

I'm not sure what his Health and Human Services credentials are. It's not like Alex Azar who used to work for pharma.

With all due respect to the senior Senator from Texas, working for the pharmaceutical industry is not the only way to get experience in healthcare. Some might argue it is the wrong kind of experience for an HHS Secretary.

The truth is, Xavier Becerra is eminently qualified. He worked in the House of Representatives for two decades, always very involved in advancing the healthcare of his constituents, and he has a particularly long track record as an advocate of women's health. As the attorney general of California, he became one of the foremost legal experts on our Nation's healthcare laws.

I must say, it is particularly rich for this Republican majority to raise "concerns" about whether Biden Cabinet nominees have every last pristine qualification for their posts. Not so long ago, nearly every Republican in this Chamber lined up to make an oil executive the Secretary of State. I don't remember too many Republican "concerns" when President Trump nominated a retired neurosurgeon to be the Secretary of HUD or when he put Rick Perry in charge of the Department of Energy—an agency he wanted to abolish before learning it maintained the Nation's nuclear stockpile and that he would be in charge of it. If memory serves, this Senate Republican majority confirmed a Secretary of Education whose only qualification for the job was she used her inherited fortune to try to privatize American schooling.

Look, the country needs to move on from the past 4 years, but Senate Republicans can't pretend like it never happened. After the sordid caliber of nominees that this Republican majority confirmed over the past 4 years, it will be impossible to take these complaints about Biden's nominees very seriously.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES.

77

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, I move to discharge the Foreign Relations Committee from further consideration of S.J. Res. 77, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the United Arab Emirates of certain defense articles and services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is pending.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I am asking our colleagues to stand up for two very important principles. One is the congressional oversight over arms sales abroad and, secondly, to ensure that these sales, in fact, promote and protect the long-term national security of the United States.

Colleagues, I wish we didn't find ourselves in the position of having to discuss our concerns with this sale in this kind of forum. The United Arab Emirates has, indeed, been an important partner in the fight against terrorism and across the region and, I believe, will continue to do so. However, a sale of this magnitude requires the appropriate due diligence.

For the past few decades, the executive branch has respected the congressional oversight of the arms sales process, a critical piece of which is an informal review period during which we get answers to pressing questions. We have an opportunity to review sensitive information so that, when sales come up for the formal notification, which is what we have before us now, we have a clearer path forward. Unfortunately, in this case, the Trump administration decided to simply ignore congressional rights here and the review process, formally notifying the sales of these complex weapons systems, along with other weaponry, totaling \$23 billion.

Beyond obliterating the congressional review process, the administration also seems to have rushed through the interagency review of a sale of this magnitude. Whereas, a sale of this scope would normally merit months and months of detailed deliberations between the Departments of Defense and State, this sale was announced with more missing than a few dotted i's and crossed t's.

I will go into more detail later before we vote, but the bottom line is that there are many outstanding issues that are critical to U.S. national security that have not been addressed, including, by way of example, the United Arab Emirates' present and future military relationships with Russia and China. My understanding is that there are negotiations to have with China regarding an airstrip for the Chinese military off of the UAE. Is that in the national interest and security of the United States?

Should we not have a definitive commitment from the UAE that it will not move forward if these arms sales move forward, including with the most sophisticated stealth jet fighter that we have? How do we work to safeguard U.S. technology? the guarantees we will have in place about how U.S.-origin weapons will be used given the Emirates' history of transferring weapons to a terrorist organization and violating the U.N. arms embargo in Libya? the longer term implications of an arms race in the region? and then, yes, the impact that it could have on both our and Israel's qualitative military edge?

If we aren't going to be willing to ask these questions, then we have to think about the magnitude of the sale without caring about the consequences.

I have heard a number of my colleagues advocate in support of these sales because they believe it will help our like-minded partners better posture against Iran. Now, no one is more clear-eyed in this Chamber or has pursued Iran and its threat of nuclear weapons more than I, and we are clear-eyed about the threat Iran continues to pose to national security interests, but we have yet to understand exactly what military threat the F-35s or armed drones will be addressing vis-à-vis Iran. Furthermore, according to the Trump administration, as recently as last year, the UAE continued to host a number of companies that facilitated Iranian financial transactions in violation of various U.S. sanctions.

So Iran is a threat, but you are helping it facilitate U.S. financial transactions. It is not that I have said so but that the Trump administration has said so. Meanwhile, over the past year, Iran has ramped up its nuclear capabilities amidst American diplomatic fallout.

So, if we really want to talk about countering Iran, we need a comprehensive, diplomatic strategy. Arming partners with complex weapons systems that could take years to come online is not a serious strategy with which to confront the very real and timely threats from Iran.

I have also heard some of our colleagues argue that, if we do not sell these weapons, the UAE will turn to China and Russia. Well, let's be clear: They already do. They already do. Our own Department of Defense's inspector general recently reported that the UAE may be funding the Russian mercenary Wagner Group in Libya. U.N. reporting implicates the UAE's use of Chinese-manufactured drones, in violation of the U.N. arms embargo, also in Libya.

So, while I absolutely agree that we have to counter Chinese and Russian influence in the region, again, this requires a real strategy, not simply more arms. Isn't this a conversation and a commitment that we should get in writing from the UAE as part of such an arms sale? We don't have that. Furthermore, if we go forward with these sales, yet deny similar requests to countries like Qatar or Saudi Arabia, where will they go for their advanced weaponry to keep pace, and what reaction will Iran have to them? Do we really think we can sell this just to the UAE and not have those other countries come knocking on our door, starting a very sophisticated arms race in a tinder box of the world?

Finally, let me be very clear: I applaud the Abraham accords as a historical turning point for Israel and the Arab world. These new, formal relationships have the possibility of transforming the region much more broadly and bringing peace, stability, and prosperity to people who desperately want

and deserve it. Yet, as the administration and the Emirates have continued to stress, these sales are neither a reward nor are they part of these accords.

So why can't we take a little more time to really assess the best way forward? We are in the midst of promoting a sale—this is the administration—that has some of the most significant transfers of advanced U.S. technology without clarity of a number of key details regarding the sale or sufficient answers to critical national security questions. This is far more than about congressional prerogative, although I would argue that it is a critical element of our policies on arms sales; this is about national security concerns to which we should have an answer before those arms sales move forward.

Again, colleagues, the bottom line is this: There are far too many outstanding questions and very serious questions about long-term U.S. national security interests. Perhaps, after considerable engagement with the executive, we would assess that all of these sales do, in fact, advance our national security. Given the length of time it will take for the delivery of these systems, it would seem quite reasonable to expect to have 40 days to evaluate these questions.

So I urge my colleagues to stand up for Congress's role in the process of determining arms sales as well as for having clear answers to the critical questions that are posed to long-term U.S. national security interests.

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

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I am on the floor today to speak to resolutions upon which we will begin voting today regarding arms sales proposed by the administration to the United Arab Emirates.

I am on the floor today to ask my colleagues to support these resolutions of disapproval upon two grounds: one, the protection of congressional prerogative and, two, a question of U.S. national security.

First, let me cover the question of congressional prerogative. We have traditionally debated arms sales here on occasion, and the reason why we don't have constant debates in this body on arms sales, the reason why we don't have resolutions on every sale that is noticed by the administration, is because we have built into our practice an ability for the Senate to consult with the administration beforehand on a bipartisan basis.

Over the years, since the passage of the law allowing for Congress to have a

role in the sale of arms to foreign nations, administration after administration, Republican and Democrat, has observed a period of consultation with Congress in which the administration comes to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, comes to the House Foreign Relations Committee, presents the reasons for the sale, and then addresses concerns raised, often in a bipartisan manner, by Republicans and Democrats.

Again, this has happened in both Democratic and Republican administrations, with Democratic and Republican Congresses, and often that consultative process results in issues that Congress has being resolved so that you never have to have a vote on the Senate floor.

Something different happened with this sale. The administration was so desperate to rush through the sale before the end of their administration that they blew through the consultation process. It just didn't happen. There was no ability for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to weigh in on this particular sale. It was rushed to notice, and our only option was to bring it before the full Senate.

Now, under any circumstances, I would argue that the Senate should stand up for our right to have a role. The reason that we built in this consultative process was because the Senate was actually unhappy with the amount of input it had decades ago and was threatening to dramatically expand its oversight role on arms sales. Instead, a deal was worked out in which the administration said they would come for this consultation.

Now it appears that those consultations are no longer the practice. That reduces our role as a foreign-policy-making body. And remember, we have abdicated all sorts of responsibilities over the years when it comes to what should be a coequal responsibility to set the broad direction of U.S. foreign policy with the executive branch. This would be yet another chip away at Congress's participation in the setting of U.S. national security policy. I am not sure we will ever get it back.

But on this sale, in particular, the consultative process was really important because this sale is as big and as hairy and as complicated as you get. We are, for the first time, selling F-35s and MQ-9 Reaper drones into the heart of the Middle East. We have never done it before. There are only 14 countries that currently operate the F-35, and almost all of them are NATO allies. Turkey was on the list for a period of time, but because they ended up making a choice to go with the Russian missile defense system, they were taken out of the program. So the partners that remain are the ones that you would suspect—Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Australia, Denmark, Canada.

There are even fewer countries that we have sold Reaper drones to—Australia, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, UK, and India.

This is the first time that we would sell these incredibly lethal, incredibly complicated technologies into the heart of the Middle East—a region that, arguably, is not in need of more weapons.

What we risk doing here is fueling an arms race. Today we may be selling the F-35s and the MQ-9s to the UAE, but the Saudis are going to want it, the Qataris have already requested it, and it just fuels Iran's interest in continuing to build up its own military program.

But, more specifically to this sale, we have to ask ourselves whether the UAE is ready for this technology or whether their behavior over the past several years makes them an unworthy partner for this set of highly complicated U.S. defense technology.

I will stipulate, as I think every Member of this body will, that the UAE is often a very important ally of the United States. There is an important cooperative relationship that exists between the United States and the UAE. We share counterterrorism information together. We were both involved in the fight against ISIS. We work together to counter Iranian influence in the region. And, of course, the UAE's recognition of Israel is good for the United States as well.

But for as many places as we cooperate with UAE, there are many points of division, and those points of division often involve the use of U.S. military technology against the interests of the United States.

The UAE has been, for years, involved in a civil war in Yemen that is terrible for U.S. national security interests. They may not be as involved as they were a couple of years ago, but they are still a barrier to peace. They still refuse to make humanitarian contributions to help the situation on the ground. So far in 2020, there are zero dollars from the UAE put into the U.N. appeal to try to fight off starvation and cholera inside Yemen.

At one point, they took U.S. equipment and they handed it to extremist militias inside Yemen. That is open-source reporting. The UAE copped to it when the reporters asked them whether they had done it. They gave our equipment to Salafist militias inside a theater of war. There are other reports that they were dropping American-made TOW missiles out of the sky into areas of that country that were controlled by al-Qaida-aligned elements. And they are, right now, as we speak, in violation of the Libya arms embargo.

The U.N. Panel of Experts came to the conclusion that the majority of arms transfers into Libya to the Haftar armed forces were either from Jordan or the United Arab Emirates. The panel found that the UAE was in repeated noncompliance with the arms embargo.

And guess what is on the list of the weapons that the UAE was transferring into Libya in violation of a U.S.-supported arms embargo—armed drones.

We are talking about selling the UAE the most lethal, most advanced armed drone technology in the world today, and as we speak, the UAE is in violation of the arms embargo to Libya, fueling that civil war, specifically sending drones into that theater.

So I am not here to say that we shouldn't be in the security business with the UAE. There are a lot of important common projects. But the question is, with a country that is part of the problem more often than part of the solution in Yemen, a country that is in existing violation of an arms embargo in Libya, a country that has just within the last several years transferred our weapons to al-Qaida-aligned militias, without resolving those issues, is this the moment to be selling, for the first time ever, F-35s, armed drones into the heart of the Middle East?

One last caution. The countries that I mentioned on this list are by and large in business with the United States and not with China and Russia. The UAE has pretty deep and complicated defense relationships with China, Russia, and Chinese and Russian companies. Query whether we can be absolutely certain that the technology on board those fighter jets, those drones, is going to stay in the right hands.

There arguably is no other country on the list for the F-35s that does as much business with China and Russia as the UAE does. In fact, as I mentioned, we pulled the F-35 program from Turkey because they are involved with Russia on a very complicated and important ground defense system, and we are just learning about the nature of the partnerships that the UAE has with the Chinese and the Russians.

It stands to reason that this would be one of the issues that a consultative process with Congress would resolve. It also stands to reason that we could probably come to a conclusion during that consultative process.

If the UAE really wants those weapons, wants to be the first country in the heart of the Middle East to get the F-35 or the Reaper drones, then I assume they would want to be able to assure Congress and the administration that there is no chance of technology transfer into the wrong hands. That is what the congressional consultative process would have gotten us, but it didn't happen in this case, and so we are stuck with this vote—a means for Congress to stand up for its right to participate in this question of arms sales.

Believe me, my Republican colleagues are going to want that right when a Democratic administration comes into office. You are not going to want to send a signal today to the Biden administration that they don't have to consult with you as the majority party, potentially, in 2021. But if you vote against these resolutions, then you are essentially saying the Biden administration doesn't need to

consult with Congress on it. They probably will because they want to do the right thing, but anybody who votes against these resolutions is essentially endorsing an end-around of Congress by any administration, Republican or Democratic.

It is also important to say that on policy grounds, it is not time to do these sales. There are too many outstanding questions about who the UAE transfers weapons to, what they are doing in Libya, why they haven't been part of the solution in Yemen, and what their relationship is with some of our most important adversaries around the globe. Until we satisfy the answers to those questions, we should not move forward with this sale.

Finally, there is no threat to the accords between UAE and Israel unwinding if we simply press pause on this sale until those questions are answered.

I do want to be in business with the UAE. I think they are an important defense partner. But I think there is far too much at stake with the sale of these weapons right now to rush it through, and I don't think there is any downside risk if we were to say "not now" until we get all of our t's crossed and all of our i's dotted.

Let's stand up for Congress's prerogative on the sale of arms to foreign countries. Let's slow down this process that has been rushed, potentially to the great detriment of U.S. national security. Let's support these resolutions of disapproval this afternoon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

CORONAVIRUS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to really highlight the important work that has been underway by Members on both sides of the aisle in the Senate and Members on both sides of the aisle in the House to try to come up with an agreement to deliver urgently needed relief to address the challenges from the coronavirus that people are facing across this country. I also hope that we can work together to get this across the finish line and that Senate leadership will be willing to join in that effort.

I think most of us are painfully aware of the devastating impact this pandemic has had in communities across our Nation, but the numbers do bear repeating. More than 15 million Americans have been infected with the virus, more than 285,000 Americans have now died from COVID, and we recently hit a new record high of 102,000 people hospitalized with COVID. Just to provide some context, our largest city in New Hampshire is Manchester. It has 112,000 residents. So we have enough people in the hospital across this country to fill the city of Manchester.

The situation is dire. People need help. Every one of those numbers that I have referenced is much more than a number; it reflects an American life, an

American family, our communities. The human toll of this crisis is crushing, and we are up against the clock as our hospitals run out of beds.

This crisis has been all-encompassing. In addition to the severe strains on our healthcare system, so many others are being battered by this pandemic.

Small businesses are closing, and even more are on the verge of collapsing if we don't get them some help.

Our transportation networks, from buses to airplanes, have been forced to lay off staff, cut routes, and in some cases just discontinue service altogether.

American families are going hungry. We have all seen the long lines on the news at night showing the number of people waiting to get food from food banks.

Too many people are facing homelessness. In New Hampshire, in the city of Manchester alone, we have 35 homeless encampments—35. Two years ago, we did not have that number of homeless.

Parents are struggling to help their children continue their education at home, sometimes with no access to broadband or really bad access. We know women are leaving the workforce because of the strains of trying to provide support to their children and deal with the other challenges of COVID.

State and local governments have been stretched to the maximum. In New Hampshire, we are facing severe budgetary shortfalls, and many of our communities may have to make some difficult decisions to cut first responders or teachers or other municipal workers if they don't get help.

We hear every day the number of people who need our help, and they can't wait any longer. This is the holiday season, the end of the year. We are headed into the worst months of winter. In New Hampshire, we have restaurants that can no longer be open because they don't have outdoor seating. We have small businesses that are worried about getting through the next few months.

For the past 3 weeks, we have had a group of bipartisan lawmakers in both the House and Senate—so bipartisan and bicameral—who have been engaged in good-faith negotiations to get a relief package out the door as swiftly as possible. We were able to reach an agreement on a broad bipartisan framework last week, and we have continued negotiations around-the-clock since that was announced.

In New Hampshire and throughout this country, our small businesses have been some of the hardest hit by this pandemic. In New Hampshire, we are a small business State. They are the lifeblood of our economy. They account for 99 percent of all of our businesses and more than 50 percent of our workforce. In the country as a whole, two-thirds of our jobs are created by small businesses.

In the bipartisan framework that we are negotiating, we have another round

of the Paycheck Protection Program, which has been instrumental for so many of our small businesses since back in March when we passed it and created the program in the CARES Act.

Overall, our bipartisan relief proposal would provide significant financial assistance for our small businesses, for our restaurants, for our live venues, which in many cases have been shut down completely, and for our childcare centers.

In New Hampshire, if we don't get some help for our childcare centers, at the end of this pandemic, we will have lost fully 50 percent of our childcare centers. That means the families who depend on that childcare so that they can go to work are not going to have any safe place for their kids.

I hear frequently from New Hampshire businesses that have used the PPP program effectively to keep workers on payroll and make rent that they still need more assistance if they are going to get through this winter.

Our tourism and hospitality industries are particularly hard hit, and they are vital to New Hampshire's economy. They are our second biggest industry.

Restaurants in New Hampshire account for nearly 70,000 jobs and for \$3 billion in sales, according to the National Restaurant Association. We have to provide some help for them.

The future of our small businesses in New Hampshire and throughout the country hang in the balance. If we fail to act, we fail them.

For many American families, the past 9 months have been the most difficult economic challenges of their lives, and the bleak jobs report last week reaffirms what we have been seeing in our communities. Nearly 10 million jobs have been lost since the start of the pandemic. That means people are out of work, struggling to put food on the table for themselves and their families, struggling to keep a roof over their heads. The eviction moratorium is about to expire. That is the story for 10 million families.

In the bipartisan framework that we have been negotiating, we have urgently needed funding for additional unemployment insurance. We provide rental assistance to help not just those people who might lose their housing but also the landlords, who have been hit very hard because people haven't been able to pay their rent. It also increases funding for food assistance programs to combat the surging food insecurity in our communities.

We can't afford further delay in delivering these resources. The unemployment benefits are due to expire at the end of the month, and time is of the essence.

One of the important areas of concern that this bipartisan proposal addresses is the need for Federal funding to help our State and our local communities. They are facing massive revenue shortfalls—at least in my home State

of New Hampshire—and that threatens their ability to provide essential services. We can't afford to lose those people who provide those services, who, if they are laid off, may be forced to go someplace else and won't be available when we have the money to rehire them. We can't afford to lose the teachers, and already we are seeing too many teachers who are retiring or leaving the profession because they are worried about safety and exposure, or they don't have the resources to be able to do the online teaching that is required now. If we don't get this funding out the door, we are going to see more of those losses.

In New Hampshire and in our cities and towns, they are being stretched to the limits. We are at the precipice of this crisis. Cases are continuing to go up. Hospitalizations are going up. The death toll is going up. People need help, and they need it now.

In New Hampshire, our nursing homes have been especially devastated by this crisis. We have the highest percentage of COVID deaths in our long-term care facilities of any State in the country. Eighty-one percent of our death toll has been tied to nursing homes.

Our bipartisan relief framework includes necessary Federal support for the Provider Relief Fund, and it allocates urgently needed help for our nursing homes that are on the frontlines.

We also provide help to address substance use disorders and mental health. What we have seen across the country is that COVID-19 has exacerbated what already existed in the opioid epidemic. We were beginning to make some progress in New Hampshire and in many States across the country until the coronavirus hit, and now we are seeing that progress being lost.

Our plan bolsters support for Federal investments in a number of programs that respond to the substance use disorder crisis in our communities, and it also addresses suicide prevention.

This pandemic has created significant burdens for those who are struggling with substance use disorders. And, of course, we have heard the number of mental health issues has been greatly exacerbated.

Our bipartisan plan addresses three of the most important pieces of the strategy to get on the other side of this pandemic: testing, tracing, and vaccine distribution. As overwhelming as this crisis has become, we can't just throw our hands in the air. We have to continue to prioritize robust testing and contact tracing so we can track and contain community spread. Of course, we need to follow the CDC guidelines—wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, staying home as much as possible, hand washing—so that we can help flatten the curve and help our hospitals. And now, as we are, we hope, just weeks away from having a vaccine, we need to ensure that every measure is taken so we are ready to go on day

one. The manufacturing and distribution of a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine are critical to putting an end to this pandemic, to reopening our economy, and to restoring normalcy in our society. Our COVID framework boosts funding for each of these three priorities.

When the Senate came together during the early days of this crisis, we worked in good faith to deliver the CARES Act that provided relief to Americans throughout the country. We did it before, and I believe we can do it again.

This bipartisan framework is the only bipartisan measure in Congress. It is the only bicameral measure in Congress. It is the only proposal that has an opportunity to clear both Houses.

We aren't done, obviously. Negotiations are ongoing. There are a lot more people who have to see this work and, hopefully, will decide to support it, and we still have more concerns to sort out. But this is a compromise. It doesn't have everything I want to see. It is not what I would have written if I had been able to write it by myself, but it is a compromise that I believe we can get majority support to pass.

Of course, it is step one. It is a relief bill to help Americans stay afloat over these next very difficult months, and our work doesn't end if we can provide this relief. We are still going to need a stimulus bill to get our economy moving again. But, right now, the most urgent need is to address those concerns that individuals and families have.

If Congress fails to act and get this over the finish line, the consequences will be dire. Our hospitals are already overwhelmed. Too many small businesses are closing. Families are going hungry and facing homelessness. Inaction is really not an option. We need to get this done.

There is no reason we can't come to an agreement. We have done it before. I urge Senators on both sides of the aisle to join in this effort. I urge Leader MCCONNELL and Leader SCHUMER to move forward with us to help us get this proposal over the line so that together we can deliver much needed relief to Americans and do it before the holiday season so that people will have something to look forward to.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Louisiana.

TRIBUTE TO DIANE DEATON

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I would like to speak for a few moments today about a Baton Rouge and Louisiana rock star. I am talking about Baton Rouge's own Diane Deaton.

This week, Diane announced that she is going to retire from her post as a weather forecaster at WAFB-TV, which we refer to as Channel 9, where she has served on "9News This Morning" and on "Early Edition" for many years.

Diane is known—widely known—affectionately as Queen D. She has been reporting the weather for the people of Louisiana, particularly Southeast Louisiana, for 37 years—37 years—and all

at the same station. Over a WAFB career spanning, what, nearly four decades, Diane has become a beloved fixture in our State and in our State capital.

Her compassion has been on regular display—and not only in the way that she has walked Louisianians through hurricanes and tornadoes. Weather is important to us in Louisiana. Diane has invested in first and second graders at Buchanan Elementary in East Baton Rouge Parish through an extraordinary program called the Reading Friends program. She has built new homes for families through Habitat for Humanity, where she currently serves as a board member. Diane has been a part of LSU Tiger HATS pet therapy program. That is a program where she and her colleagues visit young patients and their families at one of our leading hospitals, Our Lady of the Lake Children's Hospital.

Diane's awards are many. I won't list them all, but they include the Louisiana Association of Broadcasters' Lifetime Achievement Award, the Holly Reynolds Humanitarian of the Year Award—that was from the Capital Area Animal Welfare Society—and the Ulli Goodman Volunteer of the Year Award from the Baton Rouge Ballet Theater. I don't know how she finds the time, but Diane is also certified as a Delta Society Pet Partner for her work using therapy animals.

Yet I noticed that Diane's announcement was characteristically humble as she steps away after 37 years. Here is what she said: "I have never taken for granted the honor and privilege you have given me over these many years by choosing me and my colleagues here at WAFB-TV to keep you and your family safe and informed."

I think that the gratitude among Louisiana and Baton Rouge residents is certainly mutual.

I am glad to hear that Diane will not be leaving our great State. I want to emphasize that. She is going to retire in Louisiana, and I hope she enjoys every moment—every single moment—she gets to sleep in after December 18. No one can argue—no fair-minded person can argue—that she hasn't earned a rest, even though her familiar weather forecast will be sorely missed in a State that takes more than our fair share of beatings from Mother Nature.

I thank you for the chance to honor Diane Deaton. I thank you for the chance to honor Diane Deaton for all of her hard work on behalf of everyone who relies on WAFB-TV for news and for everyone in Louisiana and Baton Rouge whom her volunteer work has touched—and that numbers in the hundreds of thousands.

Diane, may the years ahead bring as much joy to you as you have brought to our State and our community. God bless you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, for many years, I have supported the annual National Defense Authorization Act. The bill always contains many worthy provisions, and it usually passes with large majorities. After all, who wants to vote no when the common refrain to pass the bill is "Support the troops"? But at some point you have to draw the line, and this year is where I draw it.

Just look at these bills over the last few years. Five years ago, the NDAA was 968 pages—not unusual around here and something you can get your hands around. But last year, the NDAA report was 1,794 pages, and this year the report is an astonishing 4,517 pages—not even counting the classified annexes. I doubt anyone really knows what is in it except maybe some lobbyists.

And get this: As the bill grew more than sixfold in length, we had even less time to read it. The number of people who could read the bill at any one time was restricted. Social distancing—"Can't have too many people in the room," we were told. That is fine. I understand. We are still in a pandemic. But then we should have had more time to review the bill, not less. Yet Armed Services Committee members were asked on this floor last week to sign the bill after having only a couple of hours to review it.

As this massive bill was written in secret and then rushed to a vote, some seem to have forgotten to consult with the Commander in Chief or recall that he has veto power. It is pretty well known that the President wants the bill to reform or repeal section 230, the giveaway to Big Tech oligarchs who get to censor the American people without consequence.

The bill stiff-arms the President. There is not a word in more than 4,500 pages about section 230. The sponsors claim they couldn't airdrop provisions into the bill at the last minute. I take the point. I am not sure the President will, though, and he is the one with the veto.

But there is more. The bill condemns the President for proposing to move some troops out of Germany and restricts his ability to do so, even though NATO's frontier has shifted hundreds of miles to the east and Germany hasn't exactly carried its share of the NATO load. The Senate didn't debate this major policy change. Our earlier bill didn't even mention it. As far as I am concerned, this provision was, to borrow a phrase, airdropped without appropriate consultation with committee members. And for the record, I am a senior member of the committee, but I only learned about this provision in the newspaper on Friday, 2 days after I was asked to sign the bill.

It would appear the standard for airdropping provisions into the bill is that we won't airdrop things that support the President's priorities, but we will airdrop stuff that thwarts his priorities. I doubt that will get past the President's veto either.

This failure to consult committee members is not an isolated incident. The President's 5G plan released valuable but unused spectrum owned by the government. The Pentagon protested mightily but only with vague evidence. We had a hearing on this issue, and it sharply divided committee members. Yet, again, this bill disrupts the President's plan, and, again, we learned about it only after the fact.

Another thing that happens behind closed doors is broken promises. We were promised last summer that the radical Warren amendment wouldn't survive the conference committee. Not only did it survive; not a single word was changed.

You may have heard about the Warren amendment. You probably heard that it would merely rename some Army bases that are named after Confederate officers. There is no harm in having that debate. I have always found it curious that we don't have a base named after say U.S. Grant or John Pershing.

Yet the Warren amendment is far more radical than merely renaming a few bases. The amendment explicitly applies to all military property. That is a lot more than bases. It includes military museums, service academies, and cemeteries. Do you think I am exaggerating? I am not. Read the bill: no exceptions for museums, for academies, even for cemeteries.

Let me give you just one example. The West Point library contains portraits of Grant and Lee in close proximity, two commanders of the Civil War, juxtaposed as today's cadets learn the history of our Nation, our Army, and their own school. But that painting may have to come down. So I suppose tomorrow's cadets may learn that Grant defeated an unnamed enemy with an unnamed commander and accepted surrender from no one at Appomattox.

But if you really want to see the radical consequence of the Warren amendment, just look across the river to Arlington National Cemetery, our Nation's most sacred ground. Those gardens of stone stretch in symmetrical rows across the horizon, except for a single odd section laid out in circles, rather than rows, and with pointed headstones, rather than rounded ones. The 482 graves in Section 16 contain the remains of Americans who rebelled against our country. That section also contains a memorial to those who died in that rebellion.

We should be grateful that those rebels and their cause lost on the battlefield. Yet we should also be mindful of the historical context of this patch of our most sacred ground. Section 16 of Arlington was created as a symbol not of secession but of reconciliation by the very men who had fought for the Union.

President William McKinley—a decorated veteran of the Union Army, promoted three times for battlefield valor—oversaw its creation. In a display of magnanimity, he declared—in

front of the Georgia legislature, of all places—that the Federal Government would assume responsibility for Confederate graves. He then signed a bill authorizing the reinterment of Confederate soldiers at Arlington.

Senator WARREN apparently believes that she knows better how to handle the legacy of our Civil War than did the Union veterans who bled and defeated the Confederacy on the field of battle, or even Barack Obama, who continued a longstanding Presidential tradition in 2009 of sending a wreath to the Confederate section of Arlington on Memorial Day.

If the professor gets her way, a crane may drive into Arlington and rip out the memorial whose history dates back to President McKinley and which was honored just a few years ago by President Obama. Again, I am not exaggerating. In the committee markup, Senator WARREN said that is exactly what she wants to happen. And if that happens, maybe the professor will be applauded in faculty lounges, but my perspective is a little different.

I served at Arlington with the Old Guard. My soldiers and I laid to rest our Nation's heroes. A lot of those funerals started in Section 16. Before those funerals started, we talked sometimes about that odd section and the war that occasioned it. After all, the Army has a lot of amateur Civil War historians. We were proud to wear the uniform of and be the heirs to Grant and Sherman and Sheridan—the great warriors who saved the Union and vindicated freedom and equality for all.

We also had a little humility. We didn't presume that we knew better than Grant and McKinley how to heal our Nation's wounds after the Civil War, or that we knew better than Abraham Lincoln, who called for "malice toward none, with charity for all."

Maybe Senator WARREN and the Jacobins in our streets repudiate the wisdom of Lincoln and Grant and McKinley. Perhaps they think Lincoln should be canceled. A mob tried to tear down his statue just a few blocks from here last summer. Too many of these Jacobins condemn our Nation as racist to its core. They look at the Confederacy and see not a rebellion against America but the true heart of America. So, naturally, their iconoclasm doesn't stop with tearing down statues of Lee but moves right away to statues of Washington, Lincoln, and Grant. They tried to tear down those last summer, too, if you recall.

I will never stand by while Jacobins tear down statues of Washington, Lincoln, and Grant, nor will I support a bill that permits a crane to drive into Arlington and desecrate that sacred ground. We celebrate the triumph of the Union and the cause of freedom and equality and the defeat of the Confederacy, but why does it follow that we have to rip paintings off the walls of libraries and museums and tear down war memorials in Arlington National Cemetery?

And I suspect a lot of other Senators wouldn't support this bill either if they knew what it does. And that takes me back to a larger problem. We were promised this radical language wouldn't be part of the final bill, but that promise was discarded behind closed doors. Now, we have a 4,500-page bill at the last minute in the rush to fund the government and pass another coronavirus relief bill before the holidays, all with the Presidential veto hanging over it.

An overlong bill negotiated behind closed doors, dropped at the last minute, major policy shifts without consensus or even much debate, broken promises, wishful thinking about a veto threat—these are the hallmarks of an NDAA process that has deteriorated rapidly in recent years. That has to change. If it doesn't change this month, mark my words, it will change next year.

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. 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.

TRIBUTE TO DOUG JONES

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, sadly, I return to the floor today to say farewell to another Member who will conclude his time in the Senate at the end of the term, the junior Senator from Alabama, DOUG JONES.

We all know DOUG came to the Senate as a storied courtroom lawyer and U.S. attorney, but fewer people know about his more humble origins. DOUG was born and raised in Fairfield, AL, just outside of Birmingham, the son of a steelworker, the grandson of a coal miner. When he was 19 years old, he spent his summer working at the local cotton tie mill, 10 hours a day, 6 days a week.

One day, a freak accident sent a bit of shrapnel flying his way, and he came within inches of losing an eye. Several stitches later, DOUG went right back to work—early evidence of a stubborn streak. Only at the end of the summer did DOUG decide it was time to focus a bit more on his studies.

That same work ethic—the sometimes stubborn work ethic—followed him his entire life. He brought it next to law school. On the one occasion DOUG decided to skip class, it wasn't to throw a pigskin around the quad or engage in some extracurricular activity with friends. No, DOUG skipped class to attend the trial of the Klansman ring-leader of the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church, a tragedy that had shaken the conscience of a nation.

A young DOUG JONES was moved by the disposition of justice in that trial, but he was left with the impression that other members of the conspiracy had escaped the reach of the law. Only

a scriptwriter could have imagined that 24 years later, that law school truant would become the U.S. attorney in Alabama and that his office would uncover the evidence to bring charges against two more Klan members involved in the bombing, and that 40 years after that awful crime, DOUG JONES would win the conviction of the remaining conspirators, delivering a long-delayed yet righteous justice.

History would repeat itself a few years later, when DOUG would again find himself at the center of events. DOUG was eating breakfast one day just blocks away from the scene of the bombing of the All Women Health Clinic. He took charge that day and made sure that investigators and first responders worked together in perfect unison. DOUG would later go on to secure the indictment of Eric Rudolph, the perpetrator of that heinous bombing, as well as the Olympic Park bombing 2 years later.

Of course, not every one of DOUG's cases involved matters of life and death. The U.S. attorney's office once prosecuted local officials for trying to steal an election by bribing absentee voters with cash, beer, and a little liquor for good measure. Now, if only the defendants had known about DOUG's affinity for bourbon.

Kidding aside, kidding aside, those years revealed for DOUG something profound about public service and government: You can have the best laws in the world in principle, but it takes dedicated effort to make the law work for everyone in practice, to take our ideals of justice and equality and fairness and opportunity and make them real in the everyday lives of citizens.

DOUG brought that revelation with him to this Chamber. He worked with his trademark determination to finally repeal the widow's tax. He helped pass legislation to permanently fund historically Black colleges and universities. He has worked across the aisle to combat veteran suicide, strengthen the VA, and support our military bases—so important to the great State of Alabama.

Not every issue would be so easy or so bipartisan, especially for a new Senator facing a difficult reelection, but every time DOUG approached a politically sensitive vote—and I marveled at this—he was untroubled. He would do what he always did: He would act on principle. He would vote his conscience—politics be damned. President Kennedy had a phrase for Senators whose abiding loyalty to their conscience triumphed over all personal and political considerations. He called them profiles in courage. DOUG JONES is a profile in courage for our times.

But before I get carried away with too many grand compliments, it is important to remind colleagues that DOUG JONES, as a human being, is just a joy to be around. Just ask his good friend, the Senator from Montana. More than once DOUG would catch Senator TESTER giving an impassioned

speech on the floor and think to himself: I will bet you he didn't turn his phone off. Let me give him a ring and see what happens.

(Laughter.)

Just look at DOUG's office, festooned with memorabilia of every particular: Crimson Tide footballs and keepsakes from his favorite bands. You can go see his rocking chair—one of those southern-veranda, sweet-tea-drinking chairs—and baseballs signed by Presidents, statesmen, and most impressively to this Yankee fan, Joe DiMaggio.

If DOUG JONES has one hobby besides hunting, it is autograph hunting. He has managed to collect a signature on a baseball from every Senator in this Chamber today, including its newest Member. The junior Senator from Arizona was sworn in only a week ago, but 5 seconds after he lifted his hand from that Bible, there was DOUG to congratulate him, furnishing a clean baseball, ready for Mr. KELLY's John Hancock.

That is DOUG JONES—someone who never let the immense pressure of this job change who he is, someone who has made life a joy for everyone in our caucus, and someone who understands that, at the end of the day, we get sent to this Chamber to make life better for our constituents, to do it courageously even when the odds are not in our favor.

I will end with one final story. Several years ago, DOUG was asked to participate in a stage adaptation of his favorite work of fiction, "To Kill a Mockingbird," which, of course, includes his literary icon, another great Alabama lawyer, Atticus Finch.

Hearing DOUG's life story, you would be forgiven for thinking it was ripped from the pages of that Harper Lee classic, so perhaps it was fate that one day DOUG would be asked to play a part in that story. There was just one hiccup: DOUG was asked to play the judge. So he never got to deliver that passage, shortly after the death of Mrs. Dubose, when Atticus explains to his son that real courage is not a man with a gun in his hand; "[real courage is] when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes"—sometimes—"you do."

DOUG spent his time in the Senate—indeed, his whole life—embodying the courage that Atticus describes. The story of the 16th Street bombings is a reminder of the fact that even against tremendous evil and seemingly impossible odds, if you are dogged and determined and see it through no matter what, sometimes you do win and justice prevails.

So while DOUG didn't get to play Atticus Finch that weekend at the Virginia Samford Theater in Birmingham, that is OK. It was already the role of his lifetime.

DOUG has said that it is the greatest honor of his life to fill the seat of his mentor, Senator Howell Heflin.

DOUG, you upheld the honor of that seat, and you have set an example for every Senator who will follow in it.

Whatever the next chapter of your life may bring, the entire Senate Democratic family wishes you and your family the very, very best and politely requests that you do not call us when we are in the middle of giving a speech.

(Laughter.)

I yield to my friend, the very distinguished and wonderful, wonderful, wonderful junior Senator from the great State of Alabama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. JONES. Mr. President, I thank the minority leader for those remarks. I am humbled.

You know, everyone knows the old saying "My, how time flies when you are having fun." My time here has drawn to a close, but despite the difficulties, the challenges, despite the rancor that we often see in this body, as well as Washington, DC, I can honestly say I have had a lot of fun. The last 3 years have been amazing, and I have loved being a Member of this body.

I actually was able to accomplish a few things, thanks to you. But you have been fun; you have not just been kind. It has really been good.

By the way, your staffs have been awesome. I know you hear that a lot from constituents. Maybe you don't hear it enough from other Senators. Your staffs have been amazing to us, and I really very much appreciate it.

You know, as the minority leader said, everybody knows I am a baseball fan. If you go into that office, you will see in my reception area all 100 baseballs that I had signed. And it was fun getting them—either here on the floor or in a committee room, at the retreat that the Democrats had. There were so many who had never signed a baseball, and you figured out that it wasn't easy to sign a baseball.

(Laughter.)

And even those who signed in their office, when we sent them to their office, they always came up and talked about it. It was a time to put politics aside and just talk a little bit—something we really don't do enough of around here, leaving the weighty politics and responsibilities that we have just to sign a baseball and talk about how much fun it was.

I remember, right after I was elected, I was talking to a friend of mine, dreaming big about the things that we could accomplish that would make a difference in the lives of the people of Alabama and the people of America. We talked about the possibility that we could work on a bill as important as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But I knew—I knew, though—that such opportunities were not likely, especially in what I knew to be a 3-year window and not knowing what the future would hold—

although, I have got to be honest, I had a pretty doggone good idea when I got here.

If there was one thing my momma always taught me, it was to be realistic about things. I knew it was going to be tough, but to even have an opportunity to talk and work on things that bring such transformational changes—those kind of things come along once in a generation, if we are lucky. They are that legislative equivalent of a perfect game in baseball. You are lucky if you get to be part of that in your career, but you always have to hope and you have to strive for the possible, not just the likely.

For those of you who really don't know about baseball—there may be a few—a perfect game is just that: nine innings, three outs, three up, three down. Everything has to work together in synchrony. It is not just the pitcher who throws balls and strikes; it is the outfielder who catches the fly; it is the second baseman who has to get the out and throw the runner out at first. Everyone has to fall in line and work together as a team—as a team. And it is not just that; it is the people on the field. They are all working and they are all striving for the same goal. As it turned out, I didn't get a chance to be part of a perfect game. I didn't think I would, but I didn't get that chance.

Sometimes I worry, as many of you do—especially if you listened to the farewell speeches of LAMAR ALEXANDER and TOM UDALL and MIKE ENZI and others—you worry if those perfect games can ever be had in this Senate again. I worry about that. But we always come close, and I came close.

Right after I got here, I got invited to be part of the Common Sense Caucus, which I had to explain to people in Alabama that that is really not an oxymoron, that there is common sense up here.

But within 6 weeks of being up here, I was at SUSAN COLLINS' office with so many here—some 20 Senators, Republican, Democratic—talking about immigration, working on immigration reform. It was the hottest topic of the day, an important topic that is still important today. I just marveled at the fact that here I was, 6 weeks into this, and I was in that room being a part of those discussions.

What was even more astonishing to me is that people actually wanted to hear what I had to say. That didn't happen, having raised three children, been married. I don't always get that, when people want to know what you have got to say. But they did, and I was so gratified, and I was so honored.

We would meet in Senator COLLINS' office. We would meet in hideaways. It was exciting. And we came so close. You all remember that? We came so close, within about three votes of doing what they said couldn't be done, of doing something that was possible but not probable.

That sense, what I saw of my colleagues, is why we ran for the Senate.

I could see it. I could feel it in those rooms, in those discussions. I could see it on the floor that day as people were voting. It is why we wanted to be in this body.

I remember sitting in the cloakroom, and I was as disappointed as ever when we failed. And for a long time, probably still to this day, when I am asked “What is your most disappointing day in the Senate?” I will always talk about that vote that failed so close, which was so important. But what it did demonstrate is, through that effort—effort—that anything is possible. You have got to come close sometimes before you get across the finish line. You have got to play in the red zone a little bit before you get the touchdown. You have got to hit that line.

But whatever we did, it is possible. The Senate is capable of great things, if we do them, of bridging divides that society may view as too wide to cross. We can do that. It is not that wide between here and there. It is not that wide, and people need to know it and respect it.

I am not the first and I certainly will not be the last to talk about the importance of bringing people together who hold opposing views and working toward what is both possible and palatable. But all too often the desire to do that kind of gets lost among other actions that don't quite match the words that we say.

I noticed the other day how many heads were nodding in the farewell speech of Senator ALEXANDER, Senator ENZI, and Senator UDALL. And then what happens? I have looked at a lot of farewell speeches in the last month. They all say a lot of the same things, and everybody, I am sure, nods.

We have got to do better. You have to do better. I don't think I fully appreciated it. And I listened to the minority leader talk about where I come from in Fairfield, but I don't think I fully appreciated it until fairly recently. It seems like I just kind of love a lost cause. It seems like every time that there is something that needs me there, I am there—fighting for justice for others, for others who feel like hope is lost, from the church bombing case to a Senate election in Alabama. I fought for those causes because I believe in hope. I believe in redemption. I believe in the possibility. Some may call that naive, and many have, but I have not been afraid to touch on the so-called “third rail” issues of our political system because I believe that, right now especially, there is no time for caution.

My first speech on the Senate floor was about gun violence. No one could believe a Senator from Alabama actually talked about how we can stop gun violence in a way that made some sense—not from an extreme view on the right or an extreme view on the left but right there in ways that made sense.

It was a topic that I knew could have easily been twisted into a negative

campaign ad—which, by the way, it was.

(Laughter.)

We saw it coming. But I also knew action was so important. We took some small steps on that issue over the last 3 years, despite a lot of political pressure to the contrary, and I hope you will do more in the years ahead because lives will depend on it.

Everything doesn't have to be a perfect game. There is great satisfaction in the day-to-day triumphs. You can and we did hit a home run or two and more than our share of singles and doubles. I am really proud of the 20-plus bills that I led or co-led, bipartisan bills, that have been signed into law over the last 3 years. None would have been possible without bipartisan work.

One of my first original bills, the Civil Rights Cold Case Records Collection Act would never have become law without the commitment of Senator CRUZ to help bring long-overdue closure to the victims of those terrible crimes.

I see TED in the back. I appreciate Senator CRUZ's involvement in that. I will have to say, it was so much fun, after we got that done, to go back home and tell that to all my Democratic friends. What is your proudest? I said: Well, the proudest moment right now is with my partner, TED CRUZ. They said: Aha.

But it shows what is possible, folks. And it was an important bill. None of those bills have meant more to me, though, than the bipartisan effort that I led with Senator COLLINS to eliminate the military widow's tax that for almost two decades had deprived widows of full survivors' benefits that they deserved.

So many of you went to bat for that bill: Senator REED, Senator INHOFE, and others. You were getting a lot of pressure, not from me or SUSAN COLLINS. You were getting pressure from a lot of those military widows. They had been up here for 20 years, and for 20 years the dollars and cents had prevented that from becoming a reality. We fought on that because we knew what we were doing was right. We knew it was right that you could not put a price on the duty we owe to the men and women of our armed services and their families.

I will never forget that day in December when we passed the NDAA that included the elimination of the widow's tax. In the Gallery, there was a large group of Gold Star widows who had been up here for 20-plus years to try to get that done, never being able to reach the goal. And on that day, we did it. You did it. SUSAN and I got a lot of credit, but it was this body, with the help of some folks in the House, that made it happen. That was just one of the memorable days on the floor.

Swearing-in day was unbelievable—simply an explosion of emotions. To walk on the floor as a U.S. Senator, some 37 years after I left the floor with my old boss as a young staffer to my

mentor Howell Heflin, and to take the oath of office for his seat was just really a remarkable circle of life.

There are two especially significant things about that day too. One is that I hope that you all recognize by now that the freshman class of 2018 will likely go down in history as one of the greatest freshman classes ever. The team of SMITH and JONES can't be beat. It is as American as apple pie. I was really proud and honored to be there with TINA SMITH that day.

I was also honored, if you recall, that there were three Vice Presidents on the floor of the Senate that day. Now President-Elect Joe Biden escorted me in. Former Vice President Walter Mondale escorted Senator SMITH. MIKE PENCE, the current Vice President, swore us in. And, actually, if you now think about it, we had a fourth—soon-to-be Vice President KAMALA HARRIS. That is a pretty remarkable time—pretty remarkable.

It was also a remarkable day when what I hope is going to be a new tradition in the Senate took place: When we had on two different occasions, once each year, six Senators—three Democrats and three Republicans—reading Dr. King's “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” That document remains one of the most significant in American history, and it is as important today as it was when it was written in 1963—and, in some ways, maybe more important for the moment we find ourselves in. I have asked—and I know he will do this—my colleague Senator BROWN to carry on that tradition in my absence.

And then there was the day of the swearing-in in January of 2019. I was here to observe, to pay my respects to all those who were returning and for those who were joining. And as I was standing in the back by the cloakroom, Senator TESTER walks up and says: JONES, what are you doing?

You can't get anything past TESTER. There were probably a few profanities laded in there as well, if you know Senator TESTER.

I said: Well, JON, what do you think I am doing—with probably a couple of other kind of milder profanities.

He said: Look, DAINES is caught in a snowstorm back home and can't make it here, and I would like for you to escort me down when I take the oath.

As it turns out, it is likely to be the only time I get to do that—and it was a true honor, my friend.

Simply sitting at this desk is perhaps the greatest thing, taking this place in and watching each of you, noting the bipartisanship, especially as we close the Congress—especially as we close this Congress—and how Senators move freely from one side of the aisle to the other. Occasionally, I will tell you, I confess, that I just come back here by myself, and I will open this drawer and will read the names of the Senators who sat here: John Kennedy, Ed Muskie, Hubert Humphrey, my colleague Senator SHELBY, and so many others. And it is just overwhelming.

You know, growing up, it was always the Presidents or Presidential candidates who captured my attention. I knew the names of some Senators, but that began to change for me watching the Senate Select Committee on Watergate when I was in college. It was a remarkable time and a remarkable committee. And then everything changed again in 1979 while I was studying for the bar and got a phone call from Senator Heflin's chief of staff, Mike House. I had campaigned for the judge. Mike offered me a 1-year position on Heflin's Judiciary subcommittee, which I eagerly took. That year not only changed my life but brought about a respect for this body, for the Senate—as an institution, as individuals, and for so many of its Members—that I had never had before. From that point on, folks, I was hooked. I was hooked on this body—before being elected to the Senate. And now I have come to love the Senate a lot and, importantly, all of the possibilities that go with it, which is why I don't really want to spend my last moments on the floor talking about what I have done. I want to talk about what needs to be done, what can be done, what is possible.

You know, even back in 2017, people said it was just not possible to elect a Democrat from Alabama to the U.S. Senate—and here I have been.

It is possible to make affordable quality healthcare a reality for all Americans. The ACA right now is the best hope and only plan that is out there. As President Obama said—and everybody should do this—if there is a better plan you can come up with, put it out there. Let's do it. I will publicly support it.

The goal is healthcare for everyone in some way. There are so many in this country and in my State of Alabama who desperately need it—before, during, and after this COVID crisis. It is possible to give people in remote and rural areas access to healthcare, but it is going to take a lot of work, and it is going to take getting out of partisan corners.

It is possible to provide a quality education to every American child. I know education is often funded locally, but it is possible to do it. You just have to roll up your shirt sleeves and get it done.

It is possible to extend broadband—access to broadband—to all Americans and bring every man, woman, and child into the modern era, just like we did—the Congress did—with Franklin Roosevelt in the Rural Electrification Act in the 1930s. Broadband is the new power. It is possible to do that. High speed and affordable, that is key—affordable broadband.

It is possible to ease the burdens on working-class Americans by setting a minimum wage that is not going to hamstring businesses but will raise the quality of living for so many in this country. So many in my State are in poverty, but yet they work. They work.

They work hard, but yet they are still below that poverty level. We need to do what we can to lift them out of that poverty. It takes a lot of work. It takes hard work.

It is possible for law enforcement to serve and protect all Americans—not just some—to root out the systemic racism that exists within law enforcement by enlisting the support of both law enforcement and the communities. It is possible.

I will candidly tell you another great disappointment was when we let that moment pass this summer—hoping that with a new President, maybe a new Senate, maybe a new Congress, we could get something accomplished. I hope that that still happens, but I was disappointed we let that moment pass this summer when all of the country and all of the world was behind us to say: Please do something. Please do something that we have known about for decades, for centuries. Please do something.

Law enforcement said: Let's do something.

We let it pass. But it is never too late to do the right thing. It is never too late for justice.

It is possible to ensure that every eligible voter is able to cast a ballot and have it counted. Now is the most important opportunity we have seen in 2020—concerns about our election process; that it might have been stolen; that there might have been fraud. Use that opportunity to say: Let's don't let these allegations have any credence going forward. Let's get together. The technology is there.

Figure out a way that together we can make our election safe and secure and that all people will have access to the ballot box—all people who are eligible to vote in this country.

It is possible for our system of justice to treat all Americans equally—not just talk about it, but to do it. It is what I have tried to do throughout my career. It is possible.

And this is going to be a challenge. It is possible to restore the American people's faith in government. And we all know right now that that faith has been shaken for many, many reasons. The faith has been shaken, but it is possible to restore it. It is possible for each of us to learn—as Atticus Finch taught us—to see things from another person's point of view, to walk around in their skin or in their shoes, to see things from other's point of view, to find that common ground.

It is possible for us to realize that deep down that progress is not a zero-sum game, that a rising tide lifts all boats.

These things are not easy. They take dedication and hard choices, but they are worthy goals. I know many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are dedicated to the same goals, and though I won't be able to cosponsor anything with you from this point on or debate the amendments in committee—if you get amendments in com-

mittee—I am going to support you in whatever efforts I can, no matter what side of the aisle your desk is on. And I will keep working toward the same goals too, even after I leave this place.

Remember, though, as we get into the vitriol, as we get into political rhetoric—just remember the Jones law of politics, adapted from Newton's third law. Just remember that for every action, even in politics, there is an equal and opposite reaction. If you go too far on one side or the other, you are going to get a reaction on the other side, just as hard. And that makes it harder and harder to reach that common ground.

You know, in Senator BROWN's book about his desk and the people in his desk, he quotes the political philosopher Hannah Arendt who observed: "The good things in history are usually of very short duration, but afterwards have a decisive but a short time of influence"—a long influence—"over what happens over long periods of time."

A short time—and I know you may be thinking, well, DOUG was only here 3 years; so that is what he is talking about. But I am not. In history, I am looking at something bigger—whether it was Martha McSally's 2 years or my 3; Senator GARDNER's 6; Senator UDALL's 12; Senator ALEXANDER's 18; or ENZI's and ROBERTS' 24; or, if you are like PAT LEAHY, since Moses was in the bulrushes.

Our time here is short. There is not anybody on this floor right now who is not thinking about their time since they were sworn in and said that it was just like yesterday, because it was. Our time is short. It is of a limited duration, and we have to act like that. We have to make sure that every day we are moving.

It has been a realization of a long-held dream. I have so many to thank: Doug Turner, who is here; Joe Trippi, on my campaigns; and my late friend, Giles Perkins; and an amazing family: my bride Louise, my rock; my two boys, Carson and Christopher, who have wanted to kill both me and Louise since they have been living at home during the pandemic. They have been incredibly supportive. And then my daughter Courtney and her husband Rip and her two beautiful girls, my granddaughters, who are still the brightest stars in my sky, Ever and Ollie.

I am grateful to each of you, my colleagues, and all that you helped me with.

I am grateful to an amazing staff. I am not going to go all the way through it. They have been true rock stars. I am going to enter something into the RECORD about my staff.

I am grateful for the advice and counsel of Alabama's senior Senator and an old friend, Senator SHELBY. While RICHARD and I may disagree on many policies, we share a commitment to the people of Alabama to make sure that we do all we can to get the people in Alabama the quality of life that

they deserve, and I so much appreciate Richard's service to the people of the State of Alabama, his long and distinguished service—which started out as a Democrat, by the way, just saying. That is where the seed was planted, folks.

I also want to mention briefly the chairmen of the committees I worked on: Senator CRAPO, Senator INHOFE, Senator ALEXANDER—who was one of the first people who helped me come over—and the work that we did together. You pulled me and helped me. Senator COLLINS, who chaired the Aging Committee.

But I am especially grateful for the ranking members of those committees: Senators BROWN, CASEY, MURRAY, and REED. Their friendship and counsel have been invaluable.

Of course, I want to thank the minority leader for all of his work for me and on behalf of me. And as I think you guys know—not always the people of Alabama—Senator SCHUMER never tried to put puppet strings on me. I know I got accused of that, but he never ever tried and, for that, I am very grateful.

To the people of Alabama, I promised to do my best to represent each of you, whether or not you voted for me, and I am proud of the work that we did on your behalf and that I have accomplished on your behalf. Thank you to the people for giving me the honor of serving you as your Senator.

Finally, I am going to resist the urge to tell you what is wrong with the Senate, how it operates today. You hear it virtually every time a Senator gives a farewell address, and, instinctively, you know it deep down. But I will offer you this. There is a book I finished reading recently that Ira Shapiro, a former staffer, wrote. Many of you may remember or know Ira. He wrote a book called "The Last Great Senate." It ought to be required reading for every Senator coming in. It was published 8 years ago, about the two Congresses during the Carter administration and how they operated—Bob Byrd as majority leader, Howard Baker as the minority leader, how they got things done for the American people. The author laments that the Senate doesn't operate today in that fashion. I was here for one of those years. Senator LEAHY was here during that time.

His closing is even more important today as it was when the book was published. He said:

America is adrift in turbulent and dangerous waters. Facing enormous challenges at home and abroad, we urgently need our once-vaunted political system to function at its best, instead of at its worst. To be sure, it is more difficult being a senator today than it was in the 1960's and 1970's. The increasingly vitriolic political culture, fueled by a twenty-four-hour news cycle, the endless pressure to raise money, the proliferation of lobbyists and demanding, organized interests are all well known, and they take a toll. But all of those factors make it more essential that our country has a Senate of men and women who bring wisdom, judg-

ment, experience, and independence to their work, along with an understanding that the Senate must be able to take a collective action in the national interest.

Please remember that as you go about the country's business; remember that as you go about the Senate's business; remember that as you go about your business as a Senator. And as you do, keep and preserve the reverence that the Founders envisioned for this body. As former Majority Leader Mike Mansfield once said, "The constitutional authority . . . does not lie with the leadership. It lies with all of us, individually, collectively, and equally. . . . In the end, it is not the Senators as individuals who are of fundamental importance. . . . In the end, it is the institution of the Senate. It is the Senate itself as one of the foundations of the Constitution. It is the Senate as one of the rocks of the Republic."

Something we should all remember.

One more little bit of advice. Take out the word "negotiation" when you are talking about legislation. Don't talk about negotiating this bill or that bill, whether it is COVID relief or even appropriations. It works, but let me tell you what is happening out there, what is happening out there with the people. They hear those words, and they think this is some side or the other trying to get an advantage. It is like labor and unions. It is like a civil or criminal lawsuit. Somebody is trying to get an advantage to try to do things for their own interests.

We can talk about it from the Democratic side of how we are working for the people; we are negotiating for the people. We can talk about it from the Republican side; that we are negotiating for patriotism and businesses to make sure they are protected. But what is being heard by the American people is this is all about Democrats; this is all about Republicans and getting that political power.

Talk about common ground. Talk about sitting down with the administration or whomever and finding common ground. Talk about the goals that you agree on and how to get there. "Negotiation" is just a bad word, and I hate that, but it is.

As I prepare for the next chapter of my life's journey, there is a sadness of what I am going to leave behind, but there is also optimism—optimism, the glass half full, the men and women who serve in this body and their successors and the staff who support them. And I emphasize that, again, the staff who support them. Leading together will continue to bring a better future for the American people, for your constituents, for each of us together, not as a caucus but together as a Senate.

You are just a damn, unbeatable team. You are an unbeatable team.

May God bless you all. May God continue to bless the United States of America.

Mr. President, with a deep sense of humility and gratitude, I say for the last time, I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. What a good speech here. We don't hear them like that every day.

To my colleague Senator JONES, 3 years was not a long time here, but we feel his presence. I can tell you that I have known DOUG a long time. I remember I came to the U.S. House when he came up to work in the Senate for Senator Heflin in the Judiciary Committee and so forth.

I supported him when he was nominated by President Clinton to be the U.S. attorney in the Northern District of Alabama, where he did a tremendous job. I worked with him day after day, as we all do, on a lot of issues that affected the country but affected, especially, our State of Alabama at times, and we worked hand in glove.

We have become friends. We have our differences, but we also have a lot of things that he talked about today where we would come together for the State and for the country.

I wish him well. I think we will hear more from him in the weeks ahead, in the months ahead. I certainly hope so. He has a lot to give.

He has a great family. He has a great wife in Louise and a great partner there.

He has a great staff and we worked together and we will continue to do this.

But one theme—and I like that he kept expounding on it here today—that if we work together in the Senate, Republicans and Democrats, we get things done; if not, things don't happen.

I wish Senator JONES Godspeed and wish him the best.

Mr. President, today I would like to speak about my fellow Alabama colleague and friend, Senator DOUG JONES.

I have known DOUG JONES since he was a young staffer working for Senator Howell Heflin on the Senate Judiciary Committee. During his 3 years as a Member in the Senate, I believe we have worked well together.

He and his staff have shown a lot of professionalism and class while in Washington. He is respected by all of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

While we may not agree on every policy, DOUG understands the Senate and respects the institution. It has been an honor to serve with him.

Annette and I have enjoyed spending time with DOUG and Louise, and we wish them all the best.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. I am going to be very, very short.

The truth is that serving with DOUG JONES has been a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me. This guy's last name shouldn't be JONES; it should be "Justice." He is somebody like nobody I

have ever seen, whose moral compass is so tuned into right that it has just been an incredible pleasure for me to be able to serve with him and to know him and to also wish him the best moving forward.

I don't think we have heard the last of DOUG JONES. DOUG is not the kind of person who will shrink away. There will be another moment where he can exhibit his ability of common sense, as he has done here in the U.S. Senate for the last 3 years.

I am deeply going to miss his friendship and his ability to sort the wheat from the chaff because he has been able to do that from day one and continued today with his farewell speech.

I just want to say, God bless you, DOUG JONES, and God bless your family.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I heard a lot about DOUG JONES before he got here from another courageous former U.S. attorney, Hal Hardin from Nashville. I was not disappointed when he arrived.

DOUG JONES reminds me of another former Democrat who was very effective in the Senate, Ted Kennedy. Ted Kennedy would come on the floor and make the most—well, no one could ever say he abandoned his principles, based upon his speeches. He would stand back there in the back, and the things he would say would rally any Republican Lincoln Day Dinner. In fact, all I had to do back in Tennessee to stir up the Republican crowd was to mention Ted Kennedy. I did that on a regular basis.

However, when I made my maiden address, without my knowing it, Ted Kennedy went around and got 20 cosponsors for the legislation I introduced that day, and I got a good dose of what it means to be an effective U.S. Senator, somebody who sticks to his or her opinions but, at the same time, who knows we are here to try to work on some sticky issues and get a result that most of us can vote for and that the country can accept.

In his time here, DOUG JONES did that. I got to watch him because he was a member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. Senator Kennedy used to chair that committee, working with Senator ENZI, Senator Gregg, Senator Hatch, and others to produce a lot of legislation. He used to say that committee has one-third of all the jurisdiction in the Senate. Maybe that is about right.

DOUG JONES was one of the newest Senators. We have 23 members. He was way down at the end of the line, but I noticed he always came and he always asked questions and he always listened. He seemed to me to be trying to say what he believed but learn from the witnesses how to get a result.

Let me just mention one contribution he made that I think will stick with him and with the people of Alabama and this country for a long time.

That was the work we did in 2019. Senator MURRAY and I, DOUG JONES, Senator TIM SCOTT, Senator BENNET of Colorado were on it from the beginning to do two things at once that helped low-income Americans who wanted to go to college.

The first was to simplify the dreaded FAFSA, the Federal Aid application form that 20 million Americans fill out every year that is 108 questions long. About 90 of them are unnecessary; everybody agrees. For years, we have been working on that to try to simplify it. Finally, we got a significant part of that done.

DOUG JONES played a major role in that because what that legislation did was to say to the low-income family in Alabama or Tennessee or Arkansas or Illinois—wherever—you don't have to send your tax information into the Federal Government twice and let them then see if they can catch you making a mistake and hold up your Pell grant for 2 months while you figure that out. All you have to do is check a box, and the Internal Revenue Service will fill out the tax questions on your Pell grant application for you so that there is no chance of making a mistake. That made a big difference. And at the very same time, we agreed—Republicans and Democrats—to permanently fund historically Black colleges. It was a goal that had been there for a long time.

So I would say to my friend from Alabama that I hope he puts that on his wall somewhere because that helps a few hundred thousand low-income families in Alabama alone. There is some work still to be done on that to finish the job, to finish the FAFSA simplification, and there may be some other support for historically Black colleges that we might even be able to get done while you and I are still here.

Yet I wanted to acknowledge a Senator who arrived, went to work, stuck to his principles, worked across the aisle, and got results. You can't have a much better scorecard than that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I also rise to acknowledge my dear, dear friend DOUG, but I do it in a different vein. So many good things have been said, and I think anyone who knows DOUG or who has paid attention to what has been said today had found it has been very accurate as far as his having a commitment to the rule of law and his compassion for any person, especially for those who haven't had the same opportunities as all of us have had in life. That is what has moved us all. Yet I have gotten to see him in a different light.

He and Louise invited me down. I got to campaign with them, and it was all about Alabama. I got to go down and spend a couple of days. That tells you of the true person. It not only tells you what he believes and what he feels for the people of his State and how he rep-

resents them, but it truly tells us what the people of his State think of him. I saw it firsthand. I saw it at a football game. Now, Nick Saban and I grew up together in a small, little coal mining community.

I want you to know that Coach Saban and Terry, his wife, send their best. They want to thank you for your service.

To see the fans gather around DOUG and to see the happiness that he and Louise had when we were just out, going through the tailgates, was a wonderful, wonderful sight. That tells me everything about his purpose for being here. I hope those in Alabama know how truly fortunate they are to have this gentleman, who loves Alabama with every fiber and bone in his body. He has given them everything he has and has represented their State better than any State I have ever seen represented with the true passion that he has.

I love you, buddy. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have had the privilege of serving with many, many Senators of both parties and with very many whom I have applauded. Some stand out specially—some for their longevity and some for who they are. DOUG JONES stands out for who he is.

I think, in listening to his work as a prosecutor—of course, that is near and dear to my heart in my having been a prosecutor—I had never faced what he had. I think of his discussion of the summation he gave in the trial of the people involved with the bombing of the church in Alabama and the killing and maiming of youngsters. In fact, I had a chance to meet one of the survivors of that with DOUG, and I saw how she had felt about him all these years later because he had had the courage to stand up and do something that may not have been popular with some in his State, but that had been the right thing to do. In all of the years I have known him here, what he has done has been the right thing to do.

Now, I have only had one objection about him. He showed me a picture that was taken when this young man, DOUG JONES, was working for Howell Heflin—Judge Heflin, as I recall. They were standing there with these gray beards, and this Senator from Vermont asked: Who is the youngster in the picture?

Senator JONES, thank you for bringing that. I know Ann Berry, in my office, got a kick out of that because she had the opportunity to work with you.

We have done things that we have been able to joke about, like being in an airplane, where he was sitting in the front and I was sitting in the back. Fortunately, it was on the ground. Senator JONES hollered out to somebody, one of the military people there: Where is the button for the ejection seat for the back?

It caught my attention.

I have also seen this man sit there and try to discuss legislation. He would ask: How will that help people? I don't want this because it is politically beneficial to me. How will it help people?

I have heard about towns now in Alabama that I had never heard about. I have also heard things he would tell me about that would make me think of towns in Vermont and make me realize we were talking about the same problems. Never once would he say: These are Republicans or these are Democrats. He would say: These are people in Alabama who need help. So we would work on that.

I will speak further about this, but, Senator JONES, I think of you and your wonderful family. I think of the trips you and your wife and my wife and I have taken together, and I feel that I have been a better Senator for knowing you and traveling with you and listening to you. I will miss you, my friend, and I will speak further on this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there is something about this DOUG JONES. From the earliest stages in his life, he knew he was going to be a little bit different.

When I grew up in East St. Louis, IL, it was expected that my childhood hero would be St. Louis Cardinals great Stan "the Man" Musial. But when you grew up in Fairfield, AL—also a baseball fan as a boy—it turned out that your childhood heroes included Joe DiMaggio, Roger Maris, and Mickey Mantle. I am not sure how that goes over in the Deep South, to say that you are rooting for a team called the Yankees. But you did it, and you knew from the start, in your youth, that you were willing to strike out and do the radical, controversial thing.

You were 9 years old in September 1963 when four members of the Ku Klux Klan bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church in nearby Birmingham, killing four innocent, young girls who were not much older than you were. Fourteen years later, you were an idealistic, young law student who skipped class to sit in on the trial of the ringleader of that church bombing. You were mesmerized when listening to Alabama's then-attorney general—the lead prosecutor in the case—tell the jury: "It is never too late for justice." The jury agreed and convicted the bomber.

You would go on to marry Louise, and God blessed you with three beautiful children—two sons and a daughter. Yet the memories of those four little girls who were killed in their church never left you.

In his eulogy for the four fallen girls, Dr. Martin Luther King said that the girls "say to each of us, Black and White alike, that we must substitute courage for caution. They say to us that we must be concerned not merely about who murdered them but about the system, the way of life, and the philosophy which produced the mur-

derers. Their deaths say to us that we must work passionately and unrelentingly for the realization of the American dream."

I am sure a lot of people heard those words and nodded, but you heard those words, and you were inspired. In 2001, as the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Alabama, you led the successful effort to try and convict the remaining two coconspirators in the church bombing. Both men were sentenced to life in prison.

In that same office, you coordinated a joint State-Federal task force that led to the indictment of domestic terrorist Eric Rudolph. You advocated that Rudolph should stand trial first in Birmingham for the deadly bombing in that city of a women's health center before being tried in Atlanta for the Centennial Olympic Park bombing. All told, these and other bombings killed 2 people and injured more than 150. Rudolph pleaded guilty and was sentenced to four life terms in prison because of your commitment.

I was honored, during the course of the campaign, DOUG, to do a joint fundraiser with you and Louise and Loretta, my wife. I got to sit out on my deck in Springfield and listen to Jason Isbell and Joe Walsh. It was a lot of fun that night. Sometimes campaigns are fun. It certainly was to be with you and Louise on that particular night.

I want to close by saying that you shocked me on the floor of the Senate with your first speech. I couldn't believe that this new Senator from the State of Alabama would give a speech about guns and gun violence. It really told me all I needed to know about you right then and there. You are willing to stick out your neck for something you believe in, even if it is going to be controversial and even if you are going to catch hell for it, because you believe in it sincerely.

I know you are a proud hunter and gun owner, and there is no question in my mind about your views on that issue. Yet, after the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, FL, that took the lives of 49 young men and women—one of the worst mass shootings in the Nation's history—you supported tighter background checks for gun sales and raising the age requirement to purchase a semiautomatic weapon.

I want to personally thank you, as well, for showing exceptional political courage in cosponsoring my DACA legislation in the Dream Act. I will never forget it.

I am also proud that you were an original cosponsor of Justice in Policing. That wasn't an easy one either for anybody and for you especially, but you stood up for what you believed in. That is legislation that I joined in introducing with our friend CORY BOOKER and soon-to-be Vice President KAMALA HARRIS.

So you have left your mark. It may seem like a short time in the Senate, but there are those who have served for much longer who have a lot less to

show for it. You told us who you were on your first day, and you proved it every day thereafter. It has been an honor to count you as a colleague. I know that you are going to continue to find ways to bend that moral arc of the universe toward justice, and I look forward to supporting you in every way that I can in that goal. I wish you the best.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS RELIEF

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I came to the Senate 2 years ago because the people of Florida entrusted me to fight against the broken ways of Washington and the out-of-control spending that is threatening the future of our children and our grandchildren.

I am fighting every day against the political class in Washington—the same elites that scoff when people like me say that government needs to be run like a business. They say government is too complicated to run like a business, but I say that any elected official or government bureaucrat who believes that should resign tomorrow because they are part of the problem.

It is time to wake up. It is time to wake up to the fact that every dime spent in Washington belongs to American taxpayers, and every dollar spent now is a tax increase for a future generation.

It is time to wake up to the fact that our Nation is more than \$27 trillion in debt. Every cent we spend moving forward threatens our ability to fund our military and our safety nets like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

It is time to wake up to the fact that our position as the leader of the free world is not promised and shouldn't be taken for granted. Irresponsible career politicians who care more about their next election than the future of our country will run this Nation into the ground if we let them, and I am fighting like hell to make sure they don't.

Now, let me be clear. I support another relief measure to help our small businesses and individuals who are hurting because of the coronavirus.

For months, Senate Republicans have been trying to pass responsible and targeted measures to quickly help those in need. And for months, Democrats have blocked these measures because of politics.

NANCY PELOSI admitted it. She said she purposely stood in the way of the deal until after the Presidential election so that politics would be in their favor to avoid "considerations in the legislation that we don't want."

It is shameful and exactly why the American people are fed up with Washington.

Congress has already allocated \$2 trillion in direct and indirect aid to States and localities. And we know, unfortunately, because Congress tried to get this money out the door as quickly as possible, many programs within the CARES Act are riddled with waste, inefficiency, and fraud.

Now a group of my colleagues want to spend another trillion dollars, including almost \$200 billion to bail out liberal States with Governors who can't do the basic job they were elected to do—manage their own budgets. And we don't even know how much is still unspent from the previous coronavirus relief packages.

I have reached out to every single Governor—twice now—to learn exactly how they have spent the hundreds of billions of dollars they have already received, and only 10 have replied. They won't tell us because they don't want us to know there are still billions of dollars left unspent. They don't want us to know that the real purpose is to take taxpayer money meant to help get through this crisis and use it to backfill their inefficient and wasteful budgets and pension programs.

Liberal Governors and mayors around the country think the American people are stupid. They think taxpayers in States like Florida won't realize if the Federal Government uses their taxpayer money to bail out States like New York and California and pay for those States' wasteful spending.

Governor Newsom has had his hand out for a bailout despite the fact that California's tax revenues for this fiscal year are running \$9.9 billion or 18.6 percent above projections. Personal income tax revenue in October was \$1 billion—15.6 percent higher than in the previous October in California, and sales taxes were up 9.2 percent. For the last 4 months, overall revenue in California has exceeded spring forecasts and even 2019 collections.

This is a State that paid \$1.5 million to the chief investment officer of its public pension fund, who was actively investing in companies tied to the Chinese Communist Party, only to later find out this person was personally invested in companies with ties to the Chinese Communist Party. You can't make this stuff up. How is that for pension waste and a national security threat?

It is the same story with Governor Cuomo. New York's overall tax revenue was up 4.3 percent in September compared to September 2019.

These are the same Governors who are OK issuing new stay-at-home orders that are killing small businesses. As long as they get more money from the Federal Government to backfill their budgets and pension plans, they don't care how many people in their States have to suffer. These Governors and mayors don't care, as long as they don't have to follow their own oppressive rules.

Let's not forget about NANCY PELOSI and the hair salon, California Governor

Gavin Newsom dining at the French Laundry, Austin Mayor Steve Adler encouraging constituents to stay home from his timeshare in Mexico.

Do as I say, not as I do.

These liberal politicians who refuse to open their States or spend taxpayer money wisely are seeing high numbers of unemployment. Most of the States with the highest unemployment rate in the country are controlled by Democrats.

On the other hand, Republican-led States that are making the hard choices to get on a fiscally responsible path and reopen their economy safely are succeeding and seeing lower unemployment rates.

Thirty States have halved their unemployment rate since May, while real GDP grew 33 percent in the third quarter, erasing losses from the previous quarter. You can see there, this is from a Wall Street Journal editorial—if you haven't heard, "states are experiencing a surge of—tax revenue." Politicians don't want this good news to get out because they want to get more of our money from States like Florida to pay for the budgets of Illinois, New York, California, and New Jersey. You can see the GDP growth of 33 percent in that quarter.

Over here you can see States have seen a big drop-off in their unemployment rates by half over the last 6 months, and there has been a big growth in private sector employment, but it doesn't stop these liberal Governors and mayors from wanting more money.

Look, I know everyone wants to help our States, and so do I. We help our States by ensuring appropriate spending of the billions of dollars in taxpayer dollars already allocated. We help our States by safely opening the economy and getting Americans back to work. We help our States by sending money to schools to safely reopen and funding vaccine research and distribution.

Most States will be in a strong position to get through this pandemic without more Federal aid, and that is great news for our country. But we know New York, California, Illinois, New Jersey don't need bailouts; they want bailouts so they can use that money intended to address the fallout from COVID to backfill their long-standing budget problems and their pension problems.

I have said all along that I will not support that. It is not fair to the citizens of States like Florida, where over my 8 years as Governor, we made the hard choices—they were hard—that put our State on a fiscally secure path. We paid down our State debt. We cut taxes. We balanced our budget every year without borrowing money.

And \$908 billion—\$908 billion—of spending today equals a tax increase of \$7,000 per American family down the road. It is not money that we have. It is a tax increase of \$7,000 per American family down the line.

Many families in our country right now are trying to figure out how to celebrate this holiday season while they struggle to afford daily expenses. These are people we need to be helping.

You wouldn't run your business or family the way Washington is run—like there is an endless supply and no consequences to racking up unthinkable amounts of debt. That is what many of my colleagues want. But to keep spending money like this means taking away the same opportunities that I have had and others have had to live the American dream, and it will take it away from our children and our grandchildren.

It is time to wake up. It is time to make the hard choices to put our Nation on a path to recovery—recovery from this virus, from the economic devastation it has brought with it, and from the fiscal calamity that decades of politicians have ignored. That includes refusing to bail out wasteful States for their decades of poor fiscal choices.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

S.J. RES. 77

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, later today, we will vote on whether to go forward with the arms sales that the administration notified the Congress of a few weeks ago. These would be arms sales to the United Arab Emirates, equipment sales. These sales clearly would continue the 20 years of growth in our relationship, working side by side against common concerns and common enemies.

This really goes back through three different administrations, going back to 9/11 and beyond, where the UAE has consistently been willing to stand with us in at least six long-term deployments. They come; they stay. They are side by side with us in the field. They have been with us in the air. They are flying what has previously been our best piece of aircraft at a level that we would share it with other countries that are friends of ours.

This sale will continue that. It continues to allow even more interoperability between the United States and the UAE and Israel.

Israel, by the way, is totally supportive of this sale. The Ambassador from the United Arab Emirates and the Ambassador from Israel earlier this week had a public event where they both talked about the support of Israel for this sale.

As you know very well, our law requires a quantitative advantage for Israel when we sell them equipment. We have even a slightly different advantage, but being able to continue this relationship is important.

The F-35 jets, the MQ-9 unarmed aerial vehicles, advanced munitions—I think the total sale is about \$23.5 billion. And this is not any kind of gift from the United States to the UAE. This is the UAE making a purchase totaling \$23.5 billion for equipment that

is made by American companies and almost always by American workers.

In August, we had the first breakthrough in a diplomatic sense in the Middle East in a long time. President Trump deserves credit for that. Israel deserves credit for that. But the UAE deserves credit for that. The Abraham accords, where the UAE formally recognized Israel, began to have flights back and forth and other things that were significant in changing the environment in the Middle East, the most difficult part of the world—the greatest breakthrough in 40 years. But that followed a number of breakthroughs that weren't quite as public, where this relationship has grown—the Israel relationship with the UAE—just like our relationship has gotten stronger over time.

To see the recognition of the two governments together, to see Bahrain follow that—I think we are going to see other countries in the area decide that a region that lives in peace with Israel is a good thing for everybody involved, not a bad thing for anybody. So it is important.

I think how the Congress deals with this is significant. We have been notified as the law requires us to be notified. Under this notification process, I don't believe any sale has been denied, and only one sale has been altered.

The President has to agree. So if we debate this for hours and somehow it narrowly passes and the President vetoes it and we don't have the votes to override the veto, which I am confident we would not have—in fact, I think we very likely have the votes to go ahead and deal with this right here, right now. It is the right thing to do. It is the right time to do it. We will never have more of a long-term runway of how things under the Bush administration, the Obama administration, and the Trump administration have continued to progress to where the UAE has become a trusted ally.

Now, they have become a trusted ally and a trusted diplomatic partner in this important breakthrough. Having this kind of equipment not only allows us to be interoperable, but frankly, it creates the opportunities for American military and American technicians to be working with them every time you have an upgrade, every time you have a significant maintenance issue. That just further enhances, as does working through how that equipment is used afterwards—all of that further enhances the constant dialogue, the constant reinforcement of our friends who see common enemies and are working directly to move their country and their region in a much better direction.

I hope that the Senate today does what it needs to do and sends that message that we understand what Israel would like to see happen, what the UAE would like to see happen, and, frankly, what will happen and happens better if this debate focuses more on what that outcome produces, rather than a debate that makes people won-

der exactly what do you have to do to continue to be a trusted partner of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I would restate my request, whenever I come to the floor, that the Presiding Officer wear a mask because he has people sitting in front of him that could be at risk.

REMEMBERING PAUL SARBANES

Mr. President, this weekend, we lost a former Member of this body who truly embodied the spirit of service that should animate all of our work. His name is Paul Sarbanes. He passed away a few days ago. He was a longtime chair of the committee of the Presiding Officer.

As chair of the Banking and Housing Committee, he was always a voice for consumers and working families, standing up against powerful corporate interests. The accomplishment that bears his name, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, was a landmark law in our efforts to hold corporations accountable. It helped protect Americans who invest hard-earned money for retirement and for their kids' education from corporate banking fraud, the kind that bankrupted families after scandals like Enron.

Senator Sarbanes also never ignored the housing part of our committee's jurisdiction. He fought to make sure that all Americans could find and afford a place to call home. Whenever developers tried to make a deal in Maryland, he was always adamant they include affordable housing in their projects because, fundamentally, he never forgot where he came from. The son of Greek immigrants, Paul Sarbanes grew up a working-class kid, bussing tables at his family's restaurant on the Eastern Shore.

In the Senate, he cared about getting results for the people he served, not about getting the credit. Some of his colleagues called him the "stealth senator." He welcomed the nickname. He told the Baltimore Sun that stealth is "one of the most important weapons in our military arsenal. . . . If you let somebody else take the credit, you can get the result."

Senator Sarbanes was the definition of a true public servant. May he rest in peace as he joins his beloved wife Christine. Connie and I pray for Representative JOHN SARBANES, his son, and the entire Sarbanes family.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Senator Sarbanes by building on his legacy, standing up to the corporations that have too much power in this country, and fighting for the working people we serve. Paul Sarbanes, like many others in this body, understood the dignity of work.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. President, yesterday the House overwhelmingly passed the NDAA conference report by a veto-proof majority of 335 to 78. That bill includes our com-

prehensive bipartisan reform of our anti-money laundering laws.

I would like to thank my colleagues, especially Senator CRAPO and other Banking and Housing Committee colleagues: Senators WARNER, JONES, REED, ROUNDS, and off the committee, Senators WYDEN, WHITEHOUSE, GRAMM, and GRASSLEY, and the Presiding Officer, Senator COTTON, for his work on this legislation.

On the House side, Chairwoman WATERS and Chairman MALONEY and Representative CLEAVER, thank you to all of them for working so hard to ensure that today we have this crucial bipartisan legislation in this defense conference report that will reform our money laundering laws and finally end abuses by anonymous shell companies.

I would like to extend my thanks to a former colleague, Chairman LEVIN, who was chair of Armed Services and the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations and to President Obama, who both voted on these issues for years. Many of their good ideas are codified in this bill, harvesting some of the seeds they planted years ago.

The Anti-Money Laundering Act and the Corporate Transparency Act are the products of months and months of bipartisan negotiations between and among Members of the House and Senate and certainly the staffs of Senator COTTON and me and Senator CRAPO and others. I thank them for their good work.

The bill is a critical step to fight money laundering and crack down on shell companies. While there are things I would have done differently had we been writing the bill on our own, overall, it is an effective and comprehensive response to the problem of illicit finance. I strongly support it.

Criminals abuse the U.S. financial system to launder money from drug trafficking, organized crime, Medicare and Medicaid fraud, weapons sales, and other criminal activities. I spoke today about this with Sheriff Burke of Toledo, the Lucas County Sheriff, a longtime sheriff, and U.S. Marshal Pete Elliott of Cleveland of the Northern District. They welcomed this language, and they welcome this law. This will help them do their jobs better.

Much of this dirty money that comes from organized crime in Medicaid fraud, weapons sales, drug trafficking, and sex trafficking is laundered through anonymous shell corporations. These are not victimless crimes. They directly hurt Ohio communities, especially those torn apart by the opioid crisis.

Sinaloa cartel actors and Fentanyl traffickers have been destroying thousands of families. They use money laundering to get their drug money in and out of the country. Human traffickers who prey on runaways at truck stops along major interstate highways in Ohio and across the country also use the financial system to launder their profits. We need to give law enforcement new modern tools to stop their crimes.

The bill finally requires comprehensive reporting by U.S. companies of their actual owners—no more hiding these abuses in anonymous shell companies. It cracks down on bankers who look the other way to actively aid money laundering and cracks down on Big Banks that have shoddy compliance systems. If you are helping drug traders hide their illegal fentanyl profits, you deserve more than a slap on the wrist. Banks cannot be too big to jail, and laws can't treat them that way.

I will closely monitor how this critical legislation is being implemented. I spoke this week already with the Secretary of Treasury designee and the Deputy Secretary of Treasury designee about being ready to administer and enforce these laws. I look forward to working with the administration to ensure that Treasury puts in place effective anti-money laundering and corporate transparency rules to implement the bill as soon as possible.

We know that criminals have long been revising their tactics to get around our current laws. This bill will enable us to get ahead of them and stay ahead of them.

I urge my colleagues to support it. They supported this language in the NDAA, and I ask them to support the NDAA.

Taken together, as we designed them, these measures reform, update and strengthen our current anti-money laundering laws and make critical changes to U.S. corporate disclosure laws to combat abuses by owners of anonymous shell companies—including foreign owners from China, Russia, Iran, North Korea and other countries—who have for years been exploiting our system for criminal purposes.

The legislation strengthens the Treasury Department's financial intelligence, anti-money laundering (AML), and countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) programs, modernizing our legal regime and improving communication, oversight, and information-sharing in these areas.

The conference agreement requires much more routine and systemic coordination, communication, and feedback among financial institutions, regulators, and law enforcement, to enable them to identify and act on suspicious financial activities, better target bank resources on critical AML tasks, and increase the likelihood of bad actors being caught by law enforcement.

It also provides for new whistleblower protections for those reporting BSA violations and provides for payment of whistleblower rewards.

It establishes tough new penalties on those convicted of serious Bank Secrecy Act violations, including additional penalties for repeat violators, and imposes a ban on financial-institution board service for those convicted of egregious BSA-related crimes.

It would require important new reporting from the Department of Justice and Treasury to better enable Con-

gress to oversee the use of—and sometimes continuing violations by banks under—deferred prosecution agreements and non-prosecution agreements, which too often are a slap on the wrist by regulators for banks that evade sanctions, violate our AML rules, or otherwise violate banking laws. As I have said, banks can't be too big to jail, and regulators can't treat them that way.

To help accomplish all these goals, the conference agreement authorizes additional funding for the Treasury Department, and we expect the Department to insist on strong accountability for results and to be responsive to congressional oversight as its officials work to implement this legislation.

In addition, the bill finally requires comprehensive reporting by U.S. companies of their actual owners. No more hiding in the dark abuses by anonymous shell companies to commit crimes.

Unlike in most areas of reform and transparency, where the U.S. has led the way, on this issue of anonymous shell companies we have long lagged behind other nations, and failed to require uniform and clear ownership information for firms at the time of their incorporation in the states.

This information is critical to law enforcement. In the U.S. investigators often have to spend precious time and resources issuing subpoenas and chasing down leads—sometimes jumping from anonymous shell company to anonymous shell company—to secure basic information about who actually owns a company. That makes no sense. And with this bill, it will end.

Treasury's National Money Laundering Risk Assessment estimates that around \$300 billion in illicit proceeds from domestic financial crime is generated annually.

Criminals have for a very long time abused our financial system to launder funds gained through narcotics trafficking, organized crime, Medicare and Medicaid fraud, weapons proliferation and other criminal activities. Much of this dirty money is laundered through anonymous shell corporations.

Over the years we have heard all about these abuses, from the "Panama Papers" to the "Paradise Papers" to, more recently this year, the series of news articles called the "FinCEN files."

These exposures of abuses in our system by dedicated journalists and national and international transparency organizations have highlighted problems involving human trafficking, drug trafficking, terrorism, money laundering, fraud, tax evasion, and other crimes involving illicit finance.

None of these abuses are victimless crimes.

Money laundering for drug cartels has a direct line to the opioid crisis in Ohio, where Sinaloa cartel actors or fentanyl traffickers have been destroying thousands of families. Combined with the pandemic, these drugs have hurt thousands of Ohio families.

Human traffickers who exploit the misery of runaways in truckstops along major interstate highways in Ohio and across the country use the financial system to launder their profits.

Medicare fraudsters cost the taxpayers \$2.6 billion in one recent year, according to the HHS Inspector General, and tarnish the reputation of this lifeline for seniors.

That's why anti-money laundering and corporate transparency laws are so critical: they protect the integrity of our financial system, provide critical intelligence to law enforcement to combat crime and help give victims the tools they need to hold bad actors accountable.

Under Treasury's existing rules, banks are already working to secure some of this information from accountholders when they open accounts. And while banks must continue to play a key monitoring role, it's also important that we finally, after all these years, require companies to provide basic information on their ownership when they're formed.

The bill contains a strong definition of "beneficial owner" which includes a two-part test covering individuals who, directly or indirectly, exercise substantial control over an entity or hold or control an ownership interest in the entity. The definition is clear that a nominee, intermediary, custodian, or agent acting on behalf of another individual cannot be the beneficial owner of an entity. Nominees are not beneficial owners; neither are trustees or attorneys acting as agents.

The definition is also clear that employees do not qualify as beneficial owners of an entity unless, apart from their employment status, they hold an ownership interest in the entity or can exercise substantial control over the entity such as the ability to transfer some or all of the entity's assets or earnings to their personal use. The provision defines "beneficial owner" as an individual who directly or indirectly "owns or controls not less than 25 percent of the ownership interests of the entity." When applying this part of the test, FinCEN must consider what to do if no one individual meets the 25 percent minimum, and how that situation may trigger the second part of the beneficial owner test which requires disclosure of the individuals who exercise "substantial control over the entity."

To determine whether an individual exercises "substantial control" over an entity, FinCEN is not intended to devise a numerical, narrow, or rigid test. Instead, the standard is intended to function with flexibility to take into account the myriad ways that an individual may exercise control over an entity while holding minimal or even no formal ownership interest.

They include written and unwritten agreements, arrangements, or understandings, instructions to company directors or officers, letter of wishes,

control over personnel decisions, economic pressure on company shareholders or employees, coercion, bribery, threats of bodily harm, and other legal and illegal means of exercising control.

Evidence that one or more individuals are exercising substantial control over a specific entity is expected to vary widely and may encompass such matters as emailed or telephoned instructions from the individuals suspected of being beneficial owners or their agents, employment or personnel decisions made at the direction or with the approval of such individuals, financial accounts that name such individuals as signatories, investment decisions made at the direction or recommendation of such individuals, or transfers of funds or assets to or at the direction of such individuals.

Requiring companies to provide their ownership information and storing it in a secure federal database like FinCEN's, alongside account holders' banking information, will help address longstanding problems for U.S. law enforcement.

It will help them investigate and prosecute cases involving terrorism, weapons proliferation, drug trafficking, money laundering, Medicare and Medicaid fraud, human trafficking, and other crimes. And it will provide ready access to this information under long-established and effective privacy rules.

Without these reforms, criminals, terrorists and even rogue nations could continue to use layer upon layer of shell companies to disguise and launder illicit funds. That makes it harder to hold bad actors accountable, and puts us all at risk.

The bill also contains certain exemptions. The basic justification behind the bill's exemptions is that each exempt category refers to entities that already disclose their beneficial owners to the government in one way or another and so don't need to duplicate that disclosure in the FinCEN database.

For example, publicly traded companies already disclose their true owners to the SEC, and banks already disclose their true owners to federal bank regulators; there is no reason to require those entities to disclose the same information to FinCEN. Each of the exemptions should be interpreted as narrowly as possible to exclude entities that do not disclose their beneficial owners to the government.

Exemptions created for pooled investment vehicles, dormant companies, and certain nonprofits require especially narrow interpretations to limit those exemptions to entities that provide some level of ownership disclosure to the government.

The exemption for pooled investment vehicles is intended to be available only to PIVs that rely for investment advice and services on a regulated bank or on a securities broker-dealer, investment company, or investment adviser

that is registered with the SEC, has disclosed its own beneficial ownership information to the federal government, and has filed a Form ADV disclosing the PIV's legal name and any other information related to the PIV that the federal government may require.

In addition, PIVs formed under the laws of a foreign jurisdiction must file with FinCEN a certification identifying every individual that exercises substantial control over the PIV, providing the same information required for beneficial owners.

Because evidence shows that criminals, fraudsters, and U.S. adversaries are increasingly using PIVs to launder funds and commit other wrongdoing, this exemption is of special concern and should be subject to continuous, careful review by Treasury as provided in the new 31 U.S.C. 5336(i) to see whether it should be retained or removed.

The exemption for dormant companies is intended to function solely as a grandfathering provision that exempts from disclosure only those dormant companies in existence prior to the bill's enactment; those grandfathered entities are also required to immediately disclose their beneficial owners to FinCEN as soon as their ownership changes hands, they become active entities, or they otherwise lose their exempt status. No entity created after the date of enactment of the bill is intended to qualify for exemption as a dormant company.

The exemption provided to certain charitable and nonprofit entities also merits narrow construction and careful review in light of past evidence of wrongdoers misusing charities, foundations, and other nonprofit entities to launder funds and advance criminal and civil misconduct. This exemption is intended to apply only to entities that are engaged in charitable or nonprofit activities, and not to entities engaged in for-profit businesses or for-profit activities.

The exemption is based, in part, upon provisions in U.S. and state laws that enable federal and state officials to regulate and investigate nonprofit organizations to ensure, for example, that the individuals behind them are not using the entity's assets to inappropriately enrich themselves, unfairly compete against businesses that pay taxes, or advance other inappropriate objectives.

In addition, the exemption given to entities that "operate exclusively to provide financial assistance to or hold governance rights over" a charitable entity is intended to be even more restrictive; it is confined to entities that qualify as U.S. persons under U.S. tax law, have only U.S. citizens or residents as their beneficial owners, and derive "at least a majority" of their funds from U.S. persons—meaning the exemption is not available under any circumstance for entities formed under foreign laws, established for foreign beneficial owners, or funded primarily with foreign funds.

Again, these exemptions are intended to be narrowly interpreted to prevent their use by entities that otherwise fail to disclose their beneficial owners to the federal government.

To ensure the bill's exemptions function as intended, the Treasury, FinCEN, OCC, IRS, SEC, CFTC, and other federal regulators should review and, if necessary, strengthen their filing forms to ensure that beneficial as well as nominal owners are disclosed to the federal government by the specified exempt entities, including investment companies, investment advisers, pooled investment vehicles, money transmitting businesses, and all entities registered with the SEC, among others.

The justification for the exemption of entities that have both physical operations and at least 20 employees in the United States is that those entities' physical U.S. presence will make it easy for U.S. law enforcement to discover those entities' true owners. Like other exemptions in the bill, this exemption should be narrowly construed to exclude entities that do not have an easily located physical presence in the United States, do not have multiple employees physically present on an ongoing basis in the United States, or use strategies that make it difficult for U.S. law enforcement to contact their workforce or discover the names of their beneficial owners. This exemption should be subject to continuous, careful review by Treasury under the new 31 U.S.C. 5336(i) to detect and prevent its misuse.

Extending the disclosure exemption to subsidiaries whose ownership interests are owned or controlled by one or more of certain identified exempt entities is, again, intended to be interpreted as narrowly as possible to exclude subsidiaries that never disclose their true owners to the federal government.

The exemption is intended to apply only to subsidiaries that are wholly owned or controlled by one or more of the exempt categories of entities; that's why the provision does not contain any reference to the 25% ownership figure that appears in the definition of beneficial owner.

The Federal Reserve, Treasury, OCC, SEC, CFTC, FDIC, and other federal regulators should review their filing requirements to ensure that the entities that report to them, such as banks, publicly traded corporations, securities dealers, exchange operators, or commodity brokers, include requirements to disclose the subsidiaries they wholly own or control. This exemption, like others, should be subject to continuous, careful review by Treasury under the new 31 U.S.C. 5336(i) to detect and prevent its misuse.

For their part, FinCEN identifiers are intended to simplify beneficial ownership disclosures by eliminating spelling and naming issues that can cause confusion or mistakes related to the precise individuals or entities in an ownership chain.

FinCEN should design rules that will encourage both individuals and entities to obtain and use FinCEN identifiers in their beneficial ownership disclosures. When assigning FinCEN identifiers to entities, FinCEN should first ensure that the entity has already disclosed its beneficial ownership information to FinCEN. An entity that has not disclosed its beneficial ownership information to FinCEN does not qualify and should not be granted a FinCEN identifier.

It is critical that, from the beginning, FinCEN issue rules that ensure only one identifying number is assigned to each individual and to each entity, including all successors to a specific entity. FinCEN should also establish mechanisms to detect and correct any procedure or database field that may lead to the same individual or entity possessing or using more than one FinCEN identifier.

Chairman CRAPO and I agreed two years ago that we must get this done in this Congress—we must finally enact sweeping legislation to require complete ownership information—not of front men and women, not of those forming companies on behalf of those who will pull the strings from behind the curtain—but of the actual owners of companies to be available to appropriate law enforcement, intelligence and national security officials in our government who need it to combat crime.

This bill lays out a system to do that simply, efficiently and effectively, without unduly burdening small businesses or others, and while providing extensive protections for the information. In Europe, that information is included in a public database. This approach is different, imposing some limits on who will have access, and under what circumstances.

For example, it provides that federal agency heads or their designees—and agencies can extend that delegation as far down in their organizational chain as they like—can provide access to the database to appropriate law enforcement authorities once per investigation, so they do not need to keep repeating that authorization for the same investigation. And those delegations can be made on a bulk basis, so groups or classes of employees can be authorized to access the data as needed.

For State, local or tribal law enforcement, they must get approval by a tribal, local, or state court of competent jurisdiction, which need not be a judge—it can include an officer of the court like a magistrate, court clerk or other administrative officer.

While I saw no reason to treat federal, state and local law enforcement officials differently, my Republican colleagues insisted on this differential treatment, and I am hopeful that the flexibility we have built in should make it workable.

It is far more workable than the scheme some had pushed, to require ap-

proval by a federal judge each time law enforcement wanted to access the database—an approach which would have gutted the bill, tied up our federal courts, and effectively rendered it inaccessible to state and local law enforcement. But the key here is a robust, functional and effective database at FinCEN to house this information and make it readily available.

FinCEN should take immediate steps to create the new database needed to contain beneficial ownership information. It should use state of the art technology, procedures, and safeguards to ensure the database is secure, easy to search, easy to audit, and easy to correct and update. FinCEN should use its new hiring authority to hire the information technology specialists needed to create the new beneficial ownership database. In designing the database, FinCEN should survey other beneficial ownership databases to determine their best features and design, and create a structure that secures the data as required by law. FinCEN should ensure that federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement can access the beneficial ownership database without excessive delays or red tape in a manner modeled after its existing systems providing law enforcement access to databases containing currency transaction and suspicious activity report information.

FinCEN should allow federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement to access the beneficial ownership data for both criminal and civil purposes, including law enforcement activities designed to combat terrorism, money laundering, trafficking, corruption, evasion of sanctions, noncompliance with tax law, fraud, counterfeit goods, market manipulation, insider trading, consumer abuse, cybercrime, election interference, and other types of criminal and civil wrongdoing.

FinCEN should also provide appropriate access to beneficial ownership data for foreign law enforcement requesting the information for criminal or civil purposes, including appropriate requests made by a prosecutor, judge, foreign central authority, or competent authority in a foreign jurisdiction, keeping in mind that U.S. law enforcement will be seeking similar information from those same foreign law enforcement agencies on a reciprocal basis. FinCEN should endeavor to design a system that will provide appropriate beneficial ownership information to foreign law enforcement without excessive delays or red tape.

As part of its implementation effort, FinCEN should take immediate steps to work with states and Indian Tribes to determine how to confirm that all covered entities formed or administered by those states or tribes actually file and update the beneficial ownership information required by law.

We expect FinCEN to include any resulting procedures or audits in the rule implementing the law. FinCEN should also include appropriate provisions in

the implementing rule requiring federal, state, and tribal agencies to cooperate with its efforts to ensure an accurate, complete, and highly useful database of beneficial information and to provide notice of the law's beneficial ownership transparency obligations, as required by the new law.

The Treasury IG should take immediate steps to establish a process to accept, store, and analyze information provided by a federal, state, local or tribal agency, foreign government, financial institution, reporting company, civil society group, the public, or others in the form of comments or complaints related to how FinCEN provides notification of the law's beneficial ownership transparency requirements, how FinCEN collects and stores beneficial ownership information, or regarding the accuracy, completeness, or timeliness of the information in the FinCEN beneficial ownership database.

As part of that process, the Treasury IG should establish procedures that will enable comments or complaints identifying false, out-of-date, or incomplete beneficial ownership information in the database or providing correct, up-to-date, or complete beneficial ownership information in the database promptly to reach the FinCEN personnel charged with ensuring the database's accuracy, completeness, and timeliness. In addition, the Treasury IG should establish a procedure to conduct periodic audits to determine the extent to which such information actually reached the proper FinCEN personnel, was logged, stored, and analyzed, led to changes in the database, and actually improved the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of the beneficial ownership database.

In response to the bill, the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy should take immediate steps to revise the Federal Acquisition Regulation to require covered federal contractors and subcontractors, at an early stage in the federal procurement process, to disclose to the federal government in writing, and to update over time, information on their beneficial owners.

To carry out this provision in the law, the Administrator should work with the General Services Administration to add a beneficial ownership disclosure requirement to the database authorizing entities to bid on federal contracts.

At the same time it is developing regulations to implement the new law, FinCEN should simultaneously revise the existing customer due diligence rule to bring it into harmony with the new law and all proposed regulations. In doing so, FinCEN should carefully evaluate the existing customer due diligence rule and preserve provisions that do not conflict with the new law. Among other changes, the revised customer due diligence rule must use the new definition of beneficial owner established in the law. Treasury and

FinCEN should create a transition period for financial institutions to implement the new beneficial ownership requirements. Lastly, FinCEN should also take steps to establish procedures as needed to administer the revised customer due diligence rule effectively.

Updating and strengthening our AML and beneficial ownership laws will give us a 21st century system to combat these crimes. I guarantee you criminals have long been revising, adjusting and amending their tactics to circumvent our current laws. We must get ahead of them, and stay ahead of them. This bill will enable us to do that.

I urge my colleagues to support the conference report and this important measure.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES.

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Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise today to oppose another massive infusion of arms into the volatile Middle East.

Someone must ask the question: Can a lasting peace be purchased with more weapons? Will selling sophisticated fighter jets and weaponized drones bring more stability to the Middle East? Is it wise to pour fuel on the fire that burns in the Middle East?

The Senate today is debating with these joint resolutions whether to disapprove of the announced sale of 50 F-35s and 18 Reaper Drones to the United Arab Emirates, a country that has recently taken encouraging steps specifically toward Israel, but with an overall record that should give concern.

The primary questions we should be asking ourselves are: To what ends has the UAE deployed its military and its military technology in recent years? Does the UAE have a record that we can trust? What military behavior are we encouraging and rewarding with this sale? Will the U.S. bear responsibility if the UAE misuses these incredibly sophisticated weapons?

The answers to these questions are far from clear. In fact, the UAE's record should give us pause. The UAE is not a democracy. Their human rights record is mixed, and their military activities in the region, as a one-time member of the Saudi coalition, contributed to the bloodshed and devastation in Yemen.

On human rights, let's look at some recent reported examples. In 2017, Ahmed Monsoor, a human rights activist, was given a 10-year prison sentence based on his speech. Specifically, he was charged for posting "false information that harms national unity" on social media. The charges against him were based on a call for the release of another activist who had been put in prison for political speech. Is this the kind of democracy or lack of democracy and lack of speech that should be rewarded with our most sophisticated weaponry?

In 2017, the UAE government also handed down a 10-year sentence to Nasser bin-Ghaith, an economist, for his criticism of the UAE and Egyptian Governments. Is this the kind of country that deserves our most sophisticated weaponry?

In 2018, the UAE arrested Matthew Hedges, a British citizen and doctoral student, and denied him access to legal counsel for 5 months. They sentenced him to life in prison for spying charges based on a confession that was obtained in an undisclosed location. They were ultimately forced to pardon him after international outrage. Is this the kind of country that we can trust with our most sophisticated weaponry?

The fact that the UAE is willing to buy this technology is not in and of itself justification for the sale. This is the time to carefully study the situation in the region and to consider the effects of accelerating the Middle Eastern arms race in the short-term and in the long-term.

This is why our government shouldn't be rushing into approving this sale; yet our government is moving at warp speed to approve this sale. It is as if we intentionally don't want to consider all of these issues.

The most frequently cited argument in favor of this sale is that the UAE has taken encouraging steps in the last few months. They have normalized relations with Israel, facilitated civilian travel, and more. Great. I am all-in for that.

We should be encouraging peaceful relations between countries. I support those efforts. But it is not clear that dropping advanced military technology into the region is, in fact, encouraging peaceful relations, given how these weapons have been used in recent times.

The UAE spent years bombing Yemen as part of a coalition with Saudi Arabia to stop the Houthis. This bombing campaign was undisciplined and sloppy. Civilians, residents, and other non-military targets were often destroyed. The U.N. reports approximately 7,000 civilians killed in Yemen and over 10,000 wounded.

The Saudi-UAE coalition helped create a humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Amid collapsing public services, the largest cholera epidemic on record has affected at least 2 million people—probably more—and killed almost 4,000. A lot of this is to be blamed on the civil war that had been perpetuated by Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

At the height of the destruction, a Yemeni child would die of starvation every 10 minutes. More than 50,000 children have been lost to starvation.

I have argued for years that the United States should play no role in worsening the crisis via an arms pipeline to the coalition that perpetuates this war. American technology helped facilitate this crisis and should be a real concern about sending more American bombs and fighter planes into this region.

If they weren't used wisely in the most recent years in the Yemeni war, will they be used differently in the future? Can we trust the people who were part of a bombing campaign of civilians in Yemen to do an act more wisely with weapons in the future?

Let's also not forget that a media investigation found that weapons that we sent to the coalition—U.S. weapons that were sent to the Saudi-UAE coalition—were lost, and, in some cases, handed over to terrorists. That is right. Military equipment from the United States was sent to the UAE, but it wound up in the hands of terrorists. The Saudi-UAE coalition reportedly used U.S. weapons as currency to win the approval of militias inside Yemen.

To be clear, these activities are against the terms of sale. We told them: You can't give away our weapons. You can't use our weapons to purchase the support of Sunni extremists in Yemen. But they did. This should give us cause for concern. This should make us say: Whoa. Let's stop, and let's pause before we send more weapons into this war.

Not only that, but Iranian proxies captured some of these weapons, and, predictably, pointed them back at the Saudi-UAE coalition. Guns, missiles, and vehicles ended up in the hands of terrorists—weapons that we put on the ground in the Middle East.

The same investigation found Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles, MRAPs, in the hands of Sunni allies of the UAE and Saudi Arabia. But guess who some of these Sunni allies were. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. We are talking about the remnants of al-Qaida in Yemen were getting weapons that we were giving to the UAE in Saudi Arabia. Does this sound like the kind of behavior we should reward with more weapons?

One of the MRAPs still had the export label on it indicating that it had been sent from Beaumont, TX, to the UAE before ultimately getting illegally transferred to extremists in Yemen. Is this the kind of behavior we should reward with more of our sophisticated technology?

The serial number on another MRAP in the possession of the Iranian-backed Houthis was traced back to the 2014 sale of U.S. MRAPs to the UAE. So the UAE not only was trading our weapons for support among Sunni extremists, including al-Qaida-affiliated extremists in Yemen, but they also were having their equipment taken by the Houthis. So on both sides of the war in Yemen, we had U.S. weapons. Is it a good idea to flood the Middle East with more of our weapons? Is it a good idea to keep sending weapons that wind up in the hands of people who don't have our best interests at heart?

Now, people say: Well, the UAE is doing better. They have stepped back from the coalition. They are not, you know, fighting as vigorously in the UAE. But there still are reports that UAE is still involved in the civil war in Yemen and that they are still engaged.