interference occurred and when it did not occur, every possible result has been claimed as proof that Washington Democrats should rip up our democracy's rule book and write a new one that benefits them.

The latest phony justification has been the false notion that a few States' mainstream voting laws equal some kind of assault on democracy as we know it. Of course, that is absolutely utter nonsense. Americans want it to be easy to vote and hard to cheat. Voter ID protections are hugely popular. Basic voter roll maintenance is common sense.

The new law in Georgia, for example, provides for more flexible early voting and absentee voting than many blue States, including New York. But the facts weren't about to stop the Democrats' big lie. The absurd comparison to Jim Crow segregation and all kinds of other horrors have continued apace.

To provide a little more context about this fake hysteria, we can also look internationally. As one columnist recently observed in the Washington Post, the balance struck by the State of Georgia amounts to ''one of the most expansive voting access laws in the world. Most other countries do not allow no-excuse absentee voting, and dropboxes are also virtually unknown elsewhere,'' other democracies around the world. ''If Georgia's elections are undemocratic, then almost all of our democratic allies are also undemocratic.''

If liberal activists and woke corporations believed their own rhetoric, they wouldn't stop at boycotting and threatening the State of Georgia. They couldn't possibly. They would be busy trying to divest from most of our NATO allies and essentially the rest of the entire developed world.

Some European countries allow mail-in voting, but most do not. We constantly hear from our socialist friends how we should be emulating Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark. Well, none of them allow in-country postal voting—not a one. Bring on the boycotts, I guess.

And you don't even want to hear about early voting. Goodness gracious. But France, Spain, Germany, Italy, the UK, Ireland—not a day of in-person early voting in any of those countries, none of them. That is according to an international NGO that studies democracy.

So, remember, the Texas and Georgia laws codify a whole lot of early voting, mail-in voting, and lots of election-day voting.

And this is supposed to be the death of democracy? Some outrage on a global and historic scale?

Give me a break. What nonsense.

Even going by Texas's new proposals, there will be voting by mail in Paris, TX, but not in Paris, France. There would be almost 2 weeks of in-person early voting in New Berlin, TX, but zero days in Berlin, Germany. I am sure Democrats will be yelling at the Fortune 500 to boycott Europe any day now—any day now.

Of course, the reality is that these moving goalposts are absolutely fake. The frantic outrage is phony. It is all meant to justify a political power grab that Democrats have had written and waiting since years before any of these new State laws, which are supposedly prompting it—yet another awful plank that my colleagues across the aisle want to hide in the reckless taxing-and-spending spree they hope to ram through Congress.

TERRORISM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on one final matter, last week, some of our colleagues expressed disapproval of U.S. strikes against al-Shabaab terrorists in Somalia. I find their views difficult to understand.

Al-Shabaab poses a significant threat to U.S. interests. But you don't have to take my word for it. Late in 2019, the leader of al-Shabaab, an al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist group based in Somalia, said:

> Our biggest target today is the Americans . . . The only reason we have exerted all this effort and undertaken all this preparation today is to attack the American troops.

In the assessment of the commander of U.S. Africa Command, U.S. General Stephen Townsend, that is coming from ''the largest, wealthiest, and most violent Al Qaeda-associated group in the world'' and ''the primary African violent extremist organization threat to American interests.''

This is not a new threat. Al-Shabaab was designated a foreign terrorist organization back in 2008. Its leaders declared allegiance to al-Qaida in 2012, a year before their attack on the Westgate Mall in Kenya that killed 67 people. The Obama administration designated the group as an al-Qaida-associated force in 2016. That made it subject to the 2001 AUMF.

At the time, it was a difficult but telling acknowledgement that the al-Qaida terrorist threat was growing. The raid that killed Bin Laden had clearly not ended the threat his terrorists posed to our country.

As a result of its declared and demonstrated allegiance to al-Qaida, al-Shabaab is clearly subject to the 2001 authorization for the use of military force, no question. President Obama knew it. General Townsend knows it. Al-Shabaab themselves tell us they want Americans dead. What more, what more do the skeptics need?

If our colleagues do not want the U.S. military to conduct strikes against the al-Qaida terrorists responsible for killing Americans and threatening our interests, I would be interested to hear how they propose we defend against these threats.

So, by the way, with the administration's rushed withdrawal from Afghanistan, there are well-founded concerns that al-Qaida may be roaring back in that country.

So which al-Qaida affiliate should we stop pressuring—al-Shabaab, AQAP, ISIS? Should we stop hunting for al-Zawahiri, the leader of al-Qaida?

Administrations of both parties have identified and supported local partners who share an interest in combating terrorists. By and large, this approach has succeeded in keeping pressure on the terrorists while keeping more Americans out of harm's way.

But despite the best efforts of local partners to keep the terrorists at bay and the best efforts of U.S. diplomats to broker peace, some terrorists do require direct action by the U.S. military to be stopped. These hard-core extremists pose a serious threat to American national security. They seek to attack our interests all around the world, including our homeland, if we let them.

The threat they pose will not recede if we lose focus. In fact, the exact opposite is the case. So I hope the Commander in Chief will exercise the authorities the Congress has provided him and the tools Congress has funded to keep America safe against the terrorists who continue to target our homeland and our interests abroad.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Mr. President, with respect to infrastructure, Senators continue to make good progress on both tracks of legislation. Members should be prepared to vote again on cloture on the motion to proceed to the bipartisan infrastructure bill as early as tonight.

CAPITOL SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on another matter, yesterday, the Senate Appropriations Chairman, Senator LEAHY, announced a bipartisan agreement to provide $2.1 billion in emergency supplemental funding to support the Capitol Police, reimburse our National Guard, and make sure all the critical functions of the Capitol Complex are properly funded.

The toll of January 6 and the impact of COVID had meant that funding for the Capitol Police, the Capitol Complex, and even for our National Guard was running low.