to pick an unelected Vice President. I remember Democrats and Republicans alike welcoming him and saying: Let's go forward.

I have been here with each President—some reelected, some not—and, in every instance, I see the outgoing President welcoming the incoming President, Republican or Democrat, and they have done it to try to make as smooth a transition not for their own political purposes but for the good of the United States of America. Everyone has done that.

I think it was George H.W. Bush welcoming Bill Clinton, who defeated him. I remember Al Gore had more votes than George W. Bush, but after the Court had ruled, he graciously con-

ceded to George W. Bush. I remember Hillary Clinton, with well over 2 million more votes than Donald Trump, but saying that here is what the electoral college is and conceded.

Now we see Joseph Biden, with more votes than anybody has ever gotten in the history of the United States for President, and the incumbent President goes off golfing again and again and pretends he doesn't have to step back, and, in fact, actually does everything possible to make it difficult for the new President to handle the transition.

That is wrong. Just as I have encouraged both Democrats and Republicans as President, you help the incoming President with transition, not for your political reasons or their political reasons but for the good of all of us as Americans. They are saying: Oh, no, we are going to hold the key to the door of the transition office.

Every Republican and every Democrat voted for the money for that transition office so that whoever is President could step forward and not hurt the country by coming in without doing the necessary preparation. They are like a little child in a playground: No, we got the key; we got the key. We are not going to share the key.

Oh, come on. Do you know how this makes us look to the rest of the world? Do you know how it makes us look in my State of Vermont, where some Republicans voted for Donald Trump and some voted for Joe Biden? The majority voted, in this case, for Joe Biden. But I have been hearing from Vermonters all over from both parties: What is going on? It is over. It is done for the country.

In that regard, let me just speak briefly about the President-elect and the Vice President-elect. When I came to this body, I was the most junior Member of the U.S. Senate and the second youngest. The youngest was a Senator from Delaware who had been elected just 2 years before, Joe Biden. I think of the fact that we were the two youngest, and we bonded over that, and I got to know his family.

I knew of the tragedy he had when his first wife and daughter were killed. He would go home every day to make sure that he could put his sons to bed and be there with them. I don't know how many times we would be standing down there in the well, and he was looking at his watch, and he said: What time do you think the last votes are going to be, because the next train to Delaware is at such and such time? He was like a marathon runner going out the door to make sure he got the train, which he did, to be home to take care of his children.

I remember how happy Marcelle and I were when we met Jill—what a wonderful woman. Dr. Biden was everything you would want in a First Lady in this country. We had the privilege of traveling with both of them and seeing the love and the joy they had in each other's company, the love and the joy

they have shown in their children and grandchildren, and continue to. I watched Joe Biden, with a sense of dignity, as he ran for election to the Presidency, an office he had hoped to hold and probably thought he never would.

I know that he wanted to run 4 years ago, but it was too close to the time of losing his son Beau. I had the privilege of knowing Beau. In fact, the last time I talked to him was on one of the battlefields in Iraq where he was serving in combat for our U.S. military. I told him at that time: You know, when I get back on the plane, I am going to call your father. I always do this when I meet a Vermonter in a war zone. I call their family and say they are doing well. I will call your dad and tell him.

When I got on the plane and connected with the White House operator, I remember then-Vice President Biden coming on. After a ways, he said: I know what you are going to say. I got an email from Beau.

I remember when Marcelle and I stood there and tears went down her face listening to President Obama eulogizing Beau at his funeral. We all felt as part of that family. So there was joy in the Leahy household when he was elected—not just a joy for the good of the country but the joy of seeing a person whom we know, love, and respect elected as President.

And added to that is the added advantage of KAMALA HARRIS, one of our Senate colleagues here. I remember when Senator HARRIS came to the Senate, and I was so happy to see her going on the Judiciary Committee because she had been such a good prosecutor and such a good attorney general. She was a woman who didn't need to have much of an orientation. She knew exactly what she was doing.

We have gotten to know her and her husband and admire her so. Then, when she spoke—as they accepted the fact that they were President and Vice President-elect—she said how proud she was to be there with President-Elect Biden and how proud she was to speak about her background and her immigrant parents coming here, the different races shown in her background, and what she was saying, as she said, to “women everywhere.” But I would say also what she shows to young women, those not old enough to vote, like my granddaughters, and they can look at that and say: That shows everything is open.

You know, I come from a State where it is unusual to be elected the first time because, well, I am the only Democrat ever elected to the U.S. Senate in Vermont's history, and the youngest also. I wasn't supposed to win. We were overwhelmingly a Republican State then. We have become now one of both parties. In the last election, for example, there was a Republican Governor. This year, in the last few days, our Republican Governor won overwhelmingly, and Molly Gray, a young woman that started out as an intern in my of-

fice and went to the University of Vermont, won comfortably and by a comfortable margin as a Democrat. But also, our Republican Governor said on election day that for the good of the country, to stop the dissension, to lower the kind of rhetoric we were hearing, he was going to vote for Joseph Biden.

Now, I mention that just as a microcosm in our State. But to go back to just a purely personal thing, Marcelle and I prayed for that day. We were so happy to see our friends. We were so happy to know they were there. And, as one who has known Joe Biden from the day I came into the Senate, I still remember, to this day, his coming over to greet me on the floor and saying: I am glad to see us young people here. I was about a year or so older than he, and we were sitting kind of in the junior role, and that friendship has lasted ever since.

I know Joe Biden. I know Jill Biden. I know the United States of America, and at a time when we are so torn apart, these are two people who can bring us back together.

I know KAMALA HARRIS. We know her wonderful husband. And here, my goodness, what a broad spectrum right there. In one way, it is unique. In another way, it is not the least bit unique. It is the face of America. It is the face of America. The diversity in our country of race, religion, everything—it is reflected in this ticket. It couldn't be better for the beginning of this century to have such a wide spectrum shown in the President and Vice President of the United States.

I think of what the mayor of Paris said. She issued a statement sort of to the effect of “Welcome back, America.” Well, this is an America that represents all of us. We should all get together to try to make it successful. If Senators disagree on a particular issue, vote up or down, but have the courage to vote. Have the courage to vote. Don't do what we have done this past year, refusing to vote on COVID as thousands upon thousands upon thousands of people die in our country. Have the courage to get up and vote. Vote yes or no.

We are here with 6-year terms. We ought to at least have the courage to vote yes or no. And then let's take a pause and say that these are the two who will be the face of America from noon, January 20.

From a personal point of view, that face reflects very much our family—our children and our grandchildren. I can see them in these four people, and I am proud of that.

I will admit that I have gotten a few emails from my Irish friends to say how much they are looking forward to a President Biden coming to Ireland, and they have forgiven me my Italian half with that. But I know that when I heard Joe Biden quoting Seamus Heaney during his campaign, I remember that he knows those Irish roots. But he, like his family, are first and

foremost Americans. Like his late, wonderful son Beau, they are first and foremost Americans.

KAMALA HARRIS speaks of her family, her ancestors coming here, her mother and father coming here, coming not to be anything other than Americans. They are as American as she is. She is as American as any of us.

I will close with this. Isn't it time the United States of America—a country that has become as diverse as you can imagine—can show their face to the rest of the world and say: This is who we are. And my grandchildren—my White grandchildren and my Black grandchildren—can look and say: Yes, that is who we are.

Joe and KAMALA, in a few days I will call you Mr. President and Madam Vice President, and I will do it with great pride. But I say today to my dear friends Joe and KAMALA: Congratulations. This Vermonter is very, very happy.

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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ISSUES FACING AMERICA

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, we may be back to work carrying out what should be the normal business of the Senate, but from what I have observed, the American people really don't see this as just another day. They are a little bit anxious, and I really think that it is because, over the past week, they have witnessed some of the most divisive news cycles in recent memory.

Allegations of voter fraud are running rampant. These have been unanswered and ignored by most media outlets. Liberal operatives have sent up test balloons on the creation of official enemies lists. Think about that. We have them making enemies lists, wanting to execute a campaign of personal destruction against people with whom they disagree. What does that say about treasuring free speech?

The most popular social media platforms—oh—have honestly just outdone themselves by making matters worse by slapping these scary labels on content that is meant to inform and to spark bipartisan debate.

Then you have email services that are locking down access to email lists because the distribution is something with which they disagree. This is what has happened to millions of Americans. They gasp every time they see these markers on content, when they can't get to an email list, when they hear about a group they belong to that they can't hear from or communicate with.

Yes, it is censorship, and it is something that has divided people, families,

neighbors, friends, coworkers, and colleagues.

I will tell you, many of them remain divided, but I think we have to say they have been engaged. According to the Pew Research Center, Americans participated in this election cycle at the highest rate in 120 years. Election officials still haven't finished their counts, and already we know that more than 144 million ballots were cast this cycle.

I would venture to say that many of those millions of individuals are watching us. They want to see what we are going to do next, how we are going to conduct ourselves. They don't really care if it takes a little multitasking; they are saying it is time for Congress to do its job.

You can look at all of the exit polling on the favorability ratings of Congress. I will say it is discouragingly low—the regard in which the American people hold their elected representatives collective body. It is time for us to get some things done.

Judging by the footage of demonstrations in many of America's major cities, you might not remember that we are still dealing with the effects of a global pandemic. It seems that for a few days, people forgot there is a pandemic.

Democrats in the House and the Senate have wasted months of precious time obstructing the passage of targeted COVID relief legislation that Tennesseans and New Yorkers and Californians and every other American who owns a business or supports a family needs not tomorrow or today; they needed it yesterday, last week, last month.

I have spent the past several months coming to this floor to tell the stories of Tennesseans, Tennessee small business people, Tennessee employers who are desperately in need of relief, trying to help my colleagues on the other side of the aisle understand that there is fear and pain in certain sectors of our economy. It is really so inappropriate that those fears and that pain are something they have chosen to ignore. To be frank, it has been like talking to a brick wall. There has been no response.

Just last week, I met with the board of the Academy of Country Music for a very hard discussion about the future of their industry. Not one single venue or one studio musician or one sound engineer—their whole industry shut down. This is an industry that has shut down. They did nothing wrong, mind you. They showed up for work. They built businesses. They hired people. They used independent contractors. They paid their bills. They paid their taxes. They did nothing wrong. But the entertainment industry—live entertainment—is shut down.

This isn't the huge record labels and big entertainment companies that many people think are the music industry. These are the mom-and-pops. These are the small businesses, the sole

proprietors, the independent contractors. These are the people who set up and tear down stages. They put on these amazing sound and light displays that people get so excited about seeing and that really make music and entertainment come to life. They produce the music that you walk around listening to in your earbuds. The support staff at the venues clean up your beer cans and ticket stubs after you have enjoyed a show. I tell you, they also are the artists, the storytellers, and I really think our creative and cultural historians.

This industry is absolutely dying. They are not the only ones. There are so many other sectors of our economy that are at a standstill. They are suffering, and so many other people have been suffering. They are tired of what they see as posturing here in DC, using the hurt and the suffering of people as just a political bargaining chip. Do you know what? They have noticed. They have been watching over the past few months. They know that very little has been accomplished, and they think it is time to stop putting politics over people. It is time to stop saying "We want the issue if it is good for us" because people are looking for solutions.

They were waiting for a mandate—our friends over on the left—a mandate they were sure was going to come their way on November 3, but the American people refused to deliver them a mandate. You see it in elections that took place at the local and the State level. You see it in the congressional elections and certainly here in this Chamber.

So far, Speaker PELOSI has refused any offer to compromise. Every offer and gesture that has been made by the White House or this Chamber has been refused. She has clung to that \$3 trillion parody of a relief bill that she has stuffed to the brim with billions for liberal pet projects that have nothing to do with COVID recovery—nothing at all. Isn't it interesting that her pet project is not the American people? Wouldn't you think she would want to solve some of these problems? But no—she would rather play politics.

This absurd delay has come at great cost. We have so many Tennesseans, indeed, across this country, millions of families and small businesses that will tell you they are in damage control mode because Democrats refuse to allow them the dignity of hope that targeted relief would provide. "Dignity"—that is a nice word. And we have so many people who are grasping, trying to pay their bills, keep their businesses alive. I will say that our friends across the aisle twice—twice, twice—have declined to vote for targeted relief.

It is not too late to step up on behalf of those who have lost just about everything and those who still have a shot at coming out on the other side of this pandemic with their livelihoods intact. It is not too late to pass legislation that would provide better unem-

ployment insurance, more help for small businesses, resources for schools and universities, vaccine research funding, testing funding, and liability protection—targeted relief for millions of Americans who have said: This what we need in order to keep people employed and to keep our businesses open.

The legislation is written. All that needs to happen is our friends across the aisle need to say: We are ready to vote on this package. Let's do another round of PPP. Let's do a plus-up in unemployment. Let's do that money for vaccines and testing and resources for schools and universities. Let's give companies the liability protection they need to open their doors. Let's give these entertainment venues the liability protection they need in order to again get on the road, have concerts, play that music Americans love to listen to. It is there.

To my friends, let's have no filibusters, no more distractions, and no more extravagant wish lists of pet projects. For goodness' sake, put your politics aside, and let's put the people first. Let's provide the relief they are seeking.

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

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

#### REELECTION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, before I make my remarks, I want to take a moment on the floor of the Senate to formally and officially thank the people of the State of Illinois for electing me to another term in the U.S. Senate.

On election night, when the results were apparent, I went and stared into an iPad to announce my victory speech. It was unlike anything I had ever been through in a campaign, and I said so. It was an extraordinary campaign experience, made even more difficult and challenging because of the pandemic crisis. I want to thank the people of the State for standing by me and giving me this chance to serve again.

I am honored to serve my State in this body, especially during this time of transition in America and transition around the world. Together, with a trust in science with the Biden-Harris administration, we will return to our national agenda. I am eager to continue working to help the families, small businesses, schools, hospitals, and constituents in my State and to help all of us in this country endure this pandemic together.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, COVID-19 did not take a day off for the election. While election week was brewing and all of us were glued to our television screens,

most of the country was unaware of the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic was worsening. Cases of the virus and hospitalizations in the United States have been spiking for weeks now. On Saturday, we hit the highest daily total of new cases—126,000 new cases on Saturday. In Illinois, we are approaching half a million cases. The State has tragically seen more than 10,000 of our neighbors and friends die from this COVID-19. The country is on pace to hit 1 million new cases every week by the end of this year.

This is disastrous, and it demands action. Thankfully, President-Elect Biden has announced an extraordinary task force of respected public health and medical experts—truth tellers, real leaders. Like the NIH's Dr. Fauci, I trust Dr. Kessler, David Kessler, whom I have known for decades; Dr. Morita, who served so admirably in the city of Chicago; Dr. Atul Gawande, one of my real heroes in medicine today—I have spent a lot of money on his books and have never regretted a penny of it; and former Surgeon General Murthy—what an extraordinarily talented man he is and the others who are part of the team.

Yet we need to continue to stay safe and remember that this virus is not anywhere near being gone. There are 10 million Americans who have now contracted the virus, and we have lost 238,000 American lives. My heart goes out to everyone who has lost someone in this pandemic and to those who are still suffering due to this virus.

In addition to the health and safety of the American people, we have also been struggling to deal with real economic uncertainty, job losses, food insecurity, stress, and childcare. It is a long list. Despite these urgent needs of families, small businesses, workers, health providers, and unemployed Americans across the country, unfortunately, the leadership in this Chamber has dragged its feet and offered only a few very weak measures that barely address the overwhelming needs of this Nation. This is why Americans have not received another round of economic impact payments, rental assistance, or enhanced unemployment assistance, and it is why hospitals are not receiving additional funding.

Speaker PELOSI and House Democrats passed the Heroes Act in May—a \$3.4 trillion relief package. After negotiating with the White House, they then passed the second version of that—a \$2.2 trillion package. Unfortunately, the Senate majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, refused to consider either of these proposals and even refused to attend the negotiating sessions. The last Senate Republican response was inadequate—\$500 billion. It may seem like a fortune until you look at a nation in the midst of a pandemic and at an economy struggling to survive.

If the Republicans are serious about negotiating a real package—if they want to demonstrate to the American people what leadership looks like, with

real solutions for real problems that families face—then I call on Senator MCCONNELL to show up to the negotiating table and give up these rogue attempts to pass empty, halfhearted measures.

The Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Jerome Powell, a conservative Republican economist, has repeatedly warned of potentially dire economic consequences if additional fiscal relief is delayed. As hiring begins to pick up in a few sectors—thank goodness—too many populations, including African-American workers, Hispanic men, and women with children, are being left behind.

We need to focus on helping the American people through this pandemic. We need to do it now. This is the so-called lameduck session between the results of an election and the swearing-in of a new Congress and President, but shame on us if we don't use this time together in Washington as an opportunity to do more than vote for a random Republican judge. Can't we roll up our sleeves on a bipartisan basis and realize what is really happening across America as this pandemic heats up and more Americans die every day?

We need at least \$75 billion for additional testing and contact tracing to slow the spread of COVID-19—far more than the meager \$16 billion that was offered in the Republican measure.

We also want to put \$57 billion in for hospitals, clinics, and health providers. Just a couple of weeks ago, I was on the phone with these administrators. They are desperate. We are going to lose hospitals across this country and, I fear, maybe even in our own State if we don't step forward and do something.

What is wrong with increasing, at least to some degree, the amount available for food stamps—the so-called SNAP program—so that hundreds of millions of Americans who go to food banks to survive get a helping hand? Is that too much to ask in the month of Thanksgiving and in the month of Christmas?

We must also include more economic support for households through a second round of economic impact payments and through reinstating enhanced unemployment benefits.

I continue to hear about struggles from hospitals that are on the brink, from workers who have lost their jobs, and from small business owners who are desperately trying to keep their heads above water. Unfortunately, the Senate continues to waste time on proposals that place the needs of Big Business ahead of the needs of small families. History will judge this body on how we respond—not on the best speech given on the floor—or on how we failed to respond to the worst pandemic in a century and the deepest recession in 75 years.

The American people are looking for leadership. We cannot let them down.

Madam President, there is another aspect of this that I would like to address for just a moment.

After each Presidential election, there is a transition period when a new President is coming in and his team takes a look at the government as it stands and prepares for the day of January 20, when that new President will be sworn in. All of the networks and major news sources have declared Joe Biden to be the President-elect and KAMALA HARRIS, our colleague here from the Senate, to be the Vice President-elect. They are now bringing together the people who are their experts to prepare for a smooth, orderly transition.

Before that can take place, the Administrator of the General Services Administration must file something called an ascertainment that ascertains in fact there was an election and someone won. In most cases, it is very routine. It is just done automatically based on the reports from the States that we already have as we sat busily by the TV, day after day, doing our emails and texting to friends and families, waiting for the returns to come in. The announcement was made on Saturday, and the reaction was all across the country.

You would think that the Administrator of the GSA would have the ascertainment necessary to really pull the trigger for a transition from the Trump administration to the incoming Biden administration. These are routine things that have gone on in past years without really much controversy. Yet, lo and behold, this year, there is controversy.

For the past 60 years, since Congress passed the Presidential Transition Act to ensure a smooth and orderly transfer of power, the GSA Administrator has usually ascertained the apparent winner within 24 hours of the election. By passing the Presidential Transition Act, Congress has acknowledged how critical this period is for the safety and well-being of the country. Once the GSA makes this ascertainment, the executive branch can provide crucial services to the transition team to make sure there is a smooth transfer.

Remember when I mentioned earlier that we are in the midst of a pandemic, with thousands of people dying? Why would we want to see a delay or some bureaucratic indecision that might jeopardize a person's health or a person's life in the midst of this pandemic?

Once the GSA makes that ascertainment to provide services, it includes access to classified information for incoming national security officials; background investigations and security clearances for potential nominees; State Department-facilitated foreign leader calls; access to SCIFs and Federal agencies for discussions on personnel, budget, and policy; and access



to \$6.3 million of congressionally approved funds to support transition activities and to actually buy office equipment.

Delayed ascertainment, as I mentioned, could also prevent the transition team from meeting with agency officials who will be responsible for the COVID-19 crisis. Shouldn't they get up to speed on Operation Warp Speed and on the announcement today by Pfizer that it is on the verge of announcing a successful vaccine? Don't we want an orderly, peaceful, smooth, effective, and efficient transition when it comes to the manufacturing and distribution of that vaccine? Of course, we do.

A delayed ascertainment will cause major harm to this transition, to the new Biden administration, and to the American people. It could be a danger to our national security. Why would we ever risk that?

On November 27, 2000, when there was an actual controversy in the States and in the courts over 500 or 600 votes in Florida, for example, Vice President-Elect Dick Cheney said about the transition being delayed at all: "We will pay a heavy price for the delays in planning and assembling the next administration."

It has been a bitter campaign, a tough campaign. People still have very strong personal feelings about its outcomes. Some people are euphoric, and others are angry and sad. I know that is natural in an election campaign, and I feel that way about some of the races back in my home State. Yet there comes a moment when we have to look after the best interests of this country, and the best interests of this country say we should move forward on the transition at this moment.

I believe that President-Elect Joe Biden will be sworn in on January 20 as our next President. I believe the numbers are overwhelming. The margins in even the controversial States are so large, they are not likely to be overturned by any recount. Why delay the transition? Why run the risk that we won't have a smooth, orderly, and efficient passage from one administration to the other? Why, in the middle of a pandemic that has killed over 200,000 Americans and will threaten over 100,000 more before January 20, would we ever risk it over some bureaucratic delay? It is just unacceptable.

The American people know the election is over. Now it is time for us in Washington to concede that point. It is time for the Administrator of the GSA to do her job and announce the ascertainment and move forward in an orderly, productive, and smooth transition.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Ray Knepp II, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Mitch McConnell, James E. Risch, Joni Ernst, Marsha Blackburn, Mike Crapo, James Lankford, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, John Hoeven, Jerry Moran, Lamar Alexander, Mike Braun, David Perdue.

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 James Ray Knepp II, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 23, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 225 Ex.]

#### YEAS—62

Barrasso	Cruz	Lankford
Blackburn	Enzi	Leahy
Blunt	Ernst	Lee
Boozman	Feinstein	Loeffler
Braun	Fischer	Manchin
Brown	Gardner	McConnell
Burr	Graham	McSally
Capito	Grassley	Murkowski
Carper	Hassan	Murphy
Cassidy	Hoeven	Paul
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Perdue
Coons	Inhofe	Peters
Cornyn	Johnson	Portman
Cotton	Jones	Reed
Cramer	Kaine	Risch
Crapo	Kennedy	Roberts

Romney	Scott (SC)	Toomey
Rounds	Shaheen	Warner
Rubio	Shelby	Whitehouse
Sasse	Thune	Wicker
Scott (FL)	Tillis	

#### NAYS—23

Baldwin	Hirono	Schumer
Bennet	King	Smith
Blumenthal	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Booker	Markey	Udall
Casey	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Rosen	Wyden
Gillibrand	Sanders	

#### NOT VOTING—15

Alexander	Harris	Schatz
Cantwell	Hawley	Sinema
Cardin	Heinrich	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Moran	Tester
Daines	Murray	Young

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). On this vote, the yeas are 62, the nays are 23.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

#### RECOGNIZING THE WYOMING ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I rise today to recognize a significant anniversary for the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts. When they meet next week, the association will celebrate 75 years of service to Wyoming's natural resources. Without question, the forests, streams, and soils in the state have seen immense benefit from the important work conservation district employees do every day.

Conservation districts succeed through their work and partnerships with diverse stakeholders. Landowners, farmers and ranchers, government agencies, counties, towns, and other community organizations contribute to the conservation of land and water resources on private and public lands in Wyoming. Local conservation district boards perform as a liaison between local landowners, resource users, and State and Federal governmental agencies. The association helps individuals navigate programs and provides exemplary technical assistance to cultivate productive lands and healthy ecosystems. Agriculture, industry, cities, forests, and wildlife all depend on strong and healthy watersheds.

Wyoming has 34 conservation districts in our 23 counties. Each district is run by staff and a board of five supervisors, who serve voluntarily. Conservation districts direct programs protecting local renewable natural resources at the local level. Each district



puts its focus on issues important to resource concerns in the county. These range from water quality monitoring and watershed planning to seedling tree sales and living snow fence programs, forest planning and rangeland management to wildlife habitat improvement and endangered species issues.

I rely heavily on conservation districts for their expertise in water, conservation, wildlife, forestry, and general land management. As their mission statement says, in part, the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts provides leadership for the conservation of Wyoming's soil and water resources and promotes and protects the quality of Wyoming's waters through responsible conservation ethic.

People are the key to conservation district success, from local volunteers to dedicated staff and partners who dedicate themselves to the cause. The association provides valuable insight and expertise to countless projects and issues at the local, State, and national level. One of the best examples is in the recently retired, Bobbie Frank.

Bobbie Frank served as executive director of the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts for the last 29 years. Bobbie's list of achievements is long. From being intimately involved in a myriad of water quality issues both at the State and national levels to developing and implementing programs at the local level, Bobbie has received the Wyoming Stock Growers Guardian of the Grassland Award and the Kurt Bucholz Conservation Award. She has also been inducted as a member of the Wyoming Ag Hall of Fame. I look forward to working with the Wyoming Association of Conservation District's new executive director, Hunter Petsch, moving forward.

It is without hesitation that I say Wyoming's forests and plains would look much different today if the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts had not unified in 1945. Each municipal water manager, rancher, hiker, forester, hunter, and miner owes a debt of gratitude for the good work of the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts.

I would like to recognize several leaders within the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts for their dedicated service to the State of Wyoming.

Board of Directors: Todd Heward, President; Dan Rice, Vice President; Ryan Fieldgrove and Wayne Garman, Area I Directors; Levi Clark and Stan Mitchem, Area II Directors; Keith Grant, Area III Director; Reg Phillips and Shanon Sims, Area IV Directors; and Shaun Sims and Coke Landers, Area V Directors.

Staff: Hunter Petsch, Executive Director; Kelly Brown, Program Specialist; and Cathy Rosenthal, Watershed Coordinator.

Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively, of each conservation district:

Campbell County Conservation District: Lindsay Wood, Casey Elkins

Clear Creek Conservation District: Ryan Fieldgrove, Luke Todd

Cody Conservation District: Russ Dwyer, Bobbie Holder

Converse County Conservation District: Stan Mitchem, Shelly Falkenburg

Crook County Natural Resources District: Wayne Garman, Ted Parsons

Dubois-Crowheart Conservation District: Reg Phillips, Todd Hirsch

Hot Springs Conservation District: Jim Andreen, Sonja Becker

Laramie County Conservation District: Thomas E. Farrell, Kevin Wells

Laramie Rivers Conservation District: Ruth Shepherd, Bob Shine

Lincoln Conservation District: Erick Esterholdt, Kenny Petersen

Lingle-Fort Laramie Conservation District: Don McDowell, Joe Speckner

Little Snake River Conservation District: Jack Cobb, Meghan Lally

Lower Wind River Conservation District: Nick Biltoft, Richard Denke

Medicine Bow Conservation District: Shanon Sims, Ralph Brokaw

Meeteetse Conservation District: Tim Morrison, Joe Thomas

Natrona County Conservation District: Andrew Anderson, Dennis Scott

Niobrara Conservation District: Matt Dockery, Dale Jordan

North Platte Valley Conservation District: Art Davis, Mike Carney

Platte County Resource Conservation District: Kerry Powers, Levi Clark

Popo Agie Conservation District: Tim Wilson, Jeri Trebelecock

Powder River Conservation District: Bill Jones, George Renkert

Powell-Clarks Fork Conservation District: Floyd Derry, Regan Smith

Saratoga-Encampment-Rawlins Conservation District: Arla Strasser, Dan Mika

Sheridan County Conservation District: Susan Holmes, Edith Heyward

Shoshone Conservation District: Brad Tippetts, Spencer Ellis

South Big Horn Conservation District: George Kelso, Walt Hibbert

South Goshen Conservation District: Dan Jackson, Boyd Yeik

Star Valley Conservation District: Rollin Gardner, Shane Crook

Sublette County Conservation District: Coke Landers, Darrell Walker

Sweetwater County Conservation District: Mary E. Thoman, Tom Burris

Teton Conservation District: Steve McDonald, Nate Fuller

Uinta County Conservation District: Kelly Guild, Dennis Cornelison

Washakie County Conservation District: Dave Slover, Dan Rice

Weston County Natural Resource District: Alicia Redding, David Tysdal

I rise today to honor the dedicated professionals who work to keep our ecosystems healthy. My wife, Bobbi, joins me in thanking them and wishing the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts another 75 years of success.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO BRIELLE PAQUETTE

• Ms. HASSAN. Madam President, I am proud to recognize Brielle Paquette of Salem as October's Granite Stater of the Month. Brielle is using her creative talents as a videographer to help remove the stigma around mental illness and to help inspire her friends and neighbors to open up about their mental health struggles.

Brielle grew up in a family of photographers and filmmakers. From an early

age, she found her passion in filmmaking. As she got older, Brielle recruited her young cousins to participate in music videos that she would direct and film, all with the hope of putting a smile on people's faces.

Brielle also grew up in a family with loved ones who experienced mental health challenges. Brielle's father struggled with alcohol abuse, and her mother lives with anxiety. Brielle developed an anxiety disorder, which she did not talk about with anyone, that left her feeling isolated from her peers.

When she entered high school, Brielle decided to use her talents with a video camera to help break down the stigma around mental illness. In 2019, Brielle submitted a PSA to a competition held by New Futures, a New Hampshire organization that seeks to promote health and wellness in the State.

Brielle wanted to highlight the high rate of mental illness in young adults. To film the video, Brielle went to a crowded area in Boston with a sign that read "20-50 percent of adolescents struggle with mental illness. Hug to show support for people who are struggling." Brielle then tied a blindfold on herself and accepted hugs from strangers as her mom filmed from afar.

Brielle won the People's Choice Award for that video and since then has filmed other PSAs aimed at destigmatizing mental illness and encouraging people to open up about their struggles. She also uses her platform as Miss Londonderry to promote this important message. Additionally, as a member of her school's women empowerment club, she is working on the early stages of a new PSA on body positivity.

I am proud to recognize Brielle for her efforts to break down the barriers that too often prevent us from talking about mental illness. By using her talents to help facilitate conversations about a difficult issue and raising awareness around mental health, Brielle exemplifies what it means to be a Granite Stater. I look forward to seeing what she accomplishes next.●

##### TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL SEAY-PETER FLOYD AND OFFICER NATALIE EUCCE

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to honor Fayetteville Police Department Corporal Seay-Peter Floyd and Officer Natalie Eucce for being awarded the Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service in Policing by the U.S. Department of Justice.

This is a well-deserved honor for their dedication, sacrifice, and bravery they demonstrated on December 7, 2019, when a gunman, armed with 100 rounds of ammunition, targeted law enforcement. Tragically, Fayetteville Police Officer Stephen Carr was killed while sitting in a patrol vehicle in the police station's parking lot. Corporal Floyd courageously pursued the suspect and

fired in order to stop the assailant. Officer Eucce joined in the pursuit and also fired her weapon. If not for their quick response, there could have been other victims.

This prestigious award is given to State and local law enforcement officers who personify excellence while protecting others. Only 23 members of the law enforcement community from across the country earned this honor this year. Corporal Floyd and Officer Eucce are the first Arkansans to receive this award.

Throughout their careers, Corporal Floyd and Officer Eucce have responded to calls for help while not knowing what challenges they will face. They are heroic public servants who courageously face danger head on. It takes a special person to put their life on the line every day to safeguard the public. Corporal Floyd and Officer Eucce represent the men and women who make a difference in our communities. I applaud their service and commitment to safety and the rule of law and congratulate them for receiving the fourth annual Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service in Policing.●

#### OZARK MEDIA ARTS FESTIVAL

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate the Ozark Media Arts Festival on 10 years of success and recognize the pathway it is creating from education to employment in the multimedia industry in Arkansas and throughout the region.

More than 8,000 students have participated in OMAF, helping these young minds make connections with others who have similar passions in filmmaking, broadcast journalism, production, photography, and other media platforms that keep citizens informed and entertained. The festival allows participants to explore their interests and learn from industry professionals on how to further develop their talents.

OMAF provides a venue for students to showcase their abilities, learn new skills, and compete against the brightest up-and-comers in their field of interest. The recognition that comes with earning the top spot in the competitions hosted by the festival is certainly something to be proud of, and the enthusiasm shared amongst all participants who put their creativity on display is what continues to make the Ozark Media Arts Festival a success and a place for students to foster relationships that will help them transition their skills from an educational setting to the communications industry.

The festival truly is investing in the future of the multimedia industry in the region. It is a good one-stop-shop for high schoolers to learn more about the programs offered at colleges and universities and other programs where they can continue to hone their skills. Just as importantly, it provides a valuable networking opportunity with po-

tential employers and demonstrates how they can turn their passion into a future career.

It was a pleasure to participate in a virtual panel discussion for the 2020 festival as educators, industry leaders, and policymakers and talk about the importance of communication and how technology continues to shape how we get information and stay connected with each other.

Congratulations to Ozark Media Arts Festival on a decade of accomplishments and encouraging multimedia education and building relationships to help future generations of communicators realize their dream of a career in the multimedia industry.●

#### RECOGNIZING THE JOHN WILLIAM JACKSON FUND

● Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I am pleased to recognize and honor the 20th Anniversary of the John William Jackson Fund and their contribution to the State of Idaho.

Bill "Action" Jackson, of Boise, established the John William Jackson Fund 20 years ago to honor his son, John, who died in a climbing accident in Central Asia. John William Jackson was known for his sense of adventure and passion for academic excellence, performing arts, and outdoor sports. He challenged himself and those around him to believe in themselves and take advantage of their full potential.

The John William Jackson Fund supports Idaho youth through academic scholarships and grants for performing arts organizations, outdoor sporting experiences, and the purchase or rental of musical instruments. Just as John encouraged others to believe in themselves and reach for their dreams, the John William Jackson Fund provides the support and assistance needed to make these dreams a reality. Since 2000, the fund has awarded more than 300 grants and given over \$1 million to Idaho's youth.

In addition to monetary donations, the Idaho Youth Education Recycling Partnership—(iYERP)—was established in 2007, creating a revenue stream for the Fund via metal recycling. This initiative seeks not only to fund scholarships for Idaho's youth, but also create a sustainable environment for these dreams to be met.

Bill Jackson, the fund's cofounder, will be recognized at an upcoming Idaho Philanthropy Day celebration. He will be honored as an outstanding partner in the community as an "Outstanding Adult Philanthropist" on November 13, 2020.

I am proud to recognize the John William Jackson Fund and their contribution to the State of Idaho. Your great commitment to inspire Idaho's youth and honor the memory of John is commendable.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to

the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills and joint resolution were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 4800. A bill to provide Coronavirus relief.  
S. 4805. A bill to create a point of order against legislation modifying the number of Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

S.J. Res. 76. Joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to require that the Supreme Court of the United States be composed of nine justices.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communication was laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and was referred as indicated:

EC-5777. A communication from the President of the United States to the President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, transmitting, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, a report relative to a successful operation in Nigeria to rescue a United States citizen, received during adjournment of the Senate on November 1, 2020; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

H.R. 542. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the National Urban Security Technology Laboratory, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-285).

H.R. 2589. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a homeland intelligence doctrine for the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-286).

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

H.R. 4727. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a mentor-protégé program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-287).

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

Report to accompany S. 3591. A bill to provide for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to provide for water pollution control activities and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-288).

By Mr. WICKER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2904. A bill to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support research on the outputs that may be generated by generative adversarial networks, otherwise known as deepfakes, and other comparable techniques that may be developed in the future, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-289).

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 4881. A bill to extend the authorization for the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 117

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 117, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 511

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) were added as cosponsors of S. 511, a bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors.

S. 879

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 879, a bill to provide a process for granting lawful permanent resident status to aliens from certain countries who meet specified eligibility requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 1374

At the request of Ms. MCSALLY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1374, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the waiting periods for disability insurance benefits and Medicare coverage for individuals with metastatic breast cancer, and for other purposes.

S. 1421

At the request of Mr. COTTON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1421, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23d Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133d Signal Service Company in recognition of their unique and distinguished service as a "Ghost Army" that conducted deception operations in Europe during World War II.

S. 1789

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Nevada

(Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1789, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to reform procedures for determinations on disposition of charges and the convening of courts-martial for certain offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and for other purposes.

S. 2898

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2898, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a full annuity supplement for certain air traffic controllers.

S. 3398

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mrs. LOEFFLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3398, a bill to establish a National Commission on Online Child Sexual Exploitation Prevention, and for other purposes.

S. 3419

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3419, a bill to amend the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, to provide for the establishment of a trust for the benefit of all unpaid cash sellers of livestock, and for other purposes.

S. 3444

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 3444, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the list of diseases associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents for which there is a presumption of service connection for veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 3471

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3471, a bill to ensure that goods made with forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China do not enter the United States market, and for other purposes.

S. 3722

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3722, a bill to authorize funding for a bilateral cooperative program with Israel for the development of health technologies with a focus on combating COVID-19.

S. 4150

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4150, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to provide assistance to certain providers of transportation services affected by the novel coronavirus.

S. 4258

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Delaware

(Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4258, a bill to establish a grant program for small live venue operators and talent representatives.

S. 4406

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 4406, a bill to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to fully protect the safety of children and the environment, to remove dangerous pesticides from use, and for other purposes.

S. 4429

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4429, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to conduct a study regarding toxic exposure by members of the Armed Forces deployed to Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, to include such members in the open burn pit registry, and for other purposes.

S. 4572

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4572, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a presumption of service connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to toxins, and for other purposes.

S. 4658

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4658, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to allow for greater State flexibility with respect to excluding providers who are involved in abortions.

S. 4661

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4661, a bill to authorize the President to posthumously award the Medal of Honor to Alwyn C. Cashe for acts of valor during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

S. 4663

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4663, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to save Federal funds by authorizing changes to the composition of circulating coins, and for other purposes.

S. 4712

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 4712, a bill to enhance the consideration of human rights in arms exports.

S. 4757

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 4757, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to establish additional requirements for dealers, and for other purposes.

S. 4860

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. 4860, a bill to exempt payments made from the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Account from sequestration under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

S. 4875

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4875, a bill to provide protections for good faith borrowers and lenders under the paycheck protection program, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 689

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 689, a resolution condemning the crackdown on peaceful protestors in Belarus and calling for the imposition of sanctions on responsible officials.

S. RES. 709

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 709, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the August 13, 2020, and September 11, 2020, announcements of the establishment of full diplomatic relations between the State of Israel and the United Arab Emirates and the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Bahrain are historic achievements.

S. RES. 754

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 754, a resolution requesting information on the Government of Azerbaijan's human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. RES. 755

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from New Hamp-

shire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 755, a resolution requesting information on the Government of Turkey's human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. RES. 760

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 760, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the atrocities perpetrated by the Government of the People's Republic of China against Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and members of other Muslim minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region constitutes genocide.

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 4800, S. 4805, S.J. Res. 76

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I understand there are three bills at the desk due for a second reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title en bloc for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4800) to provide Coronavirus relief.

A bill (S. 4805) to create a point of order against legislation modifying the number of Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 76) proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to require that the Supreme Court of the United States be composed of nine justices.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceeding en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar en bloc.

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2020

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 12 noon, Tuesday, November 10; further, following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day and morning business be closed; further, following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Knepp nomination and recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings. Finally, notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination at 2:15 p.m. and, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:50 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, November 10, 2020, at 12 noon.

#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate Friday, October 30, 2020:

##### FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

SHANA M. BROUSSARD, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 30, 2023, VICE ANN MILLER RAVEL, TERM EXPIRED.

SEAN J. COOKSEY, OF MISSOURI, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 30, 2021, VICE LEE E. GOODMAN, TERM EXPIRED.