Senators, my colleagues, on the great job with their football team.

''Go Bison!''

Well done, North Dakota.

FILIBUSTER

Mr. President, I wanted to come down here, like many of my colleagues today, and talk about a really important topic, and that is the future of the filibuster and the issue of voting rights, both of which are very important to this country. We are going to be focused a lot—perhaps with some major votes, historic votes, in the U.S. Senate this week—on these topics.

There has been a lot of talk recently from my Democratic colleagues about actually getting rid of the filibuster. This, as many of my colleagues have mentioned, would be an action that would fundamentally transform this institution and this country.

The irony is that, until very recently, the vast majority of our colleagues here—Republicans and Democrats—were in agreement on this topic, in essence, of getting rid of the filibuster, which has been part of the U.S. Senate for decades—for centuries, in many aspects, if you look at our history. It would not be a wise move for the Senate. It would not be a wise move for America. This has been a longstanding bipartisan view.

Let me just give you a couple of quotes from some of my colleagues.

My colleague from Montana, Senator TESTER, just said last year:

> I am a ''no'' on changing the filibuster. I am a ''no.'' The move to make the Senate like the House, I think, is a mistake.

My colleague from Delaware, Senator COONS, said in 2018:

> I am committed to never voting to change the legislative filibuster.

That is what Senator COONS said.

My colleague from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, in 2018, also said:

> I can tell you getting rid of the filibuster would be the end of the Senate as it was originally devised and created going back to our Founding Fathers. We have to acknowledge respect for the minority, and that is what the Senate tries to do in its composition and its procedure.

Wise words from Senator DURBIN.

Of course, there is a trove of quotes from the majority leader, Senator SCHUMER, who vehemently opposed getting rid of the filibuster in the past when he was in the minority. Let me highlight just a few of them.

Here is one he said in 2005:

> Bottom line is very simple. The ideologues in the Senate want to turn what the Founding Fathers called the ''cooling saucer of democracy'' into the rubberstamp of dictatorship. We will not let them. They want to make this country into a banana republic.

Never one for subtlety, that is our majority leader right now.

Then he went on to say:

> It would be doomsday for democracy.

Again, not too subtle there, the majority leader.

> It would be doomsday for democracy if we get rid of the filibuster.

Here is another Senator who is very famous around the world and who became President, Barack Obama.

He said with regard to getting rid of the filibuster in 2005:

> What they do not expect is for one party, be it Republican or Democrat, to change the rules in the middle of the game so that they can make all the decisions while the other party is told to sit down and keep quiet.

Since we are reaching back, let me quote the late Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia on this issue.

Here he is in 2005:

> The filibuster must go, they say. In my 53 years in Congress, I have never seen a matter that came before the Congress, before the Senate, or the House, as a matter of fact, that is so dangerous, so out of the mainstream, and so radical as this one. I pray that Senators will pause and reflect before ignoring that history and tradition in favor of the political priority of the moment.

That was Senator Byrd.

Of course, it is not just Senators. Here is what the organ of the Democratic Party, also known as the New York Times editorial board, said in 2004 about the filibuster:

> Republicans see the filibuster as an annoying obstacle, but it is actually one of the checks and balances that the Founders, who worried greatly about the concentration of power, built into our system.

So this has been a view that has been widely held: Don't get rid of the filibuster.

Senator MANCHIN, in an op-ed recently, talking about how he would not, under no circumstances, vote to eliminate or weaken the filibuster, gave a really important reason why, which, as Alaska's Senator, I feel very strongly about. He noted in that piece that the current rules with regard to the filibuster and the 60-vote threshold guarantee that ''rural and small States and the Americans who live in them always have a seat at the table in the U.S. Senate.''

Well, I think that that is enormously important. It is enormously important for Alaska, but it is enormously important for the Senate as a body, which was how we were designed by the Founding Fathers.

Now, you know, there are charges of hypocrisy that can be leveled at this institution and at the Members in it. Many times, there are examples of when Members of Congress say one thing when they are in power and have authority and they say another thing when they are out of power. But I will tell you, on this issue, that has not been the case for the Republican Senators here.

What do I mean?

In 2017, 61 U.S. Senators, in this letter, wrote the majority leader, then Senator MCCONNELL, and the minority leader, Senator SCHUMER—33 Republicans and 30 Democrats—saying, in essence, don't get rid of the filibuster. These were 30 Democrats, 4 years ago, who wrote this letter, saying don't get rid of the filibuster.

Now, that is when the Republicans were in the majority, and there was a Republican in the White House. There was pressure, I will tell you, on Republicans like there is now on Democrats, from certain elements in the White House and other places, to get rid of the filibuster, and we didn't do it. We did not do it for all of the reasons that we have been discussing.

Yet I guess we are going to see a vote in the first time in history, I believe, in the U.S. Senate where the majority leader of the U.S. Senate is going to actually move forward to start getting rid of the filibuster. I am pretty sure that has never happened—the legislative filibuster—in the history of the United States of America. It is a big deal.

So, look, my Democratic colleagues are clearly cognizant of how vulnerable they look with regard to being hypocritical on the issue. As I mentioned, 31 of them, just 4 years ago, signed a letter, saying don't get rid of it when Republicans had power in the Senate and in the White House, and we didn't. But now, they are like, Hmm, we are going to flip-flop and say we should get rid of it.

The Presiding Officer may have seen that there are already these filibuster flip-flop cards. I won't name the Senators, but it shows them wearing flip-flops. The President is there, but it is already out there, right? This is a big, big flip-flop, not on some small issue but on one of the most fundamental issues in the U.S. Senate, and my colleagues know this.

So what is their response? What is their response?

In looking at their previous statements, like the Senate majority leader's, who has made a lot of statements—I have just read a few—in saying, you know, that it doesn't really matter, and I didn't really mean it, what is the argument? Well, here is the argument. Here is their argument. The Senate filibuster must be nuked because American democracy must be saved from Republican State legislators and Republican Members of Congress and their so-called Jim Crow 2.0 schemes. This is their new language. Everybody from the President to Majority Leader SCHUMER is using this talking point.

Just yesterday and today, the majority leader was going on about Republican Jim Crow 2.0 schemes and the need for Democrats to protect and defend American democracy, and Joe Biden—that unifier, that great unifier—uses the Jim Crow 2.0 charge against Republicans on a very regular basis. As a matter of fact, he just did it a few hours ago, again, down in Georgia today.

It is all historically inaccurate, and it is insulting to millions of Americans. Of course, they are stated with a smug, moral superiority, their arguments that voting rights laws—just listen to them, listen to them—in Democrat States are good and noble and are protecting American democracy while voting rights laws in Republican States are bad and even racist. Jim Crow 2.0 is their argument. Listen to the President. Listen to the majority leader.

They were making those arguments as recently as today. That is their argument as to why, after all of these years of saying don't get rid of the filibuster, they are saying now we have to get rid of the filibuster.

So here is the key question: Are these arguments accurate? Are their claims actually true?

Now, I do not assume to know the details of other States' voting laws, and here is the truth. You have had a lot of U.S. Senators in the last couple of weeks and couple of months—heck, even today—coming down to the Senate floor, claiming they know all about these other laws in other States on voting rights. They don't. Trust me. For those watching, they don't.

I don't claim to know the details of voting rights laws in other States. But here is what I do know. I know a lot about Alaska's laws, a lot about Alaska's voting laws. In fact, when I was attorney general, I was in the trenches, defending the right to vote for all Alaskans. I am proud to have that as part of my record.

I know a lot about Alaska's voting rights laws—a Republican State—and here are some very important and rather inconvenient truths and facts about my State's laws in three critical areas of voting rights: early in-person voting, automatic voter registration, and no-excuse absentee voting.

My Republican State, the great State of Alaska, has voting laws that are significantly more expansive than the laws of New York, than the laws of Delaware, than the laws of Connecticut, than the laws of Massachusetts and the laws of New Hampshire, just to name a few. That is a fact.

President Biden's speech today talked about facts. Well, these are facts. And I am going to talk a little bit more about these facts, but here is my point: Those States I just named—New York, Delaware, Connecticut, and Massachusetts—are those States Jim Crow 2.0 relative to Alaska? Well, by Joe Biden's reasoning, they are.

So I want to go a little bit more in detail on some of these issues I am talking about. These are important areas with regard to voting rights.

Let's start with early in-person voting: Alaska, 15 days; other States, less so; New Jersey, DC, 10 days, 7 days; New York, 10 days; Massachusetts, 11 days. They haven't met my State yet. That is OK.

Now look at Connecticut—no days. There is no early in-person voting at all. In New Hampshire, there is no early in-person voting at all. Why don't these States want people to vote early? Is it Jim Crow 2.0? Look, I wouldn't make that claim against those States, maligning their elected officials. I am sure they have their reasons. But, again, by President Biden's logic, they are.

Let me do another area of important voting rights laws: voter registration.

My State in essence has automatic voter registration—probably one of the most forward-leaning of any State in the country. As I speak right here on the Senate floor, there is no automatic voter registration in Pennsylvania, in Minnesota, in Arizona, in New Hampshire, in Delaware—President Biden's State—or in Wisconsin. None. None. None of these States have automatic voter registration. Are these States Jim Crow 2.0 relative to Alaska, my Republican State? I wouldn't say that, but, again, by President Biden's logic, they are.

Let me give you one more, a pretty important one as well. This is the issue of no-excuse absentee voting. There are many other expansive provisions in Alaska's laws as it pertains to voting, but here is one that we think is important. If for some reason you can't make it down to the polling location and you want to vote absentee, you can. You don't need an excuse to vote absentee. We have been doing that for years and years and years.

Let's look at other States. In Delaware, you have to have an excuse. In New Hampshire, you have to have an excuse. Connecticut. Massachusetts. New York. By the way, all of the Senators from these States are down here. Jim Crow 2.0. Republican States. What about this issue? This is a really important issue. Are these States Jim Crow 2.0 relative to my State? Well, according to Joe Biden's logic, they are. I wouldn't make that claim.

Let me focus on New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts for a little bit longer, on their laws—because I did look into this—and actually what does not constitute an excuse.

Again, in my State, there is no excuse. If you want to vote absentee, you can. In these States, you have to have an excuse. But here is the deal. In New York or Connecticut or Massachusetts, age is not an excuse. It is not an excuse. You can be 90 years old, 95 years old; fought in World War II; maybe it is hard for you to get to the polling place—nope, not in New York, not in Connecticut, not in Massachusetts. That is no excuse. Sorry, World War II veteran who can barely walk.

Let me give you another example of those States—actually, the States of New York, Delaware, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. If you are a victim of stalking or domestic violence—you don't want to leave your home and go to a public polling place; you don't want your address on a public document—is that an excuse so you can get an absentee ballot? Nope. Nope. You must leave your home and go down to the polling place. That is not an excuse, domestic violence victim.

Let me remind the listeners. New York doesn't allow that as an excuse. The majority leader is from New York. Delaware doesn't allow that as an excuse. The President of the United States is from Delaware.

(Ms. HASSAN assumed the Chair.)

To me, these election laws seem particularly egregious, as egregious as any of the examples offered by the other side about voting restrictions in other States that we have been hearing about, ones that are now shamelessly and ridiculously compared to Jim Crow 2.0 by our own President, the unifier. But here is the thing: I wouldn't tell New York that it must change its voting laws. I don't understand the people who live in New York who don't want to give a World War II veteran an excuse to vote absentee.

For that matter, New York actually doesn't want to change their own voting laws to be more expansive of voting rights like we are in Alaska. How do I know this? New York just had a statewide referendum to have same-day voter registration and no-excuse absentee voting like my State. Guess what. The people of New York voted against that. The people of New York had an opportunity to meet the level where we are in Alaska, a Republican State, and the people of New York rejected it.

I don't know what is going on in New York, why the good people there rejected these provisions, but it is going to be interesting. We will see if Leader SCHUMER is consistent and accuses his own constituents of supporting Jim Crow 2.0 as he has millions of his fellow Americans. Is he going to do that?

They just rejected what my State already has: no-excuse absentee voting. New York rejected it. Are the New Yorkers Jim Crow 2.0 relative to Alaska? I don't think so. There are reasons in their State, I am sure, that they would make for not doing what we do in Alaska. But, again, by President Biden's own logic, they are. I am confident the good people of New York have a reason.

But here is the thing, and it is a serious issue: The Jim Crow era, we know, was a horrible blight and stain on our country. Some of the most heinous laws were passed to prevent African Americans from voting. It was a horrible era. But it is remarkable how casually the President of the United States and the majority leader now throw out their Jim Crow 2.0 insult at Republicans, at Republican States. The President and the majority leader do this when their States don't even closely measure up to mine on critical voting rights issues and laws. It is pretty remarkable, pretty hypocritical.

But it is not just me making this argument. Here is an article from The Atlantic that came out recently entitled ''The Blue States That Make It Hardest To Vote.'' Here is the subtitle: ''Democrats are criticizing Republicans for pushing restrictive voting laws. But states such as Joe Biden's Delaware can make casting a ballot difficult.''

I would I ask unanimous consent to have this printed in the RECORD.

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

[From The Atlantic, April 15, 2021]

THE BLUE STATES THAT MAKE IT HARDEST TO VOTE

(By Russell Berman)

DEMOCRATS ARE CRITICIZING REPUBLICANS FOR PUSHING RESTRICTIVE VOTING LAWS. BUT STATES SUCH AS JOE BIDEN'S DELAWARE CAN MAKE CASTING A BALLOT DIFFICULT.

If President Joe Biden wants to vote by mail next year in Delaware, he'll have to provide a valid reason for why he can't make the two-hour drive from the White House back to his polling place in Wilmington. Luckily for him, Biden's line of work allows him to cast an absentee ballot: Being president counts as ''public service'' under state law. Most Delaware residents, however, won't have such a convenient excuse. Few states have more limited voting options than Delaware, a Democratic bastion that allowed little mail balloting before the pandemic hit.

Biden has assailed Georgia's new voting law as an atrocity akin to ''Jim Crow in the 21st century for the impact it could have on Black citizens. But even once the GOP-passed measure takes effect, Georgia citizens will still have far more opportunities to vote before Election Day than their counterparts in the president's home state, where one in three residents is Black or Latino. To Republicans, Biden's criticism of the Georgia law smacks of hypocrisy. ''They have a point,'' says Dwayne Bensing, a voting-rights advocate with Delaware's ACLU affiliate. ''The state is playing catch-up in a lot of ways.''

Delaware isn't an anomaly among Democratic strongholds, and its example presents the president's party with an uncomfortable reminder: Although Democrats like to call out Republicans for trying to suppress voting, the states they control in the Northeast make casting a ballot more difficult than anywhere else.

Connecticut has no early voting at all, and New York's onerous rules force voters to change their registration months in advance if they want to participate in a party primary. In Rhode Island, Democrats enacted a decade ago the kind of photo-ID law that the party has labeled ''racist'' when drafted by Republicans; the state also requires voters to get the signatures of not one but two witnesses when casting an absentee ballot (only Alabama and North Carolina are similarly strict). According to a new analysis released this week by the nonpartisan Center for Election Innovation and Research, Delaware, Connecticut, and New York rank in the bottom third of states in their access to early and mail-in balloting.

The restrictions across the Northeast are relics of the urban Democratic machines, which preferred to mobilize their voters precinct by precinct on Election Day rather than give reformers a lengthier window to rally opposition. Democrats who have won election after election in states such as New York, Delaware, Connecticut, and Rhode Island have had little incentive to change the rules that helped them win.

The party has been more concerned with expanding access to the polls in places where it has struggled to obtain and keep power (although it's not clear whether Democrats' assumptions about the impact voting laws have on turnout are correct). In Congress, Democrats are prioritizing legislation called the For the People Act, or H.R. 1, which seeks to curb GOP efforts to suppress voting. The bill would set national standards to loosen photo-ID requirements, guarantee early-voting and voting-by-mail options, and mandate automatic and same-day registration. Although Democrats have focused on how the bill would rein in red states, H.R. 1 would hit some blue states just as hard, if not harder.

Republicans love to call out Democratic sanctimony in the debate over voting laws, but this ignores the divergent directions the two parties are headed. Following their 2020 defeat and under pressure from Donald Trump allies, Republicans are pushing to restrict voting in states such as Texas, Iowa, Arizona, and Florida, which have recently been competitive. The Georgia law tightens ID requirements for absentee ballots and caps the number of drop boxes where they can be deposited. The measure also limits who can distribute water to voters waiting in line outside polling places. The effect of the bill is likely to make voting easier in Republican strongholds—by expanding early voting in rural areas, for example—but harder in Democratic urban centers, where lines at polling places tend to be longer and where voting by mail was more popular last year.

Democrats in charge of blue states are now racing to expand access in a way that matches the party's rhetoric nationwide. In some cases, they're trying to make permanent the temporary changes to voting laws that were put in place because of the pandemic. Delaware, for example, removed the mandate that voters cite a reason for casting an absentee ballot. Making the reform permanent requires the passage of an amendment to the state constitution, and Republicans who supported that proposal in the past are balking now, threatening its adoption.

The limit on mail-in ballots isn't Delaware's only voting anachronism. Bensing told me that he's been voting early in elections since he first cast a ballot, in Arkansas in 2002. When he moved to Delaware two years ago, he was shocked to find that the option wasn't available. Delaware won't debut early voting until 2022, and the 10-day period the state plans to offer still falls short of the 15-day minimum congressional Democrats have proposed in their voting-rights legislation.

Democrats in Delaware may finally be opening up their voting laws, but they're unwilling to call them racist. State Representative David Bentz has been trying to expand voting since he arrived in the legislature in 2015 and is leading the Democrats' push to modernize the state's laws now. But when I asked him why it's taken so long for Delaware to change its rules, he was stumped. ''I wish I had a better answer for you,'' Bentz told me. He said the state did not have a history of long lines at the polls. ''It wasn't something where groups were coming up to me and saying, 'Hey, we're disenfranchising people,' '' Bentz said. If anything, Democrats suggest, the state's restrictive voting laws are born of political inertia. When Bentz and Bensing joined a multiracial group of advocates over Zoom last week to announce a coordinated push for new voting laws, according to Bensing, it was the first-ever statewide coalition dedicated to voting rights in Delaware.

Unlike Delaware's restrictions, Rhode Island's voter-ID law can't be described as antiquated: The statute is just 10 years old and won adoption under a Democratic majority with support from powerful Black elected leaders. Voting-rights advocates trace the law's passage to the conservative bent of the state's Democratic Party and tension that pitted Black and white Democrats against the state's rising Latino population. Backers of the bill included the first Black speaker of the General Assembly. They shared stories of voter fraud they had witnessed, but opponents of the law saw it as an effort to suppress Latino turnout in Providence. ''It was bizarro,'' said John Marion, the executive director of Common Cause Rhode Island, the state affiliate of the national government-watchdog group. ''Ten years later, I still don't know how it happened.''

Rhode Island Democrats have proposed legislation to expand voting by mail and early voting, including a repeal of the requirement that absentee ballots have two witness signatures. But they're not likely to touch the voter-ID system. ''Repealing voter ID was a nonstarter,'' Steven Brown, the executive director of the ACLU of Rhode Island, told me. ''So there was no point in putting it in the reform bill.'' Rhode Island's critics of the ID requirement now find themselves in the same unenviable position as their progressive allies in red states: hoping the federal government will override a restrictive law that their own leaders—in this case, fellow Democrats—refuse to change.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Here is a little bit of what this article says:

[President Biden] has assailed Georgia's new voting laws as an atrocity akin to ''Jim Crow in the 21st century. . . . But even once the GOP-passed measure [in Georgia] takes effect, Georgia citizens will still have far more opportunities to vote before Election Day than their counterparts in the president's home state.

That is The Atlantic—not known as a Republican magazine or anything.

The Atlantic article goes on to say:

Delaware isn't an anomaly among Democratic strongholds, and its example presents the president's party with an uncomfortable reminder: Although Democrats like to call out Republicans for trying to suppress voting, the states [the Democrats] control in the Northeast makes casting a ballot more difficult than anywhere else.

Than anywhere else.

Here is the point I am making. I am not trying to say that every other State should be like Alaska, that we need to federalize elections so every State has the same voting rights issues. I am proud of where my State is, and I am certainly not going to let any smug argument on the other side somehow accuse my Republican State of Jim Crow 2.0. Meet the standards in my State before you make those arguments.

But the point is, we are not all going to be the same. I have a State that is one-fifth the size of the lower 48. We have very unique voting issues. And the Founding Fathers strongly believed that election laws, for that reason, should be crafted State by State.

This is in the Constitution:

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations.

Yes, this Congress may make laws and regulations, but a wholesale Federal takeover of every State's elections law is not what the Constitution contemplated, and it is not what would be good for each citizen of each State in our country.

My invitation to the President and other Members who are fundamentally demanding that we fundamentally alter this body by getting rid of the filibuster: Save your smug Jim Crow 2.0 insults. Go back to your own States. Undertake voter rights legislation is as expansive as my State. Take care of your own States first before you come here and tell us that you need to fundamentally reorder this body and this

country by getting rid of the filibuster—an issue that almost everybody agreed on just a few years ago was not a good idea for the Senate or for America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, before I ran for the Senate, I ran a business that started in my hometown. Oftentimes you get criticized when you try to draw a parallel between a business and this place. And I guess it is so different, so it would be easy to make that argument.

But in the real world, if you have got a bad idea, you can't just change the rules. You have got to outcompete. You have got to offer another product. Only here, with the results that we have produced over time, would you want it even easier to generate bad ideas and put them into law.

The comparison between State government and here, I think, is valid. In almost all State governments, there is a constitutional amendment or a statute that says you can't spend more than you take in. There are certain guidelines, whenever you try to put any legislation forward, that you run it through regular order. We don't do that anymore. That takes too much time. That takes too much effort.

And when you try to get rid of the things that work in other places and double down on bad performance, that is what my Democratic colleagues are trying to do. The radical Build Back Better agenda failed. And now, instead of changing their agenda, running it through committees, making it more palatable to get at least one Republican vote, they want to change the rules.

Changing the rules of the Senate to enact their failed agenda is just the beginning. They want to completely take over our elections. Senator SULLIVAN just said a moment ago, in the Constitution, it couldn't be more explicit that that is the domain of the States.

Their plan is to silence those who stand in their way to campaign to fundamentally change in this country election law, and I don't think the country is going to have it. Thankfully, my Democratic colleagues can't even get all of their own Members on board. I think that was the same problem with the Build Back Better agenda. This is just going for something even more extreme, more impactful. It would have a ripple effect for who knows how much and how long down the road.

Hoosiers should not have their voice in DC watered down by power-hungry politicians who will do anything to get their way. The For the People Act should be called the ''For the Politicians Act.'' It would be a better name because that is what we are enabling here. States like Indiana, States like Alaska conduct their elections fairly.

And by the way, where were any complaints pre-COVID? You didn't hear of any. You change the rules; then you want to homogenize it across the country. That doesn't make sense.

Election integrity measures like voter ID are extremely popular—with a photo ID. Every State likes that. That polls in close to the 80-percent range, which is unheard of around here.

Americans are fed up with the top-down approach, one size fits all. It would be different if we were knocking it out of the park to begin with. We certainly aren't. We ought to work on the issues we can agree on and the beautiful system that was built. When you can't, don't feel that the only way it can get done is by doing it here. Turn it back to the laboratory of the States.

Another thing that irks me: 3 years ago, $18 trillion in debt, approaching the record level, which we have now eclipsed, post-World War II. The difference then and now is we were savers and investors then. We are consumers and spenders now. And this will open the floodgates for even more heavy burden on our kids and grandkids.

We shouldn't be changing the rules to make it easier to legislate or spend money when we produce the results that have been produced here now for decades. We cannot allow President Biden and the Democrats to change the rules and take over our elections to save their radical, failed agenda.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, we are in the same spot in the Senate we have been at five times before in the past 12 months. My Senate colleagues are bringing up a bill on voting to federalize our elections.

This time is different. This time their demands have changed. It is not just, ''Vote for my bill or take a vote.'' It is, ''If you don't do this, we will blow up the Senate permanently.'' Oh, that is a different thing. So let me set some context on this because this requires some conversation about where we are, what this conversation is all about, and what this really means for the future.

So first let me begin with the bill itself. There is no question 100 Senators here have all been through an election process. We are all experts on elections. We have walked through it in a way that most Americans have never walked through before. We are passionate about fair elections. We are passionate about the people who actually vote because those are the people who are actually engaged in our society. As we have millions of people who check out, don't care, and don't vote, we encourage people to vote, to pay attention.

The laws in our States are a little bit different on voting because each State is a little bit different. That is not something new. That is actually written into the U.S. Constitution. It has been that way since 1789. They have always been a little bit different.

In 1965, our Nation took a strong, bold step to be able to make sure that we protected the rights of every single individual to be able to vote because there was a season in American history where Black Americans were being pushed out. There were poll taxes. There were Jim Crow laws. There were things that actually pushed people away from voting.

So, in 1965, our Nation passed the Voting Rights Act. I will talk a little bit more about that in a moment. That Voting Rights Act still stands today to be able to protect the right of every individual in America to vote. If a single person or group of people are suppressed in their voting, are prohibited from voting, Federal courts today have the right to be able to step in on any jurisdiction, any State in America, to be able to protect the rights of individuals to be able to vote.

I bring that to this body as a reminder because, for some reason, an enormous portion of this body on the left side of this room is running around the Nation and saying, ''If we don't do something right now, there will be voter suppression in America, and we have to change that,'' when they all know, in 1965, we passed the Voting Rights Act, and that act still stands today to be able to protect the rights of individuals.

I hear people wander around the Nation and get on news channels and say the Voting Rights Act has been kicked out by the Supreme Court, when they know that is a lie. They know it is. One section of the Voting Rights Act the Supreme Court took out several years ago. It was the section that required what is called preclearance. It created a formula for States that had done a lot of oppression against Black Americans. It created a certain formula for them. If they made any changes in their voting laws, they had to get preclearance for that.

It stayed in place for decades. Even though their State had cleaned up their voting laws and had changed, for decades it stayed there, until the Supreme Court looked at it and said: You can't hold this over these States a generation later for something that a previous generation did.

And so the Supreme Court kicked that one section out but kept everything else, including protecting the rights of every single American from voter suppression. Every law in every State in America could be challenged in a Federal district court, circuit court, and to the Supreme Court to make sure the rights of individuals are protected.

Now, people here may not know that that still exists based on the way that the news has talked about voting of late and based on all the conversation about voting, but that is the law of the land right now.

So what is being brought to this body to vote on then? Well, here is what has been brought to this body to be able to vote on: a long list of things that they

want to be able to address and to be able to say they want to change voting in America to be able to remake it in their image, except it is not in the image of their States because many of my Democratic colleagues don't actually have, in their own State, the things that they are actually putting into this Federal legislation; meaning, literally, they are taking over from officials in their own State, telling their own Governor, their own legislature that they are wrong and that they are going to set them straight.

We have a disagreement on some of these issues. I will grant you that. Some of these areas in the bill we go: Let's talk about it. Most of the areas in their bill we look at and go: Are you kidding me? We just disagree on this—things like same-day voter registration, where a person could literally walk in and say, ''I never registered to vote before,'' tell them their name, and then vote on the spot. Honestly, I have a problem with that because there is no way to be able to validate they didn't vote in Oklahoma City, then vote in Tulsa, then vote in Muskogee, OK. There is no way to know. They just voted, and they did same-day registration, so there is no way to verify that person is actually that person.

Interestingly enough, they also include in their bill undermining State voter ID laws, so the combination of the two is pretty powerful. You can't call for ID, but you can register on the spot. That is a formula for fraud.

It is not just my opinion; it is the State of New York's opinion. The State of New York does not have same-day voter registration. In fact, this last November, it was on the ballot in the State of New York, and the people of the State of New York overwhelmingly said that is a terrible idea and voted it down. Yet Senator SCHUMER stands right over there and tells every State, including his that just voted this down: No, you have to do this. We are going to require it because some people in this body think it should be required.

We have a disagreement on that. That is a real disagreement we should be able to debate and talk about. Instead, my Democratic colleagues are saying: If you disagree with me on this, I will blow up the rules of the Senate, and we will get what I want no matter what.

Can we not have a disagreement that same-day voter registration may be a bad idea, when even the State of New York and the people of New York think it is a bad idea?

They have a mandate for using ballot drop boxes. I don't have a problem with ballot drop boxes, but their ballot drop box issue is you can't provide security. If you have any kind of security setting for it or any kind of chain-of-custody requirement, then that is going to be oppressive and suppressive.

You know, I think it is a good idea, when dealing with a ballot, that you actually know where it went and if anyone changed it; if people dropped off multiple ballots, when it is only legal to drop off one. I think it may be important to know if you are going to verify an election. We have a disagreement on that.

We have a disagreement on the issue of felons voting. Now, each State makes that decision whether they are going to allow felons to vote, but in this piece of legislation Democrats are bringing, they are saying: No, felons have to be given the right to vote when they get out of prison.

Now, I understand we may disagree on that, but I want you to understand what they are saying. My Democratic colleagues are saying: I will blow up the rules of the Senate and change 250 years of history in the Senate to get my way if you don't allow rapists, convicted murderers, and convicted sex offenders to be able to vote. They are so determined that sex offenders get the right to vote, they are willing to blow up the rules of the Senate to get it.

Can we not have a disagreement on if we are going to force States to mandate that convicted murders, sex offenders, and rapists get to vote again?

In this piece of legislation, they provide government funding, taxpayer funding, for Members of the House of Representatives just down the hall over there. Here is the way they set it up: If you are running for the House of Representatives and you raise small-dollar donations, then taxpayers will fund your campaign on a 6-to-1 match. It gets even better because you, as a candidate, could actually take a salary from that as well and actually be paid by the taxpayer to be able to run for office if you are running in the House of Representatives. Can we not have a disagreement on that?

I don't meet many people in Oklahoma who say they want to fund House Members running in New York State or California or Illinois or even in Oklahoma. They don't want to fund them with their tax dollars. If their tax dollars are going to education or roads or national defense or border security, they are all in, but if they are funding a political campaign with their tax dollars, I just don't meet many people who are very excited about that. But my Democratic colleagues are saying: If you don't support that, I will blow up the Senate, and I will destroy 200 years of history in the functioning of the Senate to get my way because, to them, having Federal funding for elections is so important, they are willing to blow the Senate tradition up so they can get their way.

There is a general counsel who works for the Federal Election Commission. You never met him. You don't know his name. He is an attorney who works with the Federal Election Commission. Their bill gives that attorney a tremendous amount of power to oversee elections in America. Do you know who he is? I don't either. But if this bill passes, it is a pretty powerful individual. Can we have a disagreement about that or is this about, if I don't allow someone no one even knows their name, a Federal Election Commission attorney, to be able to run elections in the country, I will blow the Senate up.

There is a section of it in this bill that talks about preclearance. We actually don't know how many States would fall into preclearance on this. Many of my Democratic colleagues say: Well, it is not very many. You have to have some sort of violation in the past to be able to get it. But, actually, if you read the fine print in the bill, it says if there has been a consent or out-of-court settlement on things related to an election any time in the last 25 years, you would suddenly now be in preclearance.

So, literally, 20 years ago, if your State made some agreement on elections, if there was some settlement that was done with DOJ during that time period, didn't even go to court; you just settled it to resolve it—said, yes, that was a mistake that was done—now that is going to come back to haunt a future generation.

And States will get drawn into preclearance, which—let me describe what that means. Preclearance means your State legislature can no longer pass legislation on elections until you contact the Attorney General of the United States and ask permission first. So now your State legislature works for the Attorney General of the United States, whoever that person may be in the future. It actually gives them the ability to be able to control anything on election law in your State, even though we don't even know who that is, and we don't know how many States are actually included.

What I have heard over and over again from my Democratic colleagues is, well, if we don't do this right now, our elections are destroyed in the future because have you seen the things that Republicans are doing all over the country? Have you seen the terrible laws that have been passed since 2020?

Actually, I have. My State is one of them. And I was surprised when I saw my State on the list of 34 different laws that are out there that have been passed that are terrible for America so we have to be able to federalize all elections. I was surprised to see my State on the list. When I looked on the list to see what was the terrible thing that passed in my State, here is what I discovered: Our State passed HB 2663. HB 2663 did a couple of things. It added an extra day of early voting for the general elections. They added an extra day of in-person early voting.

And it said, if you request an absentee ballot, you have to do that 15 days prior to the election. Do you know why we did that? Because the U.S. Postal Service contacted every State and asked them to do that because the Postal Service said: We can no longer guarantee we can get something mailed to a person and give them time to get it actually mailed back in time for the election. So to make sure people's votes actually count, we did what the

U.S. Postal Service actually recommended to us. We moved our request for an absentee ballot to 15 days before the election to make sure every vote would count.

You want to know something fun? So did the State of New York. They made the exact same change. So, apparently, the State of New York is also into voter suppression the same as the State of Oklahoma is.

Do you know what is really happening? My Democratic colleagues are running around the Nation getting on the news and saying there are 34 new laws passed by Republicans; they are destroying the right to vote. And apparently no one in the media is saying, ''List one,'' because if they would have listed one, they would have listed the State of Oklahoma added—added—an extra day of in-person voting and did what the U.S. Postal Service asked us to do, the exact same thing that the State of New York did.

Let me give you some other things that have happened in other States. In Florida, there is a requirement that voters provide the last four digits of their Social Security number or their driver's license number or their Florida ID number when they request a mail-in ballot to make sure it is actually them. It is pretty straightforward. That doesn't sound like voter suppression; that sounds like just verifying that a person who is asking to vote by absentee is actually the person voting.

They made it very simple. You can just do any number. They are not even showing ID. They are saying you can just give the last four digits of your Social Security number, which everyone has. All they are just trying to make sure is that person is actually there and is actually who they say they are, but they are listed as being voter suppression there.

Arizona is requiring a voter signature on early ballots, as do a lot of States already. That has not been a big issue on that.

In Louisiana—this is a really big one in Louisiana. Louisiana and Utah—now, I understand why Democrats are challenging this. In Louisiana and Utah, they required that deceased voters be taken off the voter rolls. Those who are decreased, they are taken off the voter rolls. That is being listed as voter suppression.

I have to tell you. I have a friend of mine who said to me: When I die, would you make sure that I am buried in a blue State because I want to make sure I can continue to vote. It is a running old joke about ''I want to keep voting when I am dead.''

The State of Louisiana and the State of Utah, all they did was say: We want to be able to clean up our voter rolls to be able to take off the names of people we know and have verified that they are actually dead. But that is considered voter suppression, and my Democratic colleagues are running around the Nation saying there are 34 new laws that are suppressing the right to vote, when this is the kind of stuff that has actually been passed around the country.

Now, they will say: Oh, you can list those; I understand those. But there are a couple of them that are really egregious. I have heard several folks say: Do you realize that the State of Georgia—the State of Georgia and the law that they passed won't allow people to be able to pass out water to people in line? That is voter suppression.

Well, did you know that new law in Georgia has been the old law in the State of New York for years so that you couldn't campaign in line? People who are actual poll workers, who are volunteers there, they can pass out food and water. But the State of Georgia did a law just like the State of New York already has. I haven't heard Senator SCHUMER say that is voter suppression in New York, but he declared that to be voter suppression in Georgia. In fact, even Georgia Senators here stood up to be able to protest that they were playing baseball in Georgia because of it. The State of New York already has it.

I have also heard folks say: Well, there are some of the things that these States have passed that they are actually removing the ability of the State chief election official to administer elections. That is dangerous because then just a legislature can declare whoever they want to declare. That sounds horrible. If true, that would be terrible. It just doesn't happen to be factually true, but it is just getting spun like crazy that Republican States are out there taking away the rights of their people to be able to vote and their vote be counted. It is just not factually true.

They will go to Georgia and say they stripped the Secretary of State's authority to oversee elections. Here is what Georgia actually did. The Georgia secretary of state is still the chief election official for the State of Georgia.

They still oversee all election activities in the State, nothing changed on that. But Georgia did replace the secretary of state on the State election board with a nonpartisan chair, making the secretary of state a nonvoting member. That did happen. The law did provide new authority to the board to suspend county or municipal election superintendents and to appoint superintendents to oversee the jurisdiction. Yep, that is part of the law, but that would only happen after an investigation by a performance review board, a hearing by the State election board.

The board then must determine that the election administrator in the jurisdictions committed at least three violations of State election law or as demonstrated nonfeasance, malfeasance, gross negligence, and the administration of elections. It also prohibits the board from suspending more than four superintendents. It allows for a suspended superintendent to petition the State for reinstatement.

It adds a whole process of due process that actually gets carried out. Why do they do this? Well, because there were actual examples in the election of election workers that were fired by the county elections directors for shredding voter registration applications. That is a crime.

So they set up a process with full due process not to overturn elections, but to make sure county election officials actually are following the law. That doesn't sound like voter suppression to me. That just sounds like running free and fair elections.

Oh, but Arizona—Arizona has a new law that provides the attorney general to have the authority to defend the State's election laws in courts rather than the secretary of state, so they just shifted their responsibility of who defends State election laws.

The secretary of state is still the chief election officer in Arizona but actually doesn't go to court. Their State attorney general does. That kind of makes sense to me, but, apparently, my Democratic colleagues don't agree. They have spun this whole web of myth and said, We have to federalize every election in America. We have to take over every State voting system in America. Washington, DC, needs to be the one to be able to run everything—or else if we don't, we'll destroy the traditions of the Senate and get our way no matter what.

Could I just read to you from the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the law that is still in place in America?

It says:

> No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965, still the law of the land, and it should be.

So what is happening now with this? Well, there are two big issues here. One is this fight over voting, whether States make decisions on voting or whether Washington, DC, Democrats make decisions on voting for their States, even if it is a Democrat State.

And then the next big issue is, are the Democrats in this room actually going to destroy the filibuster and silence the rights of the minority in America? Now, if you would have asked me 4 years ago, I would have said: No way, that is not going to happen, because a group of Democrats and a group of Republicans joined together and said: We are committed to not destroying the legislative filibuster. Why? Because it is what makes the House and the Senate different.

The House and the Senate are not just one is bigger and one is smaller. The House and the Senate operate differently. And the Senate has been the place for two and a half centuries where the debate occurs and there are rights of individual Senators to be able to debate the issues, defend their State, and talk about the rights of Americans. This happens in the Senate.

The majority rules the show in the House. If they have 218 of 435, they

don't care what the other side thinks. People who always talk about bipartisanship never bring up the House of Representatives—they just don't. Bipartisanship doesn't happen in the House of Representatives the way it happens in the Senate, but the reason it happens in the Senate is because of this thing called the filibuster.

It was interesting, when I was first elected to the Senate in 2014, the people that called me between my election and when I came were almost all Democrats—almost all of them. They wanted to introduce themselves. They wanted to say: What are you interested in? Because in the Senate we have to work together to be able to get things done.

And so I had all these Democrats that reached out to me to say: Let's find areas of common ground. We are going to disagree on lots of things, but let's find the things we are going to agree on because we have to come to consensus, because we are the U.S. Senate.

That is commonly understood by Senators, which is why in 2017, in the middle of the year, a group of Republicans and Senators wrote a letter—this letter—to MITCH MCCONNELL and CHUCK SCHUMER. In that letter—I am going to read it right here from this paragraph, it says:

> We are mindful of the unique role the Senate plays in the legislative process, and we are steadfastly committed to ensuring that this great American institution continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body. Therefore—

Here's their request.

> Therefore, we are asking you to join us in opposing any effort to curtail the existing rights and prerogatives of Senators to engage in full, robust, and extended debate as we consider legislation before this body in the future.

This group of Senators in 2017 wrote to MITCH MCCONNELL and CHUCK SCHUMER and said: Do not allow any changes. We are fully committed to making no changes in the filibuster. Don't allow it to happen for legislation. Don't allow it. Here were those that signed this document and said: This is what we believe.

KAMALA HARRIS, now Vice President of the United States; CHRIS COONS, who led the letter among all Democrats; PATRICK LEAHY is the person who has held this institution together; DIANNE FEINSTEIN; AMY KLOBUCHAR; KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND; CORY BOOKER; MICHAEL BENNET; JOE MANCHIN; ANGUS KING; MARK WARNER; BOB CASEY; MARTIN HEINRICH; JEANNE SHAHEEN; SHERROD BROWN; BRIAN SCHATZ; MARIA CANTWELL; MAZIE HIRONO; JON TESTER; TOM CARPER; MAGGIE HASSAN; TAMMY DUCKWORTH; TIM KAINE; JACK REED; Ed Markey; DEBBIE STABENOW; SHELDON WHITEHOUSE; BOB MENENDEZ—all said don't change the legislative filibuster.

In fact, they asked me, along with everyone else, to join them in opposing any efforts to make changes to the filibuster. It didn't just stop there. There were lots of other conversations that happened during that time period. There were lots of interviews and dialogue about it. Let me just read some of the comments that were made during that time period.

George Stephanopoulos on ABC's program asked of DICK DURBIN, the No. 2 leader for Democrats—asked DICK DURBIN, ''What do you think about doing away with the filibuster?''

DICK DURBIN replied this in 2018:

> Well, I can tell you that would be the end of the Senate as it was originally devised and created going back to our Founding Fathers. We have to acknowledge our respect for the minority, and that is what the Senate tries to do in its composition and in its procedure.

That is DICK DURBIN in 2018.

JON TESTER was asked in 2019 about the legislative filibuster, and he said:

> I don't want to see the Senate become the House.

He then said:

> If you're asking about the filibuster changes, I am a no. That would be a mistake.

Senator ANGUS KING made this comment in 2020. He said:

> I know it can be frustrating, but I think legislation is better when it has some bipartisan support.

Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN in 2020 said:

> I think it's a part of Senate tradition, which creates a sobering effect on the body, which is healthy.

One more comment from ANGUS KING. ANGUS KING was asked about it on CNN, about the filibuster, and he replied back he is 100 percent opposed to killing the filibuster—100 percent.

Senator CORY BOOKER responded about the filibuster. He said:

> My colleagues and I, everybody I've talked to, believe the legislative filibuster should stay there, and I will personally resist efforts to get rid of it.

Senator CHRIS COONS, when asked about this in 2018, he replied:

> I am committed to never voting to change the legislative filibuster.

Never.

Senator JACKY ROSEN in 2019 was asked about this, and she replied:

> I think we should keep the [legislative] filibuster. It's one of the few things that we have left in order to let all of the voices be heard here in the Senate. . . .

She also said:

> We have to look not at just when you're in the majority, but what does it do when you're in the minority? You have to be mindful of that.

JEANNE SHAHEEN was asked on CNN about the legislative filibuster in 2021, and she answered just simply:

> No, I would not support eliminating the 60-vote threshold.

Would not do it.

Senator JACK REED was asked in 2017, during the same time period this letter came out, which he was a signatory for, and he said:

> The filibuster is not in the Constitution nor the original Senate rules, but we have a bicameral system for a reason and this legislative tool serves a critical purpose in ensuring the functioning of our democratic republic. Yes, it sometimes slows the process down, and some have abused or subverted it. But it remains an important part in our system of checks and balances.

I agree. I agree with that JACK REED.

Senator BERNIE SANDERS even was asked about the filibuster in 2019, and he just replied:

> No, I am not crazy about getting rid of the filibuster.

Senator MAZIE HIRONO from Hawaii said:

> I'm not particularly in favor of getting rid of the filibuster because that just means majority rule. That's what happens in the House.

Senator BOB CASEY was asked in 2019 about the filibuster, and he just replied:

> I'm a yes [on keeping the filibuster].

One of my favorites, Senator SHERROD BROWN was asked about this in 2019, and he replied:

> I think there are ways of getting things through Congress with the legislative filibuster still in place. . . . it takes a chief executive that knows what she's doing or what he's doing.

Listen, this is not some trivial exercise. This is 250 years of history my Democratic colleagues are planning to flush down the toilet because they don't get their way on a bill we rightfully have very strong philosophical disagreements on.

Hey, I don't agree on giving rapists and sex offenders who are convicted felons voting rights when they get out of prison; I am not alone on that. I don't agree in Federal tax dollars being used to be able to pay for political campaigns. I am not alone in that. That is not that crazy.

I don't agree that my State should have to go play ''Mother, May I'' with some future Attorney General because they want to add another day of voting. I am not alone in that. But to say, ''If you don't do this now, I will destroy the Senate'', is a toxic shift for our Republic, and it is a violation of what you have said before in public, in fact, written to the leadership of the Senate and said: Please don't do this, and we will not do this. And now, years later go: It is not convenient. That was when we were in the minority. We had one opinion. Now we have different core beliefs because we are in the majority.

Interestingly enough, Joe Biden today stood in Georgia and made this statement. He said:

> Today I am making it clear: To protect our democracy, I support changing the Senate rules whichever way they need to be changed to prevent a minority of Senators from blocking action on voting rights. When it comes to protecting majority rule in America, the majority should rule in the U.S. Senate.

Well, that is fascinating. Now that he is President of the United States, it is my way, or I will destroy the whole place. When he was Senator Joe Biden, he had a different opinion.

Senator Joe Biden wasn't about ''I am the President, so I get what I

want.'' Senator Joe Biden made this statement:

Folks who want to see this change want to eliminate one of the procedural mechanisms designed for the express purpose of guaranteeing individual rights, and they also have a consequence, and would undermine the protections of a minority point of view in the heat of majority excess.

But now he says: No. I am in the majority. I should get my way.

Senator Joe Biden said:

I have been here 32 years, most of the time in the majority. Whenever you are in the majority, it is frustrating to see the other side block a bill or a nominee you support. I have walked in your shoes, and I get it. . . . Getting rid of the filibuster has long-term consequences. If there is one thing I have learned in my years here, once you change the rules and surrender the Senate's institutional power, you never get it back.

Senator Joe Biden said:

Simply put, the nuclear option would transform the Senate from the so-called cooling saucer our Founding Fathers talked about to cool the passions of the day to a pure majoritarian body like a Parliament. We have heard a lot in recent weeks about the rights of the majority and obstructionism. But the Senate is not meant to be a place of pure majoritarianism. Is majority rule what you really want?

That is what he said as a Senator, but as President, his demand was, majority rule or we will break every rule in the Senate to get what we want.

Senator SCHUMER, in his public statements, has been very clear. ''It would be doomsday for democracy,'' he said, ''if you change the filibuster.''

This is the statement Senator SCHUMER made in 2017, the same Senator SCHUMER who has spent the last 12 months trying to find a way to tear down the filibuster. In 2017, when there was the debate going on around this, Senator SCHUMER said on the floor of the Senate, standing right there, ''I hope the Republican leader and I,'' he said, ''can, in the coming months, find a way to build a firewall around the legislative filibuster, which is the most important distinction between the Senate and the House. Without the 60-vote threshold for legislation,'' Senator SCHUMER said, ''the Senate becomes a majoritarian institution like the House, much more subject to the winds of short-term electoral change. No Senator would like to see that happen so let's find a way to further protect the 60-vote rule for legislation.''

That was Senator SCHUMER in 2017, but now it is: I am in power. I am going to do what I want.

This is not a flippant issue, and as I have spoken to some of my Democratic colleagues, they seem to believe we will just take this vote and no one is going to care. In fact, some of my Democratic colleagues are saying: We know we are going to lose. Senator MANCHIN and Senator SINEMA have already made public comments. They are not going to go with this, or, we are going to take this, make a statement. Our progressive base wants us to be able to do this. It has no consequences. It is not going to pass anyway, so we will just do it—except they are forgetting that 5 years from now, 10 years from now, there will be another time just like this. Maybe Democrats will be in a slightly larger majority. Maybe Senator SINEMA and Senator MANCHIN won't be here at that moment, and the majority leader, Democrat Senator, at that point will step forward and say: You voted on this in 2022. It is time for us to vote on it now.

Democratic activists will rush at you and will say: Don't you dare change what you did. Tear the place down. Let's get what we want.

I have spoken to so many of my colleagues and said: Don't do this.

They have quietly responded back to me: I don't want to do this.

I am not here to attack my colleagues. You each make your own decisions. But these are decisions that matter. These are the decisions that 100 years from now will still guide the direction of the Senate. These are the decisions that will direct our Republic.

We are the only body that has a protection for the minority voice; I think the only legislative body in the world that is designed like this. It has been part of the secret sauce of America that the minority in America, however large or small it is, has a voice.

My Democratic colleagues are now saying: We no longer want the minority to have a voice in America. If you are in the minority opinion, you don't count. Sit down. Shut up. We are in the majority.

That has never been the American way, not in 250 years. This has been the place where we have argued, debated, and where, yes, I have talked to House Members who have said good bills went to die. But the Senate has been the spot where all Americans get to speak. And my Democratic colleagues are seriously considering this week saying: No more, because we want to pass a voting bill that gives Federal dollars to House candidates and gives felons the right to vote and takes away voter ID.

What in the world? What has this body become that people who signed this document, page after page of it—I mean, I could bring out page after page of Senators who have signed this and have said ''Do not take away the legislative filibuster'' but now are just flipping and flippant and saying it won't matter. Yes, it does. One hundred years from now, this week will still matter.

I encourage my Democratic colleagues to think carefully on this one because this one counts.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. SINEMA. Madam President, I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 1 on the motion to invoke cloture on Anne Witkowsky to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Conflict and Stabilization Operations).

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 2 on the confirmation of Anne Witkowsky to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Conflict and Stabilization Operations).

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 510 on the motion to invoke cloture on Jinsook Ohta to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of California.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 511 on the confirmation of Jinsook Ohta to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of California.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 512 on the motion to invoke cloture on David Urias to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 513 on the confirmation of David Urias to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 514 on the motion to invoke cloture on Maame Frimpong to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 515 on the confirmation of Maame Frimpong to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 516 on the motion to invoke cloture on Jane Beckering to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Michigan.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 517 on the confirmation of Jane Beckering to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Michigan.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 518 on the motion to invoke cloture on Shalina Kumar to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

I was necessarily absent, but had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall vote 519 on the confirmation of Shalina Kumar to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.