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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Light of the world, shine Your love on us this day. Break forth into the darkness of our world with Your truth and illuminate the paths You would have us take as we move through this day.

Make visible to us Your abiding presence, that in the certainty of Your company we would be more willing to go forth, step up, and speak Your life-giving word into the uncertainty of these times.

Reveal to us Your redeeming will, that we would receive the righteousness You offer us. May our personal holiness be grounded in humility and motivated by our desire to serve You.

Thus, may Your light shine unobscured through our renewed commitment to this world, our country, and Your people. May we have the eyes to see those who are in need, and may our lives reflect the warmth of Your light on those who hide in despair.

This day, may our words, our deeds, and our relationships one with another, be a witness to Your light and Your love.

In the gift of Your revealed name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. DEAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. DEAN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CONGRATULATING CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA

(Ms. DEAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DEAN. Madam Speaker, I congratulate and thank the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia on the opening of their second inpatient hospital, in my district, in King of Prussia.

CHOP's Middleman Family Pavilion will dedicate more than 250,000 square feet of space solely to children. In our continued fight with COVID–19, we need more facilities like this one that families from all over our region can access.

As the first pediatric emergency room in Montgomery County, CHOP will ensure that more children in Pennsylvania will have timely, nationally acclaimed care.

The Middleman Family Pavilion will also create many jobs for the Montgomery County community, bringing needed jobs to communities like Norristown, Bridgeport, and Conshohocken.

Now more than ever, with CHOP, it is all about children. That is the same for me. We need healthcare facilities that meet the demands of today, that treat our children with expert care and our families with compassion. Congratulations to CHOP.

A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN A YEAR

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, a lot can happen in a year: a woman can deliver a newborn; a child can learn to walk; and a small virus leaked from a lab in Wuhan, China, can go around the globe and cause a global pandemic.

While the first two are joyous, the latter, and the 1-year anniversary of the Biden administration, is nothing to celebrate. We have the highest inflation in 40 years, and you don't need a graph to show that. We see it each day when we go to fill up our tank or go to the grocery store.

We have the end of American energy independence and a plea to OPEC to increase petroleum production; record-high numbers of illegal border crossings; almost double legal immigration, with no COVID–19 testing; record-high illegal drug crossings, especially synthetic fentanyl, with record-high overdoses, especially in our young population, 18 to 45; record-high homicides and crime in blue States; a disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan, Saigon 2.0, with a loss of billions in equipment and the lives of 13 of our servicemen and -women.

The disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan has led to increased instability with Russia and China.

We have a vaccine mandate that ignores science, which shows that both the delta virus can transmit, even if vaccinated and boosted, and omicron wanes within 1 month.

My advice to this administration: End the vaccine mandate; stop what you are doing; and go on vacation.

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SUPPORTING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL FOR IRAN HOSTAGES

(Mr. SUOZZI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the award of a Congressional Gold Medal to the 52 hostages of the Iran hostage crisis that were released, after 444 days of captivity, 41 years ago today.

On November 4, 1979, Iranian student militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took Embassy employees captive. Despite mock firing squads, beatings, solitary confinement, lack of food, and psychological torture, the American hostages maintained their strength and resilience.

Back at home, Americans remained united in their support for the hostages, many tying yellow ribbons around trees as a sign of solidarity. The former hostages have never received proper recognition from their government for their sacrifices.

This bipartisan bill is a symbol of our Nation's ability to come together to honor these American heroes. As of today, the bill has over 166 cosponsors.

Special thanks to Commission 52 and Chairman Brock Pierce for helping to gather support for the bill. It is a true public service.

PRESIDENT BIDEN DRAGGING COUNTRY BACKWARD

(Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week marks 1 year of President Biden's out-of-touch, reckless, and disastrous Presidency.

The past 12 months have been filled with failure after failure, and Americans are dealing with the consequences at every corner.

From skyrocketing inflation, increased crime rates, a disastrous Afghanistan exit, an open border agenda, concerned parents labeled as domestic terrorists, and more, this administration has failed the American people.

Amidst all the crises, President Biden has spent a quarter of his first year in his Delaware basement, avoiding all responsibilities. This is unacceptable from anyone.

I came to Congress to serve the people of Texas' 25th Congressional District, and when I am back home, I hear firsthand how Texans are worse off under President Biden than ever before.

The bottom line is, a year of the Biden administration's socialist and far-left agenda has dragged our country backward, not forward.

It is time America has leaders that put America first. President Joe Biden is not that leader. He has 33 percent approval.

In God we trust.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STANTON). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

CELEBRATING FEDERAL FUNDING TO EXPAND HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL

(Ms. GARCIA of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Federal dollars coming to the Houston area to solve the supply chain issues facing our community and to create more jobs.

Yesterday, the Biden administration announced over $14 billion for projects that will improve our Nation's ports, waterways, and railroads. That includes $147 million for a project to expand the Houston Ship Channel on the way to the Port of Houston.

This project will make it easier for ships to reach the docks and help more cargo move faster from the container ship to the store shelf. This will create jobs, jobs, and more jobs. This is huge for Texas, huge for Houston, and huge for the whole country.

Thanks to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed by this Chamber, we are solving the real problems facing everyday Americans.

I am grateful for the leadership of President Biden and my colleagues in Congress for getting this done.

REPUBLICANS WILLING TO WORK WITH PRESIDENT BIDEN

(Mr. GROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I listened last night to President Biden's press conference, and I was disappointed that he felt the Republicans did not want to work with him.

I would like to open the door, first of all, to working together to balance the budget. We don't consider it a goal of ours to race to get to $30 trillion in debt.

Please, Mr. Biden, convene a group of Republicans and Democrats. Let's work together to balance the budget.

Secondly, prior to you taking office, it was routine that about 20,000 people per month came across the border. Now, we are at over 80,000.

I secondly ask that we convene a bipartisan group to get back down to 20,000 a month to cross the border.

Finally, at the time President Trump was President, he was given a cocktail which cured his COVID illness almost immediately. That cocktail should be available to all Americans.

I, again, encourage a joint conference with us to get together and cure the people who get COVID.

Finally, Mr. President, stop being so divisive and screaming racism right and left. It does no good for this body to constantly call racism.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

IMPROVING MERRILL AND RING CREEK BRIDGE

(Mr. LARSEN of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, people have been traveling across the Merrill and Ring Creek Bridge in Everett, Washington, since Herbert Hoover was President of the United States.

Every day, residents drive, walk, pedal, and roll across the bridge to get to and from work and school in Everett and to catch a ferry in Mukilteo. Commuters on Everett Transit's route 18 bus rely on the bridge to access Sounder commuter rail and Amtrak service at Everett Station.

However, a recent assessment revealed the bridge is not only structurally deficient; it is vulnerable to collapse in the event of an earthquake. Thanks to the bipartisan infrastructure law, Washington communities will receive more than $605 million over the next 5 years to invest in critical bridge repairs.

Last week, Everett officials took me across the Merrill and Ring Creek Bridge and told me how this bold, long-term investment will create jobs, drive economic recovery, and keep people on the move.

Mr. Speaker, you cannot have a big-league economy with little-league infrastructure. Thanks to the bipartisan infrastructure law, communities in my district now have the resources needed to repair aging bridges and build a winning game plan for the region's economic future.

RECOGNIZING STETSON BENNETT

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize one of the First District's finest, quarterback Stetson Bennett of the Georgia Bulldogs.

Football is filled with stories of triumph, tribulation, and heart. The saga of Stetson Bennett has now cemented itself as one of those great stories that football fans will talk about for generations.

Hailing from Blackshear, Georgia, in Pierce County, Stetson Bennett grew up with a dream and a drive to turn that dream into reality.

As a young quarterback at Pierce County High School, Stetson was able to accumulate 3,700 passing yards, 500 rushing yards, and 40 touchdowns, along with Class 3A second team all-State honors.

Despite his accomplishments, Stetson was overlooked by many top football programs, but he never gave up the dream and walked on at the University of Georgia.

Following his freshman year, he chose to transfer to a junior college,

where he went 10–2 and won a championship. He returned to the University of Georgia his junior year and earned a starting role.

This past season, Stetson Bennett spearheaded the Dawgs to their first college football national championship in 42 years. The dream has become reality.

Stetson inspires me and will inspire others for many years to come.

Congratulations, and go Dawgs.

HONORING THE LIFE OF OFFICER BOBBY REED

(Mr. CORREA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, today, we honor the life and memory of Officer Bobby Reed.

He was born November 23, 1951, and Bobby Reed's life was about service to his community and to his country.

As a marine, he was deployed overseas to Vietnam, where he served honorably and attained the rank of staff sergeant.

When he returned home to Santa Ana, California, my hometown, he decided to join the local police department to continue protecting and serving his community.

During his 28 years of service on the Santa Ana police force, Officer Reed was honored many times over by his colleagues and his community for his exemplary service and character. Multiple civic organizations, such as Kiwanis and MADD, recognized him with many awards.

He was also elected as a board member of the Santa Ana Police Officers Association, showing, again, his leadership and his positive influence on others.

As we celebrate Bobby's life, may his example continue to shine for the next generation.

□ 0915

SPEAKER PHELAN SETS THE BAR HIGH

(Mr. WEBER of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 76th Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, Representative Dade Phelan of Beaumont, Texas.

Speaker Phelan, who is serving his fourth term representing the great District 21, is one of the most conservative Speakers in our State's history and has made it his priority to significantly improve the lives of Texans every single day.

As only the fourth Republican to hold the Texas House Speakership since 1871, or 151 years, he has set the bar high for any who might follow in his footsteps. He fought to pass landmark legislation that protects businesses, taxpayers, the unborn, religious freedoms, and our Second Amendment rights.

Under his leadership, the Texas House led on criminal justice reform issues, healthcare affordability, police funding, and addressing winter storm Uri's long-term impact on our State.

I cannot express how proud we are in Texas 14 to claim Speaker Phelan, his wife Kim, and their four precious boys, Ford, Mack, Hank, and little Luke, as our own.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Speaker Phelan for all he does for Texas.

ENSURING VETERANS' SMOOTH TRANSITION ACT

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 860, I call up the bill (H.R. 4673) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the automatic enrollment of eligible veterans in patient enrollment system of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 860, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117–26 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 4673

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act'' or the ''EVEST Act''.

SEC. 2. AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS IN PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d)(1) The Secretary shall enroll each veteran described in subsection (a) in the patient enrollment system under this section by not later than 60 days after receiving the information described in paragraph (3) with respect to the veteran.

''(2) Not later than 60 days after enrolling a veteran under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide to the veteran—

''(A) notice of the veteran's enrollment; and

''(B) instructions for how the veteran may opt out of such enrollment, at the election of the veteran.

''(3) The information described in this paragraph is the appropriate information concerning eligibility for enrollment in the patient enrollment system under this section, as provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center of the Department of Defense, or such successor entity of the Department.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (d) of section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply to a veteran with respect to whom the Secretary receives the information described in paragraph (3) of such subsection on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATES OF ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM.—Not later than August 1, 2022, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that any veteran who is eligible for automatic enrollment in the patient enrollment system under subsection (d) of section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), is able to access—

(1) an electronic version of the certificate of eligibility showing the veteran's eligibility for such enrollment; and

(2) an electronic mechanism by which the veteran may opt out of such enrollment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, is debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or their respective designees.

The gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 4673, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4673, as amended, my bill, the Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition, or EVEST Act.

I have made suicide prevention a top priority for the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. Last Congress, we passed bipartisan, bicameral mental health legislative packages, including the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Improvement Act and the Veterans COMPACT Act. This Congress, we continued this work by passing the Sergeant Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act into law, but there is always more to do.

EVEST builds on our work and finally closes one of the most glaring gaps for veterans being able to successfully access high-quality VA health services, the enrollment process. We shouldn't be trying to hide VA care from those who earned it.

We know that the months following transition out of the military can be very stressful and particularly risky for new veterans in terms of mental health. With the EVEST Act, servicemembers will be automatically enrolled in VA care during their transition out of the military, with the choice to opt out. This helps simplify the process and prevents veterans from potentially missing out on lifesaving care. It also keeps veterans from having to opt into VA care later and attempt to navigate a new bureaucracy all on their own.

The symptoms of PTSD can be significantly improved in veterans who receive prompt mental healthcare. A 2014 study led by researchers at the San Francisco VA Medical Center looked at nearly 40,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who received VA mental

healthcare between 2001 and 2011 and had a post-deployment diagnosis of PTSD. They found that veterans who sought and received care soon after the end of their service had lower levels of PTSD upon follow-up a year after they initiated care. Each year that a veteran waited to initiate treatment, there was about a 5 percent increase in the odds of their PTSD either not improving or getting worse.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the study from the San Francisco VA Medical Center.

[From Psychiatric Services, Dec. 2014]

TIMING OF MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT AND PTSD SYMPTOM IMPROVEMENT AMONG IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS

(By Shira Maguen, Ph.D.; Erin Madden, M.P.H.; Thomas C. Neylan, M.D.; Beth E. Cohen, M.D., M.A.S.; Daniel Bertenthal, M.P.H.; Karen H. Seal, M.D., M.P.H.)

OBJECTIVE

This study examined demographic, military, temporal, and logistic variables associated with improvement of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who received mental health outpatient treatment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system. The authors sought to determine whether time between last deployment and initiating mental health treatment was associated with a lack of improvement in PTSD symptoms.

METHODS

The authors conducted a retrospective analysis of existing medical records of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who enrolled in VA health care, received a postdeployment PTSD diagnosis, and initiated treatment for one or more mental health problems between October 1, 2007, and December 31, 2011, and whose records contained results of PTSD screening at the start of treatment and approximately one year later (N=39,690).

RESULTS

At the start of treatment, 75% of veterans diagnosed as having PTSD had a positive PTSD screen. At follow-up, 27% of those with a positive screen at baseline had improved, and 43% of those with a negative screen at baseline remained negative. A negative PTSD screen at follow-up was associated with female gender, older age, white race, having never married, officer rank, non-Army service, closer proximity to the nearest VA facility, and earlier initiation of treatment after the end of the last deployment.

CONCLUSIONS

Interventions to reduce delays in initiating mental health treatment may improve veterans' treatment response. Further studies are needed to test interventions for particular veteran subgroups who were less likely than others to improve with treatment. (Psychiatric Services 65:1414–1419, 2014; doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.201300453)

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is one of the most common mental disorders among veterans returning from recent deployments. Yet, despite the availability of evidence-based treatments, there are multiple barriers to initiating mental health treatment. Many military personnel and veterans who report barriers to mental health care do not seek treatment or postpone seeking it.

Among veterans who do seek mental health care, the time lag is quite significant. In a previous study, we found that recently returning veterans with psychiatric diagnoses had delayed initiating mental health care at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) by a median of over two years after their last deployment ended. Delays in care can translate into delays in symptom and functional improvement, hindering readjustment to civilian life, family, and community.

Some studies have examined predictors of PTSD symptom worsening, but outside of randomized treatment trials, only a few studies have examined variables that are associated with PTSD symptom improvement. In other words, few studies have examined variables that are associated with PTSD symptom improvement in a naturalistic fashion, by allowing treatment initiation or engagement to vary among participants. Furthermore, even fewer studies have examined these questions among military personnel or veterans, particularly among those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. Existing studies have found a few variables that were associated with PTSD symptom improvement. For example, service members serving in multiple deployments demonstrated greater symptom improvement than those serving in a single deployment. For other demographic variables, the association with improvement is unclear. For example, although we know that female gender may be associated with the development of PTSD, it is not clear how gender is related to PTSD symptom improvement.

If we can better understand why some individuals improve, we can better understand the course and trajectories of PTSD and how to best contribute to individuals' recovery. This study evaluated demographic, military, temporal, and logistic variables that may be associated with PTSD symptom improvement. We were particularly interested in whether seeking mental health treatment sooner was associated with improvement in PTSD symptoms.

METHODS

Data source and extraction

We conducted a retrospective analysis of existing medical records from the VA's Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/Operation New Dawn (OND) roster, a national database of veterans who have separated from OEF/OIF/OND military service and who have enrolled in VA health care. Veterans of OEF served predominantly in Afghanistan, and veterans of OIF and OND served predominantly in Iraq. We linked the OEF/OIF/OND roster database, which contains veterans' demographic and military service information, to the Decision Support System's National Data Extract of pharmacy data and the VA National Patient Care Database, which provides VA visit dates and associated diagnostic codes from the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD–9–CM). These data are derived from electronic medical records generated during clinical visits. Visits to mental health outpatient and primary care services are categorized by clinic stop codes. Mental health outpatient services include visits to integrated care clinics providing primary care and mental health care. Fee basis codes designate care that is rendered at non-VA facilities and reimbursed by the VA but do not capture all non-VA care, such as care reimbursed by private insurance. The results of PTSD screening were extracted from the VA Corporate Data Warehouse.

All analyses were restricted to OEF/OIF/OND veterans who had received a diagnosis of PTSD (ICD–9–CM code 309.81) during two or more clinical encounters that occurred after the end of their last deployment and before December 31, 2012; had utilized mental health outpatient care between October 1, 2007 (beginning of nationwide primary care screenings), and December 31, 2012, and had not made any prior use of VA care; and had received PTSD screenings at both the start of treatment (up to three months before and one month after the first mental health visit) and on at least one other occasion occurring at least one year later (N=39,690). Of veterans who newly entered mental health treatment, 83% had a baseline screen for PTSD, and of those with a baseline screen, 50% had a follow-up screen during the period beginning one year later. The follow-up screen that was closest in proximity to the one-year follow-up date was utilized.

Measures

PTSD symptoms were assessed by using the Primary Care PTSD Screen (PC-PTSD), the PTSD Checklist (PCL), or both. Both measures were included in order to capture the most representative sample, given that the PC-PTSD screen is mainly used in VA primary care settings and other non-mental health settings and the PCL is used primarily in VA mental health settings. The PC-PTSD, a brief four-item screen given annually and after each deployment, is designed to detect possible PTSD symptoms. The screen yields binary responses (yes or no) for each of four PTSD symptom clusters: reexperiencing, avoidance, emotional numbing, and hyperarousal; a score of ≥3 designates a positive PTSD screen for veterans.

The PCL is a 17-item measure, with each item rating the presence of a different symptom over the past month on a 5-point Likert scale, from not at all to a little bit, moderately, quite a bit, and extremely. The PCL has been shown to have very good internal consistency, and it correlates strongly with other measures of PTSD symptoms. The PCL also demonstrates high diagnostic efficiency (.90). Within the VA, the PCL is mainly administered at the discretion of treating clinicians, typically to track patient progress during the course of mental health treatment. For the purposes of this study, symptoms rated as moderately or above on the PCL were considered present. PTSD symptoms from the PCL were combined in order to create indicators that paralleled each of the four symptom cluster proxies from the PC-PTSD. The validity of the mapping of PCL questions onto PC-PTSD items was tested by examining concordance between the two screens given at the VA on the same date. For the purposes of validation, all OEF/OIF/OND veterans who were administered the PCL and the PC-PTSD on the same date (not restricted to our study sample) were included (N=53,756), with a total of 57,889 instances in which a given veteran had both a PC-PTSD and PCL administered on the same day. [A table describing the mapping of the PCL to the PC-PTSD and agreement between the two instruments is available online as a data supplement to this article.]

We created a composite variable, referred to as the PTSD screen result; endorsing three or more symptoms on either measure constituted a positive screen for PTSD.

Dependent variable

The binary dependent variable, a negative (versus positive) PTSD screen result, was defined as a score of <3 at follow-up on the PTSD screen. This outcome comprised PTSD screen results that had improved or had remained negative compared with baseline results (versus having worsened or remained positive).

Independent variables

The main independent variable was time until initiation of mental health outpatient treatment, which was defined for each person as the time (in years) from the end of the last deployment until the first mental health

outpatient visit. Other independent variables included date of birth, gender, race-ethnicity, marital status, and military characteristics. Details about each person's military characteristics (armed forces branch [Army, Marines, Navy or Coast Guard, or Air Force], rank, component type [National Guard and reserves or active duty], and number of deployments [one or multiple deployments]) were extracted from the OEF/OIF/OND roster. Information about the type of VA facility nearest to the individual and the distance to the closest facility was derived from the OEF/OIF/OND roster by the VA planning and system support group.

The following independent variables were treated as potential confounders because each could account for change in PTSD symptoms: mental health outpatient treatment utilization, defined as the number of mental health clinic visits between the start of mental health treatment and the follow-up screen; regular use of primary care services, defined as a mean interval between visits of six months or fewer; and use of a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) for 12 consecutive weeks or more, as encoded in VA outpatient pharmacy data.

Analysis

We used logistic regression analysis to examine the association of independent predictor variables with a negative PTSD screen result. In separate logistic regression models, we examined predictors of PTSD screen results for each of the four PTSD symptom clusters (reexperiencing, avoidance, emotional numbing, and hyperarousal). The main predictors of interest included time from the end of the last deployment to initiation of mental health outpatient treatment, gender, age, race-ethnicity, marital status, military component, rank, branch, number of deployments, and distance to and type of nearest VA facility. The multi-variable analysis adjusted for potential confounders of the association between changes in PTSD symptoms and predictors. Potential confounders included baseline PTSD screen result, timing of follow-up screen, regular utilization of primary care services, total mental health outpatient treatment utilization, and SSRI use. Primary care and mental health service utilization and antidepressant use were included only for adjustment purposes because of potential biases due to confounding by indication. More specifically, persons who are more symptomatic are more likely to utilize health services and antidepressant medications.

We tested interactions of demographic and military predictors with each other and, separately, with time to initiation of mental health outpatient treatment. As mentioned above, the study combined results for veterans whose PTSD screen result had improved from baseline with those for veterans whose screen result had remained negative. To determine whether it was valid to combine these scores, we tested interactions of baseline screen results with demographic and military factors and, separately, with time from the end of the last deployment to initiation of mental health outpatient treatment. All tests were two-tailed. Analyses were performed by using SAS, version 9.3. The study was approved by the Committee on Human Research, University of California, San Francisco, and the San Francisco VA Medical Center.

RESULTS

The sample was 90% male, with a mean±SD age of 30.5±8.16; 57% were white, 11% were black, 11% were Hispanic, and 21% were of other or unknown race-ethnicity. At the time of initiation of mental health outpatient treatment, 75% of the veterans screened positive for PTSD, having endorsed at least three of the four PTSD symptom clusters on the PTSD screen (Table 1). After at least one year (mean follow-up=2.37±.93 years), 27% (N=7,908) of those with a positive screen at baseline had improved, and 43% (N=4,329) of those with a negative screen at baseline continued to screen negative.

Multivariable logistic regression analysis showed that the following characteristics were associated with a negative PTSD screen result: women compared with men, older versus younger age at first mental health outpatient visit, officer rank compared with enlisted rank, service in branches of the military other than the Army, and negative PTSD screen at baseline (Table 2).

Blacks were less likely than whites to have a negative screen result (Table 2), and this difference persisted after adjustment for time from the end of the last deployment to mental health outpatient treatment. Similar to findings of previous studies, the median interval between the end of the last deployment and the use of services was about three months longer for blacks than for whites ($p<.001$; data not shown). The reduced likelihood among blacks versus whites of a negative PTSD screen result was partly driven by the 7% greater probability that blacks would screen positive for PTSD at follow-up after having screened negative at baseline ($p<.001$; results not shown).

Veterans who were married were slightly less likely than those who were never married to have a negative PTSD screen result. Veterans who lived more than ten miles away from the nearest VA facility were less likely than veterans who lived closer to have a negative screen result. Veterans who lived closer to a community-based outpatient clinic than to a VA medical center were also less likely to have a negative screen result.

Notably, veterans who waited longer to initiate mental health outpatient treatment were less likely to have a negative screen result. Figure 1 illustrates the decreasing probability of a negative screen result with each year that passed after the end of the last deployment.

Logistic regression analyses found similar patterns of association between predictor variables and PTSD screen results for each of the four PTSD symptom clusters (results not shown).

DISCUSSION

A number of demographic, military, temporal, and logistic variables were associated with symptom improvement or with continuing to score below the threshold for a positive PTSD screen. Although temporal variables are rarely examined, we found that greater time to mental health outpatient treatment engagement was negatively associated with PTSD symptom improvement. More specifically, veterans who waited longer to get mental health treatment were less likely than veterans who sought treatment sooner to experience PTSD symptom improvement during the study period. This finding sheds light on the importance of continuing to better understand barriers to mental health treatment, particularly given that less than half of veterans with mental health problems seek care and those who seek care do so after significant delays.

Outreach efforts to help veterans engage in treatment in a timely manner are critical and may, in turn, help with PTSD symptom improvement over time. Intervening early when mental health problems are first detected should be a priority. Given that integrated primary and mental health care is now becoming available at many VA health care facilities, this ''one-stop shop'' model provides an optimal way to decrease time to seeking mental health care. Veterans in primary care who screen positive for any mental health problems can receive immediate mental health assistance within an integrated care model, which may assist with the stigma of receiving care in a mental health setting. Indeed, veterans who received integrated primary care were more likely to receive a mental health evaluation or care within a month.

We also found that female gender was associated with greater PTSD symptom improvement compared with male gender. Although civilian studies found that females are at greater risk of PTSD, findings in military samples have been mixed, with some studies finding no gender differences. In addition, we recently found that although both genders experienced a delay in engaging in minimally adequate mental health care (eight mental health outpatient visits within a year), female veterans received minimally adequate mental health care about two years sooner than male veterans, which may explain why they achieved greater symptom improvement.

Black veterans were less likely, but only modestly so, to demonstrate PTSD symptom improvement, compared with their white counterparts, and this difference was not explained by longer time from the end of the last deployment to mental health outpatient treatment initiation. That is not surprising, given that studies have consistently found that unmet treatment needs are greatest in underserved groups, including racial-ethnic minority groups). It may be that veterans from racial-ethnic minority groups face particular barriers to treatment that are important to acknowledge, and more research is needed in this area in order to optimize outcomes. Furthermore, other variables, such as differential rates of traumatic stressors and preexisting conditions, are important to further explore and may explain some of these differences.

Officers were more likely than enlisted personnel to experience PTSD symptom improvement. One possible explanation is that officer status may be a proxy for higher education; research has shown that lower levels of education are associated with chronic trajectories of PTSD. However, other variables that we were not able to measure, such as social support in the aftermath of trauma, may also explain some of these findings.

A number of limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, this study was conducted with a population of treatment-seeking veterans who had at least one visit to a VA health care facility. Therefore, our results should not be generalized to all OEF/OIF/OND military personnel or veterans. Second, we selected a population of veterans who served in support of OEF/OIF/OND, and, therefore, these results should not be generalized to veterans of other eras or to veterans from other countries. Third, ICD–9–CM diagnoses were acquired from administrative health records and were not verified with standardized diagnostic measures. A related concern is the combined use of two separate validated tools, the PCL and the PC-PTSD. We used both the PCL and the PC-PTSD in order to obtain the most representative sample and because they are the measures used by the VA system. Furthermore, we found that the method we used was statistically reliable. Nonetheless, combining two separate validated tools may have resulted in variations in these data. Future studies should continue to examine the validity and reliability of this method.

Fourth, because of the ways in which data appear in the VA administrative database, we were not able to distinguish between the types of mental health treatments that veterans were receiving, such as evidence-based treatment for PTSD or other mental health

problems versus supportive therapy; rather, we could account only for number of visits. We hope to have better indicators of evidence-based treatment for PTSD in the future so that the particular types of care that veterans receive can be examined more closely in relation to symptom improvement. Fifth, because we used administrative data, we were not able to examine third variables that may be associated with our outcome, including severe avoidance symptoms, interpersonal difficulties, and poor attachment, among others. Finally, we were able to include only veterans whose PTSD symptoms were measured during at least two occasions; those who dropped out after one visit are not as well represented.

CONCLUSIONS

Veterans who waited longer to get mental health treatment were less likely to experience PTSD symptom improvement during the study period. Furthermore, improving barriers for black, male, younger, rural, lower-ranking, and possibly less well educated veterans is an important priority, given our findings. Models that integrate primary care and mental health care may be an optimal way to help expedite veteran treatment engagement.

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Mr. TAKANO. A smooth care transition from DOD to VA can help support veterans as they adjust to the next phase of their lives and provide easy access to healthcare should any challenges arise.

Everyday Americans find it difficult and frustrating to sign up for healthcare. Now, imagine that you have just come off Active-Duty military service where, for years you were told when and where to show up for your healthcare. You probably heard something about VA services during your transition assistance program but, frankly, you were focused on everything you had to do to finalize your separation from the military and possibly looking for new employment and relocating your family.

Now, after having separated from the military, you are a veteran, and maybe for the first time you have to figure out how to check your eligibility for VA healthcare and navigate the system while potentially also facing some new stress in your personal and family life. This is completely avoidable with EVEST, which simply enrolls you in the VA healthcare for which you are already eligible, ensuring that when you need VA, there aren't any unnecessary roadblocks to seeing a doctor.

Now, let me say that again. This legislation has nothing to do with a veteran's eligibility, nor does it change VA standards or who is eligible. It only connects eligible veterans to VA care faster and easier.

We know that veterans are much more likely to use VA services and care when the process to enroll is simple, and we know that VA care is world class. EVEST is a straightforward tool that will allow us to simplify the transition process and take steps toward preventing veteran suicide.

Automatic enrollment is something policymakers and veterans service organizations and stakeholders have been trying to advance for years, and with EVEST it will finally become a reality.

Paralyzed Veterans of America and Disabled American Veterans have formally endorsed this legislation. The Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs, the American Federation of Government Employees, the Veterans Healthcare Policy Institute, and the American Psychological Association also support EVEST.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Healthcare Policy Institute.

NURSES ORGANIZATION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS,
January 14, 2021.

Chairman MARK TAKANO,
Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN TAKANO: On behalf of the nearly 3,000 members of the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA) we would like to offer our strong support for your bill, H.R. 4673, Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act (EVEST).

As nurses, caring for Veterans is our number one priority. Your bill will provide Veterans with the option of enrolling in VA healthcare during the critical months following their transition to civilian life and ensure servicemembers separating from active duty receive the critical health care to which they are eligible.

Your bill will also help eliminate barriers to care—including those who may not know they are even eligible to receive care at VA. It will also help to assure the Veteran that they are not alone in seeking care for any physical or mental health condition acquired during their military service.

Offering automatic enrollment with an opt out will help to lessen the burden of navigating the VA healthcare system at a time when they are dealing with many challenges as they transition to civilian life.

NOVA believes that most Veterans will find care provided them within the VA is suited to their individual and complex needs and cannot be matched in the private sector. Many providers at the VA are Veterans themselves so they understand what it means to serve and are trained to provide a Whole Health approach to the Veteran patients' health and well-being.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue and your continued support for Veterans and the healthcare professionals who care for them.

Sincerely,

TARYN-JANAE WILCOX-OLSON, MHS, RN,
President, Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA).

VETERANS HEALTHCARE POLICY INSTITUTE (VHPI),
January 19, 2022.

Endorsement of the ''Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act''

The Veterans Healthcare Policy Institute (VHPI) is pleased to formally endorse House bill H.R. 4673, the ''Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act'' or ''EVEST Act.'' The EVEST Act creates a process to automatically enroll Veterans who are eligible, upon their discharge from the military, into the VA for medical care, with an opportunity to opt out. Many Veterans do not receive the health care they have earned through their service because they are unaware of their eligibility or are too overwhelmed during the complex period of transitioning from active duty. By automatically enrolling Veterans into the VA system, many more eligible veterans will be able to utilize valuable VA health care benefits. Many lives will be saved.

This is one of the most important bills in many years, and we are pleased to support its passage.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Speaker PELOSI and Leader HOYER for considering this legislation today, and I urge the rest of my colleagues to support this vital legislation to increase access to care and ensure a smooth transition to civilian life for veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4673, the Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition, or EVEST Act.

This bill would require VA to automatically enroll every eligible separating servicemember into the VA healthcare system. As a veteran, I know firsthand that the transition from military to civilian life can be hard. One of the goals is to remove barriers to care for veterans, whether they left the military decades ago or just last week.

I believe the intention of the EVEST Act is to further that goal by connecting more at-risk servicemembers with the VA as they leave the service. I support the intention. I know many other Members do as well, which is why I expect the bill to pass the House, and probably on a bipartisan basis.

However, as the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have a different perspective on this bill than many of my colleagues. I have taken a long, hard look at this legislation, and what I have seen is a bill that may be well intended but has several potential problems.

To start with, the EVEST Act enrolls separating servicemembers into the VA healthcare system without their knowledge or consent. Only after they have been enrolled does the bill require VA to inform the veterans of their enrollment, the status of their enrollment, and how to opt out by disenrolling themselves.

We shouldn't be signing veterans up for a government program they aren't asking for and may never need without at least letting them know first. And

we shouldn't be telling them that if they don't like it, they can figure out how to disenroll themselves. That is backwards.

Veterans deserve better than that. Veterans also deserve better than a bill that has been rushed through Congress without due diligence. There has never been a single hearing on the EVEST Act in this Congress.

You may hear the chairman say that there has been a hearing on this bill last Congress. That is true. But last Congress and this Congress are very different. We had a different administration last Congress; we had a different VA Secretary last Congress. I believe more than 70 Members are new this Congress. More than half of the membership of the Veterans' Affairs Committee is new as well. And, regardless, VA did not provide testimony at the hearing last Congress.

We have no idea if VA can implement the bill without disrupting service to the veterans already in the VA health system, further burdening VA's already overworked staff, or increasing the strain on VA's already overfull facilities. Every Member of the House hears from veterans in our districts who are waiting too long for care they need, stuck in crowded VA facilities, and being treated by VA staff who are struggling and overwhelmed. I am concerned that this bill could make each of those things worse.

I am not the only one who thinks so. Last week, right before this bill was considered by the Rules Committee, the Biden administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy on the EVEST Act. The statement reads, ''There may be challenges implementing this bill as drafted, and the administration looks forward to working with Congress. . . .'' In other words, even the President recognizes that this bill needs more work.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the Statement of Administration Policy.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1836—GUARD AND RESERVE GI BILL PARITY ACT OF 2021—REP. LEVIN, D–CALIFORNIA, AND NINE COSPONSORS

H.R. 4673—ENSURING VETERANS' SMOOTH TRANSITION (EVEST) ACT—REP. TAKANO, D–CALIFORNIA

The Biden-Harris Administration supports efforts that ensure veterans receive timely access to high-quality benefits and services that they have earned.

The Administration supports H.R. 1836, which would expand eligibility criteria for certain education benefits. Current law defines the term ''active duty'' as those individuals who are on full-time duty in the active military service of the United States, including full-time training duty, annual training duty, and attendance, while in the active military service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the Secretary of the military department concerned. H.R. 1836 would expand eligibility criteria to include those training in full-time National Guard duty, which includes the National Guard, the Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard, as well as those same members when performing active duty.

The Administration supports the EVEST Act's goal of seamless enrollment in health care coverage. As currently written, H.R. 4673 would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to automatically enroll new veterans into VA health care, and notify veterans of their enrollment and instructions on how to un-enroll, if desired. There may be challenges implementing this bill as drafted, and the Administration looks forward to working with Congress on how best to operationalize its objective.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, to be clear, the Veterans' Affairs Committee had numerous opportunities in the last year to do that work that I had just discussed, and I don't know why the chairman chose not to. I have heard him say over the last week that it is okay we didn't have a hearing on the EVEST Act in this Congress because the bill has been in the public domain.

Now, I am not sure what that statement really means because there have been almost 400 bills introduced in this Congress that have been referred to the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I guess that each of those are in the public domain. But I don't think any of them are ready for a vote here on the House floor.

It is not too much to ask that we seek the input from stakeholders before voting on a bill to become law. That is actually the least we can do. I don't think our constituents sent us here to do anything less than that.

During last week's Rules Committee, Congresswoman TORRES, a member of Chairman TAKANO's own party, seemed to agree with me by lamenting the lack of process this bill has received this Congress. With all due respect to the Congresswoman, I doubt that we agree on much, but we do agree on this, though. Having this bill go through a much more robust process this Congress could have resulted in a much better product for our veterans.

□ 0930

Finally, I want to note that the bill will also cost taxpayers $3.1 billion in new discretionary spending. Not a penny of that $3.1 billion is offset.

Implementing this bill will certainly require additional funding above the nearly $100 billion already appropriated for the VA healthcare system.

We cannot keep saddling our children and grandchildren with billions of dollars more debt. We have to do better than this.

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate that I understand why my colleagues will likely vote for this bill. I wish I could vote for this bill, as well.

Leaving the military was not easy. It can leave new veterans feeling adrift and alone. I have been there. But that is why I supported efforts during the Trump administration to improve the Transition Assistance Program and increase the VA's outreach to separating servicemembers during their first year out of uniform.

I want separating servicemembers who need additional support to be able to get it and the help they need in a seamless manner. And I am not at all confident that this bill will accomplish that goal without harming services to other veterans and adding to the national debt. As a result, I must oppose this bill today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I reiterate that we should not be hiding the care that our veterans have earned. Let me quickly say that this bill has been in the public domain for 2 years. It was reintroduced last summer, and the minority had over 6 months to talk with us and the VA about it.

Furthermore, the committee has held six hearings on suicide prevention and transition since 2019. The common sense of this bill shines through.

And let me also add that regarding the capacity of VA—and I am glad that the ranking member has entered the statement of administrative support into the Record; that statement clearly says and declares the administration's support and its willingness to work with the administration.

Data shows that VA enrollment has been going down in recent years, and while new enrollment hovers around 400,000 per year, it used to be double that, around one million per year, and using current assumptions, VA projects veteran enrollment in VHA to remain relatively steady from 2019 to 2029.

I am very confident about VA's ability to absorb the additional veterans that will take advantage of VA's world-class healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MRVAN), my good friend and a member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization.

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. TAKANO for yielding me the time.

It is my honor today to rise in support of H.R. 4673, the Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act.

I appreciate the leadership of Chairman TAKANO to advance this critical legislation that will require the VA to automatically enroll individuals who are separating from the military into the VA system.

Our brave members of the military put their lives and health on the line every day to keep our Nation safe, defend our democracy, and protect our freedoms.

We have a responsibility to make it as easy as possible for them to transition from military service to civilian life, and I am pleased that this legislation does just that.

My life experiences have afforded me the opportunity as a former township trustee in northwest Indiana to work every day with the veterans community. I was able to initiate a veterans services roundtable and bring together veteran organizations to discuss, coordinate, and streamline much-needed resources to our veterans.

In many instances, it was not that the resources or the benefit was unavailable, but rather, the individual was unaware of the existing benefit, or unable to access, for whatever reason, the very resource they needed.

Today, I am thinking of those countless discussions and individuals as I will vote to support the EVEST Act. It is an effective proposal to help ensure that veterans access the valuable healthcare services available to them during this transition process from active to veteran status.

Today, I want to make sure we meet our veterans' mental health needs and increase veterans' access to healthcare. I again thank Chairman TAKANO and my fellow members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for your commitment to supporting veterans and bringing this measure to the floor today.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In response to the EVEST Act has been in the public domain, I think it is very important to note, as I mentioned earlier, the last Congress is not the same as this Congress. We have more than 70 Members who are new Members of Congress, half of the Veterans' Affairs Committee is new, we have a different President, and we have a different secretary.

Introducing a bill is not the same as conducting a hearing. You can't get input from the stakeholders. You can't engage in meaningful debate in the public domain. This reflects zero input from the VA, meaning we have no idea whether it is flexible, whether it is workable, whether it is disruptive to the VA system. We don't know.

And even the Biden administration agrees that more work is needed before this bill should become law.

And the previous speaker, Mr. Speaker, spoke about the person that didn't know what was available to them through the VA. If you were my age as a veteran it is true that you could not know because you got a quick class and the TAP program. And I have mentioned on this floor before that that is a tap on the back and see you later.

But today's TAP program is a course that you take, and you are bound to understand separation from your active service and what VA benefits are available to you.

And not only that, the Trump administration in 2018 put an administrative order out that you are then contacted after separation at 90, 180, and 360 days out to be notified of what benefits are available to you in the VA. We are doing that.

This instead enrolls members without their consent, and then they are enrolled. And the only option they have is to be notified later how maybe they can get out of being enrolled.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to add that, in response to the esteemed ranking member, VA formally supports this legislation and has been discussing auto enrollment for years.

VA has already been working to make transition into VA healthcare smoother with Solid Start and will soon have data showing that warm handoffs have a positive impact on veteran outcomes without overwhelming the VA system.

In response to the criticism that VSOs have not had input, I want to point out that VSOs, including Paralyzed Veterans of America and Disabled American Veterans, have already formally endorsed EVEST. Why? Because the common sense of this legislation shines through.

All VSOs have had a chance to weigh in, and many did. The Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs, the American Federation of Government Employees, the Veterans Health Policy Institute, and the American Psychological Association also support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA), my good friend and a former member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee who now serves on the Agriculture Committee, Homeland Security Committee, and House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of the EVEST Act.

All gave some, and many made the ultimate sacrifice. America has made a promise to our veterans that we will take care of them when they return home.

I represent Orange County, California, and many of my constituents have served their country proudly. One of my constituents, Billy Hall, from the city of Orange, enlisted at the age of 15, served from 1941 to 1945 in World War II, and again from 1948 to 1967 in the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Every servicemember deserves our respect and gratitude, and most of all, all the benefits and care that we promised them when they would return home.

This bill is very simple but very important. It automatically enrolls veterans in the healthcare system. It provides veterans healthcare without the red tape.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the EVEST Act and pass this simple and important commonsense legislation for our veterans.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In my debate and the things that I brought up here today, I never said that VSOs didn't have input. I did say the VA did not come to the committee, and we did not have the proper hearings. If the VA is in support of this bill, I would request that the VA send the documentation saying how they are in support of this bill. Their input would be vitally important.

Whether it is a Republican or Democrat administration, the VA is vitally important to make sure they provide services to our constituents and to our veterans.

No one on this floor cares more about veterans than the people who serve on this committee—I can guarantee you that—whether it is the chairman or myself.

But we have to make sure what we are providing does what it is we are trying to do. It was mentioned earlier that they believe that this would help reduce suicide among transitioning servicemembers. I care deeply about this. This is something that both I and the chairman have worked on and will continue to work on.

The majority of veterans who die of suicide have not had meaningful engagement with the VA. They may have been enrolled in the VA, but they haven't gotten the VA care that they need.

This bill would add names of eligible separating servicemembers from the VA and put them on the rolls, but it doesn't do the outreach that is necessary to possibly prevent them from that ultimate decision to end their lives.

Those are the type of things we are working on and will continue to work on. This is not the answer to that. There are a lot of other concerns that I have expressed and will continue to express.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me say that the amendments that we are considering to this bill today, which I consider friendly, will address many of the ranking member's concerns about the reaching out.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES), my good friend who serves on the Financial Services Committee and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO for moving this very important legislation.

In this polarized and angry time, one of the lights of this institution is that we have always come together to better serve our veterans, to better serve those men and women who took the ultimate risk and were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of all of us and the system that this room embodies.

And this is a real problem. As I go around my district and I talk to young veterans, they face any number of transitional issues; with housing, with healthcare. And let's face it, the change from being on active duty to being a veteran is a challenging one, one that all too often results in the kind of tragedy that we have acknowledged here in this Chamber today.

And so I rise in strong support of the EVEST Act. It is consistent with something that I am very proud to have accomplished many years ago when we passed the SERVE Act, which made it easier for veterans to show that they had an income so that they could get the housing which they were entitled to. It was a small thing, but it just eased the passage for those young men and women who have so well served this country.

This is important, and it is not a big deal, but it is going to affect tens of thousands of veterans. My Republican friends know that I respect and value their input and their objections to our ideas. It makes us better when you pose objections to our ideas. But I am a little puzzled by the objections that I am hearing today.

I have heard sitting here that this is not paid for. Okay. It is $3 billion that I think is well spent on perhaps the most valuable population that we have. But the notion that it is not paid for, let's remember it was just a couple years ago that my friends on the Republican side passed $2 trillion in tax cuts, 83 percent of which benefited the top 1 percent of this country's citizens. I have to believe that if we can do $2 trillion in tax cuts that largely benefits the richest Americans, that we can find $3 billion to ease the passage for our veterans.

□ 0945

I have heard the ranking member say that the VA maybe can't handle it. Let's remember that the VA supports this idea and that we are just asking them to do a little bit more of what they already do. This is not some new and fanciful program. No, it is making a program that is well-established available to more.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill. I am particularly proud of my friend and neighbor— JOE COURTNEY will talk about this shortly—that my neighbor, JAHANA HAYES, is proposing an amendment that will increase the notification that goes to veterans about what is available to them.

This bill needs to pass because, at the end of the day, we are answering the question: Do we want more veterans to have access to what we have promised them, or do we want fewer veterans to have access to what we have promised them? That is what is at stake here.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member and urge him to rethink his objections to this bill because this will be a proud moment when this bill passes.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs did not do our job on this bill. We did not consider this bill in a legislative hearing. We did not seek input from stakeholders or the VA. We did not make certain that automatically enrolling newly separated servicemembers into the VA healthcare system would not impede access for existing employees or cause funding crises. And those things are very, very real.

Even the Biden OMB has admitted that there are going to be challenges with implementing this bill. If you look at the numbers—and I am going to add this into what should be mentioned—19.1 million veterans is what we have; 9 million veterans are enrolled; 7 million have used access to the VA. If we start and do it this way without letting veterans make decisions on their own, it can overwhelm the VA. That is what has been mentioned by OMB.

Veterans are already facing tough challenges. So is the VA health system that they can go to. But we don't need to add any more to their plates without at least hearing how it is going to affect the services that are already being provided to our veterans.

That is why, just so you know, I am offering a motion to recommit this morning. My motion to recommit, if adopted, would send this bill back to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs to consider an amendment to H.R. 4673 that would delay implementation until 30 days after the VA has certified that it can implement, without disruption, services to veterans or requiring additional funds.

Mr. Speaker, I don't see how those who support this bill, despite its problems and the Biden administration's recognition that it may cause challenges, can object to this amendment. The very least we can do for the millions of veterans who are already enrolled in VA care and counting on VA services is to ensure—before this bill goes into effect—that it won't cause undue harm to them. I have already drafted an amendment that would accomplish that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD immediately prior to the vote on the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support my motion to recommit, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say, in response to my friend, the esteemed ranking member, that his MTR, which would delay implementation in order to avoid harm to our veterans, dare I say that the harm is in the delay.

I am reminded of a quote from the VFW's Pat Murray that we had at yesterday's roundtable on toxic exposure: Our pay-for for this bill and our pay-for, frankly, for all that we do for veterans was the ticket that we sent servicemembers overseas to serve. I repeat: Our pay-for was the ticket we sent servicemembers overseas to serve.

And a little further discussion on the pay-for issue: The Congressional Budget Office does not estimate that this bill will increase mandatory spending and does not require an offset. These are the rules we play by.

Again, we are not creating new eligibility here. The only cost of this bill is veterans seeking care that they are already eligible for. We are all better off when veterans are seeking the care that they need, and we should not be hiding that care for which they are eligible.

Automatic enrollment in VA healthcare for eligible veterans is a long-needed suicide prevention tool. We cannot put a price tag on protecting the health and safety of our veterans. Many of these veterans would go on to use VA healthcare even if they are not automatically enrolled, and the minority does not give a compelling reason why we should hinder or make that process more difficult for our veterans.

Again, I repeat, we should not be hiding the care for which our veterans are already eligible.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all my colleagues join me in passing H.R. 4673, as amended, and I anticipate we will see a big bipartisan vote today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand here in strong support of H.R. 1836, the Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act (EVEST), which provides automatic enrollment in the VA for all transitioning service members, and veterans who don't want to obtain its services have the easy choice of opting out.

Specifically, this bill would:

Automatically enroll new veterans into VA Health Care;

Provide VA with information about transitioning service members;

Require the VA to reach out to veterans about the scope of, and access to, benefits.

Assuring future cohorts of veterans—including those struggling with the Taliban triumph in Afghanistan—don't go without health care during their transition from military to civilian life is the worthy goal of this bill.

After attempting suicide while serving on active duty in Iraq, Kristofer Goldsmith was given a general discharge by the Army and little else.

The overwhelmed 21-year-old returned to his hometown on Long Island, N.Y., totally unaware that he was eligible for care from the Veterans Health Administration (VA).

"I had just lost my income, my support network, my identity, and almost my life. I was in a total mental health crisis," Goldsmith said.

During the critical months following his transition to civilian life, he went without desperately needed services.

If his mother hadn't forced him to go to the VA, Goldsmith, who credits the VA with helping him rebuild his life, doesn't know what would have happened to him.

Of this, however, he is certain, "If I had heard from my local VA informing me of what benefits I had and that I'd been enrolled in the system, it would have changed my life drastically."

This bill would help thousands of veterans who need services for the multitude of conditions acquired or exacerbated by military service but are confused about how to access them.

These ailments include everything from respiratory problems caused by burn-pit toxic exposure to signature combat conditions such as Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

For all these problems, prompt attention means everything.

For example, according to research conducted by the VA, veterans who received care soon after the end of their service ''had lower levels of PTSD upon follow-up a year after they initiated care.

According to the study, for each year that a veteran waited to initiate treatment, there was about a 5 percent increase in the odds of their PTSD either not improving or worsening.

In 2018, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine found that post-9/11 veterans who had not sought VA mental health care didn't know how to apply for benefits—or were unsure whether they were even eligible.

Some didn't know what services the VA offered or felt that they didn't deserve care even if they could get it.

Some women veterans are similarly unsure whether VA services are even available to their gender.

This legislation will not only be key to eliminating these barriers but also to reducing the veteran suicide crisis.

A disproportionate number of veterans die by suicide during the initial months and years following separation from military service.

Veterans ages 18 to 34 have the highest rate of suicide.

Automatic pre-enrollment could be lifesaving during a crisis when speed is of the essence.

Smoother access to VA health care has never been more important than it is today.

The tumultuous end of the war in Afghanistan is intensifying mental health symptoms within the veteran population.

I am proud to support this legislation in order to better serve veterans and reduce veteran suicide.

This bill, in which we further the benefits and recognition that our servicemen and women deserve, also reminds us that we have an overriding duty to protect the health and dignity of those serving today.

For this reason, I would like to discuss the crisis that our National Guardsmen and Guardswomen have been thrust into at the Texas Governor's direction on our Southern Border.

In March 2021, the Texas Governor launched the ill-fated and ineffective Operation Lone Star which he claimed was necessary to stem a so-called invasion of migrants at Texas' southern border.

As of November 2021, more than 10,000 Texas National Guardsmen have been deployed to the southern border in pursuit of this folly.

According to published media accounts, National Guard members who have been activated for Operation Lone Star are experiencing habitual pay delays and poor working conditions during the border mission, including being exposed to COVID–19, and many are missing the equipment necessary for safety and mission success.

In addition, the National Guard has faced austere conditions and limited resources, leading to unsanitary conditions such as the lack of portable restrooms.

Rather than addressing these conditions, just last week the Texas Governor filed a frivolous lawsuit in federal court challenging the authority of President Biden, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces to require that members of the National Guard be vaccinated against COVID–19.

There is no merit to this nuisance law suit as demonstrated by the summary rejection of similar arguments raised by neighboring Oklahoma Governor Stitt.

The Texas Governor's failure to comply with the policies intended to reduce the spread of COVID–19 among the Armed Forces will mean that there will be less military personnel available national disasters that have struck Texas in recent years, such as the winter freeze of last year.

This will also mean that there are fewer personnel to respond to any attacks on the homeland.

Encouraged by the Texas Governor's obstinacy, about 40% of the members of the Texas Army National Guard are refusing to get vaccinated, which puts at risk their colleagues and the persons they are sworn to defend and protect.

National Guardsmen and Guardswomen deployed in this disastrous mission at the Texas Governor's insistence face the deadly spread of COVID–19, unsanitary conditions, lack of pay, and a lack of a certain future.

These uniformed men and women deserve better, and some of them, seeing no alternative to their present reality, have decided to end it all.

Five National guard soldiers have shot and killed themselves in the past three months, and one more survived a suicide attempt.

One of these men, private first class Joshua R. Cortez, was preparing to accept a ''lifetime job'' with one of the nation's biggest health insurance companies in late October last year, but the Texas National Guard had other ideas.

Operation Lone Star required involuntary activations to meet the Texas Governor's troop quotas, and Cortez was one of the soldiers tapped to go on state active duty orders—with no idea how long the mission would last.

In November, the 21-year-old mechanic requested a hardship release from the mission: ''I've been waiting for this job and I'm on my way to getting hired . . . I missed my first opportunity in September when I had to go on the flood mission in Louisiana. . . . I can not miss this opportunity because it is my last opportunity for this lifetime job.''

Cortez's company commander recommended approval. But his battalion commander and brigade commander disapproved.

Within 36 hours of his request being denied, Cortez drove to a parking lot in northwest San Antonio and shot himself in the head.

Three other soldiers tied to Operation lone Star have died by suicide, including:

Sgt. Jose L. De Hoyos was found dead in Laredo, Texas, on Oct. 26. He was a member of the 949th Brigade Support Battalion's headquarters company.

1st Sgt. John ''Kenny'' Crutcher died Nov. 12, as time ran out on his temporary hardship waiver. He was the top NCO for B Company, 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry.

1st Lt. Charles Williams, a platoon leader in Crutcher's company, died at home overnight Dec. 17 while on pass.

The string of suicides raises urgent questions about the mission's conditions and purpose, as well as the way it's organized and manned through indefinite involuntary call-ups.

This is an excellent and common-sense bill that will enhance the benefits of our servicemen and women.

We must also act to ensure that our servicemen and women are protected from COVID–19, both for their own safety and the safety of our nation.

Although we cannot bring back the lives lost due to the Texas Governor's misguided actions, we can remember the names of those we have lost and work to ensure that we treat all members of our military equally and with dignity and respect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Each further amendment printed in part B of House Resolution 117–225, not earlier considered as part of amendments en bloc pursuant to section 5 of House Resolution 860, shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before the question is put thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of further amendments printed in part B of House Report 117–225 not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 5 of House Resolution 860, I rise to offer the four amendments en bloc to H.R. 4673.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc consisting of amendment Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 5, printed in part B of House Report 117–225, offered by Mr. TAKANO of California:

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. DELGADO OF NEW YORK

Page 1, line 15, insert ''(A)'' before ''Not later''.

Page 1, line 18, strike ''(A)'' and insert ''(i)''.

Page 2, line 1, strike ''(B)'' and insert ''(ii)''.

Page 2, after line 3, insert the following:

''(B) In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consider using, to the extent practical, mass texting capabilities through mobile telephones.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. DELGADO OF NEW YORK

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 3. GAO REPORT ON NOTICE OF AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT IN PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller

General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of a study to determine the best methods for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide notice under paragraph (2) of subsection (d) of section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 2. In making such determination, the Comptroller General shall consider needs of veterans based on—

(1) age;

(2) residence in urban areas; and

(3) residence in rural areas.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MRS. HAYES OF CONNECTICUT

Page 1, line 15, insert ''(A)'' before ''Not later''.

Page 1, line 18, strike ''(A)'' and insert ''(i)''.

Page 1, line 18, strike ''and''.

Page 2, line 1, strike ''(B)'' and insert ''(ii)''.

Page 2, line 3, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 2, after line 3, insert the following:

''(iii) instructions for how the veteran may elect to enroll at a later date.

''(B) Any notice or instructions required to be provided under this paragraph shall be provided in the form of a physical copy delivered by mail and, to the extent practical, in the form of an electronic copy delivered by electronic mail.''.

Page 3, after line 5, insert the following:

(d) PROVISION OF NOTICE AND INFORMATION.—The notice and instructions required to be provided under subsection (d)(2) of section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall be provided in accordance with the established procedures of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to the provision of similar types of notices and instructions.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MS. TLAIB OF MICHIGAN

Add at the end the following:

(d) REPORT ON AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the first veteran is enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under subsection (d) of section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the enrollment process under such subsection. Such report shall include each of the following:

(A) A discussion of any anticipated challenges that occurred in implementing such subsection, the strategies used to address such challenges, and the effectiveness of such strategies.

(B) A discussion of any unanticipated challenges that occurred in implementing such subsection, the strategies used to address such challenges, and the effectiveness of such strategies.

(C) Any additional information the Secretary determines appropriate, including information that may be useful to other Federal departments and agencies considering the implementation of similar automatic enrollment programs.

(2) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 860, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of these en bloc amendments. Seamlessly connecting veterans with the benefits and care they earned through their service is paramount to the transition process.

The Delgado amendment No. 1 makes sure that VA can easily notify veterans regarding care and services through mass texting. As technology and communication methods improve, so should how VA uses those capabilities to easily inform veterans of their benefits. Texting eligible veterans to tell them they have been auto-enrolled in VA healthcare is an effective, simple way to increase awareness of the care available to them.

The Delgado amendment No. 2 requires GAO to submit a report to determine the best methods to notify veterans regarding their automatic enrollment in VA healthcare. This amendment will strengthen the underlying bill and inform best practices for how VA can ensure veterans have the information they need regarding their access to care and services.

Getting information to veterans in an effective manner is crucial to their transition into civilian life, and the Delgado amendment No. 2 will help improve how VA communicates an eligible veteran's enrollment in VA healthcare so they can easily access the care they need.

The Hayes amendment requires that VA notify veterans who opt out of automatic enrollment that they may elect to enroll at a later date. We understand there will be some veterans who opt out for auto-enrollment for a variety of reasons, but it is our duty that they know that the VA will be waiting for them if their future needs change.

Ensuring VA adopts and scales best practices related to auto-enrollment while also learning from any issues that arise during its rollout is important to the long-term effectiveness of the aims of H.R. 4673.

The Tlaib amendment requires the VA to submit a report a year after the first veteran is auto-enrolled in VA healthcare to preserve lessons learned from the rollout. This report will help improve auto-enrollment for both the VA administrators implementing the program and veteran users alike.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the en bloc amendments, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the four en bloc amendments are offered by Congressman DELGADO, Congresswoman HAYES, and Congresswoman TLAIB. I thank them for their work. I remain opposed to the underlying bill, and I explained why in detail over the last debate.

One of the reasons I was opposed to it is because the Committee on Veterans' Affairs did not do our job before bringing this bill to the floor. We did not hold hearings on the bill or seek input from stakeholders. And importantly, we did not get assurance from the VA that the bill could be implemented without negative impact to services.

In fact, shortly before this bill hit the Rules Committee, the Biden administration did release the statement that we talked about earlier. That statement, remember, says that there are challenges in implementing this bill.

Now, I wish we could have done that work in the VA Committee before considering the bill on the floor. If there are challenges, we need to know about them, and we need to be able to address them to make sure that no veteran is harmed by this bill.

Nevertheless, here we are. These en bloc amendments will help get some of the information we should have gotten before passing the bill. They will help us stay informed on how the bill is working and the impact it is having on veterans and on the VA healthcare system after the fact.

For example, one of Congressman DELGADO's amendments would require GAO to study the best methods for VA to notify newly separated servicemembers of their enrollment status. His second amendment would require VA to consider texting newly separated servicemembers to inform them of their enrollment status and their ability to disenroll. If a veteran chooses to disenroll, Congresswoman HAYES' amendment would require VA to provide them with information on how to enroll at a later date if they change their mind down the line.

Finally, Congresswoman TLAIB's amendment would require VA to report to Congress on the implementation of this bill not later than 1 year after enactment. That would allow us to course-correct, as needed, if the bill is causing problems at least 1 year out.

Now, I feel like a broken record, but this is information we should have had already. Nevertheless, it is better late than never. That is why I will be in support of that amendment alongside the amendments for DELGADO and HAYES.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to do the same, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 7½ minutes remaining.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), my good friend who serves on the House Committee on Armed Services as chairman of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces and the Committee on Education and Labor.

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Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. TAKANO and Ranking Member BOST for supporting the en bloc.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to speak on behalf of the Hayes amendment offered by my friend and neighbor from Connecticut, Congresswoman JAHANA HAYES, who unfortunately could not be here today because she is

quarantining. Her amendment is a commonsense proposal to improve an already outstanding bill that will connect more veterans to benefits they have earned by volunteering to wear the uniform of this country.

Mr. Speaker, last year, at the outset of the VA's highly successful COVID vaccination program, Congresswoman HAYES and I both toured the VA hospital in West Haven, Connecticut, which is the flagship of our VA healthcare system. I had a chance to personally observe her authentic, well-informed advocacy for veteran patients and their family members, asking questions about ways Congress can improve the system, particularly about communicating the full extent of their benefits.

She described casework from the veterans seeking care, about the burdens they faced when navigating a complicated system where not only veterans, but family members struggle to stay current with changing rules and programs. It is particularly troublesome to hear cases of veterans who lose eligibility for help because of late claims caused by poor communication, oftentimes at the time of discharge from military service.

Mr. Speaker, that is why it is so important for the House to pass the EVEST Act which will provide automatic enrollment in the VA system for all transitioning servicemembers.

Mrs. HAYES' friendly amendment wisely requires the VA to go the extra mile and inform veterans who opt out of automatic enrollment through multiple methods, including not only email but also paper mail, that they can reenroll as they transition out of the military. Her measure is a commonsense insurance that veterans are informed of the EVEST so that they know from day one all of the options and rights that they have to get help.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank Chair TAKANO and Ranking Member BOST.

And I will close by simply noting that my district in eastern Connecticut is home to the largest military installation in New England, with 9,000 sailors and officers who work every day to protect our Nation. The transition from military to civilian life happens on a rolling, nonstop basis. Too often we work with veterans who experience gaps in benefits caused by a failure to enroll or late enrollment, which this excellent bill will fix.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Hayes amendment in the en bloc and the underlying bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB), my good friend and author of this amendment. She serves on the Financial Services Committee, the Natural Resources Committee and the Oversight and Reform Committee.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO and the committee staff for working with me on this important amendment and for their leadership on this bill. I can't thank him enough and look forward to him one day coming to my district for a visit to our VA hospital that we love and cherish.

Mr. Speaker, the transition of being on Active Duty to being a veteran is not easy. The EVEST Act helps with that transition and makes life easier for those who served our Nation.

This act is also a great opportunity to review the automatic enrollment programs and learn what works and what doesn't, because ensuring effective implementation is critical to its success.

Mr. Speaker, I am a social worker at heart, and we have to ensure that our veterans' lives are changing for the better with this bill. My amendment ensures the lessons learned during implementation of the program are preserved for other agencies, as well as to learn, again, what to do and what not to do.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the committee for working with me on this and look forward to my colleagues' support of this amendment. I also look forward to working with the committee on a number of other issues impacting our veterans, especially veteran suicide and access to mental health services.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), my good friend and member of the Financial Services Committee where he is chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, by way of further introduction, I am the same AL GREEN who lives across the street from the DeBakey VA hospital; the same AL GREEN who fought in this Congress to secure a Congressional Gold Medal for Dr. Michael E. DeBakey; the same AL GREEN who has 800 flags outside of his office presently to be distributed over at the DeBakey VA hospital; the same AL GREEN that goes there annually and speaks to veterans, who talks to them about their needs on an annual basis; the same AL GREEN who has had veterans who tell me the difficulties associated with enrollment; the same AL GREEN who has veterans who say they are so pleased that somebody would come by to be of service to them.

Mr. Speaker, this AL GREEN announces here and now that I will support the underlying bill. I support it because it is necessary. I support it because I believe the veterans that I have spoken to will support it. They need it, and they will enjoy knowing that we came to this floor to bring this to fruition.

Mr. Speaker, finally, if the VA hospital is not properly funded and this creates some funding issues, I am prepared to vote to fund the VA hospital sufficiently so that our veterans can be taken care of. Anyone who is willing to go to a distant place, who may not return the same way they left, who may have issues for the rest of their lives, and they do it because they want to protect this country, I am going to do all that I can to protect them. This is the least a grateful Nation can do.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close. I ask all my colleagues to support me in supporting these four amendments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 860, the previous question is ordered on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question is on the amendments en bloc.

The en bloc amendments were agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. ESCOBAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 117–225.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 12, insert after ''a veteran'' the following: ''who is discharged or separated from the Armed Forces on or after the date that is 90 days before the date of the enactment of this Act and''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 860, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO for his continued, strong, unwavering leadership on behalf of our veterans.

I am proud to represent a district that is home to a strong and growing veteran community, and proud to represent Fort Bliss in Congress, where thousands of our servicemembers transition to civilian life.

One of my top priorities in Congress has been to protect our veterans and their families in the same way they have served and defended our country. Today, I am honored to stand in support of this critical legislation for our Nation's veterans and to present my amendment.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4673, the Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act, provides automatic enrollment in the VA for all transitioning servicemembers. This bill is vital in that it expedites

the use of healthcare benefits that veterans have already earned. My amendment seeks to ensure that servicemembers who were discharged up to 90 days before the enactment of this legislation can also reap its benefits.

Servicemembers transitioning to civilian life already face a multitude of hurdles, from adjusting to everyday life, dealing with unemployment issues, housing and security, and poor mental and physical health, among other things.

Mr. Speaker, our veterans deserve that we eliminate these and any other barriers. Thousands of veterans leave the service without knowing about the VA, whether they are eligible, and what benefits they are entitled to receive.

Veterans who returned to civilian life during the pandemic faced even more challenges to access and overall engagement with the VA due to closures and the VA's limited operational capacity at the height of the pandemic. We cannot leave these veterans behind.

Already, more than half of eligible veterans don't use VA health benefits, many of which are due to confusion on eligibility and benefits and lack of access to information. The pandemic only exacerbated this. Our withdrawal from Afghanistan this past year similarly impacted millions of veterans who now need that care more than ever.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment is not adding any new entitlements. It is simply extending them to those who are equally in need. With my amendment to this bill, we can ensure that newly transitioned veterans do not miss the opportunity to access VA benefits they deserve and are entitled to.

As our chairman has said, when it comes to supporting our veterans, the true heroes of our country, there is always more work to be done. This bill is truly transformative and assures future cohorts of veterans receive the expeditious access to the healthcare they need.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote on my amendment. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized.

There was no objection.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman ESCOBAR's amendment would expand automatic enrollment to servicemembers who left the military 90 days before this bill is enacted. There are already many existing mechanisms for separating servicemembers to connect with the VA if that is something they need and want.

As I explained during the general debate, I have a number of serious concerns with the underlying bill. The Biden administration agrees that there are challenges. I think that is an understatement. Regardless, we should not be further complicating an already difficult implementation by expanding it even more.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Escobar amendment to H.R. 4673.

Mr. Speaker, seamlessly connecting veterans with the benefits and care they have earned through their service is paramount to the transition process. The Escobar amendment extends the automatic enrollment in VA healthcare to eligible veterans discharged within 90 days before enactment of the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, many of the 175,000 veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn are unaware of their eligibility for 5 years of VA healthcare upon separation. Automatically enrolling recently separated eligible veterans into VA healthcare will support our aim to prevent veteran suicides and improve their access to care during their transition to civilian life.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Escobar amendment.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 860, the previous question is ordered on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appear to have it.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 228, nays 198, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 12]

YEAS—228

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Axne
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (MD)
Brown (OH)
Brownley
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fitzpatrick
Fletcher
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Golden
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Kahele
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meijer
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Speier
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Yarmuth

NAYS—198

Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brady
Brooks
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cheney
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Comer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Dunn
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern
Herrell
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Hudson
Huizenga
Issa
Jackson
Jacobs (NY)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Keller
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kim (CA)
Kinzinger
Kustoff
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Latta
LaTurner
Lesko
Letlow
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Mace
Malliotakis
Mann
McCarthy
McCaul
McClain
McKinley
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar

Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Mullin
Murphy (NC)
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Obernolte
Owens
Palazzo
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reed
Reschenthaler
Rice (SC)
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stewart
Taylor
Tenney
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Upton
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Womack
Young
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—7

Biggs
Duncan
Hollingsworth
Johnson (GA)
Massie
McClintock
McHenry

□ 1050

Messrs. COMER, BURGESS, JOYCE of Pennsylvania, and GONZALEZ of Ohio changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. WITTMAN, VALADAO, and MEEKS changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Adams (Brown (MD))
Bass (Cicilline)
Beatty (Kuster)
Blumenauer (Beyer)
Boyle, Brendan F. (Gallego)
Brown (OH) (Kaptur)
Brownley (Kuster)
Bush (Bowman)
Butterfield (Panetta)
Carter (LA) (Jeffries)
Cawthorn (Nehls)
Chu (Clark (MA))
Cleaver (Davids (KS))
Clyburn (Panetta)
Cohen (Beyer)
Costa (Correa)
Crawford (Stewart)
Crist (Soto)
Cuellar (Correa)
Davis, Danny K. (García (IL))
DeFazio (Brown (MD))
DeGette (Blunt Rochester)
Demings (Soto)
DeSaulnier (Beyer)
Doggett (Raskin)
Doyle, Michael F. (Connolly)
Evans (Mfume)
Fallon (Gooden)
Fletcher (Allred)
Fortenberry (Moolenaar)
Frankel, Lois (Clark (MA))
Garamendi (Sherman)
Gohmert (Weber (TX))
Gonzalez, Vicente (Correa)
Gottheimer (Panetta)
Granger (Calvert)
Grijalva (García (IL))
Hagedorn (Carl)
Hayes (Clark (MA))
Higgins (NY) (Bowman)
Jayapal (Raskin)
Keating (Clark (MA))
Kelly (IL) (Kuster)
Kildee (Panetta)
Kilmer (Bera)
Kinzinger (Meijer)
Kirkpatrick (Pallone)
Krishnamoorthi (Bera)
Lawrence (Stevens)
Lawson (FL) (Soto)
Lee (CA) (Khanna)
Lofgren (Jeffries)
Loudermilk (Fleischmann)
Lowenthal (Beyer)
Lynch (Trahan)
Maloney, Carolyn B. (Wasserman Schultz)
McBath (Allred)
McCollum (Blunt Rochester)
McEachin (Wexton)
Meng (Kuster)
Moore (UT) (Meijer)
Moore (WI) (Beyer)
Moulton (Clark (MA))
Nadler (Pallone)
Napolitano (Correa)
Neguse (Perlmutter)
Newman (Clark (MA))
Norman (Wilson (SC))
Ocasio-Cortez (García (IL))
Pascrell (Pallone)
Payne (Pallone)
Pingree (Cicilline)
Pocan (Raskin)
Porter (Wexton)
Reed (Kelly (PA))
Rogers (KY) (Reschenthaler)
Roybal-Allard (Levin (CA))
Ruiz (Correa)
Ruppersberger (Raskin)
Rush (Kaptur)
Schneider (Connolly)
Schrier (Spanberger)
Scott, David (Jeffries)
Sires (Pallone)
Swalwell (Gomez)
Timmons (Armstrong)
Titus (Connolly)
Trone (Brown (MD))
Van Drew (Reschenthaler)
Vargas (Correa)
Vela (Correa)
Velázquez (Clark (MA))
Waters (Takano)
Watson Coleman (Pallone)
Welch (Raskin)
Wilson (FL) (Cicilline)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. Bost of Illinois moves to recommit the bill H.R. 4673 to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The material previously referred to by Mr. BOST is as follows:

In section 2(b), strike ''the date of the enactment of this Act'' and insert ''the effective date of this Act''.

In section 2(c), strike ''Not later than August 1, 2022'' and insert ''Subject to subsection (d), not later than August 1, 2022''

At the end, add the following:

(d) DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE; READINESS CERTIFICATION.—This Act, including the amendments made by this Act, shall not take effect until 30 days after the date on which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs submits to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a certification that the requirements of this Act may be carried out without requiring additional resources or disrupting services for veterans currently enrolled in the patient enrollment system under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XIX, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 206, nays 221, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 13]

YEAS—206

Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brady
Brooks
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cheney
Cline
Clyde
Cole
Comer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern
Herrell
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Hudson
Huizenga
Issa
Jackson
Jacobs (NY)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Katko
Keller
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kim (CA)
Kinzinger
Kustoff
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Latta
LaTurner
Lesko
Letlow
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Mace
Malliotakis
Mann
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClain
McHenry
McKinley
Meijer
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Mullin
Murphy (NC)
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Obernolte
Owens
Palazzo
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reed
Reschenthaler
Rice (SC)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stewart
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Young
Zeldin

NAYS—221

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Axne
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (MD)
Brown (OH)
Brownley
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Golden
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Kahele
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton

Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Speier
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—6

Biggs
Cloud
Hollingsworth
Massie
McClintock
Rodgers (WA)

□ 1115

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Adams (Brown (MD))
Bass (Cicilline)
Beatty (Kuster)
Blumenauer (Beyer)
Boyle, Brendan F. (Gallego)
Brown (OH) (Kaptur)
Brownley (Kuster)
Bush (Bowman)
Butterfield (Panetta)
Carter (LA) (Jeffries)
Cawthorn (Nehls)
Chu (Clark (MA))
Cleaver (Davids (KS))
Clyburn (Panetta)
Cohen (Beyer)
Costa (Correa)
Crawford (Stewart)
Crist (Soto)
Cuellar (Correa)
Davis, Danny K. (García (IL))
DeFazio (Brown (MD))
DeGette (Blunt Rochester)
Demings (Soto)
DeSaulnier (Beyer)
Doggett (Raskin)
Doyle, Michael F. (Connolly)
Duncan (Rice (SC))
Evans (Mfume)
Fallon (Gooden)
Fletcher (Allred)
Fortenberry (Moolenaar)
Frankel, Lois (Clark (MA))
Garamendi (Sherman)
Gohmert (Weber (TX))
Gonzalez, Vicente (Correa)
Gottheimer (Panetta)
Granger (Calvert)
Grijalva (García (IL))
Hagedorn (Carl)
Hayes (Clark (MA))
Higgins (NY) (Bowman)
Jayapal (Raskin)
Keating (Clark (MA))
Kelly (IL) (Kuster)
Kildee (Panetta)
Kilmer (Bera)
Kinzinger (Meijer)
Kirkpatrick (Pallone)
Krishnamoorthi (Bera)
Lawrence (Stevens)
Lawson (FL) (Soto)
Lee (CA) (Khanna)
Lofgren (Jeffries)
Loudermilk (Fleischmann)
Lowenthal (Beyer)
Lynch (Trahan)
Maloney, Carolyn B. (Wasserman Schultz)
McBath (Allred)
McCollum (Blunt Rochester)
McEachin (Wexton)
Meng (Kuster)
Moore (UT) (Meijer)
Moore (WI) (Beyer)
Moulton (Clark (MA))
Nadler (Pallone)
Napolitano (Correa)
Neguse (Perlmutter)
Newman (Clark (MA))
Norman (Wilson (SC))
Ocasio-Cortez (García (IL))
Pascrell (Pallone)
Payne (Pallone)
Pingree (Cicilline)
Pocan (Raskin)
Porter (Wexton)
Reed (Kelly (PA))
Rogers (KY) (Reschenthaler)
Roybal-Allard (Levin (CA))
Ruiz (Correa)
Ruppersberger (Raskin)
Rush (Kaptur)
Schneider (Connolly)
Schrier (Spanberger)
Scott, David (Jeffries)
Sires (Pallone)
Swalwell (Gomez)
Timmons (Armstrong)
Titus (Connolly)
Trone (Brown (MD))
Van Drew (Reschenthaler)
Vargas (Correa)
Vela (Correa)
Velázquez (Clark (MA))
Waters (Takano)
Watson Coleman (Pallone)
Welch (Raskin)
Wilson (FL) (Cicilline)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SCANLON). The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 265, nays 163, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 14]

YEAS—265

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amodei
Auchincloss
Axne
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown (MD)
Brown (OH)
Brownley
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fitzpatrick
Fletcher
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Gaetz
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (CA)
García (IL)
García (TX)
Golden
Gomez
Gonzalez (OH)
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hartzler
Hayes
Herrera Beutler
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jacobs (NY)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kahele
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Keller
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kinzinger
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski
Malliotakis
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McKinley
McNerney
Meeks
Meijer
Meng
Mfume
Miller-Meeks
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Posey
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Reed
Reschenthaler
Rice (NY)
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Speier
Stansbury
Stanton
Steel
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Walorski
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Yarmuth
Young
Zeldin

NAYS—163

Aderholt
Allen
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brady
Brooks
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cheney
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Comer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fleischmann
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fulcher
Gallagher
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Herrell
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Hudson
Huizenga
Jackson
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Kelly (MS)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Latta
LaTurner
Lesko
Letlow
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Mace
Mann
McCarthy
McClain
McHenry
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (WV)
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Mullin
Murphy (NC)
Nehls
Newhouse
Owens
Palazzo
Palmer
Perry
Pfluger
Rice (SC)
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stewart
Taylor
Tenney
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Womack

NOT VOTING—5

Biggs
Hollingsworth
Massie
McClintock
Norman

□ 1135

Ms. GRANGER changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Adams (Brown (MD))
Bass (Cicilline)
Beatty (Kuster)
Blumenauer (Beyer)
Boyle, Brendan F. (Gallego)
Brown (OH) (Kaptur)
Brownley (Kuster)
Bush (Bowman)
Butterfield (Panetta)
Carter (LA) (Jeffries)
Cawthorn (Nehls)
Chu (Clark (MA))
Cleaver (Davids (KS))
Clyburn (Panetta)
Cohen (Beyer)
Costa (Correa)
Crawford (Stewart)
Crist (Soto)
Cuellar (Correa)
Davis, Danny K. (García (IL))

DeFazio (Brown (MD))
DeGette (Blunt Rochester)
Demings (Soto)
DeSaulnier (Beyer)
Doggett (Raskin)
Doyle, Michael F. (Connolly)
Duncan (Rice (SC))
Evans (Mfume)
Fallon (Gooden)
Fletcher (Allred)
Fortenberry (Moolenaar)
Frankel, Lois (Clark (MA))
Garamendi (Sherman)
Gohmert (Weber (TX))
Gonzalez, Vicente (Correa)
Gottheimer (Panetta)
Granger (Calvert)
Grijalva (García (IL))
Hagedorn (Carl)
Hayes (Clark (MA))
Higgins (NY) (Bowman)
Jayapal (Raskin)
Keating (Clark (MA))
Kelly (IL) (Kuster)
Kildee (Panetta)
Kilmer (Bera)
Kinzinger (Meijer)
Kirkpatrick (Pallone)
Krishnamoorthi (Bera)
Lawrence (Stevens)
Lawson (FL) (Soto)
Lee (CA) (Khanna)
Lofgren (Jeffries)
Loudermilk (Fleischmann)
Lowenthal (Beyer)
Lynch (Trahan)
Maloney, Carolyn B. (Wasserman Schultz)
McBath (Allred)
McCollum (Blunt Rochester)
McEachin (Wexton)
Meng (Kuster)
Moore (UT) (Meijer)
Moore (WI) (Beyer)
Moulton (Clark (MA))
Nadler (Pallone)
Napolitano (Correa)
Neguse (Perlmutter)
Newman (Clark (MA))
Ocasio-Cortez (García (IL))
Pascrell (Pallone)
Payne (Pallone)
Pingree (Cicilline)
Pocan (Raskin)
Porter (Wexton)
Reed (Kelly (PA))
Rogers (KY) (Reschenthaler)
Roybal-Allard (Levin (CA))
Ruiz (Correa)
Ruppersberger (Raskin)
Rush (Kaptur)
Schneider (Connolly)
Schrier (Spanberger)
Scott, David (Jeffries)
Sires (Pallone)
Swalwell (Gomez)
Timmons (Armstrong)
Titus (Connolly)
Trone (Brown (MD))
Van Drew (Reschenthaler)
Vargas (Correa)
Vela (Correa)
Velázquez (Clark (MA))
Waters (Takano)
Watson Coleman (Pallone)
Welch (Raskin)
Wilson (FL) (Cicilline)

HONORING DETECTIVE JAMES STANKO

(Ms. WILD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Allentown Police Detective and Community Liaison Officer James Stanko, a man who dedicated his life's work to bridging the divide between police officers and the community they serve.

Officer Stanko died on Monday, a huge loss for our community, but his legacy lives on through the countless lives he touched.

Officer Stanko wasn't known for sitting idly at a desk. His passions lay out in the community where he was known for mentoring our kids, whether it was through coaching basketball, talking at schools, or offering life lessons at the children's clinic.

As someone who worked closely with him put it, ''Our kids called him family.'' He was a calming, yet dependable force that everyone, especially our youth, could turn to for guidance and support.

Officer Stanko never stopped trying to achieve his ultimate goal of connecting the police department to the people that it serves.

Working as an Allentown police officer for 13 years, Stanko never wavered in his values of honesty, integrity, and, most notably, respect for others. I was inspired by his sincere love for public service, as well as his passion for our community that he was proud to call home. He will be deeply missed.

HONORING DIVISION CHAMPS CLINTON-MASSIE FALCONS

(Mr. CAREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CAREY. Mr. Speaker, as a Clinton County native, I rise today in honor of the 2021 Division IV Ohio high school football State champion, the Clinton-Massie Falcons.

On December 3, 2021, the Clinton-Massie Falcons defeated the Youngstown Ursuline Irish in a thrilling comeback victory that one would expect to see in a movie.

Trailing 28–7 late in the third quarter, the Falcons kept their poise and refused to be denied. They shut down the Irish offense while scoring on three straight possessions. The Falcon's final touchdown came on a fourth and goal from the 1-yard line with under 1 minute to play.

With the score 28–27, the team didn't think twice when given the choice. They went for 2 points and the win to bring home the school's third State championship in just under 10 years.

To Coach Dan McSurley and every player on the Falcon roster, congratulations. As a former captain of the East Clinton Astro football team, I understand the obstacles that you have had to overcome to earn this title. You have made our county proud and proven that hard work and determination truly pay off.

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, thanks to President Biden's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that I and many of us voted for, we are now putting those resources on the ground across America.

The first billions of dollars to go to California and every State in the Union are now being put in place to fix bridges. Next, we are going to fix our roads and build our infrastructure to electrify our system throughout the country.

These are the kinds of things that our voters sent us to Washington to do, to bring those resources back to every single community, every single one of our communities, and that is what we are doing here in Congress with a President who actually believes in the fundamentals of infrastructure and making sure that we put our American workers back to work to build our Nation as it should be and what we are so proud of.

We are the number one infrastructure place in the world, and we will continue to be so with these investments.

ONE YEAR OF CRISES

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 1-year anniversary of President Biden's inauguration and 1 year under one-party rule.

And I ask: Is America better off? The answer is no.

Since President Biden took office, we have seen crisis after crisis.

We are facing an economic crisis. President Biden and the Democrats had the tools to bring our economy back to the prepandemic records of 2019. But instead, we have massive supply shortages, labor shortages, and an inflation rate that has reached a 40-year high.

Our country faces an energy crisis. We went from being energy independent to begging OPEC+ to produce more oil to offset the rising costs. This is because of anti-American energy policies enacted over the past year.

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on: an education crisis as our youth continue to face uncertainty in the classroom; a national security crisis as our presence on the world stage has been weakened and our southern border remains vulnerable; and a crime crisis following dangerous defund the police rhetoric.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the leadership America needs right now. In fact, it is far from it.

□ 1145

INFRASTRUCTURE AND JOBS

(Ms. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today marks one year of Democrats in Congress working alongside the Biden-Harris administration on behalf of American families.

I am proud of what we have accomplished so far, including the once-in-a-generation investment in our roads and bridges made by the bipartisan infrastructure law. With nearly 2,500 bridges in poor condition, Illinois ranks third among States with crumbling bridge infrastructure. Thanks to the bipartisan infrastructure law, Illinois will receive $1.4 billion to repair and rebuild these bridges, like the Blackberry Creek and Mendota railroad bridges in my district.

These upgrades will save Illinoisans money on costly car repairs and time on their daily commutes. This long-overdue investment will also connect our communities and support our supply chain, while creating good-paying jobs and spurring economic development.

With the partnership of the Biden-Harris administration, we have spent the last 365 days delivering for the American people. Our work is far from finished.

COMMEMORATION OF DR. MARCY ZWELLING

(Mr. SESSIONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of great respect and mourn the loss of Dr. Marcy Zwelling from California.

Dr. Zwelling, since 2012, has headed up the National Physicians Council for Healthcare Policy, which is a group of some 570 independent physicians across the country. Dr. Zwelling not only challenged me but challenged all 570 members of the Physicians Council to please advocate on behalf of not only patients but also physicians. She dedicated her service and life not only to patients, attempting to give them the very best of medical help, but also for physicians. Physicians who many times are faced with innumerable challenges, not just to provide service but also in their own lives.

So it is today I offer to the House of Representatives the great life of Dr. Marcy Zwelling who passed away this last weekend. May she rest in peace. May God bless her life and that which she gave each of us.

Whether she was helping organize one of the over nine conferences of the National Physicians Council for Healthcare Policy nationwide, developing new screening tools for patients with cancer, or supporting her fellow physicians, Dr. Zwelling served as an inspiration and servant leader for myself and so many others in the medical community. I will miss her leadership and inspiration.

THE NATION IS CRYING OUT FOR DEMOCRACY

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the name of Dr. Martin Luther King and John Robert Lewis, our late colleague.

I rise today to say that we are not finished. The work of this Nation is not finished, even in the aftermath of a sinister vote on the floor of the United States Senate that could not see clearly to determine that the Constitution and the right to vote rose above the silly and insignificant rule of the Senate called the filibuster.

In the midst of that debate, we heard eloquent and beautiful statements about the many times the filibuster had been eliminated or relieved. We heard a brilliant analysis of the Constitution and the Founding Fathers' desire for the filibuster not to be in the Constitution, yet due process and the 15th Amendment are.

Mr. Speaker, we saw justice crushed and democracy gored. In Texas, of course, more criminal laws are now related to voting. Poll watchers can attack voters in terms of what they are doing. We are now in a constitutional hearing in Judiciary. It is my commitment to go forward on the John Robert Lewis and all the bills attached to it because the Nation is crying out for justice. The country is crying out for democracy. We will not let it down. The Senate must continue its debate, and we must get these billed passed.

PRESIDENT BIDEN'S BORDER CRISIS

(Mr. PALAZZO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind the American people that today marks President Biden's one year in office and 365 days of his disastrous failure at our southern border.

Forty percent of Americans graded Joe Biden's immigration policy with a big fat F for his failures. His open border policy has proven month after month to be not only unsuccessful but downright dangerous for the American people.

More deadly fentanyl products have been smuggled into our neighborhoods this year than ever before. Nearly 11,000 pounds were apprehended in the last year alone.

Biden's wide open southern border is poisoning our communities and causing unthinkable harm. His bad policy is taking lives. It is no surprise that our Nation's number of overdoses reached an all-time high in 2021. My heart breaks for the parents who have lost their children while our President plays politics.

Mr. Speaker, I have said it before, and I will say it again. Border security is national security. It is time to stop deliberately destroying the safety of innocent Americans for the sake of politics.

POSTAL SERVICE DISRUPTIONS

(Mr. CASTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, almost a year ago, I spoke here about the delays in our postal system, and a year later the calls to our office have not stopped. In fact, they have gotten more frequent and more frantic.

Since the start of this year, 50 percent of all the phone calls our office has received are about disruptions in the Postal Service. These are from seniors whose essential medications and Social Security checks were over 2 weeks delayed; folks with missing credit card statements, Medicare cards, past due still undelivered bills accruing interest that they can't pay because their paycheck hasn't come in; small business owners reliant on the mail who are completely unable to operate.

Now, to be sure, the pandemic contributes to some of this. It has increased demand on the mail system, even as postal workers are staying home, quarantining, looking after loved ones. While leaders in the private sector have adapted to this moment, Postmaster DeJoy has responded to this by eliminating overtime, closing mail processing facilities, and removing mail sorting machines. He has made things worse.

Now, in the private sector we would fix that. A corporate board wouldn't tolerate it. They would hold this man to account. That hasn't happened because we still don't have a fully staffed Postal Board of Governors thanks to the Senate's failure to confirm President Biden's nominations. This is no way to run a business. It is no way to treat the American people.

The Postal Service needs leaders as committed to public service as our letter carriers and mail handlers. Frankly, so does the U.S. Senate. It is time for them to act, to confirm these nominees and ensure the post office has a fully staffed and fully functioning board.

RECOGNIZING LAUREN GOLLOFON

(Mr. ROSENDALE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Lauren Gollofon from Bozeman, Montana. Lauren is a 17-year-old senior at Liberty Online Academy and a former student at Bozeman High School. When Lauren became aware that the Pledge of Allegiance was not being said daily in public schools in Bozeman, she sprang into action. Lauren notified school administrators that their failure to hold the Pledge of Allegiance every day violated Montana House Bill 543, and asked that they hold the Pledge of Allegiance daily in accordance with the State law.

Within a week of her advocacy, local schools began to recite the Pledge of Allegiance daily. When asked why this was so important, Lauren said patriotism is on the decline in the United States. When students say the Pledge of Allegiance, they are acknowledging the freedom and the values and also everyone who has died and fought for our country.

This display of patriotism demonstrates why a report just this year found that Montana is one of the most patriotic States in the Nation, a ranking which we are extremely proud of.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all Montanans, I want to sincerely thank Lauren Gollofon for her leadership, community activism, and her dedication to the core principles that make this country great.

RECOGNIZING BOB BRIGGS

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bob Briggs of

Westminster, Colorado, who passed away on December 2, 2021.

Bob was born December 24, 1937, in Greeley, Colorado, as one of eight children and the oldest son. His family moved to Westminster in 1943 where Bob graduated from Westminster High School.

He earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Colorado State University, both in horticulture. According to a January 2020 profile in Orchard Living, he majored in horticulture because he did not want to wear a tie for a living.

Bob married his wife, Shirley, on September 8, 1957. He had a long career in local and State politics, serving as Adams County Commissioner for 4 years, beginning in 1979—where he actually helped me on one of my very first cases that I had as a lawyer—as the local board member for the Regional Transportation District for 4 years in 1999, and a State representative for District 29 from January 2003 to 2005. He served terms on the Westminster City Council, including a stint as mayor pro tem. He was a longtime proponent of local rail and helped found the advocacy group Rocky Mountain Rail.

Mr. Speaker, Bob was a devoted husband and a loving father and grandfather. He and Shirley raised two children and enjoyed spending time with their grandchildren. I am deeply grateful for his lifetime of service to our community.

UNITED STATES AID TO TALIBAN

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, under recent comments President Biden made about his first year, he talked about under-promising and over-delivering.

Given what the year looks like, please, Mr. President, under-deliver.

Mr. Speaker, our country has seen unprecedented crisis and record inflation, supply chain disruptions, price surges, gas and energy costs going through the roof, food supply shortages, empty shelves everywhere, higher prices.

Unfortunately, the failures of Biden's first year in office isn't limited to just the United States alone. No, he hastily evacuated our troops from Afghanistan, leaving behind as many as 14,000 U.S. citizens and legal residents and friends, as well as billions of dollars of countless weapons of ours that have fallen into the hands of the Taliban. So over 20 years of a record of Taliban and they get all these weapons to use against us or our friends in the neighborhood.

If this is not bad enough, the administration is now proposing to send over $300 million in foreign aid, basically, to the Taliban regime to do all the great things they have been doing. People in Afghanistan do need help, but we know the funds or food we send over there will go straight into the wrong hands.

We need to have a better chain of supply to help them than what the Biden administration is proposing. The nonprofit rescue group known as Save Our Allies has been working tirelessly to rescue those left behind by President Biden's disaster over there. They warn that the funds and supplies will not go into the hands of the average Afghan but, instead, straight into the hands of the Taliban. We need to rethink this.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KAHELE). Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

NEW MEXICO SUPPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

(Ms. STANSBURY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, the history of New Mexico and our rural communities predate the founding of our great Nation. Our communities carry rich traditions and ways of life, from our tribal communities, to our land grants, to our farmers and ranchers and small towns that dot the plains, mountains, and river valleys of our beautiful State.

They are diverse, resilient, vibrant, and full of grit and determination. For far too long, our rural communities have been left behind in critical infrastructure, which is why I am deeply proud that our bipartisan infrastructure bill is already delivering for New Mexico, investing millions in rural roads, bridges, and airports, broadband, our electric grid, and life-giving water, creating thousands of jobs, and supporting rural economic development across our State, because our rural communities are the backbone of New Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that we are working together to invest in infrastructure, to invest in jobs, and the well-being of our future and our communities.

□ 1200

MARCH FOR LIFE

(Mr. GOOD of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today marks 1 year of total Democrat control of the Federal Government—1 year of this Biden administration. In addition to all the other disastrous policies and the crises created by this President, it marks another year with 1 million babies being slaughtered in the womb in our country.

Tomorrow we will, once again, march for life here in Washington, DC, and I will be privileged to join that march. May it be the last time that we do that before the Supreme Court rightly overturns the brutal, vicious, inhumane, dishonest, and inaccurate interpretation of the highest law of the land—the Constitution—giving the right to terminate a pregnancy in the womb.

Sixty-five million babies have been lost since that happened nearly 50 years ago. These are inventors, these are scientists, these are ministers, and these are healthcare providers who are not serving and helping our country here today.

Equality begins in the womb, and freedom begins in the womb, and the science tells us that life begins in the womb. May the Supreme Court overturn Roe, and may we begin to protect all innocent, precious life in the womb.

SCHOOL DIRECTOR RECOGNITION MONTH

(Ms. SCANLON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, January is School Board Director Recognition Month, and I want to take a moment, as a former school board member and school board president, to recognize the contributions of these unpaid but essential community servants.

In the best of times, being a school board member is challenging, requiring community members to step up and address issues ranging from child development to HR, and from transportation and construction to nutrition and natural disasters. There is never enough money to do everything we would like to for our children, and the number of regulations, mandates, and laws that must be met seems to be never-ending. It often seems like every choice is between two bad alternatives.

As school directors are facing these outsized challenges compounded by a pandemic and political polarization, and the mental health challenges both have brought, I want to acknowledge their Herculean efforts to keep our children, our teachers, and our staff safe and give them every opportunity to succeed.

I want them to know how much their efforts on behalf of our children, our schools, and our communities are appreciated.

LIFE: GOD'S FIRST GIFT

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, having done this many times over the course of the past 14 years, to speak on behalf of life itself. It is the first and foremost gift that is given to us, and I think of the over 60 million children who have been taken out of that opportunity.

It is my hope that we will never have to march again for the repeal of Roe v. Wade after the Supreme Court decides but, rather, that we stand and continue to march for life and the freedom of opportunities for individuals to not only

grow and be benefited by the greatness of this country but also to bring the greatness of this country.

Life is a gift of God. It can only be sustained by people who understand that same gift, and I just pray that the Supreme Court and, ultimately, Congress and the legislatures of our land will stand for life.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING FOR THE PORT OF INDIANA-BURNS HARBOR

(Mr. MRVAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for Congress to complete the consideration of the fiscal year 2022 appropriations measures prior to the current deadline of February 18. I remain grateful that a transparent process was established for all Members to include eligible projects in these measures.

Notably, for the first District of Indiana, there are projects included that will allow for dredging and improvements at the Port of Indiana-Burns Harbor. This incredible facility is essential to the functions of the northwest Indiana steel and manufacturing industries and supports thousands of steelworker jobs and longshoreman jobs along the way.

Appropriations measures are not just funding numbers and direction for Federal programs and projects. They are a testament to the government's investment that create jobs and grow our economy.

I appreciate the ongoing communications of our appropriations leaders, and I look forward to doing all I can to ensure that these important measures are signed into law as soon as possible.

FORTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE

(Mrs. McCLAIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, this week marks 49 years since the landmark Supreme Court decision of Roe v. Wade, 49 years since the choice won over life in the eyes of the American people.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle applaud Roe v. Wade and have no problem with the more than 62 million innocent babies who have been aborted since 1973.

I, however, find these numbers to be sickening.

These children are just as worthy of life as a fully grown adult is. They are created in the image of God just as you and I are, and their lives should not be carelessly and despicably destroyed.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle preach and parade human rights.

But where is the outrage for equal human rights for the unborn?

It is frighteningly nonexistent, and their lack of consistency makes it very clear what their priorities are.

How can you claim to care for one life when you don't care for all lives, no matter how small?

HEALTHCARE WORKERS

(Mr. FOSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the men and women who have been on the front lines of this pandemic from the very beginning: our healthcare workers. On MLK Day, I had a chance to deliver care packages to hospitals and clinics in my district in Joliet, Aurora, and Naperville as a small token of appreciation for the tireless work of our healthcare workers.

As our Nation confronts this, hopefully final, winter surge of COVID, we should all keep in mind the people who are still going to work every day to care for people who are sick. Their dedication to their jobs is truly inspiring, and they are literally saving lives every day. After almost 2 years of battling COVID, our healthcare workers are mentally and physically exhausted, but yet they still show up every day to provide care for others.

We can all learn so much from them.

I am honored to represent so many of them in my district in places like Edward Hospital in Naperville, Silver Cross Hospital in New Lenox, Rush Copley Medical Center in Aurora, and Aunt Martha's Health Center in Joliet; just to name a few.

So I want every healthcare worker in America—doctors, nurses, and support staff—to know that they are not alone. I thank them for being there.

THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION'S 1-YEAR REVIEW

(Mr. MEUSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, in business, a 1-year review is customary. So let's review the Biden administration's first year by the numbers. As we tend to say in business, the numbers don't lie.

Regarding the economy, there are 6 million Americans unemployed while 10 million jobs remain unfilled. The vast majority of small businesses are hiring, yet 95 percent report few applications. Inflation, Mr. Speaker, is at a 40-year high of 7 percent. Gas is up 50 percent, and it costs about $100 to fill up the gas tank on a pickup truck.

Regarding national security, it is really no better. Two million illegals have crossed our border. Twice as much fentanyl is coming in; we have over 100,000—sadly—fatalities throughout the United States. And we have 125,000 troops preparing to invade Ukraine.

We have 2-mile long lines for COVID testing in my district.

Mr. Speaker, we are not going to hold our breath for corrective action to be taken by the Biden administration; they have stated how they plan to double down. It will be up to the American people to solve this problem come November.

ROE V. WADE

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, as I stand at this podium, I will speak for about 60 seconds, and within those 60 seconds, an unborn baby will lose its life. In fact, in America, an unborn baby will have its life ripped away every 50 seconds through the gruesome procedure of abortion. This is about 630,000 unborn lives lost per year—a number that equals about 80 percent of my congressional district.

This is tragic. God has a plan for these children. They are our brothers, sisters, friends, and loved ones. They are future leaders, nurses, doctors, farmers, and small business owners. But, most importantly, they are human beings with a purpose from our Creator. There is nothing more hideous than taking the life of the most vulnerable in our society.

Forty-nine years ago, the decision made by the Supreme Court in Roe v. Wade has resulted in the death of over 62½ million unborn babies. Despite the three-quarters of Americans who want significant restrictions on abortions, my colleagues across the aisle are still prioritizing their abortion-on-demand agenda.

This is senseless. Together, as a nation, we must make this the last year we speak on this horrible anniversary. We cannot wait another 50 seconds, another 50 months, or another 50 years. Everyone is entitled to the right to life.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KAHELE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ALLRED) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, before I give my speech on voting rights, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA).

HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF MANUEL T. PADILLA

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, today we honor the life and memory of Manny T. Padilla, a leader in our community and my very, very good friend.

Manny served on many boards, commissions, and organizations in Orange County, and he also served 9 years on the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Orange County's Board of Directors.

Among his many accomplishments, he was honored as Volunteer of the Year by the University of Georgetown, as well as receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of the State of California.

Manny's story started in New Mexico when he was 17. Then his high school principal chose two of the best students in his high school to be part of the Boys State program. Manny was one of those students.

He moved to Washington, D.C. later on and attended Georgetown University while he worked for then-Senator Dennis Chavez. Years later he attended law school where he met his wife, Betty, at the same time while working at the Department of Labor. They had four children. And Manny had a very long career in the private sector working for State Farm Insurance.

As we celebrate his life, we know his memory will serve as a great example to this next generation.

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER).

BRANDON ROAD PROJECT

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share some great news about our efforts to protect Lake Michigan and the rivers and lakes throughout Illinois and the entire Great Lakes region from invasive Asian carp.

Yesterday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that thanks to the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, $225 million of new funding is headed to Illinois for the Brandon Road Project. The Brandon Road Lock and Dam on the Des Plaines River in Joliet, Illinois, is the last best line of defense against the spread of this invasive species into waterways not just in Illinois but to lakes and tributaries throughout the entire Great Lakes basin.

The economic and environmental consequences of allowing this infestation to spread would be massive, and that is why securing Federal funding for the Brandon Road Project has been one of my most important priorities for several years.

Last year, I joined my colleagues on the Great Lakes Task Force to urge the Army Corps of Engineers to prioritize the Brandon Road Project. And 3 years ago, I hosted members of the then-Republican-controlled Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for a tour of the Brandon Road site so that they could have a first-person look at the importance of this project.

This injection of much-needed funding means that we can move forward on getting this project done and protecting our waterways, and not just our Great Lakes, but the beautiful lakes and rivers that define the entire Great Lakes region for generations to come.

I just wish that more of my Republican colleagues had actually voted for the bipartisan infrastructure bill to provide the funding for this great project.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, for decades, Americans have been asking their elected leaders to fix crumbling roads and bridges and modernize our Nation's transportation infrastructure. For decades, politicians of both parties promised to deliver on an infrastructure package. President Trump even promised that he would be the one person to get it done. But he didn't, not even when Republicans controlled the House, Senate, and Presidency.

□ 1215

It was President Biden and this Democratic Congress that finally got it done even though more than 90 percent of my Republican colleagues voted against it. Thanks to this new law, people in my State will benefit from robust Federal investment in the infrastructure that they rely on every day: $11.2 billion for highway and bridge repairs; $1.7 billion to make sure that everyone has access to clean drinking water; $4 billion to enhance public transportation; $616 million for infrastructure enhancements at Illinois airports; and over $100 million for broadband internet expansion.

Just last week, the Department of Transportation announced that $1.4 billion was already on its way to Illinois to repair bridges all across the State. This is the largest investment in our State's bridges since the construction of the Interstate Highway System, and it is just the beginning of the infrastructure investments that will benefit the people of Illinois every day.

I have to say, I look forward to meeting my Republican colleagues at the ribbon cutting ceremonies for all of these projects that they voted against.

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I am here today to talk about the foundation of our democracy: the right to vote and why we must protect it.

I want to begin just by telling a little bit about me. My story is somewhat unique. I didn't take the traditional path to Congress. Before I got here, I played in the NFL for 5 years as a linebacker for the Tennessee Titans. After hurting my neck, I decided to pursue my other dream, which was to become a voting rights attorney, a civil rights attorney. While I was in law school, I decided to focus on voting rights because of what I saw happening in my home State of Texas where it was becoming harder to vote as the State was becoming more and more diverse.

After I came back to Texas, I worked doing voter protection in 2014, setting up poll watcher programs across the State of Texas, trying to help voters deal with the new voter ID law that had just been put in place and that I knew was going to deeply impact so many Texans. Then I became a voting rights litigator suing States like Ohio and Wisconsin for the laws that they passed making it harder for the people in their States to vote.

Then I was lucky enough to rejoin the Obama administration and finish out that administration.

I decided to come home and run for Congress in my hometown and my home district where I was born and raised. In 2018, I ran against an opponent who had been unopposed in 2016. I won, and I am now proud to be representing the 32nd Congressional District in Congress.

In that campaign in 2018, I had the distinct honor of having Congressman John Lewis come join me in Dallas. Mr. Lewis is my hero, and to have him with me talking to voters and campaigning with me was, to say the least, surreal. We went on to become colleagues, and I considered him to be a friend and a mentor. I know that without John Lewis, I would not be here today. There would be no Congressional Black Caucus.

So many of us would not be here today were it not for him, the other civil rights leaders, and the foot soldiers who fought for the right to vote. That is why we named this critical piece of legislation after him, the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act.

Now, this piece of legislation is not coming out of thin air. It is not a Federal takeover. Many of the reforms are intended to address long-held problems with access to the ballot box for many Americans. It is also meant to address the gutting of the Voting Rights Act by the Supreme Court in 2013, and the 440 voting restriction bills across 49 States that have been introduced in recent years.

Many of those bills to restrict the right to vote have become law in States like my own, in Texas, in Georgia, and so many other States. While other pieces address the direct and more recent threat to our democracy, including the counting of votes and the safety and security of election officials, this legislation is necessary for us to save our democracy.

Yes, we have had setbacks in this fight. Yesterday was another one. Not enough of our Republican colleagues in the Senate were brave enough to stand up to President Trump's lies and to vote for the same Voting Rights Act that the Senate had unanimously reauthorized in 2006 that my constituent, a Republican, President George W. Bush, signed in 2006. We were just shy of having enough Democrats in the Senate with enough courage to change the rules so that we could protect our democracy.

But I am here to say today, to all of my constituents and to anyone across the country who is worried about our democracy, that we can't lose hope. We have had setbacks before, just as Mr. Lewis did, and we have come back from

them. The American people have sent us a clear message.

In 2020, 155 million Americans voted in a pandemic. They risked their lives to vote. That is how important it was to them. Campaign finance reform; ending partisan gerrymandering; and expanding access to the ballot by creating national standards around voter registration, early voting, and vote by mail are all necessary for us in our democracy, and they are commonsense ideas that are contained in the Freedom to Vote Act. They will fortify and protect this sacred right.

But let's talk about what is happening in the country because I hear all the time from folks that voting is not difficult; that there has not been a rash of voter suppression laws passed across the country; that this is a Democratic story that is being told.

According to the Brennan Center for Justice, between January 1 and September 27 at least 19 States enacted 33 laws to make it harder for Americans to vote.

Restrictive laws in four States: Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, and Texas, imposed new or more stringent criminal penalties on election officials or other individuals for helping their fellow citizens vote. These new criminal laws would deter election officials and others who assist voters from engaging in ordinary, lawful, and often essential tasks. People in Georgia can now be charged with a crime for handing out water and snacks to voters waiting in line to vote; lines that were created intentionally by restricting other ways to vote.

Montana eliminated election day voter registration, making it harder for new voters or folks who have moved to vote in that State.

Arizona temporarily restricted the powers of their secretary of State to represent them in lawsuits. And the reason? Because that position is held currently by a Democrat.

Other States have shortened the window to apply or the deadline to deliver a mail-in ballot or have eliminated ballot drop boxes and reduced polling places, and the list goes on and on and on.

Mr. Speaker, 155 million Americans voted in 2020, the highest turnout since the 1900 election. The Trump administration itself called it the most secure in American history. Yet, the lies about the election and the attacks on the right to vote have just continued and continued, and that is why I am standing here today.

Because of this new lie, these new laws have been passed, and we are seeing voter suppression taking place in real time in my home State in Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just talk about my home State for a little bit because I hear from a lot of Texans who wonder why voting rights experts like myself say that it is one of the most difficult States in the country to vote.

I want to walk you through just how difficult it is to cast your ballot in my home State. First, the State of Texas makes it incredibly difficult to register to vote. In order for me to register my neighbors in Dallas County, I need to go to the Dallas County elections department, take a short course, and become deputized as a volunteer deputy registrar. That is just to register my neighbors. After that, I am able to register voters only in Dallas County, and I am only able to do that for 2 years because it is going to expire, and then I have to go back and get it reauthorized.

After I registered that voter which I have done hundreds of times, I have 5 days to deliver the completed form that I filled out with them, or I face criminal penalties; 5 days. So if I lose it, something happens, I will be held criminally liable. If I would like to register voters in both of the counties in my congressional district, Collin County and Dallas County, I would have to go to Collin County and get deputized separately there. If I meet a voter who lives in the city of Dallas but doesn't know what county they live in, because four counties touch the city of Dallas, I would not be able to register them unless I know that I am deputized in their county, whether it be Denton County, Kaufman County, Collin County, Dallas County. I have to figure it out. That is just to register my neighbors as a lawyer, as a voting rights lawyer, for me to help my neighbor get registered.

If a voter would like to participate in the next election, they have to register at least 30 days before that election day. So if, like many young people, you decide that a week out from an election you are fired up, you are ready to go, you want to vote in that election, guess what? You can't. Because you didn't get registered in time.

Unlike many other States where they have same-day voter registration, in Texas you have to have decided 30 days out from the election that you were going to get registered and, hopefully, get through all of those other hoops.

Right now, as we speak, the secretary of State's office is citing a paper shortage as the reason why they can't print out enough voter registration forms, despite dragging their feet for years in expanding online voter registration for Texans. That is all just to get registered, Mr. Speaker. We are not even talking about casting your ballot yet.

So after you have gone through those hoops, after you have gotten registered, you have to then survive the purges of the voter rolls that are going on right now, such as in 2019, when Texas attempted to kick 100,000 Texans—incorrectly—off the voter rolls claiming that they were noncitizens. It was such a disaster the secretary of State had to resign.

Now, if you survived that, if you have gotten registered and you have not been purged from the voter rolls to actually cast your ballot, you have to jump through more hoops because Texas has the strictest voter ID law in the country. In order for me to vote in the State of Texas, I need to possess one of seven acceptable forms of ID which does include a Texas handgun license but does not include a student ID like my constituents at SMU, or UTD, or any school in Dallas might be issued.

A Texas district court found in 2014 that 600,000 registered Texans or 4.5 percent of those registered at that time lacked one of these qualifying IDs. Now, thanks to a court ruling, you can sign a declaration stating that you don't possess that required form of ID. But that is not often communicated at the polling place. I know because I have trained poll watchers to try and watch for this. When voters present themselves and they don't have the required ID, they are often turned away.

If you have a disability or if you are out of town, or you just have difficulty coming to a polling place, you can't vote by mail very easily either. To vote by mail in the State of Texas you have to be 65 years or older, you have to be sick or disabled, or you have to be out of the county where your election is being held on election day and throughout the entire early voting period.

Recently, thanks to the State's voter suppression law, S.B. 1, this has become even more difficult. As reports from counties from across the State have shown, mail-in ballot applications are being rejected at an alarming rate. That is because this new law requires that people provide either a partial Social Security number or a driver's license number on their application for a mail-in ballot, and that number has to match the identification on their voter registration. This makes it extremely difficult for voters to remember which ID they used when they registered, perhaps decades ago.

In Dallas and Tarrant Counties right now, 40 percent, Mr. Speaker, of the applications have been rejected. In Bexar County where San Antonio is located, it is almost 50 percent. If these rejection rates hold, tens of thousands of mail-in ballots and possibly more will be rejected.

It is now a crime, Mr. Speaker, for county officials to encourage folks to vote by mail, meaning that if you are in a household and you are married and if a spouse requests a mail-in ballot, the county official cannot inform you that your spouse can also request a mail-in ballot if they are eligible or they face criminal penalties. And that doesn't even scratch the surface of dealing with voters whose names have changed because of marriage or divorce, or a change in gender identity, or whose names no longer match the names on the voter roll.

If you possess one of these IDs and if you are aware of your rights, you may still struggle to find a polling place. According to a report from the Leadership Conference Education Fund, 750 polling places have been closed in

Texas since 2012. This has disproportionately happened in counties with large Black and Latino populations.

The law also curbed other initiatives by counties to make voting easier. That happened during the pandemic, including limiting ballot drop boxes, banning counties from drive-through voting, and opening 24-hour voting locations as they did in Harris County where Houston is. They even tried to ban Sunday morning early voting to stop souls to the polls until they had too much outrage and they had to back off.

Texans in minority communities disproportionately face long lines when they get to the polling place in order to vote. This includes one Black man in Houston who waited 6 hours to cast his ballot in 2020.

If you make it through all of those hurdles: register to vote, cast your ballot by mail or in person via early voting or on election day, your vote will then be diluted through aggressive partisan gerrymandering at the State house, State senate, and congressional level.

□ 1230

According to the Brennan Center for Justice, Texas Democrats would have to win 58 percent of the vote to be favored to carry more than 37 percent of the State's congressional seats. That is a State where Joe Biden earned 46.5 percent of the vote.

According to this analysis, Texas would have to vote very heavily for Democrats in order to barely break the gerrymandering, and it would still likely leave Republicans with a 2-to-1 seat advantage.

This is all due to partisan gerrymandering, which allows politicians to choose their voters instead of the other way around.

Gerrymandering doesn't just silence communities, though. It also suppresses the vote. It is well known that competitive elections drive higher turnout, which is why the recent State and congressional maps in Texas sought to limit the number of competitive elections as much as possible.

For the Texas voter that has found a way to register and cast their ballot, and has ignored the impacts of gerrymandering, their vote is still under attack, even after they have cast it.

Currently, right now, as we are 2 months out from the primary election for our next election, our State's leaders are conducting a so-called audit of the 2020 election results in our largest counties at the request of the former President of the United States, trying to prop up the lie that the last election was stolen from him—in a State that he won.

All of these hurdles, combined with the potential discriminatory penalties, are making it difficult for the average Texan to feel that they can engage in an election freely. Even worse, States across the country are following Texas' lead. That is why we need to pass the Freedom to Vote Act and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act.

The Freedom to Vote Act, just very quickly, for folks who are wondering, because there is a lot of discussion about this, this is what it actually does:

It establishes automatic, online, and same-day voter registration, which would solve our voter registration problems in the State of Texas.

It makes election day a Federal holiday, something that should happen.

It sets national standards for early voting and vote by mail, requiring 2 weeks of early voting, including 2 weekends, and allowing any American who wants to, to vote by mail.

It bans partisan gerrymandering and establishes clear, neutral standards and rules as well as increasing transparency and enhanced judicial review. This would address Texas' extremely gerrymandered maps.

It creates a uniform standard for what forms of ID are acceptable for voting.

It prevents States from subverting their own elections and protects election records, legislation that I introduced here in the House that I am glad to see included in this final bill.

Of course, the Voting Rights Act needs to be restored. We need to make sure that we have preclearance again. We need to have a national standard. That is what the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act does.

This is a bill that passed the Senate 98 to nothing in 2006. It passed the House overwhelmingly. It was signed into law by my constituent, again, George W. Bush, a Republican. Now, not a single Republican in the Senate or in the House will vote for it.

This brings me to my final thoughts. On January 6, I was just a few rows back from where I am standing now. The doors to my right were barricaded with furniture like this, which we use to hold paper, as a mob tried to break in and prevent us from ratifying the results of an American Presidential election.

I along with my colleagues like Mr. JONES, who is here with me, were prepared for the worst. These doors were locked. We didn't know if there would be a way out. But we were determined to do our job.

I think the most important thing that happened on January 6, the thing I hope that people remember that happened, isn't that we had to evacuate the House floor. I hope they remember that we came back.

We came back while there was still blood on the walls, while there was still broken glass on the floor, while we ourselves were dealing with our own emotional response to what had happened. While we ourselves were shaken, we came back and we voted—yes, in a bipartisan way—to affirm an American Presidential election. Our democracy held, just barely.

Since then, we have seen a more clever, slower attempt to accomplish the same thing that those rioters tried to do on January 6, which is to subvert the will of the American people. We have seen it in State after State.

We have seen the worst rash of voter suppression laws that we have had in this country since the days of Jim Crow. In many ways, it is worse because it is not 1965, Mr. Speaker. It is 2022, and we should have made more progress by now. We shouldn't be having this conversation about whether or not certain Americans should be able to vote in our elections.

We have had this problem since the passage of the 15th Amendment, the idea that certain votes matter more than others, or that votes of certain people who live in certain places are inherently fraudulent, or that they don't know enough to be involved in an election.

I tell you what, I believe in the American people. I believe that they know that our democracy is what makes our country great. Our democracy is what allows us to have this thriving economy.

People are trying everything they can to get into this country still. They are not trying to join some of our autocratic opponents. They are not trying to break into Russia or China. They want to come to the United States. We are still a beacon of hope for the world.

When strongmen and autocrats worry about the United States, it is not just our military they worry about. It is our ideas. It is the idea of the United States. While that idea is under attack, I believe it is going to stand strong.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, to all of my constituents, to anyone who may be listening to this, the fight to protect the right to vote is far from over. The Senate may not have done its job yesterday, but I and my colleagues will not give up that fight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague, Congressman ALLRED, for his leadership in the fight to protect the fundamental right to vote and to save our ailing democracy. It has been an honor working with him, with Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL, and with Congressman JOHN SARBANES over the past year on the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the Freedom to Vote Act.

As you just heard, we are living through the worst assault on the right to vote since the Jim Crow era. And yesterday, on the Senate floor, white nationalists used the Jim Crow filibuster to block voting rights legislation.

But they did not win the contest for the soul of our Nation. I rise to affirm that we the people aren't giving up that easily. We never give up.

We the people didn't give up when, after we finally ended the scourge of slavery in this Nation, white nationalists fought back, violently unraveling Reconstruction, throwing duly elected

Black people out of office, and barring Black voters from the voting booth for generations. We responded by organizing.

Progress came in fits. It took us nearly a century, but progress came.

It came in the courtroom where Thurgood Marshall helped to end a century of legalized segregation.

It came on the streets, where the March on Washington and the Montgomery bus boycott produced meaningful social change.

Of course, it came in Congress where, after considerable pressure from the civil rights movement, this Chamber and the Senate passed the Voting Rights Act into law, and they overcame a filibuster to do it. Imagine that.

Mr. Speaker, like you, I was hoping against all hope that today's story would end the same way, with a majority of Senators doing the right thing.

To those of you watching at home, to the millions of you who put it all on the line to save our democracy, to see the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act become law, I feel your pain right now. But I do not despair. As Sherrilyn Ifill, the director-counsel of the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund, said recently: No story in the history of our quest for racial justice has ever ended with the words: ''And then they gave up.''

Our story, the story of building a true, multiracial democracy in the 21st century, is no exception. The fact is, progress is not always linear. It is messy. There are false starts. There are setbacks, like what happened last night. But the weight of history and the force of reason are on our side.

I grew up in the Baptist Church. To quote from the book of Jeremiah: Like a fire shut up in my bones, I know that goodness will prevail.

As the elders used to say: Trouble don't last always. Weeping may endureth for a night, but joy—joy—cometh in the morning.

Look at how far we have come already. Just a few years ago, democracy reform was a pipe dream embraced by only the most committed activists. But thanks to an overwhelming groundswell of energy, of movement building, of organizing, the Freedom To Vote: John R. Lewis Act passed the House, and it came just two votes short of passing the Senate.

We are not going anywhere. We are more energized than ever to see this through. We must pick up Senate seats this fall to make the filibuster an impossibility.

This is the fight of our lives, for our climate, for healthcare, our jobs, our dignity under the law, our future. We have no choice but to keep going.

I am reminded of the words of Dr. King in his 1966 speech in Kingstree, South Carolina:

''Let us march on ballot boxes, for this is the way we are going to straighten up . . . the Nation.

''Let us march on ballot boxes until somehow we will be able to develop that day when men will have food and material necessities for their bodies, freedom and dignity for their spirits, education and culture for their minds.

''Let us march on ballot boxes so that men and women will no longer walk the streets in search of jobs that do not exist.

''Let us march on ballot boxes until the empty stomachs . . . are filled.

''Let us march on ballot boxes until the idle industries of Appalachia are revitalized.

''Let us march on ballot boxes until 'brotherhood' is more than a meaningless word at the end of a prayer but the first order of business on every legislative agenda.

''Let us march on ballot boxes.''

Dr. King's words are as true today as they were nearly 60 years ago. But while our work must include the ballot box, we know that it also must go beyond it. We must envision the world as we want it, and we must do everything in our power to bring about that world.

Hold your elected officials accountable. Educate your friends, your family, your neighbors. Change their hearts and minds.

Mr. Speaker, unlike John Lewis and his generation, we are not called to risk our lives. We are merely called to exercise the rights that they helped to win: our votes and our voices.

Like those before us, let us march on.

□ 1245

REMEMBERING LANI GUINIER

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, as we grieve the demise of democracy legislation in the Senate last night, I rise in grief and in gratitude to honor my beloved teacher, the legendary Lani Guinier, who passed away earlier this month.

Lani Guinier's life defies summary. She began her career in the civil rights division at the Department of Justice. She led voting rights advocacy at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, often driving alone at night through hostile places, like from Selma to Mobile, Alabama, to win 31 of the 32 cases she argued. Due to her intellect and her sterling record of accomplishment, she was nominated to lead the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice. She would go on to become the first woman of color tenured at Harvard Law School.

But like many great civil rights leaders, Lani Guinier did not define herself by the power she held or the acclaim she received. She defined herself by the power she unleashed within her clients, her students, and the American people. Lani Guinier found her voice by helping others find theirs.

I am blessed that she helped me find my voice. So the day after the Senate tried to silence the voices of the American people, it feels fitting to honor her by speaking from the floor of the people's House.

I first met Professor Guinier when I was in college. I was taking a writing course, and with her characteristic generosity, she agreed to let me interview her. At the time, I wanted to be a civil rights lawyer like my friend, COLIN ALLRED. That warm evening, the Sun still glowing in the sky, she illuminated a different path forward for me. She revealed to me that civil rights advocacy was about so much more than litigation, as important as that is. It was also about leveraging the power of impacted communities to transform entire institutions. Without meaning to, she helped persuade me to become a legislator.

When I arrived at law school, Professor Guinier taught me more than I could ever have expected, not just everything I know about voting rights law, but also how to become the person I hoped to be.

As the first woman of color to be tenured at Harvard Law School, Professor Guinier showed us that being a first is not a privilege but a responsibility—a lesson that is not lost on me as one of the first openly gay Black Members of Congress.

Her scholarship sought to show that every voice belonged in our constitutional conversation. Not just John Marshall, but Thurgood Marshall. Not just lawyers like Constance Baker Motley, but activists like Fannie Lou Hamer. Not just the people whose names make the history books, but the seemingly ordinary people living lives of extraordinary service.

While most law professors obsess over jurisprudence—what judges do, say, and think—Professor Guinier opened our eyes to demosprudence, the law that emerges from and enhances the power of the people. She knew that justice is not the work of Justices alone.

At heart, Professor Guinier was a democratic idealist, a prophetic voice who called us to reconstruct our democratic institutions and reimagine our democratic identities. She cautioned us that winner-take-all elections risk converting political competition into mutually assured destruction, intensifying conflict and underrepresenting those already underrepresented.

She helped Congress reinvigorate section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, work the Supreme Court subverted last year in Brnovich v. DNC, and which I was proud to help restore by introducing the Inclusive Elections Act, which we passed in the House but, unfortunately, the Senate rejected last night through the filibuster.

After the Court demolished the Voting Rights Act's foundation in Shelby v. Holder in 2013, she urged Congress to not only repair the damage—as we did in the House, but as was blocked last night by the Jim Crow filibuster—but she also encouraged us to guarantee an affirmative right to vote. I have been honored to answer that call by introducing the Right to Vote Act, which also passed the House last week as part of the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act.

Beyond prescribing specific reforms and remedies, Professor Guinier urged

us to see that democracy was not a zero-sum war over the power to dominate but, rather, a delicate project of sharing power with one another as equals. ''Living in a democracy,'' she said, ''is not something we inherit. It is not something we inhabit, and it is not something that we consume. It is something we actively build together.''

Just as the Senate refused to heed the will of the people last night, the powerful did not always heed Professor Guinier. But she knew the power of dissent. Whether dissenters speak from the bench, from the lectern like this one, or from the streets, what seems like their weakness is really their strength. The powerful coerce us to do their bidding, but dissenters call us forward to freely do what is right.

I am heartbroken by Professor Guinier's passing. I miss her.

But Professor Guinier, even now, shows me that accepting myself as I am can help me to center the people I serve. She inspires me to protect and perfect our multiracial democracy. I once asked her how to advance that mission in today's times. She said, ''I think that is the question for your generation.'' With our democracy on the line, may we, the people, lift every voice to answer.

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for his words.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities against Members of the United States Senate.

MARCH FOR LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I will be brief, and I will speak at the end of the Special Order as well if there is time.

Mr. Speaker, in 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court abandoned women and babies to what is now the multibillion dollar abortion industry, and almost 63½ million unborn children have been killed, a staggering loss of children's lives that is more than the entire population of Italy.

Now, by at least affirming the constitutionality of the Mississippi law after 15 weeks, which we are all hoping and praying for, the Supreme Court may finally take a powerful step towards inclusion, respect, and justice for the weakest and most vulnerable nearly 50 years after the infamous findings of Roe v. Wade.

Tomorrow thousands will march for life here in the capital and across the country.

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS), who is a medical doctor, an anesthesiologist at Johns Hopkins, and co-chairman of the Pro-Life Caucus.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with the hope that after nearly 50 years, Roe v. Wade's attack on the most basic of human rights, the right to life, will soon meet its end.

Why are we going to be marching tomorrow? We do it because we believe that every person, born and unborn, deserves a chance at life. We march to shed light on the incredible resources available to expectant mothers who find themselves in desperate situations. We march to send a message that humanity cannot sit by and quietly tolerate the deliberate ending of human life.

Mr. Speaker, I am a physician, and I have helped thousands of women deliver their babies over the course of my career. When I underwent my training, I was taught that caring for expectant mothers meant caring for two patients, not one. As you can see here, advances in ultrasound technology have reinforced that training from decades ago. Mr. Speaker, these are not blobs of tissue we are talking about. These are human beings. The science is clear: From the moment of conception, new human life enters the world with its own unique DNA, and in a matter of weeks even a heartbeat.

Mr. Speaker, we march for an end to the human tragedy of abortion, and I pray each day that we come closer to this righteous conclusion.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH), co-chair of the Pro-Life Caucus.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my great friend, Mr. SMITH, and a great fighter for life for many years, and we appreciate all of his work on that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 49th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade tragedy and to remember the more than 60 million unborn lives it has taken and the tragic, irreversible mark it has left on countless mothers, fathers, and families.

Every innocent life is precious, from conception until natural death, but for nearly five decades abortion has remained one of the greatest tragedies of our Nation.

The Supreme Court now has the opportunity to right some of the terrible wrongs committed in this country against the unborn since Roe v. Wade. I pray for our Justices, that they make the right decision, for many lives will depend on it.

We will continue to fight for the lives of unborn children.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mrs. FISCHBACH for her powerful and eloquent witness for life, both in the legislature in Minnesota and now in the U.S. House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT). I would note that he is the prime author of two breakthrough laws. One is called the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act, which is law, and the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his long-time leadership in protecting innocent, unborn lives. He was here at the beginning. The fathers of the pro-life movement here in the United States Congress were CHRIS SMITH and Henry Hyde.

Speaking of Henry Hyde, we have had for a long time something called the Hyde amendment, which basically said U.S. tax dollars could not go to pay for abortions, but we have a radical pro-abortion group of people that control this Congress now. They think that tax dollars ought to go to pay for other people's abortions.

They also believe that not only should we pay for abortions here in the United States with the people's tax dollars, but they ought to pay for abortions across the globe, and that is a reversal of the Mexico City policy.

The Supreme Court is currently considering two cases that may fundamentally alter abortion in this country, and it is my hope, my sincere hope, that this Court will finally right a grievous past wrong and give the rights to the most vulnerable among us, the unborn, and protect lives in the future rather than what has happened in the slaughter of over 63 million of our fellow citizens.

I want to thank Mr. SMITH and all the other Members who will be speaking here today for their leadership on this vital, vital issue.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to just say how much I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for having this very, very valuable worthwhile Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the 63 million babies who have tragically been aborted since the Supreme Court's devastating decision in Roe v. Wade.

However, in the 49 years since that fatal decision, science has unmistakably proven that unborn babies can feel pain as early as 15 weeks. They even have a character. We can see it on sonograms.

But the left likes to ignore this fact. They seem to only value the type of science that supports their political agenda. It is time for the ''party of science'' to actually follow the science and to protect the unborn.

I will always fight for life. I am proud to be up here with my colleagues today standing up for these unborn, innocent, little human beings. I sincerely pray that the Supreme Court of the United States will make the just decision to overturn Roe v. Wade this very year.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN), my friend and colleague.

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here with my colleagues

who believe so fervently in doing the right thing because if you seek your wisdom from above, you will always do the right thing. I appreciate Mr. SMITH's leadership.

As we stand here remembering the 49th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, I want to remind my colleagues that standing for life—and I repeat, standing for life—has historically been a bipartisan effort. Example, the Hyde amendment, especially across Michigan's First District.

Since coming to Congress, I am proud to have stood shoulder to shoulder with my constituents as we collectively raise our voice, and our vote, for those who have neither.

□ 1300

The very first inalienable right described in the Declaration of Independence is the right to life.

As a Member of Congress I have always and will always continue to fight to correct that right for the born and the unborn.

Protecting life isn't an issue of division. In fact, it is one of unity.

We must all work together to enact better policies and build stronger communities that create a culture of life.

Together, we can create a Nation that honors life and upholds the self-evident truth that every life is precious and must be protected.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), a distinguished attorney before coming to Congress and number four in the line of leadership in the Republican Party.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his principal leadership on this issue for so many years. He is a great model to us all.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Pro-Life Caucus are happy to join the March for Life tomorrow here in the Nation's capital, but we are here today to acknowledge the tragic anniversary of Roe v. Wade.

As has been said, more than 63 million unborn children have been denied their right to life in the past 49 years since that tragic decision was handed down.

As we fight to protect the liberties of all Americans here in Congress, we have to remember to fight first for the most defenseless, and that is the child in the womb, who from the moment of conception is a unique human being with unique DNA.

In the coming months you are going to hear a lot of vague and euphemistic language from defenders of abortion. Do not be swayed. The truth is very simple, and it has never changed. Abortion takes a baby's life, a person made in God's image.

We hope, we pray, we believe that 2022 is the year the Supreme Court will finally recognize this truth once again.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE), a medical doctor. So many of our leaders in the pro-life effort both in this Congress and legislation across the country are medical doctors and healthcare professionals.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New Jersey, Mr. SMITH, for his leadership in this incredibly important issue. Year after year he has stood for the unborn. Personally I want to thank him for that leadership.

Mr. Speaker, in the 49 years since the case of Roe v. Wade was ruled on by the Supreme Court, 63 million innocent unborn children have lost their lives to abortion.

Now, members of the radical left are trying to raise the number of abortions performed in the United States by repealing the Hyde amendment, which for decades has ensured that no taxpayer dollars are used to fund this barbaric procedure.

As a doctor, I swore an oath to ''first, do no harm.''

When I was in medical school I swore that I would never perform, assist, or support an abortion procedure. As a medical student, as an intern, as a resident, and as a board certified physician for 25 years, I lived up to that pledge.

As a legislator in the United States Congress I took a pledge to continue to stand for life.

Now is the time for Congress to pass legislation that defends the rights of the unborn.

Now is the time for us to end abortions in this country.

On this 49th anniversary of Roe v. Wade let us remember the lives that have been lost and recommit ourselves to defending human life.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Thank you very much, doctor, for your leadership and eloquence.

I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT).

Mr. BURCHETT. We can all agree that it is wrong to murder a person, Mr. Speaker, or in other words to take someone's life. So my pro-abortion colleagues need to answer the simple question of when does a little baby girl's life start?

Does it start at 6 weeks when the baby girl's heart starts beating? Most pro-abortion advocates oppose the 6-week heartbeat laws, so they would not consider a heartbeat to be life. What about when a little baby girl can start to feel pain around the halfway point in pregnancy? Not a single House Democrat cosponsored legislation that would affect babies who can feel pain, so it seems they don't believe in life at the halfway point either.

What about at 21 weeks, Mr. Speaker, when the baby girl could potentially survive outside the womb thanks to lifesaving medical technology? It seems simple to say if she could live outside the womb, she must be alive inside the womb, as well. Yet most pro-abortion advocates still say we should be able to kill her without a second thought.

Many of my pro-abortion colleagues also believe we should be able to abort viable babies even up through birth. Why should abortion doctors be allowed to kill a baby who has developed organs, a beating heart, and even the ability to recognize the sound of their own mother's voice? There is no excuse for aborting babies at birth, but the pro-abortion movement believes this murder should be allowed anyway.

It is time my pro-abortion colleagues start following the science and realize those little babies are human, alive, and worthy of life.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SMITH for the incredible work he is doing. He may not get his rewards here, but I assure you he will in Heaven.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE).

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his leadership on this issue and for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, as we approach the 49th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in Roe v. Wade my colleagues and I come together to remember the more than 63 million children who have had their lives cut short in this country since 1973.

I stand here today for the sake of the women, for the sake of the children, and for the sake of the very future of our Nation.

Because of Roe v. Wade and the cases that followed its precedent, the right of the unborn to be born is denied throughout our Nation more than 2,000 times every single day, and in several States throughout all 9 months of pregnancy, which Roe permits.

This is a great stain on this great Nation.

We will not be silent here in Congress, nor will the hundreds of millions of pro-life Americans across this country.

My colleagues and I will continue to stand for life and fight to end the tragedy that is abortion.

We will remain steadfast supporters of life and serve as voices for the voiceless and defenders of the defenseless.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his strong statement.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER.)

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for taking the lead on such an important issue.

Mr. Speaker, on the 49th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, let's reflect on the importance of standing up for every human being's right to realize their full potential from the moment of conception.

In fact, Members of Congress have a solemn duty to defend those incapable of defending themselves, the most innocent among us, the unborn.

I will share a little bit of a personal story when my family chose life. This was when my son was 3 years old. He

was involved in an accident with a head injury, and he was on life support. And many times the doctors told us he wasn't going to survive. In fact, they said it is not an 80 percent chance, not a 95 percent chance, but it was a 100 percent chance that he was going to pass. We did not disconnect life support.

We chose life. We prayed. And Freddie started to recover.

Today Freddie is fully recovered, and though his accident was decades ago, this is an opportunity to learn about the value of human life.

Our creator has a plan for each one of us, and I will continue to support policies that ensure every life has the chance to realize its fullest potential.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for sharing that beautiful story about his son Freddie.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN), another good friend and colleague.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for all his great work on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 49th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in Roe v. Wade, a devastating decision that we have continued to remind you has killed 63 million children in this country.

Who do we trust on this issue? There it says: ''In God We Trust.'' So if that is the case, this is what God said to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:5: I knew you before I formed you in the womb. So what more evidence do we need?

This shouldn't be a political debate, but now my Democratic friends are taking it one step further by attempting to abolish the Hyde amendment, which prevents taxpayer money from funding abortions. The government should not be using hard-earned taxpayer money to kill innocent children.

However, I am optimistic that the fight for life will take a step in the right direction.

The Supreme Court is currently reviewing Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, a lawsuit challenging a Mississippi law that bans abortion after 15 weeks.

I pray that the judges will rule in favor of life.

As the father of four and the grandfather of 14, I believe that life is precious, and I will fight to protect that life.

I have taken an oath to fight for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and so has every Member of this body.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his comments.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. LESKO).

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, you wouldn't believe it, but as I was walking here today to speak about the value of life, my daughter called me, and she is headed to the hospital to give birth to my fifth grandchildren, my second granddaughter. So isn't this an appropriate depiction right here of my next granddaughter, who is going to be named Grace.

I used to be what they call pro-choice years ago. But I was lied to. You know, they said it was just a clump of cells, just some tissues, looked like a tadpole, nothing. But, you know, as technology has gotten better, we now have ultrasounds, and in our State of Arizona we passed legislation so that the mothers could see what their babies really look like. They have little hands, little fingers, little toes. They are humans. They are real people. They are not just a clump of cells. And that is why it is so disturbing to me that here in the U.S. Congress I don't think we have one of my Democratic colleagues left that is pro-life. I think they got rid of them in the primaries.

And when Republicans have come forward and asked the Speaker of the House, please, can we vote on a bill that requires medical help to be given to babies that are born alive in a botched abortion, she said ''no.'' What has this country come to when we don't even want to keep a baby alive after it is born?

My fellow Republicans and I are fighting hard for the value of life to protect the preborn, to protect every life. This is the most important thing that we can do.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her remarks and wish her congratulations.

I yield to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ROSENDALE).

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being a leading example on this charge for us.

Tomorrow will be a unique and significant day. Tomorrow many of us will take the unfortunately similar steps of a march that began in 1974. This March for Life however may be the last one before the stain of Roe v. Wade is lifted from this Nation.

However, even if we are so fortunate, the decision to continue this crime will likely remain in many of the States.

Sadly, millions of Americans have yet to awaken, awaken to the cruelty and the evil that is abortion. The reason for this slumber is no less devastating than the murder of 63 million children. It is the failure to recognize the inherent dignity of every life. This failure has justified the intentional killing of a living child, led to the many atrocities of the 21st century and this American tragedy. We, however, are not reconciled to continue this moral failing.

I often think about the abortionist who has woken up to the evil which he has been so complicit in. That moment when his heart converts, when he has been availed of the truth inherent in human life. He looks back at the trail of broken bodies that he has traveled.

But if we stop there at the horror and the tragedy, we would not have hope because we know that when he looks up he now sees those glorified souls looking down on him, singing in praise and rejoicing in his conversion.

□ 1315

There is renewal in our movement, and there is hope. There is the hopeful anticipation that everyone in every State will also see the obvious truth and the inherent beauty in the tiniest life.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for including me in this Special Order today.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), a good friend and colleague.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I may have a slightly different tone here. I was born in an unwed mother's home in downtown L.A., and so were all my siblings. In my late thirties, I got an email out of nowhere, and it said: Hi, David. I am a friend of your sister's. Here is your information. Here is your birth mother.

We had a family discussion. I sent a very carefully worded note, and a couple of weeks later, I got this phone call, this tiny voice crying—and I am crying now also on the phone. And she is saying: I go to mass almost every day. On your birthday, I am terrified. Are you having a good life? How has your world been?

And I am crying on the other side, basically saying: Look, I have had a great life. I got adopted by a family that brought me to Arizona. I get to live in the Phoenix area. I have a wonderful brother and sister, who were also born in the unwed mother's home.

It became an amazing experience. My mom, who is right here, and this is my birth mom right here, they became best of friends. I have never told this part of the story here, but my birth mom—both of them have now passed away—had an early type of Alzheimer's, a type of dementia. But my mom here had sent her all sorts of photos of me being a child. So when you go into the house that they had there in California, there would be my two 6' tall blonde half sisters and then pictures of me as a baby growing up.

In her mind, I was always there. I was always part of the family. The dear Lord does heal.

But one of her best friends at the funeral turned to me and said: David, did Mary Lynn ever tell you the story of when we were in the car on the way to Tijuana to go get an abortion?

As they got closer and closer to the border, she began to cry. Then they got closer, and she started to hyperventilate. Eventually, she became so crushed with fear and sadness and terror, the girls turned around and went back and talked to her mother. A few months later, I was born at that Holy Family Unwed Mothers Home.

Now I am this age, and I have an adopted little girl, who is the third generation adopted in our family.

For those of us who passionately care about life, I think it is important we also tell the stories of how grateful some of us are to be alive; the amazing life my little girl is having and how grateful I am to her birth mom for giving us the greatest gift my wife and I have ever had; and understanding that the ultimate definition of love is life. Maybe others out there can have the amazing experience I have had with meeting my birth family and my family and my siblings' birth families. It is just one amazing experience of joy of life.

That needs to be what, I think, we focus on. There is good here if we just change our hearts and our minds.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman so much for sharing that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. FULCHER), my good friend and colleague.

Mr. FULCHER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from New Jersey. It is an honor to join my colleagues here during this special week.

Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, I approached the podium for the first time to give my speech on the House floor. I chose my topic intentionally as it is an issue that I will always champion: protecting the lives of the unborn. There is no effort more worthy than supporting life. This issue defines our culture, our society, and our value system.

Every year, I am overwhelmed at the outpouring of effort, energy, and support that floods this cause. So thank you, and thank you to my colleagues in the House and Senate who join me in this fight. Thank you to the health practitioners working nonstop to provide resources to help new mothers choose life. Thanks to our advocates on the ground, from the airwaves to in-person, for continually showing your support. And thank you to our pastors and religious organizations for seeking divine guidance and strength in this effort.

I am inspired by you all and will keep doing everything I can to continue this fight to protect the unborn.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA), and I thank him for his leadership on his pending bill.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New Jersey for his years of unending work for the unborn. He has been so steadfast that, from the bottom of my heart, I thank him for all he has done.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the tragedy of abortion is the greatest human rights issue of our day. The right to life is the foundation upon which all other rights are built. The science is clear: Abortion ends a human life.

Studies have proven chemical abortion puts the life of the mother in great danger. In 2015, one in three women who took the abortion drug ended up in the emergency room within 30 days. Let me repeat that. One in three women who took the abortion drug ended up in the emergency room within 30 days.

Congress must do more to provide women and their unborn children with care and support. I am proud that my legislation, the SAVE Moms and Babies Act, would prevent the FDA from approving new abortion drugs and would stop these dangerous pills from being dispensed through telemedicine.

I would like to thank everyone in Washington, D.C., this week who is offering their unwavering dedication to defending the unborn despite a culture that often marginalizes pro-life values.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO), my friend and colleague and leader in the pro-life movement as well.

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for putting on this very, very Special Order so we can address a very serious issue that is plaguing our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, a standard of unparalleled violence against an innocent population in this country. The biggest casualty caused by Roe v. Wade are the 62 million children killed before they had a chance.

Our forefathers believed that every man, woman, and child has a God-given right to life. Our Constitution makes no caveat for only those who can walk, talk, and speak.

Because of my children and my faith, protecting life is a very personal responsibility to me. As a Catholic, I can testify how faith encourages strength of character, urges truthfulness, and prioritizes the sanctity of life.

The sad truth is that you will find many of the politicians claiming to be religious actively rejecting each of these faith-founded principles. The most basic way to exercise faith is by adhering to the Ten Commandants, including thou shalt not kill.

I appreciate all of my friends and colleagues in Congress who are standing up and speaking up for those who cannot today. I am grateful to know that there are Americans who will speak and fight alongside me on behalf of millions of unborn babies who cannot defend themselves.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I have always felt the 1960s was where America went off the rails. Of course, Roe v. Wade wasn't decided in exactly the 1960s, but the 1960s really, I think, began with the assassination of President Kennedy. You would say the end of that disastrous decade was January 22, 1973, where the Supreme Court decided that abortion was legal in the United States of America. Just a disaster.

Since then, 63 million unborn children have died in every State. Ten years before that, abortion would have been considered illegal. All churches would have been appalled by it, and all Americans knew it was just a horrible thing. But then, in an example of out-of-control judiciary, probably the most extreme example in our country, the U.S. Supreme Court came in and began a reign in which 63 million unborn children have lost their lives.

The U.S. is one of seven countries where late-term abortions are illegal. We stand with Vietnam, North Korea, Red China, together with Singapore, Canada, and the Netherlands. We are one of the few countries in the world, after all God has given us, that we decide to step up and say it is appropriate to kill a child right up to birth.

In any event, today, we mourn the anniversary of Roe v. Wade. We look forward to leaving this Chamber and marching in the March for Life, as we hope that this is finally—given that there is an important Supreme Court decision coming down—finally the end, or the beginning of the end, of this ongoing slaughter of the innocent in the United States.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for reminding us that the Chinese Communist Party and North Korea both have policies like ours, especially as it relates to up-to-birth abortions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for being a stalwart leader on this ever since I have been involved in this. I appreciate him for being courageous and strong on defending life.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, in the 49 years since the Supreme Court codified Roe v. Wade, the science behind pregnancy and its diagnosis, so to speak, has advanced exponentially. We know this year the Supreme Court will rule on a case called Dobbs v. Jackson to decide on limiting abortion access to 15 weeks of pregnancy.

As if there has been any doubt, really, of what a pregnancy means commonsense-wise, that it is a child developing—not a blob, a tissue mass, a clump of cells, or a baby giraffe. No, it is a human being.

Medical advancements like ultrasounds since that decision 49 years ago, prenatal surgeries, all these have shown the humanity of the unborn, which points to the value of life from the moment of conception, from that flash of light.

By 15 weeks in the womb, babies have fully developed hearts, can taste, can make facial expressions, and can feel pain. With today's medical advancements, a baby can survive outside the womb, incredibly, at 22 weeks and, in

some cases, even earlier with aggressive care and maybe a little bit of luck and God's blessing.

Roe v. Wade allows a baby to be born as late as 28 weeks. At 28 weeks, a baby is a living, breathing, developed person with thoughts and a future. We need revisions to Roe v. Wade. The future of our Nation, its morality, its outlook, it depends on it. Abortion is a gruesome act that destroys families, harms women's health, mentally and physically, and takes the life of the innocent.

I will always fight for the unborn, the sanctity of life, and our traditional family values this country is founded upon. It is truly a cornerstone, and it is abhorrent that lives like this can be taken needlessly when we have so many remedies.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership all these many years.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. VAN DUYNE).

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this weekend, tens of thousands of men and women will fill the streets of our Capital to march for the lives of the unborn and to advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable Americans.

These men and women are advocating for an end to abortion, but they are not just seeking policy solutions. I know many of the devoted participants in the March for Life and about all the work they do in our communities to make sure that no woman ever feels alone or that abortion is her only option.

□ 1330

They staff pregnancy centers, host diaper drives, provide information on adoptions, and organize childcare for young mothers. They are doing the work of making their cities and neighborhoods a place where no one is alone and there is a support system for every mother. There is sensitive and compassionate help available to those facing an unwanted pregnancy.

Mr. Speaker, as we march for life this weekend, we march for a greater future for all of us, one that values the unborn and sees the potential in every life. I am proud to support, champion, and stand with these efforts.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I now yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER), who is also a pharmacist.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, my belief in God and my Christian faith, they are the catalyst for every decision I make. Remarkable Americans from across the country are gathering this week in Washington, D.C., to advocate for the protection of unborn children.

Written into the Declaration of Independence is our founding faith and principle that we are all created by God, created equally, endowed by our creator with the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. However, since the infamous Supreme Court decision of Roe v. Wade some 49 years ago, we have fallen short of that national edict by not acknowledging that life at every stage is precious, valuable, sacred, and should be protected.

To the many Americans marching in person this week and supporting the pro-life movement through other means, I want to say thank you for your dedication to this most worthy cause and know that you are not alone in this fight. As you continue to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves, remember that my pro-life colleagues and I stand with you.

Mr. Speaker, I promise to use this platform right here in Congress and beyond to continue my vocal and unapologetic advocacy for unborn children. I will not stop fighting until our laws and policies protect life at every stage. I hope you won't either.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT), a friend and colleague for several decades.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize my colleagues this solemn day. It is the day we commemorate the anniversary of Roe v. Wade. I have said it before and continue to say, as I have many times, I am pro-life. I am pro-family. I am pro-child. I join my colleagues and constituents in Alabama's Fourth Congressional District in remembering the, literally, millions of babies that have been aborted since that 1973 decision.

Mr. Speaker, this year we are possibly on the brink of a transformational moment in our history, a moment of hope that we really haven't had for many, many years, the reversal of or major changes to Roe v. Wade.

As most of us know, in June of this year we expect the U.S. Supreme Court to hand down a decision on the Dobbs v. Jackson case. In deciding this case, the Supreme Court has the opportunity to protect the lives of unborn children after the 15-week mark of pregnancy.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all have to be clear. Even if the Supreme Court upholds the Mississippi law as it is written, abortion will not be banned nationwide. It simply gives the power back to the States. For me, my pro-life stance is deeply rooted in my Christian faith. Just as important, my opposition to abortion is about doing what is right. It is about protecting unborn babies. It is about not trying to impose my faith on anyone else.

Mr. Speaker, that is because it is also rooted in science. Like much of science, our scope of knowledge on the development of unborn babies has advanced farther than what we knew back in 1973. It is time for our laws to catch up.

At 15 weeks, an unborn baby has a heartbeat. It can open and close its fingers and hands. It can taste. It can even feel pain. No argument in favor of abortion can overcome one unchanging fact, and that is abortion stops a beating heart.

Given developments of unborn babies at 15 weeks, abortions after this timeframe often involve gruesome medical procedures that are dangerous for mothers and undoubtedly painful to the baby.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues, as we look forward, as we return back to our States, and as this issue is hopefully turned over into the hands of the States, we can make groundbreaking steps in saving the lives of the unborn.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I now yield to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN).

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my reasoning for voting to protect unborn American citizens. I believe that life begins at conception which is why I support adoptions, foster care, and crisis pregnancy centers that work tirelessly to care for mothers and babies.

Kansans are leading the way in protecting the right to life by placing the Value Them Both amendment on the ballot, this year's response to the Kansas Supreme Court's unthinkable ruling that abortion is a constitutional right. For my part, I have cosponsored pro-life legislation including H.R. 18, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, permanently prohibiting Federal funding for abortions and abortion services. I have introduced my own H.R. 714 which would require the executive branch to notify Congress and the American public before issuing any new executive order pertaining to pro-life provisions.

Mr. Speaker, abortion has desensitized our Nation. I pray we wake up soon and repent for the horrors we have visited upon America's most vulnerable, the unborn. Imagine what this country would look like economically, culturally, socially, and spiritually if abortion hadn't wiped out an entire generation of Americans, 63.4 million people over the last 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, I say thank you to all of you who have joined together in this fight. Thank you for using your voices to defend the voiceless.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I now recognize the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON). As I said before, there are doctors who are outspoken in their defense of life, Dr. Thompson is one of those.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during this Special Order to reaffirm my commitment to protect and defend the sanctity of life.

From the moment I stepped foot into this Chamber in 2009, I submitted my promise to protect our most vulnerable, the unborn. In this Congress I have cosponsored 11 bills and signed on to eight letters relating to pro-life policies.

Our Founders enshrined in the Declaration of Independence three unalienable rights. The first is the right to life. Sadly, from the moment of the Roe v. Wade decision, the basic

right to life has been denied to more than 60 million unborn children. We don't know what those children would have grown up to do. Perhaps they would have cured cancer, found a solution to Alzheimer's. The possibilities are endless with the loss of those lives.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today with so many of my colleagues. We know that there is hope on the horizon. The life movement is strong, and I look forward to continuing to advocate on behalf of pro-life policies. It is my hope that one day those unalienable rights will extend to all Americans born and unborn. It is my prayer that this will be the last march for life with Roe v. Wade being the law of the land. When we march next year, it will be in celebration for what we have accomplished for the protection of the unborn.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. FITZGERALD), a good friend and colleague.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in defense of life.

This Saturday, as many of the previous speakers had alluded to, is the 49th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. As such, it is a fitting time to talk about this administration's radical anti-life policies for which some of us were caught off guard when President Biden was running for the Presidency.

Over the past year we have watched President Biden and the Democrats continually push what I would consider an anti-life full agenda. First, they gutted the Hyde amendment, a longstanding provision of appropriations bills that prevents taxpayer funding for abortions and has saved an estimated 2 million lives.

Then the Biden Administration's Department of Health and Human Services changed the rules to essentially require healthcare providers to perform abortions, despite any moral objections they may have.

Finally, my Democrat colleagues passed a radical bill that removes existing limits on abortion and allows abortions on demand, no matter the age of the fetus.

Mr. Speaker, I will always push back on their anti-life stances with a clear and strong message of full opposition. I believe that every human life is precious and should be protected at every stage. Throughout my career, I have always stood for life. I will continue to fight against this administration's anti-life policies.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today, after decades of noble struggle and sacrifice, pro-life Americans are hopeful that government-sanctioned violence against children and the exploitation of women by abortion may be nearing an end, although in a very real way the struggle to defend innocent human life now enters a critically important new phase.

Because of the Dobbs case, because the Supreme Court has finally seemingly accepted a relook at Roe v. Wade and subsequent decisions, the Federal Government and the States-based suit have new authority to protect the weakest and the most vulnerable among us. Protection for unborn children is at a tipping point. In 2022, the Supreme Court can begin dismantling the culture of death that it has imposed on America.

Mr. Speaker, for decades and right up to this very moment, abortion supporters have gone through extraordinary lengths to ignore, to trivialize, and to cover up the battered baby victim. With stolid resolve, they defend the indefensible.

Why does dismembering a child with sharp knives, pulverizing a child with powerful suction devices, chemically poisoning a baby with any number of toxic chemicals—one method euphemistically called medical abortion—why does all of this fail to elicit so much as a scintilla of empathy, mercy, or compassion from the so-called pro-choice crowd?

Have the physical and emotional consequences of women been underreported? You bet they have. I have been in the pro-life movement for almost 50 years. Both my wife, Marie, and I do work with a lot of women who have had abortions. They tell us stories of agony that, just like the fact of the unborn child's worth and dignity, has been trivialized by the other side of this issue.

Mr. Speaker, why are children born alive during some late-term abortions not given the same standard of care and respect as premature infants born at that very same age? They are left to die, or they are just killed after they are born.

President Biden understands the gruesome reality of abortion and this injustice. At least he once did. As Senator Biden wrote to constituents in explaining his support for the Hyde amendment, for example, prohibiting taxpayer funding for elective abortions, he said it would protect both the woman and her unborn child. He stated at the time he had consistently, on no fewer than 50 occasions, voted against Federal funding of abortions. Further, those of us who are opposed to abortion should not be compelled to pay for them.

Today, the President has weaponized the entire Federal bureaucracy to aggressively promote abortion on demand at home and overseas, including full court press to force taxpayers to fund abortions on demand including the repeal of the Hyde amendment.

Last September, the House passed a bill, the abortion on demand until birth act. Of course, it had a different name that just cloaked the misery that it would impose. That bill would not only codify late-term abortions, it would also nullify nearly every modest pro-life restriction ever enacted by the States including a woman's right to know laws in 35 states, parental involvement statutes in 37 states, pain-capable unborn child protection laws in 19 states, sex-election abortion bans in almost a dozen states and waiting periods in 26 states. By his words and his deeds, the President has become the abortion President. I think he wants to own that.

Mr. Speaker, this all comes at a time when ultrasound imaging has made unborn babies more visible, with a greater clarity than ever before. Breakthrough research has now found that unborn children can feel pain at a gestational age of 15 weeks and maybe earlier.

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Today modern medicine treats an ever-increasing number of unborn children with disability and disease as patients in need of diagnosis and life-enhancing treatments before birth. Unborn babies are society's youngest patients and deserve protection, not death by abortion. Science informs us that birth is merely an event—albeit a very important one—in the life of the child. It is not the beginning of his or her life.

As most people know, after the ultrasound the grandparents, the parents, and the friends get pictures of the child in utero. The ultrasound pictures are the first baby pictures that are now plastered on all of our refrigerators in great expectation for that event called birth.

The right to life is the first human right, and it must be guaranteed to everyone regardless of race, age, sex, disability, stage of development, or condition of dependency. Life is not just for the planned, the privileged, or the perfect.

We need to protect these innocent children.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LET'S HAVE A DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleagues who have been down here on the floor of the House of Representatives for the most part of the last hour talking about the importance of defending life, those infamous—or famous or important words, I should say, in the Declaration of Independence: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Nothing can be more important than this body focusing on defending life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and my colleagues' focus on life, as we sit here now 49 years removed from a Supreme Court decision taking out of the hands of the people and putting it into the hands of unelected judges' decisions, about the beginning of life, when life begins, the important reality of a people defending life.

What is controversial about defending life?

It is a question for this body.

What is controversial about defending life when we talk about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and when we talk about living on this Earth while God gives us the precious time we have here?

What are we going to do with that time?

Are we going to live free?

Are we going to be able to pursue happiness?

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness: one might wonder here now 1 year into the current administration, the Biden administration, whether the average American would say that he or she is free to pursue happiness.

Are we free?

Are we free to pursue happiness when, in fact, just a few miles away—and, frankly, a few thousand feet—from this Chamber where we are right now, restaurants are being chastised and pursued by the Government of the District of Columbia representing this area that forms our Nation's Capitol because those restaurants may not believe that it is in their interest or the interest of the people whom they serve to be checking papers and to be checking so-called vaccine passports or vaccine passes?

One restaurant in particular over on H Street—which was one of the early restaurants on H Street as it was revitalizing—has been fined, berated, and harassed by the Government of the District of Columbia for wanting its doors to be open and not wanting to harass its patrons. They want them to use their own free will to make a decision about what is in their interest. They don't want to live in a republic where you are forced to show papers to walk about and to engage in society, to freely move about and engage in commerce.

The very heart of the kinds of ideas that the Founders meant and what Jefferson meant when he penned pursuit of happiness is that we not allow a government through tyrannical policies to interfere with our pursuit of happiness: our ability to go have a business, our ability to go out and take care of our family, our ability to move about and to engage in commerce, our ability to create wealth and opportunity for our children and our grandchildren, to be able to get healthcare, and to be able to be secure in our possessions, secure in our belongings, and secure in our own homes.

I would ask this question: Is the United States more secure than it was 1 year ago?

Is the United States stronger economically than it was 1 year ago?

Is the United States stronger on the world stage?

Are we safer from our enemies than we were 1 year ago?

Is our border secure?

Are we able to afford energy and have reliable energy to heat our homes, fuel our cars, provide jobs, and keep us warm in the winter and cool in the summer?

Are we able to do that better more than 1 year ago?

The answer very clearly to all of those questions is a resounding ''no.''

Do you think it is an accident that I just spent 2 hours in a hearing in the Judiciary Committee bemoaning the United States Senate for holding the line on the filibuster which Democrats and this President wanted to throw over the wall in the name of voting rights because nobody can oppose something called voting rights?

They put up those words, they call it the Voting Rights Act, and they name it after people we serve with in the Chamber to provide maximum guilt if you dare stand up and say, Mr. Speaker, that the people in the States ought to be able to decide how to ensure that the elections of the people who represent them are secure; that you dare to have a voter ID favored by 80 percent of the American people.

But yet let's go back to what I just said: I have to have an ID just to walk in and buy a hamburger in the Nation's Capitol, but I cannot have an ID to vote. No. No. No. That is Jim Crow 2.0 I am told by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

I actually had colleagues on the committee today walking through the horrors of the poll tax—the jelly bean counting and all of the obstructions put into place for voting in the 1950s and 1960s that the Voting Rights Act nobly pursued to correct—and then tried to compare that to voter identification.

They tried to compare that to wanting to make sure that mail-in ballots aren't abused by anybody in any party, even though, by the way, those bastions of crazy conservatism, Jimmy Carter and James Baker, came out in a report over a decade ago that The New York Times quoted saying precisely that mail-in ballots are the area where you have the most fraud.

Now, all of us want to have integrity and belief in our elections. But our Democratic colleagues want to use that issue to divide us, as President Biden literally admitted yesterday. In his 1-hour marathon wandering, meandering press conference, he literally said that he could not say whether the elections will be legitimate this fall unless—unless—we embrace the legislation that he says must get passed and that we must set aside the traditions of the Senate to jam it through. And all of it, very clearly, is to set the stage for a lack of faith and belief in the elections that are coming this November.

Again I ask: Is America stronger or weaker?

Is it richer or poorer? More secure or less safe?

We know the answer, and that is why my colleagues on the other side of the aisle wish not to talk about those issues. We don't want to have a debate about crime on the floor.

Do any of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to come down to the floor right now and have a debate about crime in the United States?

Do they?

Do you think a 50 percent increase in crime in Austin, a 50 percent increase in crime in San Antonio, a 19-year-old woman shot in a Burger King in New York City, a 24-year-old student murdered walking the streets of Los Angeles, train robberies in 21st century America with litter all over the tracks in Los Angeles, is an accident?

Or could it be that radical leftists who are funded to take over the district attorneys' offices in cities across America and radical city councils like the Austin City Council and leftists in this Chamber believe that letting criminals out on the streets and believe in not prosecuting people is going to make our country safer?

It is empirically and obviously untrue.

The American people see it. And I promise you, Mr. Speaker, take this bet: We will not have a debate on the floor of this body about crime while I am here this year. It will not happen. My Democratic colleagues would not dare have a debate about crime because they would get absolutely decimated.

They sure as heck do not want to have a debate about the border.

Do you want to talk about 2 million apprehensions?

Do you want to talk about 1 million people released?

Do you want to talk about dead Texans?

Do you want to talk about fentanyl pouring into our communities, 100,000 dead Americans, opioid poisonings of our youth, and kids taking Xanax and dying because cartels are flooding into our country while China drives them right up through Mexico?

Not a person in this Chamber on the other side of the aisle wants to come to the floor and have an adult debate about why our country is much less secure and much more endangered at the hands of the cartels and of people making money trafficking in human beings and undermining our security and safety in the United States of America.

I promise you, Mr. Speaker, Joe Biden and the NANCY PELOSI Democrats have no interest in having a debate about the border because it is an embarrassment and it is a travesty.

Ranches are getting overrun, people are dying, bullets are being fired across at our own Border Patrol, the National Guard is having to fire at cars coming across the border, livestock is getting out, bodies are stacking up in body trailers in Brooks County, Texas, and cartels are making hundreds of millions of dollars on a daily basis driving fentanyl into our kids' communities and schools.

No, no, no. We do not want to have a debate about the state of our border.

Do we want to have a debate about the state of healthcare mandates?

No. No. This body has no debate but embraces rules. We must wear masks, they say. For a year and a half we have

been excoriated—even fined—if you don't wear a mask the floor of the House of Representatives—masks which are very clearly proven—fabric masks—to have no real discernible benefit over the last year and a half of the mandates that say you must wear a face covering.

They said: Well, are we going to mandate N95s?

Are we going to have to wear N95s on the floor?

Do they want to talk about the negative effects in the study that wearing N95s for a prolonged period of time, what that does for people's health and well-being, breathing carbon dioxide, minimizing your cognitive ability if you wear N95s for a long time?

Some people might joke: Would it make any difference on the floor of the House if you minimized the cognitive ability of the Members of the House? You could argue that it may not make any difference whatsoever. I am looking in the mirror myself.

We do not want to have a debate on the floor of the House on anything, by the way, much less the reality of what has been happening with respect to this virus and our response to it; and what Anthony Fauci engaged in with respect to the reality of the truth of funding gain-of-function research knowing full well the dangers, working to cover that up and hide from the American people how this virus came about; not wanting to pursue the truth on that, not wanting to pursue the truth or conduct studies on natural immunity.

We have study after study after study coming out right now. I could pull out on my phone and pull up study after study now finally demonstrating and showing how natural immunity is more powerful than vaccinations, and people don't want to be able to have that honest conversation.

□ 1400

An adult leadership would have done like the Nation of Japan saying: We believe that vaccines are effective for a large group of people. We believe that there are some risks. You are adults. We won't mandate. You decide.

We can't do that in the supposed land of the free? We sit up here and we stare at that American flag and we talk about the Senate being the greatest deliberative body. They don't really debate. This being the people's House, the people's Chamber, when was the last time the Speaker heard a robust debate on the floor of the House with multiple Members?

When was the last time we offered an amendment on the floor of the House in open debate that wasn't predetermined by all of the Rules Committee overlords who govern our lives? Democrat and Republican, I do want to say.

Mr. Speaker, it has been 6 years since we have had an amendment offered on the floor of the House in open debate. Do you want to know why we can't do anything in this Chamber? Because we don't ever debate. We don't ever actually have a discussion, throw things out there and then vote. Maybe, just maybe, we come to some bipartisan agreement.

I am happy to work with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. DEAN PHILLIPS and I worked on the PPP Flexibility Act. ABIGAIL SPANBERGER and I have introduced legislation called the TRUST Act to deal with stock trading believing that might help improve people's faith and confidence in this body. I have introduced numerous bills and passed numerous bills with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. That is not what this is about.

It is about a broken body refusing to actually debate, refusing to actually engage, refusing to offer amendments. Both sides do it. That needs to end.

The last point that I will make on that point, if you want this body to function again, you have to stop spending money we don't have. If you keep writing blank checks, how on Earth is there a check against the wisdom of the policy? You just keep writing a check to keep doing the same thing or to do something different. You can't run a business that way. You can't run a home that way. You can't run a church that way. You can't run a legitimate school that way. But no, no, we just keep writing checks to fund the expansion of government, to fund the creation of programs no matter who is in power.

Over the last year, we have seen what that causes when it is then left in the hands of an administration that literally does not care about the rule of law.

To be very clear, this administration is ignoring the rule of law, ignoring their oath, ignoring their duty to enforce the laws of the United States, ignoring their duty to secure the border, ignoring their duty to stand up in defense of the men and women in blue, to follow the laws around the United States, ignoring their oath to stand up and defend the United States against our foreign enemies; hold the line against Russia; push back on Russia; sanction them; hold the line on Nord Stream 2; stand alongside Ukraine; push back on China; stop appeasing them.

Don't leave $85 billion sitting there in the hands of terrorists when we walk away and abandon our duty and leave those men and women in the field, and then have 13 dead marines to show for it.

That is the legacy of the first year of this administration. But will President Biden, when he strolls to that podium on March 1 for his so-called State of the Union, and we are all spread out, and all wearing masks, and doing whatever the heck we are going to do—not actually doing the people's business—will he address any of those issues?

Will he talk about border security? Will he talk about how we are weaker around the world? Will he talk about the crime on the streets of Los Angeles, New York, Austin, San Antonio, and Chicago?

Will he talk about the businesses getting crippled by mask mandates and health mandates?

Will he talk about the children who are now having mental health issues, the people who are sick; the diseases that weren't dealt with, all to push a vaccine mandate that goes contrary to the pursuit of happiness and our right as Americans to live free?

Will he talk about any of those things? Will he talk about the fact that the United States of America is sitting on one of the world's largest reservoirs of energy and, yet, we are wondering even in Texas whether you can have the lights on because we built no nuclear power plants.

We slowed down our production of clean burning natural gas, all chasing unicorn energy policies of wind and solar as if they can possibly, possibly power the world at the level that is needed for the proper amount of human flourishing while 3 billion people around this planet do not have access to abundant energy and power.

Will the President of the United States come down here and talk about that or will he get up there and just talk about: Well, we are going to be net zero in our carbon production by 2035, or 2050, or make up some totally arbitrary number without regard at all to what that does to the price of energy and the availability and abundance of energy.

All of this has real-life consequences for Americans. People die. Houses get cold. People can't get access to energy. They can't afford energy. They lose jobs. You have stagnation and then you have the brilliance of this administration and the brilliance of those in the media starting to talk about energy and food price control because, of course, that is what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will resort to.

They will sit there and bemoan markets when they don't let the markets work. Healthcare markets never work. We haven't had a healthcare market in decades. It is an absolute lie; and I am looking at you Big Healthcare. I am looking at you Big Pharma. I am looking at you hospitals. I am looking at you Big Insurance. You made out like bandits after ObamaCare. You minted money. And probably three-quarters of the people in this Chamber fattened their wallets and their portfolios riding the back of all of that Big Healthcare enrichment, all at the expense of poor Americans around this country trying to get access to a doctor without having to call some bureaucrat in the government, the VA, or an insurance company, or however it may be, but it sure as heck isn't their doctor.

We don't have health freedom in this country. We have mandated Big Healthcare, Big Government, Big Insurance, bureaucracy. And everybody knows it. Everybody knows it because you all had to deal with it. You have

had to call somebody. You had to call some kid sitting in Omaha in some phone bank telling you which doctor you can go to 2,000 miles away. That is the truth, and we all know it. We sit in here, we roll in here and we say: Let's spend more money and create a government program. Let's spend more money we don't have.

Not one person in this body will come down here and truly debate any of these truths when you are $30 trillion in debt; when you are funding the very FBI going after parents for daring to stand up and defend their children in a school board meeting; when you are funding the Department of Homeland Security that is literally lying to the American people saying our border is secure while hundreds of thousands of people come across.

You want to know what happened in that synagogue? Because we don't have a dang clue who is coming to the United States, and this administration doesn't care. They don't care. They don't care what list they are on. They don't care whether they pose a danger to the United States of America. They don't care at all who is coming into this country. And they sure as heck don't care what is happening to the people of Texas, Arizona, or, frankly, everybody around this country who is having to bear the cost, who is having to bear the burden of what wide-open borders means to the United States of America.

Complain about Mayorkas? We should impeach him for failing to faithfully execute the laws of the United States of America, endangering Americans in the process, ignoring the laws of the United States. And that is what is happening. That is what is happening.

America is poorer, sicker, and less safe a year into the Biden administration, and that is the truth. Our enemies know it. That is why Russia is going after Ukraine. That is why China is rattling on a daily basis. That is why Russia, China, and Iran are talking about joint exercises. That is why the cartels are emboldened. That is why there are people marching through Mexico from all over the world coming to our southern border. That is why there are people on the streets breaking into businesses, assaulting people on the streets and killing them, raping them. It is happening every single day in the United States of America with reckless abandon while Democrats in district attorney's offices, Democrats in the House of Representatives, Democrats in this administration do nothing about it and do not care that the American people are left holding the bag.

Then they want to talk about taking away our Second Amendment rights and our ability to defend ourselves. Well, that crap ain't going to happen because we are going to defend ourselves in the land of the free. We are going to stand up and defend our communities and defend our families. We are going to stand up in defense of the Constitution and limited government and freedom to be able to protect our families and protect our States when this administration is letting this country burn.

It dares to do an hour-long press conference, lecturing the people for wanting to make sure their elections are secure, for daring to say that we should have voter identification when that same administration is ordering vaccine mandates that are causing healthcare workers to lose their jobs; causing healthcare workers in long-term health facilities to be unable to carry out their jobs.

And then there is the talk about, oh, the burden on hospitals. Well, you just caused 20 percent of nurses to have to leave because you were mandating they take a jab for something that is a year old that Pfizer is making billions of dollars on. Then we won't even have a hearing about why on Earth we are having this virus in the first place, because of what Anthony Fauci knew and what NIH was up to and what China was up to.

We won't have a hearing about natural immunity. We won't have a hearing about the dangers and levels of dangers of the vaccines, what they may be. Again, my polio-stricken father who is 79 has been vaccinated. I refuse to say whether I have been vaccinated. I think it is a principle for Americans that they shouldn't have to say.

My point is, there are people for whom the vaccine makes sense. There are people for whom the vaccine does not make sense. Mandating a jab in a 5-year-old is irresponsible and it is dangerous. We should have that conversation instead of blindly walking around preaching what other people should stick in their dang arm.

But that is what we do in the people's House. I am sitting here in an empty Chamber—with the Speaker, respectfully—and that is it. They are all jetfumed out, leaving town. Oh, we shut down earlier. Let's get out of here. Or they are out at some fundraiser or something.

Let's have a debate on these issues. Let's seek the truth. I don't know all of the truth on all of those issues. I don't know the specific risks. I have read a lot about what is going on with the vaccines, positive and negative. But it is becoming very, very clear that it doesn't do squat to stop the spread. So you are left basically saying: Well, it is better for you so that you don't die in the hospital.

Well, let's look at the data on that. But why don't we just present the information and let the American people decide? Japan's vaccine rate is a lot higher than ours and ours has mandates. All they did was say: We think it is good. There are some risks. You decide. We can't do that in America?

We can't just go down to the border and say: You know what, it is better for migrants, better for Texans and all Americans, bad for cartels, bad for China, if we secure our border. That is the truth. Talk to the migrants getting abused. Talk to the people in south Texas. Go to Laredo and Webb County. Sit down with the Brown people in Laredo who will say: We are pretty ticked off with this administration about how they are handling the border.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle might be up for a rude awakening pretty soon about their expectations of what voters are voting for them and what voters are not because there are a lot of people in this country that are sick and tired of the elite in this town, immersed in the swamp, promoting Big Healthcare, promoting Big Tech, promoting Big Government, minimizing the rights and the abilities of Americans to live their lives the way they see fit.

That is our calling as we head to 2026, our 250th birthday of the United States of America, which comes up in 4-and-a-half years. Will we be able to say that we live in the land of the free? Will we be able to say that we are pursuing happiness; that we are the country of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

We will only be able to do that if we stand up and secure our Nation's sovereignty, defend our streets, protect our families, stand up to enemies around the world, and limit this body to the job that it was given in the Constitution: limit our spending to the dollars that we have and responsibly lead this country and represent the people so that this country can, in fact, be great in our agreements and our disagreements in a Federalist Republic where we are able to live free.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced her signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 452.—An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 2959.—An act to provide that, due to the disruptions caused by COVID–19, applications for impact aid funding for fiscal year 2023 may use certain data submitted in the fiscal year 2022 application.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(b) of House Resolution 188, the House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon (at 2 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, January 21, 2022, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC–3223. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; North Carolina: Mecklenburg General Provisions [EPA-R04-OAR-2020-0705; FRL-9235-02-R4] received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3224. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Minor Revisions to Cotton Ginning Operations Rule [EPA-R04-OAR-2021-0430; FRL-9060-02-R4] received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3225. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — State of New Mexico Underground Injection Control Program; Primacy Revisions [EPA-HQ-OW-2020-0154; FRL-7998-02-OW] received January 12 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3226. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Clean Air Act Section 112 List of Hazardous Air Pollutant: Amendments to the List of Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAP) [EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0471; FRL-5562-08-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS26) received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3227. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final action — Findings of Failure to Submit State Implementation Plan Revisions in Response to the 2015 Findings of Substantial Inadequacy and SIP Calls to Amend Provisions Applying to Excess Emissions During Periods of Startup, Shutdown, and Malfunction [EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0862; FRL-9250-01-OAR] received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3228. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Trifloxystrobin; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2020-0038; FRL-9086-01-OCSPP] received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3229. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Limited Approval and Limited Disapproval of California Air Quality Implementation Plan Revisions; Amador Air District; Stationary Source Permits [EPA-R09-OAR-2021-0438; FRL-8773-02-R9] received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3230. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Redesignation of the Rhinelander Sulfur Dioxide Nonattainment Area [EPA-R05-OAR-2021-0540; FRL-9201-02-R5] received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–3231. A letter from the Senior Bureau Official, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 21-033, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 40(g)(2) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–3232. A letter from the Director, Office of Financial Reporting and Policy, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's FY 2021 Agency Financial Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC–3233. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment [FRL-5906.6-01-OECA] received January 12, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–3234. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Regulations Officer, Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Indefinite Delivery and Indefinite Quantity Contracts for Federal-Aid Construction [FHWA Docket No.: FHWA-2018-0017] (RIN: 2125-AF83) received January 18, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–3235. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Regulations Officer, FHWA, Office of Chief Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Program for Eliminating Duplication of Environmental Review [Docket No.: FHWA-2016-0037] (FHWA RIN: 2125-AF73; FRA RIN: 2130-AC66; FTA RIN: 2132-AB32) received January 18, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–3236. A letter from the Director, Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Schieber v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2017-32 T.C. Docket No. 21690-14 [Action On Decision: AOD-2021-01 (AOD-105860-20)] received January 11, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–3237. A letter from the Director, Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2021 Required Amendments List for Individually Designed Qualified and Section 403(b) Plans [Notice 2021-64] received January 11, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–3238. A letter from the Director, Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Guidance on Single-Employer Defined Benefit Pension Plan Funding Changes under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 [Notice 2021-48] received January 11, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–3239. A letter from the Director, Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Automatic method change procedures for method changes to comply with Sec. 1.451-3 and/or Sec. 1.451-8 (TD 9941) (Rev. Proc. 2021-34) received January 11, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. WATERS: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 2543. A bill to amend the Federal Reserve Act to add additional demographic reporting requirements, to modify the goals of the Federal Reserve System, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 117–228). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. WATERS: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 4590. A bill to require the Federal banking regulators to jointly conduct a study and develop a strategic plan to address challenges faced by proposed depository institutions seeking de novo depository institution charters; and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 117–229). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. WATERS: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 1277. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the submission by issuers of data relating to diversity, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 117–230). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. WATERS: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 4685. A bill to require the Government Accountability Office to carry out a study on the impact of the gamification, psychological nudges, and other design techniques used by online trading platforms, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 117–231). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. OBERNOLTE:

H.R. 6434. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish, within the National Park Service, the Japanese American World War II History Network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. RODGERS of Washington (for herself and Mr. NEGUSE):

H.R. 6435. A bill to provide for the application of certain provisions of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 for fiscal year 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma (for herself and Ms. JACOBS of California):

H.R. 6436. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to address workforce gaps, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BOWMAN (for himself, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Ms. NORTON, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mr. JONES, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CARSON, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. LEE of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MENG, Mr. POCAN, and Ms. BUSH):

H.R. 6437. A bill to amend the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 to increase the availability of heating and cooling assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BUCK (for himself and Mr. NEGUSE):

H.R. 6438. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the site known as ''Dearfield'' in the State of Colorado; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BURCHETT (for himself, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. GUEST, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 6439. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to provide for life imprisonment for certain offenses involving Fentanyl, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 6440. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to establish a grant program for jurisdictions with high rates of violent crime, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas (for herself and Ms. TENNEY):

H.R. 6441. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to improve the women's business center program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. FULCHER:

H.R. 6442. A bill to amend section 101703 of title 54, United States Code, to include Tribal Governments and quasi-governmental entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 6443. A bill to accelerate deployment by Taiwan of the asymmetric defense capabilities required to deter or, if necessary, defeat an invasion of Taiwan by the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself and Mr. LAMALFA):

H.R. 6444. A bill to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of real property at Beale Air Force Base in California to the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GOLDEN (for himself and Mr. HAGEDORN):

H.R. 6445. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to require an annual report on entrepreneurial development programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GOOD of Virginia (for himself, Mr. PERRY, Mr. ROSENDALE, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. BROOKS, and Mr. BUCK):

H.R. 6446. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to prohibit the Election Assistance Commission from making payments under such Act to States and jurisdictions which fail to meet certain standards to protect the integrity and certainty of elections for Federal office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. GOODEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. POSEY, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. CARL, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DUNCAN, and Ms. TENNEY):

H.R. 6447. A bill to amend the STOCK Act to require the public availability of financial disclosure forms of certain special consultants and information relating to certain confidential filers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER (for himself, Ms. SPANBERGER, Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. SHERRILL, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. PHILLIPS, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. CASE, Mrs. LURIA, Mr. COSTA, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. GOLDEN, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. DELGADO, Mrs. AXNE, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. VELA, Mrs. LEE of Nevada, Mr. SCHRADER, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. BACON, Mr. UPTON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. REED, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. MEIJER, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. KATKO, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. STEIL):

H.R. 6448. A bill to direct the Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services of the Department of Justice to carry out a grant program to provide assistance to police departments with fewer than 200 law enforcement officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GROTHMAN:

H.R. 6449. A bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to enable a State to be reimbursed for child welfare training expenditures made by a nonprofit educational institution in the State; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. KIM of California (for herself and Ms. CRAIG):

H.R. 6450. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to reauthorize the SCORE program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK:

H.R. 6451. A bill to establish the Chiricahua National Park in the State of Arizona as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI:

H.R. 6452. A bill to require the Director of National Intelligence to produce a National Intelligence Estimate on escalation and de-escalation of gray zone activities in great power competition, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

By Mr. LIEU:

H.R. 6453. A bill to establish a Housing Stabilization Fund to provide emergency housing assistance to extremely low-income renters and homeowners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana):

H.R. 6454. A bill to clarify the primary functions and duties of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 6455. A bill to promote, facilitate, and increase two-way trade and investment between the United States and Africa; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. MILLER of Illinois (for herself, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, and Mr. GOHMERT):

H.R. 6456. A bill to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to a local educational agency that requires any student at the schools served by the agency to wear a face covering or be vaccinated against COVID-19; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mrs. MILLER of Illinois (for herself and Mr. GOOD of Virginia):

H.R. 6457. A bill to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to a local educational agency unless in-person instruction is available to all students at the schools served by the agency; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina (for himself, Mrs. AXNE, and Mr. TRONE):

H.R. 6458. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the requirement to specify an effective period of a transfer of Post-9/11 educational assistance to a dependent; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6459. A bill to amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to redesignate the Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia as the Office of the Governor of the District of Columbia and to redesignate the Council of the District of Columbia as the Legislative Assembly of the District of Columbia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself and Mr. NEAL):

H.R. 6460. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the mandatory delay in making certain refunds; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. CURTIS, and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER):

H.R. 6461. A bill to require the Federal Government to produce a national climate adaptation and resilience strategy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CARSON, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. POCAN, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 6462. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure the solvency of the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund by extending the excise tax on coal; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TIFFANY:

H.R. 6463. A bill to provide for equal protection of the law and to prohibit discrimination and preferential treatment on the basis of race, color, or national origin in the administration of programs of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Education and Labor, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. NEWMAN, and Mr. COSTA):

H.R. 6464. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a presumption of

service-connection for certain veterans with tinnitus or hearing loss, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. WAGNER (for herself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. HICE of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. BROOKS, Mr. LATTA, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. BANKS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. KELLER, Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BAIRD, Ms. HERRELL, Mr. MOONEY, Mrs. LESKO, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. ROSE, Mrs. HINSON, Mr. GUEST, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. BABIN, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. BUDD, and Mr. LATURNER):

H.R. 6465. A bill to prohibit discrimination against the unborn on the basis of sex, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia (for herself, Ms. ROSS, Ms. STEVENS, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. MANNING, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 6466. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to remove all adverse credit history related to a loan from the credit history of a borrower who has rehabilitated the loan; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Ms. VAN DUYNE (for herself, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. BRADY, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, Mr. BABIN, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. FALLON, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. ARRINGTON, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. VELA, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. SCALISE, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. COLE, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. OWENS, Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. MAST, Mrs. HINSON, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. EMMER, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. GARCIA of California, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. JACOBS of New York, Mr. HERN, Mr. NORMAN, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. HICE of Georgia, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. CLINE, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. KUSTOFF, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. CARL, Mr. UPTON, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. TIMMONS, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. GARBARINO, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mrs. WALORSKI, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. MEIJER, Mr. KATKO, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mrs. STEEL, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. DUNN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. BANKS, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. FITZGERALD, Ms. JACOBS of California, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. LATTA, Mrs. MCCLAIN, Mr. HAGEDORN, Mr. VALADAO, Mrs. RODGERS of Washington, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. STEWART, Ms. FOXX, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. KELLER, Mr. BUCK, Mr. ALLRED, Mr. MOONEY, Mr. PHILLIPS, Mr. CLOUD, Mr. ZELDIN, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. DONALDS, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Mr. ROY, and Mr. WALTZ):

H. Res. 881. A resolution condemning the heinous terrorist attack on Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas, on January 15, 2022; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. ISSA, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. FOXX, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. OWENS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. JACOBS of New York, Mrs. LESKO, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. DONALDS, Mr. BIGGS, and Mr. FITZGERALD):

H. Res. 882. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of January 23 through January 29, 2022, as ''National School Choice Week''; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BUDD (for himself and Mr. NORMAN):

H. Res. 883. A resolution recognizing National Sanctity of Human Life Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. SCANLON (for herself, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. MOULTON, Mrs. AXNE, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mrs. LEE of Nevada, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mr. CASE, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CARSON, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. NORTON, Ms. NEWMAN, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. SCHIFF):

H. Res. 884. A resolution recognizing January 2022 as ''National Mentoring Month''; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. OBERNOLTE:

H.R. 6434.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the authority to enact this legislation pursuant to the power granted under Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. RODGERS of Washington:

H.R. 6435.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the authority to enact this legislation pursuant to the power granted under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma:

H.R. 6436.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. BOWMAN:

H.R. 6437.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. BUCK:

H.R. 6438.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BURCHETT:

H.R. 6439.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 6440.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 1 of section 8 of article 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas:

H.R. 6441.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

''The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .''

By Mr. FULCHER:

H.R. 6442.

Congress has the authority to enact this legislation pursuant to the power granted under Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 6443.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. GARAMENDI:

H.R. 6444.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I. Section 8, Clauses 1 and 14 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. GOLDEN:

H.R. 6445.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8; Clause 1

''The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .''

By Mr. GOOD of Virginia:

H.R. 6446.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Ninth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution maintains that the American peoples' rights are not limited to those clearly enumerated in the Bill of Rights: ''The numeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.''

Article I, Section 8 contemplates Congress' authority to '' . . . to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof''.

By Mr. GOODEN of Texas:

H.R. 6447.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises to pay the debts and provide for the common Defense and general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. Thus, Congress has the authority not only to increase taxes, but also, to reduce taxes to promote the general welfare of the United States of America and her citizens. Additionally, Congress has the Constitutional authority to regulate commerce among the States and with Indian Tribes, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER:

H.R. 6448.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all laws that shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. GROTHMAN:

H.R. 6449.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section VIII

By Mrs. KIM of California:

H.R. 6450.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK:

H.R. 6451.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI:

H.R. 6452.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. LIEU:

H.R. 6453.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section VIII

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 6454.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 6455.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mrs. MILLER of Illinois:

H.R. 6456.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mrs. MILLER of Illinois:

H.R. 6457.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina:

H.R. 6458.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6459.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 17 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 6460.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PETERS:

H.R. 6461.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:

H.R. 6462.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. TIFFANY:

H.R. 6463.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1 of the constitution,

Amendment XIV, Section 5 of the constitution

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 6464.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 6465.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(1) section 8 of article I, to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution the powers vested by the Constitution of the United States, including the power to regulate commerce under clause 3 of such section; and (2) section 5 of the 14th Amendment, including the power to enforce the prohibition on government action denying equal protection of the laws

By Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia:

H.R. 6466.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 38: Ms. VAN DUYNE.

H.R. 82: Mr. PFLUGER.

H.R. 222: Mr. RYAN.

H.R. 336: Miss RICE of New York and Mr. CROW.

H.R. 748: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER.

H.R. 889: Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. BABIN, and Mrs. STEEL.

H.R. 959: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 1012: Mr. JACOBS of New York.

H.R. 1211: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 1221: Mr. CASTEN.

H.R. 1361: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 1442: Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia.

H.R. 1527: Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio.

H.R. 1531: Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida.

H.R. 1577: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 1579: Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. CASTEN, and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 1581: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. ALLRED, and Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia.

H.R. 1729: Mr. ESTES.

H.R. 1842: Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. VALADAO, and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 2037: Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. MANN, Mr. TRONE, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. TIMMONS, Ms. NEWMAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 2144: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 2230: Mr. MCEACHIN and Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 2252: Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. MCEACHIN, and Mr. GUEST.

H.R. 2307: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 2351: Mr. GREEN of Tennessee.

H.R. 2517: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 2525: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 2638: Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 2650: Ms. VAN DUYNE.

H.R. 2654: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 2709: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H.R. 2724: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 2840: Mr. CORREA.

H.R. 2965: Ms. BASS and Mr. NEGUSE.

H.R. 2974: Mr. TURNER and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 3053: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 3088: Ms. STEVENS and Mr. BOWMAN.

H.R. 3109: Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 3172: Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 3207: Ms. STRICKLAND.

H.R. 3488: Ms. MANNING, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. STRICKLAND, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. PRESSLEY, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. NEWMAN, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. SPANBERGER, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. CASE, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 3525: Mrs. TORRES of California and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3548: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 3577: Mr. CURTIS, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. JACOBS of New York.

H.R. 3588: Ms. ROSS.

H.R. 3685: Mr. RICE of South Carolina and Ms. VAN DUYNE.

H.R. 3704: Mr. NORMAN.

H.R. 3710: Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 3808: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 3962: Ms. ESCOBAR.

H.R. 3982: Mr. CLINE.

H.R. 4130: Mr. EVANS.

H.R. 4141: Mr. MANN and Mr. FERGUSON.

H.R. 4390: Mr. STANTON and Mr. KELLER.

H.R. 4472: Mr. BACON.

H.R. 4598: Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. NEGUSE, and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 4603: Ms. ADAMS.

H.R. 4693: Miss RICE of New York and Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 4698: Mr. CAREY.

H.R. 4707: Ms. GARCIA of Texas.

H.R. 4942: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 4950: Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 5073: Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 5118: Ms. STANSBURY.

H.R. 5129: Mr. DELGADO, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. CASE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. KELLER.

H.R. 5136: Mr. CLYDE.

H.R. 5254: Mr. EVANS.

H.R. 5255: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 5345: Mr. OWENS and Mr. CURTIS.

H.R. 5388: Ms. BOURDEAUX.

H.R. 5396: Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 5428: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 5435: Ms. CHU and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 5485: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 5497: Mrs. STEEL.

H.R. 5502: Ms. BASS and Mr. STEUBE.

H.R. 5508: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 5585: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 5590: Mr. GARBARINO.

H.R. 5639: Ms. SLOTKIN.

H.R. 5660: Mrs. AXNE.

H.R. 5723: Ms. WILD and Ms. STANSBURY.

H.R. 5731: Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 5754: Ms. STEFANIK and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 5761: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 5766: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 5768: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. GARBARINO.

H.R. 5900: Ms. SPEIER and Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 5963: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 6005: Mr. NORCROSS and Mr. CRIST.

H.R. 6009: Mrs. MILLER of Illinois and Mr. CAWTHORN.

H.R. 6015: Mr. STANTON.

H.R. 6089: Mr. RESCHENTHALER.

H.R. 6107: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 6109: Mr. FERGUSON.

H.R. 6114: Mr. ESTES.

H.R. 6132: Ms. MALLIOTAKIS.

H.R. 6149: Mr. BACON.

H.R. 6161: Mrs. WALORSKI and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H.R. 6205: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 6208: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 6226: Mr. SUOZZI.

H.R. 6227: Mr. STANTON.

H.R. 6238: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 6299: Mr. MANN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, and Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina.

H.R. 6312: Mr. CAWTHORN, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota.

H.R. 6319: Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 6321: Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina.

H.R. 6367: Mr. JACOBS of New York, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, and Mr. FITZGERALD.

H.R. 6377: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. PETERS, Ms. DEAN, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 6380: Mrs. HINSON and Mr. FEENSTRA.

H.R. 6395: Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 6396: Mr. EVANS and Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ.

H.R. 6433: Mr. JACOBS of New York.

H.J. Res. 58: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.J. Res. 67: Mr. GARBARINO.

H. Con. Res. 33: Ms. MANNING.

H. Res. 850: Mr. JACKSON.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray. Eternal God, we love You, for You are our strength and fortress. Lord, You are worthy of our praise. We thank You for showing yourself faithful to all who put their trust in You. Continue to sustain our lawmakers with Your strong right hand.

Lord, equip and empower them by Your Heavenly grace that they may be adequate for these momentous times. Use them as Your instruments to bring decency, justice, and mercy to our Nation and world.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night was a reminder of a difficult but important reality of our great democracy: The march to freedom, through thick and thin, is never over—and we have to keep marching.

While last night's vote was disappointing, it will not deter Senate Democrats from continuing our fight against voter suppression, dark money, and partisan gerrymandering. Democrats are proud of the fight we held last night. The strength, eloquence, enthusiasm, and overwhelming participation of my Democratic colleagues during debate was exhilarating and shows the passion we feel about this issue.

Facing an uphill battle from the start, we lost the vote. But to have not voted would have been a far greater loss, a loss for our Democratic Party, which for generations has stood for voting rights; a loss for the civil rights advocates who have sacrificed so much on this issue; and a loss for the American people and what this country stands for. On an issue this important, not doing everything we could would have been unacceptable.

Now, the bromides of the beltway class hold we should not have held a vote on voting rights if the outcome was not certain. They are wrong. Imagine telling Dr. King not to march from Selma to Montgomery because he could not be sure what obstacles awaited him and his fellow freedom fighters. Imagine telling John Lewis he should never have crossed the Pettus Bridge because it was unclear what perils awaited him on the other side.

Every Member of this body who has ever invoked these great titans of freedom has an obligation—an obligation—to uphold their legacies not just with words but with actions. Senators were elected to vote. The examples of Dr. King, of John Lewis inspire us, give us strength, and show us that sometimes the only right option is to move forward.

And we need to remember what this is about. With the advent of Donald Trump and his many Big Lies, with the January 6 insurrection, with the vicious acts of voter suppression throughout the States, and with the greedy dark money interests that fuel the Republican Party these days, this is a fight for the soul of America—nothing less. So Democrats will not shy away from an uphill fight; we will continue to face them.

And I believe that the lessons of history are clear: When Representatives have to take a stand, when they have to show to the American people where they are on the issues, the right side of history ultimately prevails. We know history is on the side of voting rights, and we know that forcing leaders to take stands will ultimately move the ball forward.

Now, finally, I want to thank all my colleagues who came to the floor yesterday to speak valiantly in defense of voting rights and for working assiduously for months on this vital issue: Senators KLOBUCHAR and MERKLEY, BOOKER, SCHATZ, Senator KAINE—you, Mr. President—Senators KING, TESTER, WARNOCK, OSSOFF, DURBIN, PADILLA, LEAHY—and so many, so many more. Their leadership, their expertise, and their dedication to protecting our democracy is inspiring. It gives our caucus strength, and it made such a difference. Last night was unusual and exhilarating because we fought the good fight.

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

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As former Majority Leader Alben Barkley of Kentucky said 80 years ago this November, facing a filibuster, which successfully blocked anti-poll tax legislation—the majority leader, Alben Barkley, from Kentucky, said:

> I am glad I have made this fight. I have made it in behalf of what I believe to be the broad and true foundations of a true democracy.

Senate Democrats fighting for voting rights is not over. We will keep fighting until voting rights are protected for every single American. And one day—hopefully, sooner rather than later—we will succeed.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, tomorrow, our Nation's Capital will once again host many thousands of Americans gathering peacefully to support the most basic human right—the right to life. For 49 years, the March for Life has united people from diverse backgrounds, different faiths, and all 50 States to celebrate the dignity of human life and confront the ways our society fails to protect it.

This year, the marchers will arrive in a Washington controlled by a Democratic Party that has grown increasingly radical on this issue. Today's Democrats work overtime to keep our country one of just seven nations on the planet that have abortion on demand even after the unborn children can feel pain. Our shameful company includes China and North Korea. Fewer than 30 percent of Americans endorse this view, but Democrats have made it party dogma.

On President Biden's watch, Washington Democrats have even turned against the longstanding bipartisan Hyde Amendment. Both parties used to agree that at least Federal taxpayers should not be forced to fund abortions. Now Democrats on both sides of Pennsylvania Avenue declared war on even this.

So I warmly welcome the marchers from Kentucky and across the country. This radical version of the Democratic Party needs to hear your voices now more than ever.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Today marks exactly 1 year since President Biden became our fourty-sixth President. This all-Democratic government has had 365 days to start delivering on some of their core promises.

So what were those promises, in their own words? ''Crushing the virus,'' ''strengthen[ing] our alliances,'' and, above all else, ''lower[ing] the temperature'' and reuniting a divided country.

Remember, upon taking office, this administration had historic tailwinds at its back. President Biden inherited lifesaving vaccines and a distribution system that was already up and running. He inherited a string of bipartisan rescue packages, including one that was only just a few days old. He inherited an economy that was prime for a roaring comeback. Those were the promises. That was the inheritance.

So let's take a look at the progress report. Last spring, against expert advice, the Biden administration dumped another mountain of borrowed cash on an already white-hot economy. As a result, we are now being hammered by the worst inflation in 40 years. Practically everything families need and want have gotten much, much more expensive. Constant shortages disrupt family shopping. Households are being hit with soaring heating costs if they stay home and soaring gas prices if they go out. Our economic trajectory looks shakier today than it did when Democrats were sworn in.

Of course, we have continued adding back jobs from COVID lockdowns. That was certainly going to happen. But job creation has massively underperformed Democrats' own projections for job creation with their super costly springtime stimulus package.

When 2021 was said and done, the country had added roughly the same number of jobs that we were on track to create before Democrats implemented one policy or spent one dime. They managed to literally blow $1.9 trillion but only barely beat the starting trajectory they inherited.

They call that spending a COVID package, but less than 10 percent of the money went to the actual medical fight, and that certainly shows.

Americans are entering their third year of this pandemic with too few tests, too few treatments, too many new cases, and too many school closures; muddled guidance on boosters that caused FDA experts to resign in protest, and needless divisive vaccine mandates that were not even constitutional.

One year in, the coronavirus is decidedly uncrushed.

And COVID wasn't the only epidemic sweeping American streets. Take violent crime. Far-left rhetoric and anti-law-enforcement local policies have led major cities to set all-time records for homicide in 2021.

Or take fentanyl. This deadly imported poison was the leading cause of death for Americans aged 18 to 45, last year. The No. 1 killer of Americans in their prime—fentanyl.

So why aren't Democrats treating this like an emergency? When was the last time President Biden even talked about this?

And drug deaths are not the only consequence of our weak borders.

Candidate Biden's rhetoric incentivized a historic flood of illegal immigration, and then President Biden's weak policies lit the fuse. The result? The biggest surge in illegal border crossings in 60 years—60 years.

All these issues are priorities for American families, but the Biden administration spent most of 2021 focused on none of those. Washington Democrats spent months chasing a reckless taxing-and-spending spree packed with far-left policies that citizens never wanted. We spent half of 2021 trying and failing to blow $5 trillion on windmills and welfare.

When that effort faded, Democrats abruptly pivoted and started shouting that American democracy was on death's door. They propagandized that some evil anti-voting conspiracy was sweeping America, and the only solution to this grand crisis was a gigantic partisan election takeover bill that Democrats had conveniently written years before the events which they say now prompted it.

The American people didn't buy the fake hysteria. One-half of one percent of the country thinks election laws are our top issue. In fact, more Americans believe voting laws are too loose than too tight.

Oh, but Democrats went all in on this obsession. A few days ago, the sitting President of the United States called millions of Americans his domestic enemies and analogized—analogized—U.S. Senators to Jefferson Davis.

Well, last night, the fake panic drove 48 Senate Democrats to walk the plank on a failed effort to shatter the Senate itself for short-term power. And now Washington Democrats appear to be launching an absurd and reckless campaign to delegitimize the next election in advance, in case they lose it. Sound familiar?

Yesterday, the President told reporters that he might not accept the 2022 election results as legitimate if his election takeover bills do not pass Congress first. It all sounds eerily familiar.

This morning, the House majority whip followed suit. He was asked if the legitimacy of our elections is contingent on Washington Democrats passing these bills, and he replied: ''I am absolutely concerned about that.''

The Democrats who preached countless sermons about accepting voter decisions are now saying the midterms may be illegitimate, unless they win.

So America, after all of this, do you feel unified? Do you feel healed? Do you feel like our core institutions are being protected?

Now, Senate Republicans have met this administration more than halfway. In 2021, the Senate built and passed a major infrastructure bill. We passed bipartisan legislation on competing with China.

But beyond that, this administration deliberately chose to build their whole

governing strategy around the party-line reconciliation process.

So the President cannot deflect blame for his disappointing first year. The American people know where the buck stops, and if our Democratic friends do not change course, before long, the buck will stop somewhere else.

Now, on a related matter, President Biden also campaigned on strengthening America's partnerships and renewing our global leadership. Well, how has the administration done?

The administration that campaigned on restoring alliances abandoned a coalition of loyal partners with its disastrous and fatal retreat from Afghanistan.

The Biden administration green-lit Vladimir Putin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline, and the Democrats blocked us from sanctioning it. This pipeline will help Putin gain even more leverage over Western Europe and, of course, further isolate Ukraine.

As we speak—right now—Putin has amassed more than 100,000 Russian troops along the border of Ukraine. If these forces cross into Ukraine, it will not be a new invasion or a ''re-invasion.'' It will represent a major escalation of an ongoing occupation.

Ukraine has been fighting a Russian-backed war on its own now for 8 years. Eight years ago, I tried to warn President Obama that Putin is only deterred when the world imposes real costs—real costs—on his misbehavior.

But the Biden Administration sent Ukraine nonlethal support, and the sanctions it imposed and coordinated proved not to be as tough as advertised. The Obama-Biden administration failed to end Putin's invasion or compel compliance with the Minsk accords. Now the Biden-Harris team must not repeat the Obama-Biden grave mistakes.

But yesterday, on live television, President Biden telegraphed passivity—telegraphed passivity—and weakness, exactly when our allies can least afford it. Our President seemed to state—and, I pray, unintentionally—that he expects Putin to escalate in Ukraine, and, in any case, Putin can do what he wants.

Here is what the President said: ''That decision is totally, solely, completely a Putin decision. . . . I suspect it matters which side of the bed he gets up on.''

What on Earth does that mean?

Further, the President said: ''My guess is he will move in.''

The President said: ''My guess is he will move in. He has to do something.''

So President Biden thinks Putin has to do something. What does that even mean? Why is our President speculating like a passive observer on the sidelines?

He isn't a pundit. He isn't Putin's psychoanalyst. He is the President of the United States.

So will America hold Russia accountable if it escalates? Here was the message from our Commander in Chief: ''It depends on what Russia does. It's one thing if it's a minor incursion''—a minor incursion—''and then we end up having to fight about what to do and not do, et cetera.''

''It is one thing if it is a minor incursion''? Does this mean President Biden will not actually authorize the tough response that his own administration officials have spent weeks—weeks—promising?

This was a moment to deliver a powerful warning to the Kremlin that Ukraine's sovereignty is inviolable; that we would stand with her people; that the cost of escalation would be devastating.

It was a moment to reassure our partners in Kiev and our allies along NATO's eastern flank that America had their back.

It was a moment to call for NATO's unity, not to expose and appear hamstrung by NATO's divisions. It was a bizarre and devastating performance—especially, I would add—for our friends on the frontlines.

President Zelensky's Defense Minister has already shot back. This is from Ukraine's Defense Minister:

> We should not give Putin the slightest chance to play with quasi-aggression or small incursion operations. This aggression was [already] there since 2014. This is the fact.

I suspect our own Secretary of State, who is in Europe to meet with our allies and the Russian Foreign Minister—was also shocked by what the President had said. Minutes later, White House staff put out a frantic statement laying out a completely different position than what President Biden had just expressed. By then, of course, significant damage had been done.

But, alas, the damage can be undone. The President of the United States is never powerless. President Biden needs to clean up his remarks. He needs to clearly state American resolve and clearly demonstrate American leadership. He should call President Zelensky and NATO's allies most threatened by Russian aggression. He should rally allies and partners around the world to defend Ukraine and the international system that is being threatened by Putin.

His administration should be using every waking moment right now—right now—to expedite our delivery of real defensive capabilities to Ukraine.

The President must cut the indecision and redtape that has slowed us and our partners down. President Biden should finally, at long last, get around to nominating an Ambassador to Ukraine, a position he has left empty for 12 crucial months.

He should send U.S. forces to shore up NATO's eastern flank—not if—not if and when Putin escalates, but right now, before it is too late.

He should encourage our treaty allies to do likewise. But while alliance unity is important, the lowest common denominator of NATO's most nervous members cannot be allowed to restrict American action.

Whatever course other nations choose to chart, we cannot afford to let Moscow underestimate our resolve to impose serious—serious—crushing costs in response to any further incursion against Ukraine.

Our friends and America's reputation deserve nothing less.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. REED). The Republican whip.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, tomorrow, the streets of our Nation's Capital will be filled with Americans from across the country who have come to Washington, DC, to march for life. They come to nudge the conscience of our Nation, to remind all of us that every day in this country, baby girls and boys are being killed by abortion.

The March for Life, of course, is just one small facet of the pro-life movement, which works every day in this country to offer help and hope to moms in need. Pro-lifers collect supplies for pregnant moms. They pay for prenatal care. They assist moms with housing. They help moms continue with their schooling or find employment. They provide a listening ear to support a mom going through a difficult time.

The March for Life is just one small facet of that work, but it is an important one because abortion is an injustice that happens behind closed doors. It is not something that we see happening, and so it is all too easy to forget that every day in this country, hundreds of babies are being killed by abortion.

The CDC reports that almost 630,000 babies were killed by abortion in 2019 alone—630,000. That number is so big, it is almost unfathomable. To put 630,000 in some kind of perspective, that is equivalent to roughly 70 percent of the population of my State of South Dakota killed in 1 year—630,000 unique, unrepeatable human beings; future doctors, nurses, farmers and teachers and plumbers and busdrivers and research scientists, beloved sisters and brothers and nieces and nephews, future moms and dads. That is a lot of lives lost.

So events like the March for Life are fundamentally important because they provide a public witness to the truth about abortion. They remind all of us of what can be all too easy to minimize or ignore or forget, and that is that in this country, we are denying our most vulnerable citizens their most basic right.

You would think by now that we would have learned our lesson about deciding that one group of human beings is expendable; about deciding that some human beings are excluded from the protection and dignity that every member of the human family should enjoy. Unfortunately, history makes clear that great sins are often repeated. But we don't have to stay silent in the face of them. Indeed, we

must not stay silent in the face of them.

''Rescue those being led away to death,'' it says in the Book of Proverbs. ''[H]old back those staggering towards slaughter. If you say, 'But we knew nothing about this,' does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? . . . Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?''

The March for Life helps make sure that we can never offer the excuse ''But we knew nothing about this'' and reminds us of our responsibility to speak up to rescue the babies in this country who are being led away to death mere weeks or months after their life has begun.

Those who would defend a supposed right to abortion would like Americans to believe that the decision that legalized abortion in this country is settled law, but the truth is, it is not. If it were settled law, the Supreme Court wouldn't regularly be asked to rule on abortion legislation.

There is a reason why Roe v. Wade has never taken on the character of settled law, and that is because it was a fundamentally wrongheaded decision; a decision in tension with our most basic beliefs as Americans—that every person is endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights. Chief among them is the right to life.

Americans are not a perfect people. We have made some very grave errors in our past. But Americans are fundamentally a good people. While we have not always fully realized the promise of our Declaration—the promise of protection for the unalienable rights of every person—it is something we keep fighting for and pursuing.

We really believe in the right to life and liberty and to the pursuit of happiness, and we have the sentiments to go with that: a strong sense of justice, a passion for the right, an instinct to protect the vulnerable. So the idea of killing innocent, vulnerable human beings is not something we can easily make our peace with. So it is not surprising to me that, despite the best efforts of the pro-abortion movement, a strong majority of Americans support restrictions on abortion.

An Associated Press poll from this June found that 65 percent of Americans believe that abortion should generally be illegal in the second trimester, or from about 13 weeks of pregnancy, while a whopping 80 percent—80 percent—of Americans believe that abortion should generally be illegal in the third trimester.

Americans know that abortions kill babies. The pro-abortion movement can talk all it wants about blobs of tissue or products of conception; science and technology and common sense point inexorably to the humanity of the unborn child. And Americans know that human beings deserve to be protected even when they are small or weak or vulnerable—especially when they are small or weak or vulnerable.

It is reprehensible that a country like ours, dedicated to the defense of human rights, has some of the most extreme abortion laws in the world. We are part of just a tiny handful of countries that allow elective abortion past 20 weeks of pregnancy. Among those other countries are China and North Korea—not exactly the kind of company we want to be keeping when it comes to protecting human rights.

It is time for us to do better. We can do better. And I am so grateful for all of the marchers and for all those in the pro-life movement who are out there fighting to ensure that we do better.

''Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,'' it says in the Book of Proverbs. Thank you to all those who are speaking up tomorrow. Keep speaking up, and I am confident that sooner or later, life will prevail.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask to execute the previous order with respect to the Thomas nomination.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Holly A. Thomas, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Thomas nomination?

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) would have voted ''nay.''

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 11 Executive]

YEAS—48

Baldwin	Heinrich	Padilla
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Peters
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Rosen
Brown	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Luján	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warnock
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Hassan	Ossoff	Wyden

NAYS—40

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	
Graham	Portman	

NOT VOTING—12

Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Marshall	Sinema
Cassidy	Moran	Tester
Cramer	Rounds	Toomey

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 655.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Bridget Meehan Brennan, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 655, Bridget Meehan Brennan, of Ohio, to be United

States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Henrich, Sherrod Brown, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Executive Session to consider Calendar No. 657.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Charles Esque Fleming, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 657, Charles Esque Fleming, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Henrich, Sherrod Brown, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Executive Session to consider Calendar No. 658.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David Augustin Ruiz, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 658, David Augustin Ruiz, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Henrich, Sherrod Brown, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 404.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Rupa Ranga Puttagunta, of the District of Columbia, to be Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 404, Rupa Ranga Puttagunta, of the District of Columbia, to be Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 406.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kenia Seoane Lopez, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 406, Kenia Seoane Lopez, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 410.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sean C. Staples, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 410, Sean C. Staples, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard J. Durbin, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 556.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ebony M. Scott, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 556, Ebony M. Scott, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 557.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Donald Walker Tunnage, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for a term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 557, Donald Walker Tunnage, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for a term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 613.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John P. Howard III, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 613, John P. Howard III, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Henrich, Sherrod Brown, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 614.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Loren L. AliKhan, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for a term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 614, Loren L. AliKhan, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for a term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Henrich, Sherrod Brown, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 644.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Amy Gutmann, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 644, Amy Gutmann, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Richard J. Durbin, Sherrod Brown, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 649.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Lisa A. Carty, of Maryland, to be Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 649, Lisa A. Carty, of Maryland, to be Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tina Smith, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Cory A. Booker, Debbie Stabenow, Christopher Murphy, Ben Ray Luján, Angus S. King, Jr., Martin Heinrich.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 627.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Scott A. Nathan, of Massachusetts, to be Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 627, Scott A. Nathan, of Massachusetts, to be Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation,.

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tina Smith, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Cory A. Booker, Debbie Stabenow, Christopher Murphy, Ben Ray Luján, Angus S. King, Jr., Martin Heinrich.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 616.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Chantale Yokmin Wong, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 616, Chantale Yokmin Wong, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador.

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tina Smith, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy

Duckworth, Cory A. Booker, Debbie Stabenow, Christopher Murphy, Ben Ray Luján, Angus S. King, Jr., Martin Heinrich.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 473.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Gabriel Camarillo, of Texas, to be Under Secretary of the Army.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 473, Gabriel Camarillo, of Texas, to be Under Secretary of the Army.

Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Richard J. Durbin, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 474.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Andrew Philip Hunter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 474, Andrew Philip Hunter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 495.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John Patrick Coffey, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Navy.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 495, John Patrick Coffey, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Navy.

Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard Blumenthal, Richard J. Durbin, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 496.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Alexandra Baker, of New Jersey, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 496, Alexandra Baker, of New Jersey, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Richard Blumenthal, Catherine Cortez Masto, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard J. Durbin, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Benjamin L. Cardin, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 673.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Reta Jo Lewis, of Georgia, to be President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2025.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 673, Reta Jo Lewis, of Georgia, to be President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2025.

Charles E. Schumer, Sherrod Brown, Christopher Murphy, Jeff Merkley, Jack Reed, Ben Ray Luján, Christopher A. Coons, Chris Van Hollen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Amy Klobuchar, Tammy Baldwin, Tim Kaine, Patrick J. Leahy, Jeanne Shaheen, Edward J. Markey, Debbie Stabenow, Martin Heinrich.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 654.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Leonard Philip Stark, of Delaware, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 654, Leonard Philip Stark, of Delaware, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Henrich, Sherrod Brown, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

Mr. SCHUMER. And, finally, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, January 20, be waived.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 401

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, this weekend is the anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision. It is a decision that, without a doubt, changed lives for the better. It prevented a lot of harm and helped keep many patients healthy. It opened doors for women to pursue their career and education goals and affirmed the right to control our own bodies and our own futures.

Roe was a giant leap forward, and a majority of Americans want to protect it. But since Roe was decided, extreme Republicans have peddled blatant misinformation, filled our judicial system with anti-abortion judges, and passed State laws designed solely to make it harder to get abortions—laws that are now hurting people of color, the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants, young people, people with low incomes, and people with disabilities the most. And they are not stopping at abortion. They are pushing to make it harder to get birth control and defund family planning clinics—including Planned Parenthood—which provide critical healthcare for so many communities.

In Texas, Republicans have passed, and the Supreme Court green-lit, a law that essentially bans abortions and is enforced by pitting neighbor against neighbor. And even though medication abortion pills are safe to take at home, extreme Republicans are now pushing to pass laws that not only dictate what happens in a doctor's office but also make it harder for patients to take a pill in their very own living room.

You know, Republicans do like to talk about Big Government, but overriding people's individual decisions and science to dictate what people can do in their own homes sounds like a lot of overreach.

The Senator from Oklahoma is here with a bill today that has one goal: to make it harder to get abortion care by allowing someone else's personal beliefs, rather than a patient's best interest, to determine a patient's care. And that is just one example of the extreme agenda Republicans are pushing, today and every day.

I have heard from so many people about the problems and the harm this has caused in their lives. I have heard from many patients who had to jump through unnecessary or even harmful hoops to get the abortion care they needed: patients who had to endure invasive ultrasounds that were medically unnecessary before they could get an abortion; patients who were harassed going in and out of a clinic; patients who had to drive hours or even days to get to the nearest abortion provider or who zeroed out their bank account to afford a plane ticket or childcare; patients, including many in Texas, who didn't have the means to get the abortion care they needed and were forced to stay pregnant when they did not want to be.

And then the Supreme Court took on a direct challenge to Roe that threatens the constitutional right to abortion. I have heard nonstop from people who are very anxious about their future, people who are scared and frustrated, people who, like the majority of Americans, want to protect Roe, who want to live in a country where everyone can make their own decisions about pregnancy and parenting—free from political interference.

That is exactly why I am fighting so hard to protect the right to abortion at the Federal level by passing the Women's Health Protection Act. That bill will safeguard Roe and help make its promises a reality for everyone, no matter their ZIP Code, by ensuring their constitutional right to abortion is not undermined by State abortion bans and restrictions.

But Republican attacks from every angle, like the one we will witness now, means there is no one easy fix.

We have got to do everything we can to undo the damage the extreme Republicans have caused in our laws and in our lives. And that is why I am fighting so hard for the over-the-counter birth control and to make health insurance companies follow the law rather than forcing patients to pay out of pocket for contraception.

It is why I am fighting to make a historic investment in title X family planning centers, which help make healthcare like birth control, STI screenings, and more available to everyone, regardless of their income.

And it is why I am asking for everyone to join me in this fight. It is going to take all of us working together to protect reproductive rights, and there is no action too small.

Share your story. Speak up about what reproductive rights mean to you. Support a local organization helping to get patients the reproductive healthcare they need. Work to combat Republicans' misinformation. Fight to pass local and State laws protecting abortion rights.

And here is something to remember while you do it: It is true that extreme Republicans have worked nonstop to roll back progress on reproductive rights and that abortion access is at risk like never before.

But this is also true: Since Roe, millions and millions of American women and men grew up knowing access to abortion is a constitutional right. Millions and millions more saw how much Roe opened doors for women and empowered people to make their own personal decisions about their body and their future.

The vast majority of Americans believe people should be trusted to make their own decisions about whether or not to get an abortion and that whether and when to get pregnant is a personal decision, not a decision that should be made by any politician or taken away from them because of how much money they have or where they live.

We can make this a reality, but we have got to fight for it. That is what I am doing; that is what I am going to keep doing; and I am very glad to have so many people alongside.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I guess I am one of those extreme Republicans that believe that a child who sucks their thumb, wiggles their toes and fingers, feels pain, has a beating heart, has a functioning nervous system, has DNA that is different than the mom or the dad is a baby.

I didn't think that was an extreme position to see a child as self-evident. That is a child. Now, I understand Americans are divided on whether children in the womb are convenient or inconvenient, and if they are inconvenient, they can be thrown away as medical waste, but if they are convenient, they are kept.

I just think every child is precious, and I think every child should be honored and protected. So I guess that makes me extreme.

The bill that I bring today is a bill that just looks at the millions and millions and millions of Americans who believe like I do. Many of them work in hospitals, and they joined the healthcare profession and got a medical degree because they wanted to save life. They wanted to be a part of protecting individuals at their most critical times, but they also had this real belief—that is a science-based belief, by the way—that a child in the womb is just like a child outside the womb, the only difference is time.

Forty weeks ago, you were 40 weeks younger. That child in the womb at conception and the child outside the womb is just 40 weeks older, just like you are 40 weeks older than what you were 40 weeks ago. It is still a child.

For the millions of Americans who believe like that, we have had conscience-protection laws on the books, for a long time. In fact, there are 25 conscience-protection laws on the books in America right now. Many of these have not been controversial. In fact, if we go through the church amendments, when they were done, they protect the conscience rights of individuals and entities that object to performing or assisting in the performance of abortions or sterilizations against their religious beliefs or moral convictions.

When that passed, almost 50 years ago now, it passed 92 to 1 in this body. It just wasn't that controversial. We understood that people disagreed on the issue of abortion. And why would you ever compel someone to be able to perform an abortion when their conscience objects to that?

In 2004, Congress created the Weldon amendment. It is on all of our annual appropriations bills. The Weldon amendment bars Federal Government, State and local government, and recipients of Federal funds from discriminating against healthcare entities that refuse to provide, pay for, or provide coverage or refer for abortions. It has not been that controversial.

In fact, it was on the Consolidated Appropriations Act last year, which passed 92 to 6. This has not been that controversial to be able to honor the rights of individuals.

Now, there are some things that have changed. Some of these 25 laws have not been enforced. In fact, these 25 conscience protections that are on our books right now are dependent on the executive branch to actually enforce those laws. If I go back during the Trump administration, they confronted California because California mandated that insurance providers had to provide abortion coverage. Well, that is not consistent with our law.

And so the administration pushed them and said: No, you can't compel a religious institution that has a moral objection to abortion in your State; you can't make them buy abortion coverage and actually pay into that system—though California is.

So the Trump administration said to them: No, you have got to allow those folks to have the option; that is the Federal law. And that was in the process of being enforced until this administration took the leadership and Xavier Becerra, who was the attorney general of California, then moved to HHS and immediately dropped the suit against California, his old State—curious.

So the religious entities don't have any recourse in California because the executive branch won't enforce it.

Let me give you another example. There was an employer, University of Vermont Medical Center. They were pressed with a lawsuit against them for knowingly, willfully, and repeatedly violating the Church amendments. They had nurses that were there that said: I have a conscience issue. I don't want to participate in abortion, and the University of Vermont Medical Center would compel them to perform abortions or they would lose their job.

It is in direct violation of Federal law and the conscience protections. So there was a lawsuit against them to be able to have them actually carry out Federal law.

When the Biden administration came in, Xavier Becerra immediately dropped that lawsuit. There was no settlement. There was no statement about it. Though it is Federal law that you can't violate someone's conscience protections, they said: We are not going to enforce that Federal law—though it was in the process of being enforced.

So the question is, For religious entities in California or for a nurse in Vermont, where do they go? If the entity that is charged under Federal law—25 Federal laws, to be exact, to actually allow people to have conscience protections—if that entity says, ''We won't do it,'' what happens?

Well, this bill is very straightforward. It just gives the ability for that individual to be able to press a suit for their own rights.

If the Federal Government will not enforce the law, this allows that individual to step up and say: Then, I will then file charges that you are in violation of Federal law for this—to protect their rights as a citizen.

Quite frankly, it is not any different than what any other citizen would do anywhere else—that if they had some civil violation against them that was clearly in violation of their rights, they would be able to go to court and be able to say: My rights have been violated; here is the statute. And they would have their day in court.

That is not allowed currently in Federal law. It has to be the executive branch to carry it out. And, as we have learned, it is under the whims of the executive branch whether they are going to carry that out or not.

But, listen, this is really not that controversial in America. The most recent survey that was done by the Knights of Columbus that actually just came out this week asked a question about conscience protections. It was a very straightforward question. And the answer came back: 75 percent of the individuals surveyed said that doctors and nurses should not be forced to perform abortions if they have a religious objection.

Now, we are very divided on the issue of abortion, but our Nation is really not that divided on the issue of conscience protections. This is, Can an employer compel someone to do something that violates their religious beliefs or moral beliefs? And if they don't, they lose their job. That is the only question that is in this, and that is why I bring it to this body today. That is my simple request.

Now, this body knows, and Senator MURRAY, who is on the floor with me today, knows full well of my beliefs about the value of every single child. I do look forward to a day that we are post-Roe as a nation and the Supreme Court of the United States is not compelling every State to have abortions carried out that are elective abortions in their State.

A post-Roe nation is not a nation that has no abortion. It is a nation where, State to State, each State makes those decisions.

I have brought bills dealing with everything from chemical abortions to 20-week, pain-capable bills dealing with Down syndrome children, dealing with Planned Parenthood, dealing with all sorts of different issues.

This issue today is very specific, though—just about conscientious objectors. Should they be compelled to violate their beliefs by their employer?

So as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 401 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and

passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. MURRAY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, to the Chair, we will as a nation process through this in the days ahead. This body has very strict laws that cover my State and many other States for a lot of other things.

In my State, if you go to build a building in the southeast part of my State, you have to do frequent inspections to make sure the burying beetle is not going to be harmed in that area because it is considered threatened.

If you are in the western part of my State, you can't build certain buildings in certain places or carry out certain farming activities because the lesser prairie-chicken is there.

If you are in California, they pour their water—their great water—out of the mountains into the ocean because if they don't, it may harm the smelt.

If you are building a bridge in Oklahoma, at certain times of the year, and a migratory bird puts up a nest in that construction area, you have to stop construction, because migratory bird eggs are valuable, burying beetles are valuable, prairie-chickens are valuable, smelts are available, but we throw children in the trash.

We have got to figure this out as a nation, and, currently, we seem to be afraid to talk about it or even to protect the rights of individuals who disagree about this in the workplace. We have got to figure this out as a nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VAN HOLLEN). The Senator from Wyoming.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to oppose the Democrats' radical agenda.

For weeks now, America has been breaking records with cases of coronavirus. The scavenger hunt for tests has resulted in long lines and empty shelves. We have just had the worst jobs report of the year—last year—with inflation at a 40-year high. Crime is out of control in big cities run by Democrats. The southern border is being overrun by hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants every single month. Our foreign policy is in shambles; our friends are endangered; and Vladimir Putin, China, North Korea, and Iran are emboldened.

The American people are deeply worried about all of these issues. Yet Democrats in Washington are offering no solutions on these pressing problems. Democrats created many of these crises in the first place, often through incompetence, mismanagement, and weakness. Now, under President Biden, they are making them worse.

Democrats just spent 5 months trying to pass the most expensive spending bill in American history. It was a bill nobody asked for except for the radical base of professional activists. The bill would have led to the largest tax increase in 50 years, trillions of dollars in new spending and new debt, and even higher inflation.

Democrats tried to pass this on the narrowest of margins. Democrats failed. As soon as the bill was pronounced dead, Democrats scrambled to change the subject. Democrats know they can't solve the inflation crisis, the supply chain crisis, the coronavirus crisis, or any of the other disasters created by the Biden administration. By ignoring these problems, they are practically admitting that, as Democrats, they have no solutions.

So what are they doing instead?

Well, they have tried to manufacture another crisis. They have invented a phony moral panic about election laws. Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS have repeatedly lied about our elections. They got Major League Baseball to move the All-Star Game to a Democrat State. They got Hollywood stars and journalists and wealthy corporations to parrot their talking points. Now they have former Presidents Obama and Clinton getting involved. It has been a shameful effort to frighten the American people and further divide our Nation.

When Joe Biden was a Presidential candidate, he said he would ''heal the country.'' He said he would ''restore the soul of the nation.'' Just 1 year into his Presidency, we have found out that that was all for show. Joe Biden has been one of the most divisive and partisan Presidents in American history, and, today, he is on track to be the least popular President in modern times.

I understand why Democrats are desperate to change the subject. Yet Democrats are failing on the election issue as well. If Democrats think they can win on the idea of a Federal election takeover, they are wrong. Joe Biden is so unpopular in Georgia he couldn't even get Stacey Abrams to show up to his rally in Atlanta. She is running for Governor. She is a political celebrity. Election law is her main issue. Yet she wouldn't be seen in public with Joe Biden, and, frankly, I don't blame her.

Two days later, Joe Biden came to Capitol Hill to convince Democrats to change the rules of the Senate. He failed again. Brave Democratic Senators did the honorable and courageous thing. They kept their word. They said they would not destroy this institution for short-term partisan gain. They deserve the respect of every Member of this body. Joe Biden tried to push them around, and he failed.

The latest Quinnipiac poll has Joe Biden with a 33-percent approval rating just 1 year into his term in office. He has lower economic approval ratings than Jimmy Carter. Yet Senator SCHUMER asked Democrat Senators to follow Joe Biden over the cliff.

Yesterday, in his almost 2-hour press conference, President Biden talked about taking his message on the road and campaigning with Democrat candidates. I want to see which Democrat candidates actually want to stand with him as more and more Members of the House announce their retirements because they know, and they can see the writing on the wall.

Senator SCHUMER wanted a vote in this body on the Washington election takeover and on changing the rules of the Senate. The American people have utterly rejected both of these ideas. The vast majority of the American people support voter identification. If you want a ballot, show your ID. They support making voters show a photo ID in order to get a ballot. This includes a majority of Democrats, who think it is an important thing to do for ballot integrity and accountability and security.

If Democrats want to fix our election laws, they ought to do something about what is happening in the majority leader's hometown. Just last month, the New York City Council voted to let 900,000 noncitizens vote in New York City's elections—noncitizens. This is a larger group than the margin of victory in this last New York mayoral election. In other words, this new group of voters—not citizens of the United States—could swing and determine the outcome of the next election for the mayor of New York. This is the majority leader's hometown.

Where is the ballot integrity, accountability, and security there for American citizens?

Before CHUCK SCHUMER lectures the American people about our elections, he ought to fix the problems in his own hometown.

Democrats are OK with vaccine passports, and they are OK with noncitizens voting, but they are not OK with voter ID, at least on the legislation that they brought to the floor. Democrats continue to fail to listen to and to fail the American people. Democrats are failing on inflation, on coronavirus, on immigration, on crime, and on national security. By voting on elections and on Senate rules, Democrats are admitting they have absolutely nothing to offer the American people on the key issues and concerns that are impacting the lives of people all across this country.

There is plenty of work to do right now. We have to stop unnecessary government spending to get inflation under control. We need to support law enforcement. We need affordable energy. That is what people want. We need to make sure that our schools stay open. We need to make sure that they teach our children skills, not ideology. We need to secure our border. So, yes, there is plenty of work for this Senate to do. Republicans have been more than willing to work with Democrats on all of these important issues.

The American people are looking for solutions. Yet the majority leader is giving them pointless exercises and show votes. It is time for the majority

leader to abandon this political wish list. Let's get to work on the issues facing the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 137

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, one of the aims of American foreign aid is to assist countries in times of need. This spirit exemplifies a trait Americans and Utahns rightfully value, that of giving to those in need.

Yet, for many years, our foreign aid dollars in support of abortion have been used to impose violent cultural imperialism. Instead of helping to preserve, strengthen, and sustain the lives of women and children abroad, our taxpayer dollars have been used to harm women's lives and to end the lives of their unborn children, especially baby girls. In some of these countries, girls are disproportionately aborted precisely because they are female. U.S. aid is used not to affirm the equal dignity of women but to violently deny it.

In some of these countries, abortion is forced on women who don't even want abortions, women in countries like Vietnam and Peru, for instance, who were forced to endure the coercive abortion and sterilization campaigns of the 1990s, just to name a couple of examples.

What kind of aid does violence to women and girls? What kind of help is it to impose U.S. abortion extremism on countries that culturally and democratically reject it or contribute to international organizations that allow regimes to use abortion as a tool of oppression? What kind of progress is it to encourage sex-selective abortion and the denigration of human dignity for both the baby and the mother?

U.S. advocacy abroad for the taking of innocent, unborn life is not pro-woman, it is not pro-child, and it is not pro-healthcare. It is pro-sexism. It is pro-violence. And we must end it.

According to recent polling, the American people overwhelmingly agree. Nearly 60 percent of Americans oppose using tax dollars to pay for abortions, and more than 75 percent of Americans oppose using tax dollars to support abortions in other countries.

Thankfully, President Ronald Reagan took steps to reverse this support, starting in 1984, instituting the Mexico City policy to prohibit foreign aid from going to organizations that provide or promote abortions or that advocate to change abortion laws in a foreign country. Since then, the policy has, unfortunately, been rescinded and reinstated again and again, repeating this cycle between changing administrations.

Another policy that used to have lasting support is the Hyde amendment. This legal provision prohibited the use of Federal funds to pay for abortion with a set of exceptions. Recently, Democrats have abandoned this bipartisan position and have placed the Hyde amendment under threat. It, too, could become a back-and-forth, ping pong policy, depending on who holds majorities within the two Houses of Congress.

The lives of babies and the dignity of women and girls are not political footballs. Women and unborn children everywhere have immeasurable dignity and eternal worth regardless of where they are from, and they are entitled to the right to life and protection from harm regardless of who happens to be in office from one moment to the next.

The Protecting Life in Foreign Assistance Act affirms this truth. This bill would permanently stop the use of our foreign aid money from funding or promoting abortions overseas.

In our laws and through our lives, we must uphold the dignity of each and every human person regardless of race, regardless of sex, and regardless of appearance, abilities, or age. The measure before us today does just that, and I urge my colleagues to support it. The lives of millions of women and children, born and unborn, depend on it.

So, Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 137 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, my colleague and friend from Utah and I agree on a couple of points. Yes, President Biden did rescind the global gag rule, which this proposal would not only reestablish but make permanent and expand, disastrously, and yes, women and children should not be political footballs, nor should this issue be one. Unfortunately, that is the objective of this proposal.

It is difficult to exaggerate the breadth of this proposed legislation or the breadth of harm that the global gag rule does. In fact, it prohibits foreign organizations receiving U.S. assistance from providing legal abortion services or referrals or even information—information—on abortion services even when those activities are funded without any connection to U.S. Government money. It egregiously blocks organizations receiving U.S. funds from advocating for abortion legislation—mere advocacy—stifling their ability to champion their patients, even if that advocacy is not funded in any way by U.S. taxpayers.

This legislation would not only codify this dangerous policy but expand it even beyond what was implemented under previous administrations—expanding it, not just codifying it.

Thankfully, President Biden has rescinded this policy. It was an important effort to restore U.S. leadership abroad, promoting healthcare access in places it is needed most. It was a critical step toward what is now needed—permanent prohibition of the global gag rule, not codification of its expansion.

Let's be very clear. The global gag rule does nothing to protect the health of people around the world. It blocks healthcare access, it stifles local advocacy efforts, and it undermines reproductive rights worldwide, putting in jeopardy the people who need those services most. It impedes access to a range of health services, including contraception, HIV prevention and treatment, and maternal and child care, because it cuts off funding for many of the most experienced healthcare providers.

Some proponents of this dangerous policy seem to claim it will reduce abortions or it is intended to do so, but studies have shown that, in fact, it does just the opposite. The global gag rule actually increases rates of abortion—many of them unsafe—because it reduces access to contraceptives and it increases the number of unintended pregnancies.

In short, we should be joining other countries in addressing global goals like creating an AIDS-free generation, ending preventable maternal and child deaths, and achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, not putting unnecessary restrictions on U.S. funds that cause fear and impede access to healthcare. Unfortunately, that is what the global gag rule and this legislation do, impeding countries' efforts to improve global health, advance human rights, and achieve gender equality.

I oppose the Lee bill. I urge my colleagues to come together and work, instead, to promote global health. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I have tremendous respect for my friend and colleague, the distinguished Senator from Connecticut. He and I both acknowledge that the policy we are arguing—the nature of the policy is one in which we have seen something of a tug-of-war, a ping pong match over the years.

The Republican legislation will put in place or restore the so-called Mexico City policy, prohibiting U.S. foreign aid from going to organizations that perform or advocate for abortion overseas. It is backed by an estimated 75 percent of Americans who don't believe that we should be using U.S. taxpayer dollars especially to further the cause of conducting or advocating for abortions overseas.

He and I both agree that President Biden has rescinded that. I think where we disagree can be highlighted and traced back to the fact that we call it by different names. He refers to this as

the gag rule, a gag rule. Now, normally when we think of a gag rule, we think of something that tells someone who is otherwise free to speak that they may not speak. It is, in fact, what happens when we don't allow people to live. It is what happens to all these baby girls who are never allowed to be born precisely because they are female. And make no mistake, when we fund abortions overseas, that is what is happening. It happens a lot in countries that receive our aid in the absence of the Mexico City policy. Some of that goes to these organizations that perform abortions.

In many of these countries, sex-selective abortions are not only tolerated culturally, they are commonplace. They are excessive. As a result, these baby girls never get to be born. They never get to become women. They never get to speak in the first place. That is a form of gagging. That is not OK.

Regardless of how you feel about abortion, regardless of whether you think that is a baby, a human life, or whether you think it is something else—I am not sure what else it could be. When someone becomes pregnant, we know that is the potential of what will one day be a human being. Absent a death—whether a natural death or a death brought about by someone's actions or by the operation of a disease or medical condition or surgical intervention in the case of abortion—it is a person. We shouldn't lose sight of that.

I have difficulty accepting the premise that the only solution to this is continuing to fund organizations that perform or advocate for abortions overseas. I reject the premise that anything we do in this area to withhold those funds will necessarily result in more abortions.

As far as the suggestion that organizations could receive these funds and still perform abortions and that not translate into U.S. dollars being used to perform abortions, I reject that premise as well for the same reason that I reject the premise that Planned Parenthood isn't using taxpayer dollars to perform abortions. It is. It is spent differently. It is a matter of accounting, but it sustains and supports an organization that itself advocates for and performs many abortions. These are, in fact, human lives, and the American people are, in fact, very uncomfortable with the idea that we are funding abortions with their taxpayer dollars, and we are doing it overseas. We shouldn't do that. This shouldn't be controversial. I look forward to the day when it is not.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, just to be clear, I understand my colleague's point, but I think I have highlighted and I want to emphasize again the limited purposes for which our taxpayer dollars are used and the advocacy, the healthcare, the contraception, HIV screening and treatment—world health—that would be prevented by this legislation.

I think that is an unintended consequence. Maybe, it is unintended that it is gargantuan in its potential impact, and, therefore, I continue my objection.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I am here to speak on a nomination, but before I do, a point of personal privilege.

It was 1 year ago today that I had the honor of being sworn in as a Member of this Senate. As I hope my wife is watching at home on C–SPAN 2, I just want to thank her for her love and support throughout this first year. I couldn't have done it without her.

And I thank, of course, the Presiding Officer and all of our colleagues for the tremendous support and experience that this last year has been.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. President, with respect to the Thomas nomination, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

CONFIRMATION OF HOLLY A. THOMAS

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I was hoping to rise prior to the vote just a little while ago but was consumed with the agenda in the Senate Judiciary Committee this morning.

So in lieu of speaking prior to the confirmation vote, I rise to applaud the confirmation of Judge Holly Thomas to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Judge Thomas is a dedicated advocate for equality under the law and has made a career of fighting to ensure the civil rights of all Americans.

A proud native of San Diego, CA, and a graduate of Yale Law School, Judge Thomas spent 10 years working on civil rights litigation and appeals. That time included litigating at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, in the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, and in the New York Solicitor General's Office.

In each of these roles, Judge Thomas was a tireless advocate for equal justice. She proved to be a skillful appellate lawyer, an insightful thinker, and a valued colleague.

She returned to California in 2016 to serve as the chief liaison between the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the Governor's Office. The State Department of Fair Employment and Housing is California's largest civil rights regulatory body, and in her role there Judge Thomas dedicated herself to protecting workers and families from unlawful discrimination, working closely with then-Governor Brown.

Recognizing her outstanding work and her tremendous talent, Governor Brown appointed her to the Los Angeles County Superior Court in 2018. Now, this appointment was a full-circle moment for a person whose love of the law was nurtured by her supportive parents starting at a very young age. Judge Thomas's parents, when she was a young girl, would take her to watch court proceedings. Why? So that she could imagine what a career as a lawyer would look like.

Decades later, as a judge on the superior court, Judge Thomas actually requested to serve in the family law division because of her empathy for families going through a difficult process and experience in court.

Now, as the first person in her family to go to college after high school, Judge Thomas knows what it is like to navigate unfamiliar institutions. She is also the granddaughter of sharecroppers, and she is a passionate fighter for equal justice.

Since her appointment, Judge Thomas has proven her excellence as a jurist, as a neutral arbiter, and a compassionate voice for justice both in family court and on the California Court of Appeal, where she served in a pro tem capacity for 6 months.

Judge Thomas's compassion is matched by her legal acumen. Throughout her career, she has distinguished herself with thoughtful analysis, expert judgment, and unshakeable commitment to civil rights.

I know—and I am thrilled—that Judge Thomas will serve with distinction on the Ninth Circuit, and I congratulate her on this very well-deserved confirmation.

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

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

UKRAINE DEMOCRACY DEFENSE LEND-LEASE ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday I was dismayed to hear the President of the United States suggest that a Russian invasion of Ukraine might not provoke a powerful response by the United States and our allies.

Now, I am grateful that the Press Secretary did issue a statement subsequently which seemed to clarify the strong commitment that the American people—from the administration to the Members of Congress—have to assist our Ukrainian allies in their efforts to deter or defeat Russian aggression. I believe we have a duty to stand with Ukraine and our European allies as they attempt to defend their democracies.

Strong language and threats of sanctions have their place, but they are not enough to deter Vladimir Putin. We need to take concrete steps to deter the likelihood of a Russian attack in any form.

But it is not just the executive branch of the U.S. Government that

has a role to play. We in Congress have a role we can play, too, in sending a very clear message to Vladimir Putin that we will not stand idly by while he attacks a neighbor, a democracy, and a potential future member of NATO.

To that end, I have introduced bipartisan legislation called the Ukraine Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act to ensure Ukrainian forces have the weapons that they need to deter that aggression and defend, if necessary, against a Russian invasion.

Of course, students of history remember the importance of lend-lease back in World War II, back when America was officially neutral in the conflict initiated by Nazi Germany in Europe and during a time when the American people were of an isolationist frame of mind.

Recognizing the importance of throwing a lifeline to Great Britain and our other allies, Congress passed on a bipartisan basis the Lend-Lease Act, which ultimately resulted in $30 billion worth of materiel being delivered to Britain and our other allies to help them defeat Nazi Germany.

So, in a similar vein, this legislation authorizes the President to enter into lend-lease agreements with Ukraine and provide the military equipment necessary to protect the Ukrainian people from Russian aggression. No one is suggesting that American troops should be on the ground, but we are saying clearly that it is our responsibility to provide the Ukrainians everything they need in order to defend themselves.

This legislation would once again, in the immortal words of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, allow us to serve as the arsenal of democracy, just as we did in World War II, and provide Ukraine with the lethal weapons they need to protect themselves against the Russian threat.

Make no mistake, America stands with Ukraine, and we will do everything we can, again, on a bipartisan basis—the executive branch, the legislative branch—to support our friends and to defeat a Russian invasion and allow them to protect their democracy.

Vladimir Putin's stated concerns about Ukraine are completely a false narrative, particularly with regard to his stated concerns about Ukraine becoming a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which, as we all know, is purely defensive in nature.

Vladimir Putin has called the fall of the Soviet Union one of the greatest geopolitical tragedies of the 20th century, and clearly he is of a mind to regain that lost territory as a result of the fall of the Soviet Union and, if necessary, do it by force. That is what Putin is up to, and we should not be confused about that.

I am proud to have worked with Senators CARDIN and WICKER and Senators SHAHEEN, GRAHAM, and BLUMENTHAL on this legislation, and I hope more of our colleagues—again, on a bipartisan basis—will join us in advancing this bill and making sure that our Ukrainian friends have everything they need to deter, if possible, Russian aggression and, if that is not possible, to make sure that Vladimir Putin pays a heavy price for attacking Ukraine.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, on another matter, it was 1 year ago today when we were all on the Capitol steps on a cold January 20, 2020, following the election of Joe Biden as President of the United States and KAMALA HARRIS as Vice President. Exactly 365 days ago, we were out there on the Capitol steps and heard what I believed to be an important and welcomed speech by the President, where the President said he would serve to be a unifying force in Washington.

He said:

> [W]ithout unity there is no peace, only bitterness and fury. No progress, only exhausting outrage. No nation, only a state of chaos.

Wonderful, inspirational words.

But now we find ourselves, a year into the Biden administration, with a lot of bitterness, fury, and outrage over the many failures and missteps of this administration. One of the pillars of the President's campaign was the promise of a strong Federal response to the pandemic.

Mr. Biden said:

> I am never going to raise the white flag and surrender. We're going to beat this virus. We're going to get it under control, I promise you.

That is a quote.

One year later, we are nowhere close to having this virus under control. New daily cases are breaking records, threatening the capacity of intensive care units and hospitals across the country. Healthcare workers are once again exhausted after having been pushed to their limits—mentally and physically. And, perhaps most embarrassingly, affordable, reliable tests are increasingly hard to come by.

We know testing is one of the most valuable resources we have when it comes to this virus. I remember calling my Governor, and I said: What do you need, Governor?

This is at the beginning of the pandemic.

He said: I need two things.

He said: I need testing, and I need PPE—personal protective equipment.

Well, that is another story about our vulnerable supply chains and the fact that we have outsourced the manufacturing of personal protective equipment to China, which is the main reason we had a lack of access to what we needed.

But as to testing, the sooner positive cases are identified, the better equipped we are as individuals to quarantine ourselves, seek medical attention—if necessary—or, if all else fails, to just ride out the virus without infecting other people.

Even before taking the oath of office, President Biden promised to make free testing widely available. But months and months went by without the President taking any significant action to prevent the current testing shortage.

Last month, the White House Press Secretary even mocked a reporter who asked if the United States should provide free at-home tests, just as other countries have done around the world. It looks like it took swift criticism of her remark to finally prompt some action. Just a couple of days ago, the White House launched a website for people who wanted to request free at-home tests. But I am afraid it is a case of too little, too late.

Many experts have said that Omicron has already peaked in parts of the country. By the time these tests ship, which the website says could take 7 to 12 days, we will be even closer to the beginning of the end of this current wave of Omicron.

Instead, the White House could have purchased and distributed massive quantities of tests at any point over the last year, but it did not do so. Increased access to testing could have lessened the impact of the Omicron variant over the summer as well as the contagious variant that we are confronting today. So it shouldn't take bad press to force the administration to action, especially when they made a commitment to free testing early on but, obviously, were unprepared for Omicron and the wave of new cases.

Unfortunately, the President has broken another big promise about his plan to address the pandemic. He vowed that public health decisions would be made by public health professionals, not politicians.

Once again, things have played out quite a bit differently. Here is one example. Last February, the Centers for Disease Control released a report that said that schools are not a breeding ground for COVID–19 and that as long as precautions are taken, schools could open safely.

Well, Congress did not skimp when it came to providing financial resources to the States and school districts to take those appropriate precautions to help preserve the safety of our children. But the science was at odds with the demands of a key political constituency—teachers unions, which wanted schools to remain closed even if the teachers were vaccinated and appropriate safety measures could be taken to protect the schoolchildren. We all know which side the administration chose. It ignored the science and stood with their political constituency, the teachers' unions.

When the President's big promise of a strong pandemic response failed to meet the need, he shifted the responsibility to the States. He said: I am going to do it. The Federal Government is going to do it. But then, amazingly, pivoted and said: Well, this is not my responsibility. This is not the Federal Government's responsibility. This is the State's responsibility.

Just a few weeks ago, he actually said these words. He said: There is no Federal solution. This gets solved at the State level.

I am sure the American people were flabbergasted at the answer and his obvious flip-flop. President Biden pledged to lead a strong pandemic response when it helped his chances of getting elected, but now that he is actually in office and has the power and authority to follow through, he is folding his hand and pointing the finger at others.

The Biden administration has fumbled the ball time after time. It has chipped away at our energy security. When you saw prices rise at the pump because of inflation or because demand of refined petroleum products exceeded supply, he actually went so far as to encourage Russia and OPEC to produce more oil and gas. At the same time, he was all about canceling the permit for the Keystone XL Pipeline. Nord Stream 2—the Russian pipeline—providing gas to Germany, he is all for it. When it comes to domestic pipelines providing oil and gas to refineries so they can produce gasoline so that people can drive their cars at an affordable price, he is not for it.

Additionally, this administration has failed to address the humanitarian crisis at the border, in an astonishingly blasé sort of way. It doesn't even seem to get a rise out of this administration anymore—the numbers are so high. There are 2 million-plus people apprehended at the border, with no real impediment or deterrent or discouraging words to keep them from entering the country illegally.

And then there is the fumbling of diplomatic relations, insulting some of our oldest allies and emboldening our biggest adversaries. The biggest example of that was ceding the war in Afghanistan to the Taliban in the most humiliating way possible.

So the list of missteps and failures during this last 365 days has been a long one, indeed. But perhaps the biggest disappointment was in not delivering what President Biden promised the American people 1 year ago today, and that is to be a unifying force for our country.

He promised, as we all heard, to bring people of different backgrounds and ideologies and beliefs together and to find common ground. It actually made sense to make a virtue out of something that a 50–50 Senate would ordinarily dictate, and that is: When you can't have your own way because you don't have the votes, then make a virtue out of working together and actually pass bipartisan legislation.

He actually went so far as to point to his record in the Senate as evidence of his ability to work across the aisle and broker bipartisan deals, but it didn't take long for the American people to find out that these were, by and large, empty words.

Less than 2 months into his Presidency, our colleagues across the aisle took a hammer to Congress's perfect record of bipartisan pandemic response. That was during the previous administration. Almost everything we did was bipartisan, virtually unanimous, when it came to responding to the pandemic.

First, our colleagues spent nearly $2 trillion on a bill that even though it was framed as COVID–19 response, committed less than 10 percent of that funding to COVID–19 and only 1 percent to vaccines. But that blowout, $2 trillion, wasn't enough.

The President tried and failed, along with his political allies, to advance the so-called Build Back Better agenda. While trying to sell this radical plan to the American people, President Biden continued to make big promises, most of which were not credible. He said, for example, that this multitrillion-dollar bill cost zero dollars. Nobody—nobody—believed that. But here it was, the President of the United States, embarrassingly, for himself and others, was saying that $5 trillion is really zero dollars. He said it wouldn't increase the deficit. And he said anyone making less than $400,000 a year would not pay a single penny more in income tax.

All of these claims turned out to be false. And in the end, Democrats couldn't muster enough support to get the bill to the President's desk—again, not particularly surprising to those who have been observers of the Senate for a while. A 50–50 Senate should tell you that the only way you are going to get things done is through bipartisan consensus building, not trying to do things all on your own with 50 votes in the Senate, plus a tie-breaking vote from the Vice President.

But that didn't stop our colleagues from turning to yet another partisan bill—this time, one to launch a Federal takeover of State-run elections. Yesterday, our Democratic colleagues brought this bill up for a vote in the Senate and, of course, as we now know, it failed to garner sufficient votes to pass. But no one should be surprised, especially because this bill was drafted by one party in a 50–50 Senate.

And then when the bill failed, as we all knew it would, our Democratic colleagues took their penchant for partisanship to an entirely new level.

With the President's blessing, somebody who served more than three decades in the Senate and who railed against efforts to eliminate the filibuster, the 60-vote bipartisan consensus requirement before bills can be advanced—the President, in spite of his previous comments supporting that requirement, the so-called filibuster—this time, with the President's blessing, Senate Democrats tried to change the rules of the Senate to secure a purely partisan win.

What we witnessed in the Senate yesterday evening was a remarkable show of priorities of our Democratic colleagues. Forget the rules, forget compromise, forget consensus building, and forget the traditions of this institution, our Democratic colleagues proved that they are willing to taking a wrecking ball to this Chamber in pursuit of power.

It is no wonder that President Biden's approval ratings continue to plummet. One recent poll found that only 33 percent of the respondents to that poll approved of the job that he was doing. After all, after everything the President promised, and with his dismal record of actually delivering on that promise, it is hardly surprising that the American people are disappointed.

In addition, inflation is up, wages are being eaten away by inflation, eroding the cost of living, and our country feels more divided than ever, despite the President's extravagant promises 1 year ago today, just out here on these steps.

The man who positioned himself as an experienced, unifying leader for the country has spent virtually all his time pursuing partisan ends. As a result, the Democratic Senate majority has wasted a lot of valuable time. I am disappointed by the wasted opportunities during the past year.

Floor time in the U.S. Senate is a precious commodity. It is the coin of the realm. There are a lot of great ideas that occur outside of this Chamber, but unless it can get time on the floor, it doesn't happen. But rather than taking up bills that did have that proud, bipartisan support, wasting time on purely partisan bills has resulted in very few accomplishments.

I can only hope that the second year of the Biden administration will bring more bipartisan cooperation. Hopefully, the administration can learn from its mistakes of the last year. This parade of dead-on-arrival legislation isn't helping the American people. The only way we can accomplish anything is by working together and building consensus.

Again, voters elected a 50–50 Senate, a closely divided House, and a President who promised to bring people of different views together. Let's hope this next year, the second year of the Biden administration, the President will see fit, along with our Democratic colleagues, to deliver on that commitment made 1 year ago today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

S.T.A.N.D. WITH TAIWAN ACT OF 2022

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, today I introduce the S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act of 2022, which would mandate comprehensive and devastating economic and financial sanctions against the Chinese Communist Party, key sectors of China's economy, and leaders in the Chinese Communist Party, if the Chinese People's Liberation Army initiates a military invasion of the island democracy of Taiwan. Representative MIKE GALLAGHER of Wisconsin introduced an identical bill in the House today as well.

I am hopeful that when my colleagues come back from recess, the vast majority of Senators here, Democrats and Republicans, will end up joining me in supporting this important bill.

Last March, in a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, I posed this

question to the INDOPACOM commander, Admiral Davidson:

> Given the Chinese Communist Party's recent but long list of coercive and even violent actions—a hostile suppression of freedom in Hong Kong, threatening nuclear war with Japan, hand-to-hand combat with Indian soldiers in the Himalayas, economic blockades of Australia, genocide in its own Xinjiang province, [and aggressive naval actions in the South China Sea]—how do such actions impact your analysis [Admiral Davidson] on if and when China would invade Taiwan?

His response to me in this hearing made news around the world. He called these recent actions by President Xi ''alarming,'' and then he said:

> I think the threat [of an invasion of Taiwan] is manifest during this decade, in fact, in the next 6 years.

Six years—that is not a lot of time. The Senate needs to focus on this issue much more. Indeed, this issue is not unrelated to the actions of another dictator—Vladimir Putin—who is right now threatening and likely to invade one of his neighbors—Ukraine.

Now, some see the defense of Taiwan as a luxury we cannot afford in an age of sharpened and great power competition and China's global economic strength. I reject that view. Importantly, so does American law, particularly the Taiwan Relations Act, which this body passed in 1979 by a vote of 90 to 6. Among other things, it states the following:

> The United States will consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means . . . a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern.

The free world cannot be neutral in the contest between freedom and authoritarianism that is once again underway around the world, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.

American alliances, power, and ingenuity helped build a world that provided more freedom and prosperity to more people than ever before. Think about this fact: The U.S. democracy, bolstered by our strong military, has done more to liberate humankind from oppression and tyranny—literally hundreds of millions of people—than any other force in human history.

The Chinese Communist Party knows exactly what it wants to accomplish—to make the world safe for its authoritarian government, to export its dictatorship model to other countries, to separate America from its democratic allies, and to erode U.S. leadership around the world.

A world governed by Xi Jinping's totalitarian vision would be a world unsafe for America and other democracies around the world. That is why Taiwan is so central to the free world and its future. It is a thriving, prosperous Chinese democracy that holds free elections and bounds its power by the rule of law. For that reason, it threatens the CCP's central premise, which is that one man ruling in perpetuity by crushing all dissent knows what is best for 1.4 billion people.

The Chinese Communist Party has already crushed Hong Kong, once a bastion of liberty, and the free world barely raised its voice in protest. Should America and the world stand by as China does something similar to Taiwan, a peaceful democracy of 25 million people who have voted for an entirely different future? That would not simply undermine the security of the Western Pacific, as the Taiwan Relations Act says, a violent military takeover of Taiwan by the Chinese Communist Party would be a sea change in how the world is ordered. It would change the history of the 21st century in ways that the guns of August of 1914 changed the 20th century.

Taiwan is not some peripheral sideshow in terms of global great-power competition; it is the frontline between freedom and tyranny, like West Berlin was during the height of the Cold War. It matters everywhere.

Last month, the magazine the National Review highlighted many of these issues in an excellent issue which laid out the arguments for and against whether the U.S. military should come to Taiwan's aid if the island democracy was invaded by the Chinese military. Should our country militarily defend democratic Taiwan after the CCP launches a military invasion of the island? This is a vitally important question which was front and center in the National Review last month. As the National Review points out, there is much disagreement on this issue.

There are powerful arguments on both sides, as this issue admirably demonstrates, but I believe there is much less disagreement on whether the United States should take actions now to deter a Chinese Communist Party military invasion of Taiwan in the future. Indeed, taking actions now to promote deterrence of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan is an area where I believe there is broad bipartisan agreement and support in the U.S. Senate.

Deterrence comes in many forms, and with regard to Taiwan, I believe there are three crucial layers of deterrence, as depicted here.

First is Taiwan's ability to militarily defend itself, the so-called hedgehog approach right here, where Taiwan musters sufficient self-defense capabilities to make a Chinese military invasion very difficult and very costly.

The second layer of deterrence is America's capability and will to defend Taiwan militarily should the President of the United States decide to do so once there is an invasion by the Chinese.

Over the past several decades, through many different crises in the Taiwan Strait, this layer, the American layer of deterrence, has proven to be decisive in keeping the Taiwanese people free. Our deep network of allies in the region augments this level of deterrence.

As it relates to deterrence in Taiwan, it is really often discussed only in these two layers, but there is a third layer that is depicted here, which in terms of the present circumstances might be the most important, and that is the use of other instruments of American power beyond our military, such as our global economic and financial strengths, to deter China from an invasion.

That is exactly what my bill, the S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act of 2022, is all about. The full name of this bill is Sanctions Targeting Aggressors of Neighboring Democracies—aka S.T.A.N.D.—with Taiwan.

It is a simple bill but a very powerful one, especially in terms of its deterrent effect. It states that if the Chinese Communist Party initiates a military invasion of Taiwan, the United States shall impose a comprehensive suite of mandatory economic and financial sanctions. The bill lays out these comprehensive sanctions, some of which are listed here, in great detail. These sanctions would be crippling to the Chinese Communist Party, its leaders, and key sectors of China's economy.

The bill also calls on the United States to coordinate such comprehensive sanctions with our allies around the globe, with the goal of making the CCP an economic pariah globally if President Xi chooses to militarily invade Taiwan.

The bill's goal is to make very clear to President Xi today the true cost of what such a military invasion of Taiwan would be, thereby heightening deterrence, which we all in the U.S. Senate support.

I believe the S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act of 2022 should receive broad bipartisan support. In many ways, it reinforces the goals, policies, and directives of the Taiwan Relations Act, which continues to have overwhelming support here in the U.S. Senate.

The defense of Taiwan is an issue that has been weaved in and out of the careers and professions of countless Americans, including my own.

Over 25 years ago, in 1995 and 1996, I was a Marine infantry officer deployed to the Taiwan Strait as part of a Marine amphibious task force and two U.S. carrier strike groups, all in response to the Chinese Communist Party's aggressive military provocations on the eve of Presidential elections in Taiwan—the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis, this period is now called. That was an important and decisive demonstration of American commitment and resolve to an emerging democracy and partner that is still remembered today on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

More recently, I was part of another demonstration of American commitment and resolve when I traveled to Taiwan with Democrat Senators TAMMY DUCKWORTH and CHRIS COONS to provide vaccines—close to a million—from the United States for the Taiwanese people in the face of the Chinese Communist Party's aggressive attempts to prevent the citizens of Taiwan from receiving these lifesaving Western medicines.

I am now a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve, working again on these issues in the INDOPACOM theater.

Let me conclude with this: American commitment and resolve for Taiwan has been part of our law, heritage, trade, economics, and military deployments for decades and should be for decades to come. The S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act of 2022 is the next logical step to demonstrate America's commitment to Taiwan, this time emphasizing the deterrent power of our economic and financial strengths.

It is our values of freedom, innovation, the rule of law, individual rights, and openness that the Chinese Communist Party is most afraid of. We must be ready as democracies to defend these values or risk a world increasingly governed by autocracy, surveillance, aggression, and permanent conflict. The S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act will help us do just that.

TRIBUTE TO EMMA BROYLES

Madam President, it has been a busy week. Let's face it—it has been a contentious week here in the U.S. Senate. We had a big vote last night. I spoke about the issues we were debating last night and a few times on the Senate floor. Just a minute ago, I introduced a bill of mine on a very serious topic regarding a possible war with China and Taiwan. So it has been busy.

To be honest, my team and I were focused on a lot of these issues, and we were thinking about skipping my favorite part of the week—coming down on the Senate floor and talking about the Alaskan of the week—but then we came across a Twitter meme. You almost have to see it to completely understand it, but the gist of it was this: We in the Senate can't achieve civility without an ''Alaskan of the Week'' speech at the end of the week to lift spirits here in the Senate.

I kind of appreciated that meme, so we wanted to make sure that we, after a rough, contentious couple of weeks, ended it on a note that was uplifting and to highlight another very special Alaskan, as I try to do pretty much every week, whose role right now in our country is, in fact, going to be about bringing civility and respect and emphasizing the importance of service to all people of the United States and across the globe. So I thought, what a great time for an ''Alaskan of the Week'' speech. I know the pages love it.

So let me introduce to you our Alaskan of the week this week: 20-year-old Emma Broyles from Anchorage, who broke through barriers to become the first Alaskan and the first Korean American ever to be crowned Miss America. This just happened a couple weeks ago. Emma is very well-deserving, as you will see, and when it was announced that she had won Miss America, when that happened, when her name was announced, she cried tears of joy, of course, and Alaskans across the State cheered.

Now, every Miss America contestant picks a cause to champion. Special Olympics, which I love—I am probably Alaska's Special Olympics biggest fan—was Emma's cause.

The night of the event, they held a watch party at the Jim Balamici Special Olympics training center in Anchorage, which is a great facility. Our Special Olympian athletes were the loudest of any group in the State cheering for Emma and her great win. Then, of course, there is the huge, extended Korean-American family who was also cheering, laughing, and crying when it was announced that she had won.

After it was done, Emma told reporters: ''I didn't even expect to make the top 10. I was there for the good time and the cheesecake.'' That is Emma for you—funny, self-deprecating, humble, and real, just like her home State. She is the perfect Miss America to represent the great State of Alaska.

So let me tell you about our Miss America, America's Miss America, Alaska's Miss America, and her goals going forward.

About 50 years ago, Emma's grandparents emigrated from Korea to Anchorage. They wanted to raise a family, to live the American dream. Alaska, of course, is a great place to do that.

By the way, we have the greatest, strongest, most incredible Korean-American community in Alaska, who are just incredible Americans.

Emma's grandparents' daughter—Emma's mom—Julie was born in Anchorage, and so was her father Ron. Emma grew up a typical Alaskan kid—like my three daughters—fishing, winter sports, hard work at school, community-oriented. Her mom was a special education teacher, and her older brother has Down syndrome.

Emma likes to say that she went to her first Special Olympics meet when she was in the womb, so she has been a fan literally from the beginning of her life, and that is one of the reasons she is so passionate about that issue. She knows firsthand, like many of us do, the power of Special Olympic athletes to inspire and to be such great representatives for inclusion and respect and healthy competition.

Emma graduated from Service High School and made her way to Arizona State University, where she is now a junior studying biomedical sciences and voice performance. She wants to be a doctor. In fact, she wants to be a dermatologist.

Emma shared something with the world during the Miss America pageant that was very brave, like so many young women are doing now, particularly our athletes who have to perform and have a platform and use that platform for good, to talk about some difficult issues. Emma told the world that she had been diagnosed with ADHD—attention deficit hyperactivity disorder—which led to chronic scratching and skin-pinching issues.

Now, we don't hear a lot about that, but roughly 2 percent of the population has this challenge, mostly young women. That is why Emma wants to be a dermatologist—to help young women like her who suffer from this disorder or other medical challenges.

''It was kind of a hard thing for me to share at first,'' Emma said, with the world during the pageant. ''I wasn't sure if I was ready to be that vulnerable, you know, on a national stage with hundreds [of] thousands of people watching.''

That is what she said, but she did it. She did it. That was very courageous, and we are better for it.

With Emma's beautiful singing voice, her poise, her bravery in highlighting an issue that has caused her a lot of pain, her role of championing the Special Olympics, her heritage, her home State, the crown looked very natural and beautiful atop Emma's head, like it was meant to be there.

Here is what she told a reporter after she won:

> There were a lot of people who felt like they saw themselves in me.

She talked about all of the positive messages she had received from people all across America, Alaska, and the entire world after she won.

They told her how wonderful it was to see someone like them, someone who had similar issues or someone who has a family member who has a disability, and she talked about it courageously. They told her how wonderful it was ''seeing themselves in me and seeing this kind of relatable figure and someone they can look to.'' That is Emma.

I think you are starting to see what a great young woman she is. Like so many of us, she had a tough time during COVID last year, but she overcame it. She said, ''I hope that other people know that they can do the same thing,'' overcoming these challenges, ''whatever it is they're struggling with.''

So thank you, Emma, for being such an inspiration—incredible job, incredible courage, incredible poise.

I also—because I am talking about Emma—want to recognize so many other incredible Alaska women who have recently stepped up, done amazing things.

We have a State of very strong women. I am lucky to be surrounded by them everywhere—my wife, my daughters, cousins, sisters-in-law.

There is a famous saying in our State, and when you come to Alaska, you see it everywhere—T-shirts, mugs, bumper stickers. It is a simple saying: Alaska girls kick ass.

Now, look, I am not sure I am supposed to be able to say that on the Senate floor, but I just did. I hope I am not going to get fined or anything. But take a look. It is everywhere in our State. I love the bumper stickers.

And that, in the past year, has really proven to be true—truer than ever. We have our first Alaskan to win Miss America, our Alaskan of the Week today, Emma Broyles. We had our first

Alaskan, Lydia Jacoby, to win a gold medal in swimming, where we don't even have an Olympic-size swimming pool. She won the breaststroke in an amazing race. She did such a great job that she is the first person in U.S. Senate history to be Alaskan of the Week twice—not sure that is ever going to happen again.

We have the first Alaskan woman, Deniz Burnham, chosen to be a NASA astronaut. Another woman, Nichole Ayers, who was stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, was also picked to be an astronaut.

I don't know. It is something about breathing the air.

And, as usual, we have winter olympians going to the Winter Olympics again this year, like we almost always do—strong, very strong, in that area: Rosie Brennan, Vicky Persinger.

And there is Quannah Chasinghorse, an Alaskan Native—a young Alaskan Native woman who was featured recently on the cover of Vogue.

So it has been a great year for strong Alaskan women. And to Emma, I just want to say: You make us all proud. Congratulations on your incredible win: Miss America, first Alaskan ever. You have been an inspiration to us. Thank you for your courage, your willingness to speak out on tough issues and take up great causes like our Special Olympic athletes. And, of course, congratulations on being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Ohio.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, 10 minutes ago there was a different Nevadan Senator sitting at the Presiding Officer's chair. Welcome.

I was at a roundtable this morning with a group of Ohio county commissioners from conservative counties like Warren and Medina and more progressive counties like Lucas and Hamilton—Republicans and Democrats alike; male, female; a good cross section of Ohio leaders—talking about the projects we are going to build and the good-paying jobs we are going to create—jobs that will not be off-shored this time because we came together to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Yesterday, I was on a media call with the Republican mayor of Findlay, OH, about the I–75 bridge project that they need in Hancock County.

The day before, I was at another roundtable with western Ohio leaders, talking with them about how we can leverage these investments. It is some of the most important work I am going to be doing over the coming months, working with local and Federal officials to make sure this investment translates into Ohio jobs.

The Presiding Officer understands this, that we pass legislation here. With it, sometimes, comes a good bit of money, like with infrastructure. But it is also up to us, as representing our States, to make sure those dollars are spent efficiently and effectively and quickly, frankly.

The infrastructure bill is some of the most important work we have done in the Senate in a long time. We are investing in our country.

For years, mayors and businesses and workers have been telling us, as their representatives, as their Senators, about the need to upgrade infrastructure, but we have noticed over the years that candidates of both parties have promised infrastructure. ''We are going to pass an infrastructure bill when I am elected,'' they say. Plenty talk about it, but now, with a new President and a new majority in the Senate and the House, we are finally getting it done with this bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Over the past few months, I have heard from communities about the projects that this is going to allow them to accomplish.

In Toledo, with the mayor, talking about the city's plans to replace lead pipes—my State has the dubious distinction of being the second leading State, if you will. Our State has the second-most lead-contaminated pipes from main water lines and the pipes going into people's homes. We have 600,000 pipes like that going into people's homes that have high levels of lead.

And science has known, paint companies have known, lead manufacturers have known that infants, babies ingest lead. It affects their brain development for the rest of their lives. So one of our goals, working with the mayor of Toledo, is over the next several years to replace those pipes.

Ohio will get someone $1 billion in new funding to improve water infrastructure.

The Western Hills Viaduct in Cincinnati, the Patterson Avenue Bridge in Dayton—Ohio has some 3,200 bridges eligible for upgrades. Some of them, like the Brent Spence, unbelievably, across the Ohio River, carries 3 percent of GDP every day across that river.

Some of those bridges are—when I grew up working the family farm, driving a tractor with a hay wagon crossing little culvert bridges that dot our countryside and all over my State, many of those are in states of disrepair.

We have seen the new pollution-free buses that communities like Akron and Canton, Columbus, and Lake County are rolling out through Laketran, their transit system. We have heard about how they are going to expand service so people can get to work and school.

We have some 60,000 buses—big city buses—and another 50 or 60,000 small transit, more rural buses, that need to be replaced. They are fossil fuel, mostly diesel engines, and we are going to replace those over the next several years with low-emission or zero-emission buses.

From the Port of Ashtabula, the community my wife grew up in, we are hearing about how upgrades to our ports will increase investment and help speed up and grow Ohio supply chains.

As the Presiding Officer knows, this Congress, this Senate and the House, frankly, over the years, at the behest of corporate lobbyists, sold us out on trade agreements, sold us out on tax policy, so that so many jobs left our country. The industrial Midwest was hit the hardest, but every State was hit by that job loss because of bad government policy, again, lobbied by some of the largest corporations in the world—the tech companies, the drug companies, the oil industry.

We now have a President who wants to get it right and bring those supply chains closer to home.

Now this, we also see how Ohio needs better rail infrastructure—new rail cars for Cleveland RTA, better Amtrak service, safer rail crossings.

But, fundamentally, this bill—the infrastructure bill—is a jobs bill. It will create construction jobs, to be sure. It will create jobs—union jobs: carpenters, millwrights, electricians, plumbers and pipe fitters, sheet metal workers, laborers. It will create those kinds of jobs but also create manufacturing jobs through the supply chain.

Senator PORTMAN and I worked to make sure this bill has the strongest ''Buy America'' requirements ever in an infrastructure bill with our Build America, Buy America Act.

Every one of these projects will come with the strongest ever ''Buy America'' rules. No more bridges—no more bay bridges in Northern California—made entirely with Chinese steel.

We introduced the ''Build America, Buy America'' bill on President Trump's inauguration day. Unfortunately, nothing moved because everything got crowded out of President Trump's agenda so they could give a huge tax cut to the richest people in the country.

We worked with other leaders now, 4 years later, with a new President, to get it right.

With ''Buy America'' particularly, I call out Senator BALDWIN from Wisconsin, Senator PETERS from Michigan and their work.

We are putting in place a clear, permanent standard: If American tax dollars are involved, American workers should be getting the jobs. It is going to mean more contracts for Ohio businesses.

Cleveland Cliffs' new plant in Toledo, talking about what we are doing there, it is the cleanest steel making, I believe, in the entire world at that new plant.

Owens Corning in Toledo; Gradall Industries in New Philadelphia, OH, on the edge of Appalachia.

We have the potential for hundreds more bridge projects around the State using American rebar, American steel, American iron.

It is an investment in Ohio that will pay off, creating jobs now, both during construction and up and down the supply chain. It will help attract new businesses. It will help keep the existing

ones. It will connect people with their jobs and businesses.

I will spend pretty much every day, and my staff will too, making sure that our State gets its fair share of this investment and these jobs.

If you believe in the dignity of work, you fight for the people who make this country work. We are seeing results.

On Wednesday, the mayor of Findlay and I were talking about the Biden administration's announcement of $100 million in initial bridge funding already on the way to Ohio. That focus will continue.

We are doing roundtables. We are doing briefings with Federal officials, with local township trustees and county officials and mayors and city officials and State officials, talking about how they can apply for Federal funding, and to make sure communities are best positioned to make the most of this infrastructure.

Our goal is to leverage this investment to create jobs in every city, in every county, in every township across my great State.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 638, Joseph Donnelly, of Indiana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Joseph Donnelly, of Indiana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See?

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations: All nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

PN480–2 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of Leon Skarshinski, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2021.

PN903 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (2) beginning John Breidenstine, and ending Michael Lally, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 19, 2021.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWN. 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.

NOTICE OF A TIE VOTE UNDER S. RES. 27

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the following letters in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC.

To the Secretary of the Senate:

PN1501, the nomination of Dale E. Ho, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York, having been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

(1) on the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed, 11 ayes to 11 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

RICHARD J. DURBIN.

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC.

To the Secretary of the Senate:

PN1509, the nomination of Charlotte N. Sweeney, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado, having been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

(1) on the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed, 11 ayes to 11 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

RICHARD J. DURBIN.

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC.

To the Secretary of the Senate:

PN1512, the nomination of Hernan D. Vera, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, having been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

(1) on the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed, 11 ayes to 11 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

RICHARD J. DURBIN.

(At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, had I been present when the Senate voted on vote No. 11 on confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 635 Holly A. Thomas, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, I would have voted aye.•

COVID–19 VACCINES

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, as our Nation battles another wave of COVID–19, I want to detail my efforts to lower barriers for Americans to access life-saving vaccinations against this terrible disease.

The Special Committee on Aging's investigation forced the largest commercial health insurer in the United States to reverse course and make whole providers who were paid far below the market rate for administering COVID–19 vaccines. These efforts will help ensure that every provider who can administer COVID–19 vaccines is doing so, helping get more shots in arms.

Last year, news reports detailed how UnitedHealth had been shortchanging pediatricians who were vaccinating children against COVID–19. In short, Medicare set reimbursement rates for participating providers at $40 per dose in mid-March 2021. The Federal Government strongly recommended that private carriers do the same and most appear to have done so within weeks, but UnitedHealth did not.

The committee's investigation found that UnitedHealth paid in-network providers roughly 40 percent below the Medicare rate until July 1, 2021. Further, the company delayed action to make providers whole. During the investigation, pediatricians in Pennsylvania and beyond raised concerns that UnitedHealth's original reimbursement rate could dissuade providers from administering the vaccine.

UnitedHealth covers 26 million people in employer and individual market health insurance plans, with 1.4 million

in-network providers and an estimated 14 percent market share. UnitedHealth's decision to reimburse providers below the Medicare rate had the potential to harm families across our Nation at a critical juncture, just as the Food and Drug Administration prepared to expand the availability of vaccines to children ages 5–11.

For parents with questions about vaccines, pediatricians are trusted advisers who can play a key role in overcoming lingering concerns or hesitancy, which remains a major issue in our Nation.

In the long term, ensuring that all hands are on deck to deliver vaccines will help end this pandemic. Data has shown time and again that being vaccinated against COVID–19 reduces infections, severe disease, hospitalization, and death. Vaccinating children also will help protect adults by increasing the number of Americans shielded from the virus, reducing its spread. It also reduces the chance for the virus to mutate and spawn variants, like Omicron, that has led to another wave of illness and death. These concerns are particularly important for older adults who are more likely than the general population to experience both severe COVID–19 and breakthrough infections. Vaccinating children helps protect older generations, particularly older adults living in multigenerational households, including more than 7 million grandparents who live with grandchildren under the age of 18.

Providing more parents with the information they need to ensure they are comfortable vaccinating their kids will help protect all of our children. While pediatric hospitalizations remain relatively rare, there has nonetheless been a significant increase of such hospitalizations as the Omicron variant has spread in recent weeks. The Wall Street Journal recently reported that pediatric hospitalizations due to COVID–19 reached pandemic highs in the United States.

Vaccinating more children is essential to keep schools open for in-person learning, a live issue for schools throughout our Nation that have been forced to return to online classes in the face of the Omicron variant. We must do all that we can to safely keep students in the classroom so that they can receive the high-quality education they deserve. School closures also cause a disruption in the lives of families, with parents often struggling to find childcare or forcing them to take time from work. Vaccinating children will help schools remain open, protect students and educators, and help parents stay in the workforce.

After Aging Committee investigators reached out to UnitedHealth, the company quickly and voluntarily committed to change course, commitments I detailed in an October 20, 2021, letter. In response to my letter, UnitedHealth confirmed its plans to retroactively increase reimbursements for approximately 2 million COVID–19 vaccine administration claims to the Medicare rate across its entire commercial network, including individual plans on the Affordable Care Act marketplace. On January 14, 2022, the company reported that it had processed 1.64 million claims in connection with its commitment to the committee—more than 99.8 percent of the affected total—at an average cost of $14.55 per claim for a total of $23.9 million. The company expects the remaining claims, which number less than 2,900, to be processed by February 1, 2022.

UnitedHealth also committed to more quickly update reimbursement rates for future emergent vaccines and therapeutics, whether for COVID–19 or the next pandemic. The company added that it is ''redirecting additional internal resources and automating updates whenever possible,'' while noting that their new processes still might involve withholding claims ''for a short time,'' which it characterized as no longer than 30 days. On January 14, the company went further, stating that it will implement new billing codes in a national public health emergency ''faster than industry standard,'' while noting that it has ''learned over the past few months the required technology and human resources that need to be brought forward to accelerate'' adoption of new billing codes in a public health emergency.

While lacking some details, the steps UnitedHealth has described appear to be an appropriate response. However, UnitedHealth has not adequately addressed an issue that a senior company official raised when speaking with Aging Committee investigators in September, that the company's size and numerous claims systems presented a barrier to quickly updating COVID–19 vaccine reimbursement rates in the first place. In its responses to subsequent questions about the issue from committee staff, UnitedHealth has cited reasons such as contracting language for the delay, but has failed to provide additional information or explanation in their written responses. The fact that a senior UnitedHealth official told the committee that the company's size negatively affected the quality and efficiency of its interactions with the market is concerning and a matter that deserves continued oversight from Congress and regulators.

In recent weeks, the world has been upended by the Omicron variant. Case rates have skyrocketed, and hospitals are once again filling up, primarily with people who have not gotten a COVID–19 vaccine or booster. In order to leave the tragedy, the disruptions and the closures of the pandemic behind, every person who can be vaccinated has a duty to the country to roll up their sleeves and get the shot.

We will continue to learn more about the Omicron variant and variants to come. However, there is one thing about this variant, past variants, and future variants that will not change: The key to ending this pandemic is getting more people vaccinated.

I remain committed to removing future roadblocks that may emerge to widespread vaccination against COVID–19.

This body should do the same.

In closing, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the following documents: a September 3, 2021 Modern Healthcare article detailing UnitedHealth's under reimbursement for COVID–19 vaccines compared to most other major carriers; my October 20, 2021 letter to UnitedHealth; UnitedHealth's November 5, 2021 response to my letter; a November 12, 2021 supplement to the company's original response; and a January 14, 2022 email from UnitedHealth providing further updates.

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

[From Modern Healthcare, Sept. 3, 2021]

UNITEDHEALTHCARE PAYS PROVIDERS BELOW STANDARD RATES FOR COVID–19 VACCINES

(By Nona Tepper)

Pediatricians across the country are claiming the nation's largest insurer is short-changing them for administering COVID–19 vaccines, jeopardizing access to the main tool for stopping the virus' spread.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has fielded complaints from providers nationwide who are frustrated that UnitedHealth Group is paying about 50% of the federal rate for vaccine administration, said Dr. Sue Kressly, who chairs the AAP's payment advocacy advisory committee and runs Pennsylvania-based Kressly Pediatrics. While UnitedHealthcare is not legally required to pay the federal rate, Kressly said the Minnetonka, Minnesota-based insurer is the only national carrier that has not agreed to pay at least $40 for vaccine administration.

The insurer also continues to pay pediatricians and family medicine providers below-market rates for COVID–19 tests, Kressly said, an issue the New York Times revealed in February.

With new variants of COVID–19 continuing to emerge, Kressly worried that low fees for testing and vaccine administration would lead some doctors to stop offering these services, worsening the public health crisis, increasing medical costs and inspiring more independent practices to shutter, particularly as providers struggle with overwork during the pandemic.

''They had record-breaking profits in 2020, and we struggled with getting them to pay adequately for COVID testing. That still not been resolved,'' Kressly said. ''Now pediatricians who are giving the vaccine to people covered by UnitedHealthcare, they're effectively opening their wallet, and subsidizing that patient to get the vaccine.''

At the end of the company's most recent second quarter on June 30, UnitedHealthcare generated $55.5 billion in revenue, up 13% from the $49.1 billion reported during the same period last year. The company counted more than 49.6 million enrollees, an increase of 1.2 million year-over-year. Meanwhile, the insurer's low vaccine reimbursement rates threaten the future of family practices, Kressly said. Unlike most medical services, federal legislation bars providers from balance billing patients for the COV[0–19 vaccine.

''If we don't at least make enough money to cover our costs, then we won't be here as practices to serve the community beyond the

public health emergency,'' Kressly said. ''That's a bigger problem.''

UnitedHealthcare is not the only payer offering clinicians low fees for vaccine administration—some regional plans and employers are also paying below the federal rate, Kressly said. But she said these payers are likely just slow to react to payment standards. In March, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services nearly doubled what it was paying providers for giving the vaccine, after the American Medical Association found the previous rate did not cover the costs associated with administering the shot. Most of these payers are just confused about the update and, when Kressly reaches out to them, she said they generally immediately increase their rate. But UnitedHealthcare has refused to increase what it is paying pediatricians.

''They say, 'Our fee schedule is our fee schedule, it's up to the contract that the practice has with UnitedHealthcare, let them try to have the conversation,' '' Kressly said.

UnitedHealthcare, for its part, said it recently offered to increase reimbursement for COVID–19 testing for some pediatric and family medicine practices that met specific criteria. When it comes to vaccines, UnitedHealthcare said it is continually reviewing its reimbursement rates.

Dr. George Rogu, president of the Independent Pediatric Collaborative of Long Island and head of RBK Pediatrics, hopes to be one of the providers paid more for giving UnitedHealthcare enrollees COVID–19 vaccines.

When Rogu reached out to the insurer last month. a UnitedHealthcare customer service representative blamed his low rates on his different customers' plans and the different fee schedules associated with each. The customer service representative said Rogu was the first provider to complain about the matter and offered to refer his case to the company's management team.

''We cannot in good conscience say, 'Oh, we can't give you the vaccine because you have UnitedHealthcare.' That's not right,'' Rogu said. ''It's just not humanely right. But people that have a large panel of UnitedHealthcare customers? It's killing them.''

Rogu said he is still waiting to hear back from the insurer.

He said he noticed that he was being paid below the federal rates in May and asked New York-based Canid Vaccines, his vaccine administration software system, about the problem. The startup verified that UnitedHealthcare reimbursed him at about half the rate that other insurers did. Canid Vaccines said it has identified at least 25 independent practices representing more than 350 providers nationwide that UnitedHealthcare is paying at less than the federal rate.

Among pediatric circles, UnitedHealthcare is often referred to as the ''evil empire'' since they are the least transparent and least cooperative among the major insurers, said Dr. Peter Pogacar, vice president of the Rhode Island chapter of the AAP and a pediatrician at East Greenwich Pediatrics. He said UnitedHealthcare is underpaying physicians for COVID–19 vaccine administration there too.

''Healthcare should be about healing with business as a sideshow, not the main event,'' Pogacar wrote in an email.

The insurer isn't just offering low rates for administering the COVID–19 vaccine. UnitedHealthcare has also reimbursed providers for less than what it cost them to purchase COVID–19 testing kits. After significant media attention, the manufacturer and distributor of the tests dropped their prices so that providers were no longer losing money when they were paid UnitedHealthcare rates, said Dr. Reshma Chugani, a pediatrician at the Atlanta Children's Clinical Center. The insurer also announced it would increase the rate paid for the tests, as well as allow pediatricians to resubmit patient claims, she said. But they are still not offering to reimburse providers for tests previously paid at below-market rates.

''We lost money on every United patient,'' Chugani said.

Additionally, the insurer has made it difficult for providers to recoup the money it said it owes them, forcing them to go through multiple administrative layers and still failing to reimburse one type of test at the full rate, said AAP's Kressly. She said she talked to UnitedHealthcare about this issue two weeks ago and that it has still not been resolved.

''They've put barriers for us to have to act when we have no time, energy or resources to do so,'' she said.

OCTOBER 20, 2021.

Sir ANDREW WITTY,
Chief Executive Officer,
UnitedHealth Group.

DEAR SIR ANDREW: I write in regard to commitments UnitedHealth Group (UnitedHealth) made to the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging related to reimbursement policies for the administration of COVID–19 vaccines. UnitedHealth's past policies appeared to have created access barriers for children seeking COVID–19 vaccination from their primary care pediatrician—barriers that affected younger and older Americans alike. I appreciate the company's decision to reprocess certain COVID–19 vaccine claims, which I expect will facilitate the broadest possible access to COVID–19 vaccines among UnitedHealth's members. I expect that the steps UnitedHealth has committed to take will help children seeking COVID–19 vaccines as well as older Americans under the purview of the Aging Committee, including the millions who live with and care for their grandchildren or other younger relatives. I appreciate your company's assurance that UnitedHealth will keep the Aging Committee updated on its progress toward expeditiously resolving the concerns raised with the company.

The Aging Committee's attention was drawn to this issue by press reports highlighting that during a four-month period earlier this year, UnitedHealth reimbursed pediatricians at rates that failed to meet the costs of administering COVID–19 vaccines. During that time, other large insurers reportedly reimbursed pediatricians and other health care providers at a higher rate, in line with what the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) set in March 2021. Pediatricians raised concerns that UnitedHealth's low reimbursement rates would deter in-network providers from administering COVID–19 vaccines, creating barriers for patients. The additional costs of administering COVID–19 vaccines have been significant for providers, a point that CMS noted at the time it increased reimbursement rates, citing ''updated information about the costs involved in administering the COVID–19 vaccine for different types of providers and suppliers and the additional resources you need to safely and appropriately administer the vaccine.'' The agency furthermore encouraged private payers to follow suit, noting that ''in light of CMS's increased Medicare payment rates, CMS will expect commercial carriers to continue to ensure that their rates are reasonable in comparison to prevailing market rates.'' Given UnitedHealth's status as the Nation's largest commercial payer—with 26 million people enrolled in employer and individual plans, 1.4 million in-network providers and an estimated 14 percent market share—it is critical that the company do all it can to ensure that vaccines are available to every person that is eligible to receive one. To that end, the Aging Committee requested that UnitedHealth provide information about the company's reimbursement rates, the timeliness of future fee schedule updates and the company's progress toward making providers whole for vaccines they administered while UnitedHealth was reimbursing below reimbursement rates set by CMS.

The ongoing effort to increase COVID–19 vaccination rates across our Nation demands an all-hands-on-deck approach. Ensuring that all eligible children are vaccinated against COVID–19 is key to improving the overall vaccination rate, which will better protect older Americans by helping stem the spread of the virus. Such efforts are of particular importance ahead of the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) expected consideration of COVID–19 vaccines for young children later this month. Older Americans have been among those hit hardest by COVID–19 and face the greatest health risks if they contract the disease, even after being vaccinated. Recognizing the elevated risk of breakthrough infections in older adults, the Biden administration recently authorized third doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for people ages 65 and over. The serious health risks COVID–19 poses for older adults are especially acute for those living in multi-generation households, including more than 7 million grandparents who live with grandchildren under the age of 18. Those older Americans are at even greater risk of exposure when they live with unvaccinated individuals, an important consideration given the greater impact of the delta variant on children. The current wave of COVID–19 has led to higher pediatric case rates, record pediatric hospitalizations and school closures that have affected more than 900,000 students at 1,800 schools across 44 states in August and September alone.

During calls in September with Aging Committee staff, UnitedHealth officials confirmed press accounts that reported a months-long period when the company was reimbursing providers up to 40 percent less for COVID–19 vaccine administration than the rate set by the CMS. While other major payers reportedly adopted the reimbursement rate set by CMS swiftly, UnitedHealth continued reimbursing at a lower rate until the end of June. During conversations with staff, UnitedHealth reported that it had problems uploading the CMS rate to the company's various fee schedules. Aging Committee staff have heard concerns from providers that the reimbursement issues pediatricians experienced with UnitedHealth earlier this year could resurface when the FDA authorizes a COVID–19 vaccine for 5–11 year-olds, which will carry a different billing code.

Following the concerns raised by the Aging Committee last month, UnitedHealth informed Aging Committee staff during a call on October 6 that the company planned to address the concerns outlined above. Specifically, UnitedHealth committed to reprocessing all of its commercial claims—not just pediatric claims—from the time CMS issued new rates for COVID–19 vaccines in mid-March to the time United updated its fee schedule on July 1. Company officials further stated that United Health would reprocess the claims automatically and that providers would *not* be required to resubmit claims for reprocessing. Noting that the company expected to reprocess ''millions'' of claims that

were submitted by providers during the three-and-a-half month period prior to July 1, UnitedHealth officials told Aging Committee staff that they hoped to make ''significant progress'' within 30–45 days. Company officials further committed to:

1. Review UnitedHealth's claims process to minimize delays in making payments to providers for COVID–19 vaccines;

2. Verify that there are no similar underpayment issues in its Affordable Care Act Exchange and Medicaid Managed Care books of business: and

3. Provide updates to Aging Committee staff on the company's progress toward meeting these goals.

As part of these updates, please also provide me with the following information no later than November 5, 2021:

1. How many claims does UnitedHealth expect to reprocess for COVID–19 vaccinations that were administered prior to July 1, 2021? What was the average difference between the initial reimbursement and the reprocessed claim? What was the total amount that UnitedHealth paid to providers to settle these claims at the CMS rates?

2. UnitedHealth told Aging Committee staff that it is difficult to quickly update its reimbursement rates when new vaccine billing codes and rates are issued by CMS. UnitedHealth further stated that its expected solution for this issue may involve delaying payments to providers to give the company's payment systems time to reflect new codes and rates. In order to minimize access delays in the future, what steps is UnitedHealth taking to ensure that pediatricians and other providers will be reimbursed in a timely manner when CMS issues new rates for COVID–19 vaccines or other emergent vaccines and therapeutics in the future?

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. If you or your staff has questions, please contact Peter Gartrell, Chief Investigator for Chairman Casey.

Sincerely,

ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr.,
Chairman,
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging.

NOVEMBER 5, 2021.

Chairman BOB CASEY,
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CASEY: On behalf of UnitedHealth Group, including our over 120,000 frontline doctors, nurses, and other health care practitioners, thank you for your recent letter regarding retroactive payment for COVID–19 vaccine administration. Like many individuals and families, clinicians and essential health workers have sacrificed deeply these past two years as our country worked together to fight COVID–19.

We share your commitment to ensuring and expanding access to critically important health care services and understand these are extraordinarily challenging times for the millions of people we are privileged to serve, as well as employers, health care providers, governments, and the health care system. We welcome this opportunity to provide you with an overview of the significant actions we have voluntarily taken regarding vaccine reimbursement and the steps we are taking to quickly address the concerns expressed.

UnitedHealth Group is committed to helping people live healthier lives and making the health care system work better for everyone. We do this by working with stakeholders and partners to address the biggest challenges facing our system. As we shared during our conversation, we have been in close contact with the American Academy of Pediatrics regarding concerns they raised about vaccine reimbursement.

Consistent with the discussion with your staff on October 6th and your October 21st letter, we are writing to confirm the following details related to our reimbursement for COVID–19 vaccine administration:

UnitedHealthcare (UHC) has been reimbursing providers using the new CMS rates since July 1, 2021, consistent with timing specified in UHC's contracts with providers.

UHC will adjust claims paid less than $40 between March 15 and June 30, 2021 to reimburse at $40 per administration, so providers can benefit from the increase CMS announced on March 15, 2021.

The voluntary retroactive reimbursement changes are in process and claims will be adjusted accordingly. Providers will not need to take action to receive the change in reimbursement.

UnitedHealth Group recognizes the important role that reimbursement plays in addressing the COVID–19 pandemic, which is why we are taking action to adjust previous claims and accelerating our processes to update reimbursement rates when changes are announced by CMS. In your letter dated October 21, 2021, you asked for the following information:

The number of COVID–19 vaccine administration claims UHC expects to reprocess.

The average difference between the initial reimbursement and the reprocessed claim.

The total amount that will be reimbursed.

Information on how we will ensure providers will be reimbursed in a timely manner when CMS issues new rates for COVID–19 vaccine claims going forward.

Approximately two million COVID–19 vaccine administration claims paid between March 15 and June 30, 2021 will be impacted by this retroactive adjustment. We anticipate the average adjustment will be approximately $12.50 per claim, for total additional reimbursement of approximately $25 million. UHC has already begun processing these reimbursements.

With regard to new rates for COVID–19 vaccinations or other emergent therapeutics for COVID–19, we will be accelerating our process for updating our reimbursement to support the COVID–19 vaccine codes and rates implemented by CMS as they become available. Specifically, UHC will implement new COVID–19 codes and rates upon the publication of this information by CMS rather than including these changes in our scheduled quarterly reimbursement update processes. This will ensure provider payments are updated as quickly as possible.

We appreciate the services provided by health care professionals during the pandemic. The actions we are taking to adjust COVID–19 vaccine claims build on the many steps we have taken to support providers over the last eighteen months, including accelerating claims payments, assisting in processing and administering CARES Act Federal funding to providers, working with HHS to ensure clinicians who provided COVID–19 testing or treatment for individuals without insurance were reimbursed for their services, and removing administrative requirements in highly impacted areas.

We appreciate the opportunity to address the Committee's questions.

Sincerely,

BRIAN THOMPSON,
CEO, UnitedHealthcare.

NOVEMBER 12. 2021.

Addendum to UHG—Senate Aging Committee Response on 11/5/21

Thank you for the email of November 8, 2021 with follow-up questions to UHG's letter dated 11/5/2021, and for your continued engagement regarding how we reimburse providers for COVID–19 vaccine administration. Please see our additional responses below:

Staff asked that we clarify whether ''similar underpayment issues occurred in United's Affordable Care Act and Medicaid Managed Care plans.''

Answer: As discussed with staff, we have been paying providers according to their contracts since the vaccines first became available. These provider contracts explicitly provide how new procedure codes are implemented and on what timeline; those provisions are agreed to by all parties. Because United paid its network providers according to these contracts, there have been no ''underpayments.'' Nevertheless, after reviewing concerns about the contracted reimbursement amounts paid earlier this year, we elected to voluntarily increase reimbursement—above and beyond contractual rates—for all commercial plans (including individual plans purchased via ACA exchanges), for dates of service between March 15, 2021 and June 30, 2021.

Within ACA Exchanges, we similarly have paid according to contracts agreed to with providers. ACA Exchange plans will be included in the voluntary increase in reimbursement described above. The completion of that increase will be on the same time frame as commercial plans. With respect to managed Medicaid, as we noted in our first discussion with staff on September 22, 2021, those plans pay according to rates set by state law and state payment policies. United has paid for vaccine administration consistent with those parameters and will continue to do so.

Staff asked that we provide detail about how we will timely reimburse providers for emergent vaccines and therapeutics unrelated to COVID–19 and the current Public Health Emergency (PHE).

Answer: In the event of a future pandemic or new PHE we will take immediate actions (noted below) to accelerate reimbursement updates. Outside of a pandemic or PHE how we update codes and payment rates will continue to be guided by our existing contracts with providers. Consistent with industry practice, those contracts provide for timely and substantial payment to providers while we complete the update to our systems. At all times we will follow all applicable state and federal requirements.

Staff noted the complexity of adjusting reimbursement rates for new procedure codes and asked for details on how United might make those adjustments more quickly in the future.

Answer: We hope that under less exigent circumstances CMS will provide additional lead time for its pronouncements, but United is not relying on that to speed its processes during this PHE. Instead, we are devoting significant time and effort to ensuring that the process of updating new COVID–19-related codes within our systems begins at the time of publication of those codes and without regard to contractual timelines. This includes, for example, redirecting additional internal resources and automating updates whenever possible. While some claims filed immediately after new payment codes are announced might be held for a short time while those updates are being made (generally no longer than 30 days after receipt), we believe this will result in overall faster reimbursement at updated rates. Indeed, it is common in the industry to hold claims during a period of change or uncertainty to help ensure that those claims are paid accurately. We are confident we will be able to update new codes for all claims platforms on a timely basis.

Finally, staff asked for updates as to our progress on increasing the reimbursement amount for the approximately two million claims impacted by our decision to voluntarily increase reimbursement for COVID–19 vaccine administration.

Answer: To date, we have resolved approximately 60% of these claims. We expect the

remaining claims to be completed in the coming 6–8 weeks. We will update you when all claims are complete.

From: Prible, John M.
To: Gartrell, Peter (Aging)
Cc: Hartman, Doug (Aging); Shakow, Peter
Subject: RE: Follow Up on UnitedHealthcare's Response
Date: Friday, January 14, 2022 5:12:29 PM

Peter, thank you for your recent email, in which you asked for an update on our voluntary efforts to retroactively increase reimbursement to $40 for COVID–19 vaccine administration. Answers to your questions are provided below; however, we expect that this confidential information will not be shared with third parties.

To date, we have retroactively reimbursed providers for 1,640,996 claims, or more than 99.8% of all affected claims. The average additional payment for those claims was $14.55, for a total of approximately $23.9 million in additional payments. At this time, fewer than 2,900 claims (less than 0.2% percent of all affected claims) remain to be reprocessed. Because the original paid amount on those remaining claims averaged about $36, the average additional reimbursement to be paid will be about $4. Those remaining reimbursements continue to be prioritized and sent out the door. We anticipate those few remaining claims will be completed by February 1, 2022.

We note that you asked for claims and payment data by state. There are a few reasons we are not able to cut this data cleanly by state, including that providers submit claims via tax identification numbers (TIN), many of which cover physicians (and therefore claims) from multiple states.

You also asked for additional information about how we will shorten the adoption time of new rates in this or a future national public health emergency (NPHE). As we stated previously, contracts between United and its network provider groups specifically provide for time to implement new rates in an orderly way. We understand this to be routine across the industry, understood and long accepted by the provider community, and entirely proper. If there is another NPHE or there are exceptional circumstances which dictate more timely adoption of new rates, we have learned over the past few months the required technology and human resources that need to be brought forward to accelerate. As a point of reference, should circumstances justify it, we commit to implement new codes in an NPHE faster than industry standard.

JOHN PRIBLE,
Vice President, External Affairs, UnitedHealth Group.

MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I often hear from people in Wyoming who are concerned about the changes being proposed in Washington, DC. When the Federal Government changes the rules, authorities, or standards, it can significantly impact critical Wyoming industries.

In the ''Wyoming Livestock Roundup,'' a weekly news source for Wyoming's ranchers, farmers, and Agribusiness community, Sarah L. Falen authored an opinion editorial titled ''The Government's Word: Should We Trust It.''

She raises concerns about the Biden administration's rule revoking the Trump administration policy prohibiting prosecution for accidentally harming migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. While there has been a lot of discussion about the impact on the energy industries, Sarah Falen points out how the new rule could affect the agriculture industry. It is important that Congress note these consequences and the uncertainty created by the Biden administration's rule.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the opinion editorial written by Sarah L. Falen.

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

THE GOVERNMENT'S WORD: SHOULD WE TRUST IT?

(By Sarah L. Fallen)

Americans trust the U.S. government less and less. In fact, according to the Edelman Trust Barometer, trust in the federal government hovers around 40%. Yet, with the revocation of the Trump Administration's rule that prohibits prosecution for accidentally harming migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), the Biden Administration is asking citizens to do just that, ''trust'' the federal government.

People involved in industries such as energy or agriculture have a clear understanding of how environmental legislation, originally passed with the best intention, has been weaponized to negatively affect their livelihoods. One of the lesser known, but just as dangerous environmental swords is the MBTA. While it is easy to see that energy industries, such as oil and gas, wind or even solar would be impacted by the Biden decision, this Act has the potential for very serious impacts on the agriculture industry.

The MBTA is a statute that allows for the criminal prosecution of any person who ''incidentally takes'' a migratory bird. To understand the breath of this Act, there are two important concepts. First, nearly all birds in the U.S. are considered migratory. Second, what constitutes an ''incidental take.'' The MBTA states that ''it [is] unlawful at any time, . . . to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, . . . any migratory bird . . .'' 16 U.S.C. 703(a). If you read that language, it would make sense that this Act is referring to someone who intends to kill a migratory bird. That commonsense reading is what the Trump MBTA rule enforced . . . only those engaged in an action that purposefully ''takes'' a migratory bird would be subject to fines and prison time. This is not how the Biden Administration reads that language.

According to the Biden Administration, even if a person is doing something that accidentally harms a migratory bird, that person can still be criminally liable. Thus, someone can be prosecuted for an action or inaction that is otherwise legal, but just so happens to ''take'' a migratory bird.

We should all be concerned about the Biden Administration allowing ''incidental take'' to be prosecuted because there is no limit on what can be prosecuted. This means that if a farmer uses a pesticide that is legally administered and a migratory bird just so happens to ingest that pesticide, he could be subject to criminal prosecution. The MBTA allows for up to a $5,000 fine or six months in prison for an incidental take.

The scenarios under which a person can accidentally kill a migratory bird are infinite and can be ridiculous. Yet, the government expects us to believe that they will only prosecute ''foreseeable'' accidental killings of migratory birds. It is foreseeable that a bird can ingest a legally administered pesticide. Are farmers now risking prison time for growing the food that feeds America and the world?

The Biden Administration has entertained the idea of an ''incidental take permit'' that might remove some of the liability for birds that are accidentally killed, however they have not developed the idea enough to know what the permit would look like. There aren't any standards for what actions would be exempt from liability under the permit system and the MBTA office doesn't have enough staff to begin handling the undoubtedly thousands of permit applications they will receive.

The government has often implemented rules, promising it will not take advantage of its authority, but time after time this has proven to be just a way to get a rule approved or legislation passed. From wolves and grizzly bears to ever changing definitions of ''navigable waters,'' the government has proven that its word should not be trusted and the MBTA is no exception.

PUBLIC SERVICE REVIEW

Mr. WICKER. For all who are looking for encouragement about the future of our country, I want to call attention to the Fall 2021 issue of ''Public Service Review,'' produced by the Stennis Center for Public Service and available at www.stennis.gov. ''Public Service Review'' features rising young leaders across the country sharing their own experiences, insights, and aspirations as they engage in public service, both in their communities and around the world. The commitment of these future leaders to keeping our Nation strong and free is truly inspiring.

The eight authors featured in the fall 2021 issue are Alexis Eberlein of Ohio University, Sarah Glaser of the University of South Florida, Hannah Krawczyk of Auburn University, Mia Robertson of Mississippi State University, Alanna Cronk of Georgetown University, Katie Medford of Harvard University, Preeti Chemiti of Princeton University, and Amitoj Kaur of Miami University.

''Public Service Review'' provides young leaders a platform to share stories of both challenge and hope as they focus on causes that draw their unique passions. Their stories are hopegiving to those of us currently engaged in public service and offer valuable perspectives for younger students looking to become involved.

On behalf of my colleagues and fellow members of the Stennis Center Board of Trustees, U.S. Senator CHRIS COONS, Tom Daffron, U.S. Representative TERRI SEWELL, and former U.S. Representatives Martha Roby and Gregg Harper, I commend the Stennis Center for this excellent publication and encourage its wide distribution to audiences of all ages.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA WILSON

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Linda Wilson, who recently retired from the U.S. Department of Education after over 33 years of service to the American people.

Linda earned a degree from University of Arizona in 1980 before embarking on a career dedicated to public service. Linda began her service as a congressional staffer for Representative Millicent Fenwick from her home State of New Jersey. She then served the people of Illinois as a legislative aide for Representative Bob Michel. In 1989, Linda began her service at the U.S. Department of Education, engaging with State and local officials and congressional offices in both the Intergovernmental Affairs Office and the Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs, serving 9 of the 12 U.S. Secretaries of Education across political parties.

Linda has been an indispensable resource in my work on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee, of which I am a member. She assisted me to solve innumerable problems and concerns important to my constituents. She provided information about various administrations' implementation of important Federal programs, such as the Alaska Native Educational Equity Program, the Native American Language program, the State-Tribal Education Partnership program, and Impact Aid, in addition to providing insight into the Department's budget priorities. In addition to her expertise on these issues, she always approached my questions and concerns with the utmost diligence and attention, providing the support necessary for me to craft legislation that meets the needs of my constituents and the American people.

I am grateful for Linda's professionalism and dedication. I thank her and congratulate her on her upcoming retirement and wish her well in the future.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, on Monday, our Nation celebrated the life and legacy of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Like many Americans, it was a day of self-reflection for me. While leading a bipartisan delegation to Ukraine, I had a front-row seat to a nation struggling to hold on to its democracy in the face of a potential outside attack. This comes at a very poignant moment in America's history when we were reminded of the strength and fragility of our own democracy.

One year ago, a violent mob fueled by false claims of widespread election fraud stormed the U.S. Capitol. This was the most significant assault on the Capitol since the War of 1812. Although State and Federal judges ruled against efforts to overturn the results of the election, this lie of election fraud has continued to propagate. And now, those who didn't like the 2020 election results are trying to rewrite the rules.

Since the 2020 elections, Republican State lawmakers have passed an unprecedented number of bills to erode the authority of state and local election officials. These new laws would strip secretaries of state of their authority, allow partisan ballot reviews, and even make local election officials criminally or financially liable for technical errors and actions, such as proactively sending out absentee ballot applications.

In total, 19 States have passed regressive laws that make it harder to vote and, in some extreme cases, may even allow Republican-controlled legislatures to overturn the results of a legitimate election by using false claims of voter fraud. In New Hampshire, over the past year, we have seen efforts to eliminate same-day voter registration, a measure that would disproportionately impact young voters, including college students and first-time voters.

Similarly, other efforts to prohibit students attending college in New Hampshire from voting in our State's elections would unduly burden—if not outright disenfranchise—many of those young voters. Other attempts to make voter registration more complicated have failed in court, including requirements for additional documentation for same-day registrants, and restrictions on which types of addresses are valid for registration.

These efforts are ongoing, with additional restrictive and burdensome measures being introduced as recently as the current legislative session. And it is not just our voter laws. Earlier this month, the Republican-controlled New Hampshire House approved a redistricting plan that can only be described as gerrymandering. Taken together, these measures represent a comprehensive and coordinated attempt to burden—or even deprive—certain Granite State citizens of their right to vote. Such blatant efforts to suppress the vote must not be tolerated.

The right to vote is one of the most fundamental and cherished principles of our democracy. The history of our Republic is marked by those seminal moments when we as a nation extended the right to cast a ballot to broader populations, thereby including more voices in our representative government: first after the Civil War with the 15th Amendment, then to women with the 19th Amendment, and then notably with the 1965 Voting Rights Act. As others have noted, the Voting Rights Act has historically drawn great bipartisan support for its reauthorization because the principles embodied in it go to the very heart of our democracy.

But the issues and challenges that are increasingly facing our voters are very real and very troubling—and we must take them seriously or risk eroding that most fundamental of rights. Making voter registration more difficult or making the process of voting more burdensome has disproportionate effects on some of the most vulnerable voters—whether those be young voters, communities of color, the poor, the homeless, among others. Eliminating or limiting opportunities for early voting, same-day registration, voting by mail, automatic registration, or the use of absentee ballots are all different pathways to the same pernicious effect—the suppression of the vote.

That is why I am proud to cosponsor the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Together, these bills would standardize voting election laws across the country, expand voting access and restore key provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that have been struck down or weakened by the Supreme Court.

The right to vote isn't determined by political affiliation. It is the most sacred right enshrined in the U.S. Constitution for every eligible American and ensures that our country is, as President Lincoln said, ''government of the people, by the people, for the people.''

I am deeply disappointed by the inability—or unwillingness—of this august body to come together today to take this basic step in defense of our democracy. We, the U.S. Senate, ought to be the foremost champions and defenders of democracy, but today, I fear that we have allowed partisan considerations to distract us from that duty.

We cannot afford to stay silent and ignore these measures that attempt to undo the progress that we have made over decades. We especially cannot stay silent when all of us here witnessed the horrific events of January 2021 and the attempt to undo a legitimate election. Protecting voting rights for every American is the first and irreplaceable step towards protecting our democracy. We must take it seriously, we must not let it wither in the dark, and we must not stay silent. It is far too important—and once damaged, it is far too hard to rebuild.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING POWELL VALLEY MILLWORK

• Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week, I recognize an outstanding Kentucky small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize the small business, Powell Valley Millwork of Clay City, KY, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Twenty-seven years ago Jim Thornberry and his son Jimmy left the mining industry behind in search of a new venture. Shortly thereafter, Powell Valley Millwork was founded. The Thornberry's started their mill with the desire to harvest a tangible product within a sustainable industry, and that mission has stayed at the heart of their business throughout their decades of growth and success.

The talent and substance of Powell Valley Millwork draws directly from our State, with the mill focusing on only one species of lumber: poplar. As

the State tree of Kentucky, poplar is an abundant resource within Appalachia, which makes their location in rural Clay City a prime spot for their operation. Often referred to as ''the painter's wood,'' poplar is known for its clear grain, smooth milling, and paint-taking qualities. The versatile and fine nature of the wood allows Powell Valley Millwork to supply consumers with a wide variety of interior-trim products, such as stretcher bars, door and window jambs, stair parts, cabinetry components, primed finger-joint interior trim, and more. In creating all these products, the Powell Valley millworkers make sure nothing goes to waste. Poplar can be safely used as animal bedding which means the mill's offcuts, those that are not already being used to fuel the company's wood drying kilns, are turned into shavings. These shavings are then bagged and shipped out by the truck load to be sold in a wide variety of retail outlets.

This Powell County mill maintains their technology at a topnotch standard. In 2019 the owners invested in a new addition to the team: a sophisticated scanning rough mill line from Eagle Machinery & Supply, Inc. The new rough mill line is able to process 65,000 board feet of lumber in a single 8-hour shift with only six people required to operate it. The joint project between Powell and Eagle, both family companies, demonstrates that U.S. machinery manufacturers can successfully compete with Europeans in providing world-class technology to the North American wood processing industry.

The Thornberrys keep their eye on efficiency and progress, opening up ownership of the company to experts outside the family, including Brian Lambert, Powell Valley Mill's General manager, and Dale Budke, the mill's operations manager. As fellow owners of the company, these gentleman provide the expertise necessary for navigating the growing Kentucky lumber industry. In 2019 Powell Valley Millwork acquired the Metrie Poplar manufacturing facility in nearby Jeffersonville, KY. With a new 125,000-square-foot location only 12 miles from their original facility, the two locations utilize their natural synergies to support the needs of a diverse customer base across North America in full truck and railroad quantities.

Powell Valley Millwork is a testament to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of Kentuckians. Drawing from our beautiful natural resources and employing over 200 local men and women, this business illustrates some of the best qualities Kentucky has to offer—fine craftsmanship and dedicated hard work. Powell Valley Millwork is a decades-old dream the Thornberrys had when they left the mining industry, a dream that has grown beyond what they had imagined. Small businesses like Powell Valley are the core of small towns across Kentucky, and like the poplars they use in their mill, their roots grow deep to help our communities flourish. Congratulations to the Thornberrys and the entire Powell Valley team. I wish them the best of luck and look forward to watching their continued growth and success in Kentucky.●

MARYLAND SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH

● Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, devotion, commitment, resilience—these are just a few of the words that describe the professionals who comprise Maryland's 24 local boards of education.

The dedicated public servants who lead the school systems in Maryland counties and Baltimore City act with deep commitment to their communities and their time-intensive school board duties. Maryland school board members make critical budget and planning decisions, adopt policies to create supportive learning environments for all students, engage with parents, students, school staff, and other community stakeholders, work closely with superintendents, respond to crises, and undergo ongoing training to carry out effective governance, continue to grow as leaders, and stay up-to-date on the latest best practices.

As devoted professionals who serve students, school systems, and their communities at large, Maryland school board members face an array of daunting challenges every day, challenges made significantly more difficult and complex during the COVID–19 pandemic. Yet Maryland's 24 school boards have consistently risen to these challenges, working to ensure excellence in public education throughout the State.

School board members come from all backgrounds and professions. They may not agree on every issue, but they unite and volunteer to serve under the strong conviction that Maryland students come first.

Because of the extraordinary, continuing commitment of those who serve on our school boards to helping Maryland students grow, thrive, and excel each day—and with my ongoing commitment to Maryland public education in mind—I am proud to recognize January as Maryland School Board Recognition Month.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Swann, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:05 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4673. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the automatic enrollment of eligible veterans in patient enrollment system of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 1:53 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 452. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 2959. An act to provide that, due to the disruptions caused by COVID–19, applications for impact aid funding for fiscal year 2023 may use certain data submitted in the fiscal year 2022 application.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4673. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the automatic enrollment of eligible veterans in patient enrollment system of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, January 20, 2022, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 452. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 2959. An act to provide that, due to the disruptions caused by COVID–19, applications for impact aid funding for fiscal year 2023 may use certain data submitted in the fiscal year 2022 application.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

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

S. 2305. A bill to enhance cybersecurity education (Rept. No. 117–59).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. DURBIN for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Alison J. Nathan, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

Victoria Marie Calvert, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

John H. Chun, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

Sarah Elisabeth Geraghty, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

Georgette Castner, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

Ruth Bermudez Montenegro, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California.

Julie Rebecca Rubin, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

Cristina D. Silva, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Anne Rachel Traum, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. KELLY (for himself and Mr. OSSOFF):

S. 3528. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to limit the authority of corporations to establish and operate separate segregated funds utilized for political purposes, including the establishment or operation of a political committee, to nonprofit corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. WARNOCK, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 3529. A bill to amend the Investor Protection and Securities Reform Act of 2010 to provide grants to States for enhanced protection of senior investors and senior policyholders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 3530. A bill to encourage the extraction and processing of rare earth metals in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 3531. A bill to require the Federal Government to produce a national climate adaptation and resilience strategy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. SASSE, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 3532. A bill to require the imposition of sanctions with respect to Ansarallah and its officials, agents, or affiliates for acts of international terrorism; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 3533. A bill to amend the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act to improve the National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. INHOFE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. HAWLEY, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. Res. 494. A resolution memorializing the unborn by lowering the United States flag to half-staff on the 22nd day of January each year; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 495. A resolution urging the International Olympic Committee to relocate the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games in response to the refusal of the People's Republic of China to end its egregious human rights abuses, including genocide, forced labor, and crimes against humanity; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. Res. 496. A resolution congratulating the University of Georgia Bulldogs football team for winning the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association College Football Playoff National Championship; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. CRAMER):

S. Res. 497. A resolution congratulating the North Dakota State University Bison football team for winning the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Football Championship Subdivision title; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. REED, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. Res. 498. A resolution recognizing January 2022 as ''National Mentoring Month''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. WARREN, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. Con. Res. 28. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that September 30 should be observed as a national day of remembrance for the Native American children who died while attending a United States Indian boarding school and recognizing, honoring, and supporting the survivors of Indian boarding schools, their families, and their communities; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 766

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 766, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow an above-the-line deduction for attorney fees and costs in connection with consumer claim awards.

S. 1106

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) were added as cosponsors of S. 1106, a bill to prohibit the sale of shark fins, and for other purposes.

S. 2779

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2779, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment of a Task Force on Maternal Mental Health, and for other purposes.

S. 3236

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 3236, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to reform the contribution system of the Universal Service Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 3486

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3486, a bill to provide, manufacture, and distribute high quality N–95 respirator masks for every individual in the United States during the COVID–19 pandemic using the Defense Production Act and other means.

S. 3494

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3494, a bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require Members of Congress and their spouses and dependents to place certain assets into blind trusts, and for other purposes.

S. 3514

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3514, a bill to repeal COVID–19 vaccination requirements imposed by the District of Columbia.

S. 3522

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 3522, a bill to provide enhanced authority for the President to enter into agreements with the Government of Ukraine to lend or lease defense articles to that Government to protect civilian populations in Ukraine from Russian military invasion, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 494—MEMORIALIZING THE UNBORN BY LOWERING THE UNITED STATES FLAG TO HALF-STAFF ON THE 22ND DAY OF JANUARY EACH YEAR

Mr. BRAUN (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. INHOFE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. HAWLEY, and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 494

Whereas, on January 22, 1973, the majority of the members of the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that abortion was a right secured by the Constitution; and

Whereas, since that fateful day, over 60,000,000 unborn children have perished: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the recognition of the Day of Tears in the United States on the 22nd day of January each year; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to lower their flags to half-staff to mourn and honor the innocents who have lost their lives to abortion.

SENATE RESOLUTION 495—URGING THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE TO RELOCATE THE 2022 BEIJING WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES IN RESPONSE TO THE REFUSAL OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO END ITS EGREGIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, INCLUDING GENOCIDE, FORCED LABOR, AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 495

Whereas the Olympic Games should never be held in a country whose government is actively committing genocide, forced labor, and crimes against humanity;

Whereas the ongoing crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Chinese Communist Party in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region include—

(1) the arbitrary imprisonment and other types of severe deprivation of physical liberty of more than 1,800,000 civilians;

(2) forced sterilization;

(3) forced abortion;

(4) infanticide;

(5) torture;

(6) forced labor; and

(7) restrictions on freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, and freedom of movement;

Whereas the Chinese Communist Party is committing ongoing genocide as a direct attempt to forcibly ''assimilate'', or eventually eliminate, vulnerable ethnic and religious groups;

Whereas, on December 9, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, done at Paris December 9, 1948 (referred to in this preamble as the ''Genocide Convention''), as a commitment of ''never again'' in response to the Holocaust and other crimes against humanity committed in the first half of the 20th century;

Whereas, on November 5, 1988, the United States ratified the Genocide Convention with the understanding that the Genocide Convention declares that all state parties ''confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish'';

Whereas, on January 19, 2021, former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo determined that the Chinese Communist Party has committed genocide and crimes against humanity, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken has expressed agreement with that determination;

Whereas, as of January 2022, 152 countries, including the People's Republic of China, have ratified or acceded to the Genocide Convention, and each such country has its own national Olympic committee and is recognized by the International Olympic Committee;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee should always take human rights into account in making decisions, especially in choosing a host country for the Olympic Games;

Whereas, in March 2020, human rights expert Rachel Davis and former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights HRH Prince Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein submitted to the International Olympic Committee a report containing human rights recommendations;

Whereas, on December 2, 2020, the International Olympic Committee announced that it would incorporate ''human rights standards into the 'Operational Requirements' of the Host City Contract for the Olympic Games 2024 and beyond'', which does not apply to the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games;

Whereas, in their report, Rachel Davis and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein—

(1) note that ''the human rights impacts that could be connected to the [2022 Beijing Winter Olympic] Games are severe—as our consultations with expert civil society stakeholders also confirmed—and addressing them remains challenging''; and

(2) urge the International Olympic Committee to consider ''strengthening [human rights] due diligence across its operations [before 2024] and advancing the agreed strategic approach to engaging with Beijing 2022 on human rights, with support from the top levels of the organization and informed by the [International Olympic Committee's] own consultations with expert stakeholders'';

Whereas there are no human rights conditions set forth in the host city contract between the International Olympic Committee and the Government of the People's Republic of China;

Whereas there is no evidence that the International Olympic Committee has taken any steps to pressure the Government of the People's Republic of China to change its behavior;

Whereas the code of ethics of the International Olympic Committee sets forth universal fundamental ethical principles that are the foundation of Olympism, including—

(1) ''respect of the principle of the universality and political neutrality of the Olympic Movement''; and

(2) ''maintaining harmonious relations with state authorities, while respecting the principle of autonomy as set out in the Olympic Charter'';

Whereas, historically, the International Olympic Committee has not maintained political neutrality, including by—

(1) requiring the Government of Germany to accept qualified Jewish athletes on German Olympic team during the 1936 Olympic Games

(2) revoking South Africa's invitation in opposition to the Government of South Africa's policy of apartheid during 1964 Olympic Games, ; and

(3) in 1948, banning Germany and Japan from participating in the first Olympic Games after World War II;

Whereas taking action against genocide and crimes against humanity is a matter of morality, not politics;

Whereas the absence of rule of law and due process in the People's Republic of China inhibits the ability of the International Olympic Committee and the respective national Olympic committees of participate countries to ensure the safety of all athletes, staff, and spectators throughout the duration of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games;

Whereas, on November 2, 2021, 3-time Olympian Peng Shuai disappeared after stating that she had been sexually assaulted and forced into a sexual relationship with Zhang Gaoli, a former Vice Premier and member of the Chinese Communist Party Politburo Standing Committee;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee's acceptance of the Chinese Communist Party cover-up of sexual assault allegations and dismissal of safety concerns for Peng Shuai call into question the International Olympic Committee's willingness to protect athletes participating in the 2022 Olympic Games in Beijing;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee should not force athletes to choose between their conscience and their pursuit of the highest goals in athletics;

Whereas Olympic athletes should not have to worry about—

(1) wearing clothing or consuming food that is a product of forced labor; or

(2) being penalized or detained by the host government for exercising their right to speak out against genocide, crimes against humanity, and any other human rights abuse;

Whereas it is in the best interest of the athletes to move the Olympic Games in fulfillment of the International Olympic Committee's mission ''to promote safe sport and the protection of athletes from all forms of harassment and abuse'' and ''oppose any political or commercial abuse of sport and athletes'';

Whereas, during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, the Government of the People's Republic of China broke its commitment to the International Olympic Committee when it—

(1) displaced Chinese residents in order to construct Olympic venues;

(2) detained demonstrators;

(3) censored the internet; and

(4) restricted media access and the freedom of speech;

Whereas the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games provided the Government of the People's Republic of China the ability to perpetuate propaganda and distract from ongoing human rights abuses;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee should consider the individuals who will not be able to celebrate the Olympic spirit because they have been unjustly detained, imprisoned, beaten, or worse by the government the International Olympic Committee selected to host the 2022 Winter Olympic Games;

Whereas it reflects poorly on the entire Olympic movement, and therefore the international community in general, to proceed with holding the Olympic Games in a country whose government is committing genocide and crimes against humanity;

Whereas, on March 24, 2020, 4 months before the start of the 2020 Summer Olympics, the International Olympic Committee and

the Government of Japan announced the postponement of the Tokyo Olympic Games due to the COVID–19 pandemic, an action that demonstrates the ability to postpone the Olympic Games on short notice;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee has the right to terminate the host city contract with the People's Republic of China if, at any time, ''the IOC has reasonable grounds to believe, in its sole discretion, that the safety of participants in the Games would be seriously threatened or jeopardized for any reason whatsoever'';

Whereas relocating the 2022 Winter Olympic Games due to ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Government of the People's Republic of China is consistent with the vision of the International Olympic Committee to build a better world through sport; and

Whereas the International Olympic Committee failed to adhere to its own human rights commitments by extending the honor of hosting the 2022 Olympic Games to Beijing, particularly after Chinese authorities violated commitments to the International Olympic Committee in 2008: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate urges—

(1) the International Olympic Committee to relocate the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games to another country in response to the refusal of the People's Republic of China to stop committing genocide and crimes against humanity;

(2) the International Olympic Committee to take human rights into account in all decisions, especially in selecting future host countries for the Olympic Games; and

(3) the Chinese Communist Party to immediately cease harassment of tennis star Peng Shuai and ensure her safety and freedom.

SENATE RESOLUTION 496—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA BULLDOGS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2022 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. WARNOCK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 496

Whereas the University of Georgia Bulldogs football team (referred to in this preamble as the ''Georgia Bulldogs'') went 14–1 during the 2021 college football season and won the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association College Football Playoff National Championship (referred to in this preamble as the ''2022 National Championship''), defeating the University of Alabama Crimson Tide by a score of 33 to 18 at the Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana, on January 10, 2022;

Whereas this victory marks the first college football national championship for the University of Georgia since the 1980 college football season and its third national championship overall;

Whereas the 2022 National Championship was the 59th football bowl appearance and the 34th football bowl victory for the University of Georgia;

Whereas the 2021–2022 Georgia Bulldogs achieved a 14–1 overall record for the season, the most single-season wins in the history of the University of Georgia football program;

Whereas the 2021–2022 defensive unit for the Georgia Bulldogs allowed on average only 10.2 points and 153 opposing yards per game, making it one of the most dominant defensive units in the history of college football;

Whereas the 2021–2022 Georgia Bulldogs overcame a loss in the Southeastern Conference Championship to the University of Alabama on December 4, 2021, achieving a historic victory over the University of Alabama in the 2022 National Championship;

Whereas Georgia Bulldogs quarterback and Blackshear, Georgia, native Stetson Bennett IV, a former walk-on player and junior college transfer, demonstrated tremendous leadership and skill throughout the 2021 college football season, and was named the 2022 National Championship Offensive Player of the Game;

Whereas Georgia Bulldogs defensive back, Lewis Cine, was named the 2022 National Championship Defensive Player of the Game;

Whereas the University of Georgia head football coach, Kirby Smart, a University of Georgia alumnus and former Georgia Bulldogs defensive back, has now led his team to 5 consecutive Associated Press Top 10 finishes and the first national championship since the end of the 1980 college football season;

Whereas this victory extends the record of Coach Smart to 66 wins and 15 losses during his tenure as the 26th Football Head Coach at the University of Georgia, his first stint as a head coach;

Whereas members of the 2021–2022 Georgia Bulldogs have been honored by various awards throughout the 2021 college football season and during the post-season, including the 2021 Chuck Bednarik Award and Outland Trophy winner, Jordan Davis, and the 37th Dick Butkus Award winner, Nakobe Dean;

Whereas President Jere Morehead, Athletic Director Josh Brooks, and Coach Kirby Smart have emphasized the importance of academic success to the Georgia Bulldogs and all student-athletes at the University of Georgia; and

Whereas the 2021–2022 Georgia Bulldogs have brought great pride and honor to the University of Georgia, loyal fans of the Georgia Bulldogs, and the entire State of Georgia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of Georgia Bulldogs football team for a great season and winning the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association College Football Playoff National Championship game;

(2) recognizes the achievements of all players, coaches, and staff who contributed to the championship season; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate prepare an official copy of this resolution for presentation to—

(A) the President of the University of Georgia, Jere Morehead;

(B) the Athletic Director of the University of Georgia, Josh Brooks; and

(C) the Head Coach of the University of Georgia Bulldogs football team, Kirby Smart.

SENATE RESOLUTION 497—CONGRATULATING THE NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY BISON FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2022 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP SUBDIVISION TITLE

Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. CRAMER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 497

Whereas the North Dakota State University (referred to in this preamble as ''NDSU'') Bison football team won the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the ''NCAA'') Division I Football Championship Subdivision (referred to in this preamble as the ''FCS'') title game in Frisco, Texas, on January 8, 2022, in a well-fought victory over the Montana State University Bobcats by a score of 38 to 10;

Whereas, including the 2022 NCAA Division I FCS title, the NDSU Bison football team has won 17 national football championships;

Whereas the NDSU Bison football team has won 9 of the last 11 NCAA Division I FCS titles, an achievement that continues to be unmatched in modern collegiate football history;

Whereas the NDSU Bison have displayed tremendous resilience and skill since 2011, with 149 wins to only 12 losses, including a streak of 39 consecutive wins;

Whereas head coach Matt Entz and his staff led the NDSU Bison football team to a dominant season and a second championship in his 3 years as head coach at NDSU, continuing the culture of excellence of the NDSU Bison football program;

Whereas thousands of Bison fans once again attended the championship game in Frisco, Texas, reflecting the tremendous pride and dedication of Bison Nation, which has supported and helped drive the achievement of the NDSU Bison football team; and

Whereas the 2022 NCAA Division I FCS title was a victory for both the NDSU Bison football team and the entire State of North Dakota: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the North Dakota State University Bison football team for winning the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this resolution as the ''NCAA'') Division I Football Championship Subdivision (referred to in this resolution as the ''FCS'') title;

(2) commends the players, coaches, and staff of the North Dakota State University Bison football team for—

(A) their tireless work and dedication; and

(B) fostering a continued tradition of excellence;

(3) congratulates North Dakota State University President Dean Bresciani, North Dakota State University Athletic Director Matt Larsen, and all the faculty and staff of North Dakota State University for creating an environment that emphasizes excellence in both academics and athletics; and

(4) recognizes the students, alumni, and fans of North Dakota State University and all of Bison Nation for supporting the North Dakota State University Bison football team so well during its successful quest to bring home yet another NCAA Division I FCS trophy for North Dakota State University.

SENATE RESOLUTION 498—RECOGNIZING JANUARY 2022 AS ''NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH''

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. REED, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 498

Whereas the goals of National Mentoring Month are to raise awareness of and celebrate the powerful impact of mentoring relationships, recruit new mentors, and encourage institutions to integrate quality mentoring into their policies, practices, and programs;

Whereas quality mentoring fosters positive life and social skills, promotes self-esteem, bolsters academic achievement and college access, supports career exploration, and nurtures youth leadership development;

Whereas mentoring happens in many settings, including community-based programs, elementary and secondary schools, institutions of higher education, government agencies, religious institutions, and the workplace, and in various ways, including formal mentoring matches and informal relationships with teachers, coaches, neighbors, faith leaders, and others;

Whereas effective mentoring of underserved and vulnerable populations helps individuals confront challenges and enjoy improved mental health and social-emotional well-being;

Whereas studies have shown that incorporating culture and heritage into mentoring programs can improve academic outcomes and increase community engagement, especially for Alaska Native and American Indian youth;

Whereas youth development experts agree that mentoring encourages positive youth development and smart daily behaviors, such as finishing homework and having healthy social interactions, and has a positive impact on the growth and success of a young person;

Whereas mentors help young people set career goals and can help connect mentees to industry professionals to train for and find jobs;

Whereas mentoring programs generally have a significant, positive impact on youth academic achievement, school connectedness and engagement, and educational success, which leads to outcomes such as improved attendance, grades and test scores, and classroom behavior;

Whereas research has found that young people facing a risk of not completing high school but who had a mentor were, compared with their peers, more likely to enroll in college, to participate regularly in sports or extracurricular activities, to hold a leadership position in a club or sports team, and to volunteer regularly, and less likely to start using drugs;

Whereas mentoring has long been a staple of juvenile justice and violence prevention efforts, and can offer comprehensive support to youth at risk for committing violence or victimization, as mentoring can address many risk factors at once;

Whereas mentoring relationships for youth facing risk, such as foster youth, can have a positive impact on a wide range of factors, including mental health, educational functioning and attainment, peer relationships, employment, and housing stability;

Whereas mentoring programs have been found to positively impact many aspects of mental well-being, including reducing unhealthy coping mechanisms, improving interpersonal relationships, and reducing parental stress;

Whereas mentoring is an innovative, evidence-based practice and, uniquely, is both a prevention and intervention strategy that can support young people of all demographics and backgrounds in all aspects of their lives;

Whereas each of the benefits of mentors described in this preamble serves to link youth to economic and social opportunity while also strengthening communities in the United States;

Whereas despite the benefits of mentoring, one young person of every three is growing up without a mentor, which means a third of the young people of the United States are growing up without someone outside of the home to offer real life guidance and support; and

Whereas this ''mentoring gap'' demonstrates the need for collaboration among the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to increase resources for relationship-centric supports for youth in communities, schools, and workplaces: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes ''National Mentoring Month'';

(2) recognizes the caring adults who serve as staff and volunteers at quality mentoring programs and help the young people of the United States find inner strength and reach their full potential;

(3) acknowledges that mentoring supports educational achievement, engagement, and self-confidence, supports young people in setting career goals and expanding social capital, reduces juvenile delinquency, and strengthens communities;

(4) promotes the establishment and expansion of quality mentoring programs across the United States to equip young people with the tools needed to lead healthy and productive lives; and

(5) supports initiatives to close the ''mentoring gap'' that exists for the many young people in the United States who do not have meaningful connections with adults outside the home.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 28—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT SEPTEMBER 30 SHOULD BE OBSERVED AS A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN WHO DIED WHILE ATTENDING A UNITED STATES INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL AND RECOGNIZING, HONORING, AND SUPPORTING THE SURVIVORS OF INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. WARREN, Mr. ROUNDS, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 28

Whereas, more than 200 years ago, the Act entitled ''An Act making provision for the civilization of the Indian tribes adjoining the frontier settlements'', approved March 3, 1819 (3 Stat. 516, chapter 85) (commonly known as the ''Civilization Fund Act''), was enacted and ushered in devastating policies and practices designed to assimilate American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children by removing the children from their families and Native communities throughout the United States;

Whereas that Act intended to resolve what was commonly referred to in the United States as the ''Indian problem'' and was based on the unjust belief of many that Native people needed to be ''civilized'' and that education would be the appropriate vehicle to enact assimilationist policies on Native American people;

Whereas, pursuant to that Act, numerous church- and government-operated boarding schools were established on and off Indian territories and homelands to house and educate numerous Native American children through policies and practices that sought to eliminate the cultural identity of Native children and assimilate them into mainstream United States society;

Whereas, according to the Native American Rights Fund, Native American families were torn apart by the removal of Native American children, either voluntarily or forcibly, from their homelands and communities to attend Indian boarding schools located across the country;

Whereas many parents of children sent to Indian boarding schools were forbidden to contact or visit their children, compounding the problem of isolation that negatively impacted and continues to impact the lives of many Native children, their families, and their communities;

Whereas the Native American Rights Fund also reported that an unidentified number of Native children died at Indian boarding schools due to abuse, neglect, malnourishment, or disease, and many of those children were buried far from their homes in unmarked graves or under tombstones that misidentified the children or ascribed Anglicized names to the children;

Whereas many of the parents of children who died at Indian boarding schools were never informed of the fate of their children;

Whereas, according to a report issued by the Native American Rights Fund, many survivors of Indian boarding schools have testified that Indian boarding schools stripped Native American children of their traditional cultures, languages, and religions by forbidding the children to wear traditional clothing, speak their Indigenous languages, or practice their cultural, religious, or spiritual beliefs, and many of the boarding schools are known to have severely punished children who violated these policies through verbal, psychological, and physical abuse;

Whereas many survivors of Indian boarding schools and families of children who attended those schools have recounted details of the physical, sexual, and psychological abuse that countless Native American children endured while attending the schools;

Whereas, according to the report entitled ''The Problem of Indian Administration'' and dated February 21, 1928 (commonly known as the ''Meriam Report''), many Indian boarding schools sent students to nearby communities for forced manual work as servants or farm laborers, and the operation of many Indian boarding schools was supported by the labor of the students;

Whereas the Federal policy of Indian assimilation and education has proven to be a disastrous failure and a national tragedy;

Whereas, as stated in the report entitled ''Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge'' and dated November 3, 1969 (Senate Report 91–501) (commonly known as the ''Kennedy Report''), ''the dominant policy of the Federal Government toward the American Indian has been one of coercive assimilation'' that had ''disastrous effects'' on the education of many Native American children;

Whereas, in 2018, the United States Commission on Civil Rights reported that many American Indian and Alaska Native people suffer from intergenerational trauma as a result of policies and practices of Indian boarding schools that alienated many children from their families, traditional cultures, languages, and religions, and deprived those children of their true identities and heritage;

Whereas, while early assimilationist policies were eventually eliminated and Indian boarding school attendance has greatly diminished since its apex, the impact of this shameful period in United States history

still affects the lives of many Native American people today;

Whereas many Native American people are still suffering from and trying to comprehend and cope with direct trauma, including impacts on health and well-being, and the intergenerational trauma, that resulted from losing connection to family, culture, language, religion, and heritage;

Whereas significant research shows that adverse childhood experiences, such as the experiences of many Native American children who attended Indian boarding schools and the descendants of those children, can cause numerous negative health outcomes, increased suicide rates, and other harmful outcomes throughout life; and

Whereas recognition that healing and promotion of care for the mind, body, and spirit is essential to overcoming the dark shadows on United States history cast by Federal Indian assimilationist policies and practices carried out by the Federal Government through Indian boarding schools and acknowledging the lived experiences of the Native American children and families who endured and continue to endure the trauma and grief associated with Indian boarding schools: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That—

(1) it is the sense of Congress that there should be a national day of remembrance for the Native American children who died while attending a United States Indian boarding school;

(2) Congress recognizes, honors, and supports the survivors and the families and communities of children who attended such schools; and

(3) Congress encourages the people of the United States—

(A) to support and recognize the grief, pain, and hardship many Native American people suffered and still endure as a result of the assimilationist policies and practices carried out by the United States through Indian boarding school policies;

(B) to honor the legacy of and remember those who were lost or harmed by those policies and practices; and

(C) to appreciate the resilience of the survivors and their families with appropriate ceremonies, programs, events, and other activities to support and commemorate a national day of remembrance.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I have 1 request for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 20, 2022, at 9 a.m., to conduct an executive business meeting.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 106–398, as amended by Public Law 108–7 and in consultation with the ranking members of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, the appointment of the following individuals to serve as members of the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission: the Honorable Randall Schriver, of Virginia, and Aaron Friedberg, of New Jersey.

The Chair announces, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 116–260, the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the People-to-People Partnership for Peace Fund Advisory Board: the Honorable Elliott Abrams of Virginia.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALABAMA FARMERS FEDERATION

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 471.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 471) commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Alabama Farmers Federation and celebrating the long history of the Alabama Farmers Federation serving as the voice for Alabama agriculture and forestry.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 471) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of December 7, 2021, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN BADGERS ON WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 487.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 487) congratulating the University of Wisconsin Badgers on winning the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 487) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of January 12, 2021, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE BLUGOLDS ON WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION III WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration and that the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 488.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 488) congratulating the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Blugolds on winning the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III Women's Volleyball Championship.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 488) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of January 12 (legislative day, January 10), 2022, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

CONGRATULATING THE NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY BISON FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2022 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP SUBDIVISION TITLE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 497, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 497) congratulating the North Dakota State University Bison football team for winning the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Football Championship Subdivision title.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 497) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022, THROUGH MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2022

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted on the following dates and times and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, January 24, at 1 p.m. and Thursday, January 27, at 10 a.m. I further ask that when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, January 27, it next convene at 3 p.m., Monday, January 31; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Brennan nomination—I would add that Brennan is from Ohio—and that the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senator MERKLEY from Oregon.

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

The Senator from Oregon.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT AND THE LASTING IMPACT OF THAT ACT ON THE STATE OF ALASKA AND ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be discharged from further consideration and that the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 482.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The clerk will read the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 482) recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and the lasting impact of that Act on the State of Alaska and Alaska Native people.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 482) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of December 16, 2021, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT SEPTEMBER 30 SHOULD BE OBSERVED AS A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN WHO DIED WHILE ATTENDING A UNITED STATES INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL AND RECOGNIZING, HONORING, AND SUPPORTING THE SURVIVORS OF INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 28.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 28) expressing the sense of Congress that September 30 should be observed as a national day of remembrance for the Native American children who died while attending a United States Indian boarding school and recognizing, honoring, and supporting the survivors of Indian boarding schools, their families, and their communities.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 28) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

TRIBUTE TO RAY ZACCARO

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I believe we are all familiar with the question: If a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound? Well, here in the U.S. Senate, we can ask the question: If we accomplish something important but fail to communicate that to our constituents, did it actually happen?

The majority of the American people have so much on their plates that they are not following the intricate, daily workings of this Chamber, so they expect their Senators to speak to them on a regular basis about the work they are doing on their behalf.

As the author and former Presidential speechwriter James Humes has said: ''The art of communication is the language of leadership.'' That is why each and every one of us, in turn, relies on the dedicated men and women to help us communicate with folks back home.

I am here on the floor today to say farewell to a member of my team who has been so instrumental in helping me communicate to the people of Oregon.

For the past now 7½ years, Ray Zaccaro has served as my communications director. What a 7½ years it has been, especially when you consider how drastically the media and communications landscape has changed in that 7½ years. We have gone from local newspapers and cable news in serving as the dominant means of mass communication to Facebook and Twitter and Instagram and Snapchat and TikTok and others that are far too numerous for me to keep track of, but that is why we have a communications team.

One day, produced video content performed the best. The next, it was suddenly selfie-style videos. Videos used to do very well on Facebook. When the algorithms changed, they didn't do so well. Then Instagram reels took off, and on and on and on. It is incredible how fast the communication world keeps changing. Since March of 2020, it has only gotten more chaotic as the pandemic has turned everything upside down, including how we consume information and how we communicate.

Ray Zaccaro expertly helped me and the entire team navigate this ever-shifting media landscape. As recording studios shut down, he mobilized the communications team to quickly transition to use a vast array of tools, including Skype and Zoom, so that we could continue to get our message and timely information to the people of Oregon.

That foresight and quick action are just extensions of his entire approach to communication—always challenging the members of our team to think outside the box and never being afraid to suggest new ideas, no matter how crazy they might initially seem. It doesn't matter if they work in communications or on the legislative team or with constituent services. He believes everyone on the team has a role to play in helping to develop and tell the story of what we are working to do. And he has proven right, time and time again, over the last 7-plus years.

When Jeff Sessions, as Attorney General under the previous administration,

gave his ''zero tolerance'' speech, I said to my team: It sounds like he is planning for a policy of tearing children out of their parents' arms down at the border, and I am sure that is hyperbole because no American administration would ever do that to children.

A member of my team said: There is one way to find out. Go down there yourself.

Well, Ray, who is sitting behind me on the bench, took that idea and ran with it. We went down there the following Sunday, down to Texas, and he used his cell phone to livestream our attempts to try and ascertain exactly what was happening to young boys and girls.

At a detention facility in McAllen, we were the first legislative team to witness that, indeed, Team Trump was ripping children out of their parents' arms. I will never forget, as Ray and I walked into that facility, there was a group of press outside who said: What are you going to find?

I said: I have no idea, but I will talk with you all when we come out.

Ray and I went in and saw those children in cages. And as we were being given a tour, I remember this group of young boys who were in one of the cages. They were being asked to line up—there were about 10 of them—from the shortest to the tallest, and the youngest was knee-high to a grasshopper. He was just maybe 4 years old.

I asked: Where did these young boys come from?

He said: Well, we brought them in that door over there, and we took them away from their parents.

And in that warehouse room, the parents were in other cyclone fence cages. And if the boys peered really hard, they might possibly see a parent or a sister, a father or mother, an uncle somewhere in that warehouse, but they had no idea what fate awaited them.

We went outside and talked to the press outside and told them what was happening. And in a flash, it was national news about what was going on by our government in their treatment of young children.

We went up the road to Brownsville. We had heard that there were a few hundred boys possibly being held in a former Walmart. I thought that was an astounding story, not possibly true, but should we go and check it out? Ray and I decided we would.

We went up to this former Walmart. It had barriers to keep you from parking in the former Walmart parking lot so we walked across the grounds to the door, where, by cell phone, I called up the number that was inside and said: We are here. I am a U.S. Senator, and we would like to have a tour, please, of your facility, if we could speak with your manager or your manager could come out and talk with us. Eventually, the manager did come out. His assistant had said he would be talking to us, but, actually, what he did was he called the police. And he didn't come out until the police cars were arriving.

I think Ray, who was livestreaming the whole thing, secretly wanted me to be arrested and carried off in handcuffs to magnify the impact of the story. I am sorry, Ray, that it didn't come to that, but the story had a tremendous impact.

They would not let me into that Walmart to see what was going on, but the national scandal that ensued in the days that followed meant the press of the United States of America got in the following weekend, and a national debate started about who are we as citizens of the United States of America and who is our government and what are we doing to these children?

It turned out there were not a few hundred boys in that facility; there were a few boys short of 1,500 in that single former Walmart.

The work that Ray did that day revealed the truth of Trump's actions and shocked this Nation and moved this Nation to action. Horrified, as we continued to learn about the realities of the situation, Ray kept up the drumbeat with his contacts in the media throughout months that followed to ensure that that story of traumatized children and how we can help them continued, and those children were never forgotten.

Let me be clear. It wasn't just the power of the story or the opportunity to get his boss—me—on television; he kept up the drumbeat because he is a passionate person who cares deeply about others.

Countless members of Team Merkley could recount stories about a time when Ray went out of his way to help them, to provide comfort and support when they were going through a difficult moment in their lives, or just a call to check in on how someone is doing or a full-blown Italian feast delivered to the home of a fellow team member grieving the loss of a loved one. And as his work with those migrant children separated from their parents at the border showed, he doesn't have to know you personally to care deeply.

One time Ray was out with me in Oregon for a series of townhalls, and a constituent showed up who was having a personal crisis. Ray went out of his way to make sure that man got the help he needed, while still continuing to do the other aspects of his job: attending to members of the media, guiding and supporting staff in their respective tasks, and ensuring that the constituent had everything he needed.

That is just who he is, the type of person who will drop everything if someone needs help, who will offer up his own apartment so his boss can come film an important, last-minute video when the planned location fell through.

I couldn't begin to count how many late nights and early mornings we spent together sitting for media interviews. I am thinking right now, here on the floor of the Senate, of a night a few years ago, when I was here through the night, speaking for over 15 hours straight to protest the theft of a Supreme Court seat by our former President and then-Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL. Throughout the night, there was Ray, in between running back and forth to the office to take calls from reporters and producers, returning to flip floor charts as my speech proceeded.

Thank you, Ray, for all that you have done for the team, for the people of Oregon, and for the people of this Nation. Thank you for your tireless efforts to utilize communication tools at our disposal to protect our democracy and enhance the important issues that face our Nation, from healthcare to housing, to education, to living-wage jobs, to equality of opportunity, to taking on climate chaos. Thank you for bringing the passionate and longstanding commitment to democratic politics and principals that were forged in your early experiences back home in Long Island, and you brought them to Capitol Hill.

It is hard to picture what our Team Merkley experience will be after you leave because you have been such an integral part for so long. But know that while you will be deeply missed, we all wish you nothing but the best in this next chapter of your life as you continue fighting to build a better world.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022, AT 1 P.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 1 p.m. on Monday.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4:39 p.m., adjourned until Monday, January 24, 2022, at 1 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

FRANKLIN R. PARKER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, VICE GREGORY J. SLAVONIC.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ELIZABETH FRAWLEY BAGLEY, OF FLORIDA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL.

JANE HARTLEY, OF NEW YORK, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.

ALEXANDER MARK LASKARIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AN AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD.

ALAN M. LEVENTHAL, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate January 20, 2022:

THE JUDICIARY

HOLLY A. THOMAS, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JOSEPH DONNELLY, OF INDIANA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE HOLY SEE.

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF LEON SKARSHINSKI.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOHN BREIDENSTINE AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL LALLY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JULY 19, 2021.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JOHNNIE HODGES, SR.

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor World War II Navy Veteran, and a friend of Buffalo, the late Johnnie Hodges, Sr. Hodges who served as a light of inspiration to his local community, and I am proud to bring recognition to his life and legacy today.

Mr. Hodges was a trailblazer. He began his service with the United States Navy on January 8, 1944 and following training in Bainbridge, Maryland, was stationed aboard the USS *General Harry Taylor*. Hodges served as a Stewards Mate Third Class on the troop transport ship during World War II, taking part in missions across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans until his honorable discharge on June 17, 1946. His participation, along with many other African Americans in the Armed Forces, led to the desegregation of the military and planted the seeds for Civil Rights Movement in the United States. He was also the first ever African American Foreman at Bethlehem Steel, a mill which was once the second largest producer of iron in the United States. In addition to his work at Bethlel Steel for 35 years, his wife, Flora, and he were entrepreneurs, owning a successful delicatessen.

Johnnie was known for his kindness which never went unrecognized by those around him. When he came back from serving our great country during World War II, he raised 6 children with his wife Flora. Johnnie was known to always be helping others, from teaching teenagers how to fix their cars, to helping a young neighbor with his newspaper route. Johnnie also served his local community by working as a bus driver for Buffalo for 25 years. When he had fallen behind in mortgage payments as he was caring for his sick wife and was eventually evicted from his home, the local community rallied in support of Johnnie, and raised over 100,000 dollars in less than 24 hours to send Johnnie back to his home. This generosity by family, friends, and strangers, is a true testament to the kind of man Johnnie was, and his lifetime of kindness was quickly repaid when he was in a time of need. These actions also demonstrated why Buffalo is known as the ''City of Good Neighbors.''

Madam Speaker, please join me to bring recognition to such a significant member of the Buffalo community. It is an honor to be able to recognize Johnnie Hodges, Sr. today. He helped to make our world a better place with his participation in World War II which strengthened our democracy and freedom, and our community a better place by being a true pillar of service and sacrifice. All those who were lucky enough to have known him will greatly miss his generous spirit and forever remember his lasting legacy of kindness.

IN HONOR OF KEN NORTON FOR HIS 19 YEARS OF SERVICE AT THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS NEW HAMPSHIRE IN CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Ms. KUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincere best wishes to Ken Norton as he steps down as Executive Director at the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) New Hampshire after many years of dedicated service in the field of mental health.

During Ken's long and successful career in community mental health advocacy, he will be remembered as a leading and influential voice for mental health awareness and access in New Hampshire. Ken has brought science-based grassroots mental health services to every community in our Granite State. We are grateful for Ken's leadership as he grew the NAMI New Hampshire organization, while strengthening partnerships, building the organization's capacity for support, education, and advocacy services. Our families, neighbors, and communities are better because of the work of Ken Norton.

On behalf of New Hampshire's Second Congressional District, I thank Ken Norton for his exemplary service. I wish him the best of luck in the years ahead.

HONORING RICHARD ''RICH'' FREEDMAN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Richard ''Rich'' Freedman in celebration of his longstanding career in journalism.

Upon graduating from Ygnacio Valley High School in Concord, California, and later from San Jose State University with a bachelor's in journalism, Mr. Freedman began a 27-year long career with the Vallejo Times-Herald. Largely inspired by his late professor, Roger Budrow, and his late father, Bernie, Mr. Freedman had an immense passion for every meaningful story.

While he ended his long and illustrious career with the Times-Herald as the Community Editor, he spent time covering the arts, sports, features, and wrote his own column. As the entertainment writer, he interviewed astronauts, authors, a CIA operative, singers, motivational speakers, and so many more.

In addition to Mr. Freedman's career with the Times-Herald, he spent much of his time serving his community. As a member of Reach Out Benicia, Contra Costa County Child Abuse Prevention Council, and the Benicia/Vallejo Humane Society, Mr. Freedman received an Honorable Mention from the Contra Costa Press Club and Humanitarian of the Year Award from the Vallejo Boys and Girls Club. He was also recognized by the California Army National Guard and received a California Commendation Medal.

Mr. Freedman and his wife, Megan, have three children, Toby, Charlotte, and Beau, and one son, Cameron, who passed away in 2020. Mr. Freedman, throughout his career, has been known for his sense of humor, his passion, and willingness to serve his community.

Madam Speaker, it is evident that Mr. Freedman has dedicated his life and career to the betterment of Vallejo, Benicia, and journalism. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

RECOGNIZING JOHN P. ANDERSON, DMD OF RAINSVILLE, ALABAMA

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. ADERHOLT. Madam Speaker, I would like to honor Dr. John P. Anderson of Rainsville, Alabama on his service to Northeast Alabama after 48 years of practice. Dr. Anderson's decades of service to his community and the State of Alabama exemplify the hard-working spirit of the people we have in Alabama's Fourth District.

Dr. Anderson graduated from Auburn University in 1969 where he was a member of the Phi Eta Sigma, Alpha Epsilon Delta, and Phi Kappa Phi honor societies. He continued his education at the University of Alabama School of Dentistry where he graduated in 1973 with his DMD degree. While at the University of Alabama School of Dentistry he was a member of the Omicron Kappa Upsilon Honorary Dental Society and the American College of Dentists. He received the Dean's Award, the highest award bestowed on a graduating senior, the Walter Pelton Community Dentistry Award, and the Academy of General Dentistry Award.

After receiving his DMD in 1973, Dr. Anderson practiced in Rainsville, Alabama. Deepening his dedication to his field, he served as a Delegate to the American Dental Association for 12 years, where he served as both Vice President and President. He also served as the President of the Dentistry Alumni Association for the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He has been honored with many outstanding awards over the course of his career including the Pierre Fauchard Academy Fellowship Award in 1988, the Academy of Dentistry International Fellowship Award in 1990, the Alabama Dental Association Dentist Citizen of the Year in 1991, the International College of Dentists Fellowship Award in 1992, the American College of Dentists Fellowship Award in 1993, and the Alabama Dental Association Most Excellent Fellow in 1995.

As an active member of his community, Dr. Anderson's service extends far beyond the scope of his practice. He has served two terms as the President of the Rainsville Chamber of Commerce and served on a committee that raised $350,000 of local money to secure matching grants for a new public library in Rainsville. His service to Dekalb County includes serving 12 years on the Board of Directors for the United Givers Fund and chairing the Dekalb County Commission to Improve Education. Additionally, he is currently in his 28th year on the Economic Development Committee of Dekalb County where he has served as Chairman since 2000.

Dr. Anderson has served so many over the past 48 years, not only in Alabama, but in 1988 he even traveled to Bolivia where he provided dental care to the natives of the Andes Mountains.

Dr. Anderson has been married to his wife Frances Randolph Maclin Anderson since 1969. They have one daughter, Mary Stuart Anderson Gallian who followed in her father's footsteps and practices dentistry in Fairfax, Virginia. Please join his family and me in congratulating Dr. John P. Anderson of Rainsville, Alabama on an exceptional career and great service to his community and the great State of Alabama.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MEL REEVES

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life of a long-time civil rights activist, journalist, and my friend, Mel Reeves who passed away at the age of 64 from COVID–19 complications.

Born in Miami, Florida, he was the youngest of 13 children and was adopted at the age of one. Bullied at a young age, Reeves grew up standing up for others and being an outspoken advocate for marginalized communities. Later in life he attended Northwestern College in Iowa, then moved to Minneapolis where he devoted his life to advocating for social justice.

Mel Reeves was a journalist for the Minnesota Spokesman-Recorded newspaper and never shied away from elevating the truth. He was a devoted and passionate man with a fighting spirit, always ready to support his community advocating for justice and accountability. Reeves did not just write about the many injustices happening around him, such as the horrific murders of George Floyd and Daunte Wright, he used his voice and platform to encourage the community to never stop fighting for justice.

As a community leader, he advocated for racial justice, education reform, the working class and more recently the need to protect oneself from the pandemic by wearing a mask and getting vaccinated.

Reeves is survived by his son Kellen Reeves and five grandchildren.

Rest in peace, friend. I thank him for inspiring many to speak up for justice.

HONORING DR. MAREK PIENKOWSKI'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

HON. TIM BURCHETT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, today I recognize Dr. Marek Pienkowski, an accomplished medical researcher and a cultural ambassador for Poland. This year he is celebrating his 50th anniversary of living in the United States.

Dr. Pienkowski earned his M.D. and Ph.D. at the Medical University of Warsaw. In 1972 he migrated to the United States to work with Hilary Koprowski, the inventor of the world's first live Polio vaccine, to research cancer-causing viruses. He later became a post-doctoral fellow in clinical immunology at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and in 1984 he established a clinical practice to treat patients with allergies, asthma, and immunological disorders.

Today, medical research and findings from throughout Dr. Pienkowski's career are widely distributed. He published more than fifty scientific papers and two books, including the Handbook for Human Embryology used by medical students in Poland.

Dr. Pienkowski was key to expanding cultural, artistic, scientific, and business dialogue between the United States and Poland. He established the Marek Maria Pienkowski Foundation to facilitate cooperation and exchanges between the University of Tennessee's School of Art and fine arts schools in Poland. He also founded PolandNow in Knoxville, a civic organization to promote and strengthen Polish-American relationships.

During this time, former United States Ambassador to Poland Victor Ashe worked with Dr. Pienkowski to establish Knoxville's Sister City relationship with Chelm, Poland. For his efforts to strengthen U.S.-Poland relations, Dr. Pienkowski earned an Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland designation from the U.S. Department of State.

When Dr. Pienkowski left Poland to make the United States his home, he brought with him his passions for helping people and building international relationships. Congratulations to Dr. Pienkowski for an impressive career, and I thank him for his contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING ANNA MAE JONES, A DEDICATED PATRIOT

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the remarkable life of Anna Mae Jones, a military veteran, teacher, dedicated community leader, and devoted wife and mother. Anna Mae led a long, exemplary life committed to service for her community and country. Her sacrifice and dedication to our American values made Anna Mae the truest embodiment of a patriot. Anna Mae was born in Saratoga Springs, New York on September 6, 1916. Raised in Tonawanda, she attended D'Youville College, earning her teaching degree in 1938.

When the United States entered World War II, Anna Mae put her teaching career aside to enlist in the war. She strongly believed it was her civic duty, and a true honor, to be able to serve her country. Anna Mae joined the Women's Army Auxiliary and served in New Guinea from 1943 to 1945. Specializing as the chief clerk to the Provost Marshal, Anna Mae was able to utilize her organizational skills as a teacher to help the war effort. Her commendable service record is evident through the numerous awards, medals, and honors Anna Mae was given. As a Second Lieutenant, Anna Mae was awarded the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, Women's Army Corps Service Medal, and two Overseas Service Bars.

It was during her time serving that Anna Mae met the love of her life, Lieutenant John Joseph Jones II. The two were wed in 1946 at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Tonawanda. Anna Mae and John began their wonderful life together in dutiful service to our nation, assigned to bases in the United States and Europe. Together, they raised three beautiful children.

Anna Mae and her family returned to settle in Tonawanda in 1955. Anna Mae began her work as a special-education teacher at Central School in Tonawanda. Anna Mae dedicated her career to enhancing the learning experience for her students, ensuring they got the upmost out of their education. She frequently took her students on camping trips to teach them about nature and even started a summer school program for students in the special education department. Anna Mae was a true pioneer in the special education field, and the students of Tonawanda are forever grateful for her and her work.

After her retirement in 1981, Anna Mae's devotion to service remained steadfast, further immersing herself into the community and civic organizations around her. She sought to make a lasting, meaningful impact in the community she cared so deeply for, and so she did. Anna Mae was a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, the Ladies of Charity, the Women's Army Corps, and the Tonawanda Women's Democratic Club. Additionally, she served as Chaplain of the American Legion Post No. 264 in Tonawanda for 27 years, earning the Legion of Honor Award. Furthermore, Anna Mae was an active member in the Legislative Branch of the AARP, served as a board member of the Waterfront Revitalization Committee, and was an active member of the Historical Society of the Tonawandas for 50 years. Three years prior to her passing at the age of 103, Anna Mae was honored at the Buffalo Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Anna Mae and her exemplary work in serving our country. We cannot afford to forget the powerful example citizens like Ms. Jones set for us. Let the memory of her lifelong service to something larger than herself summon our better angels to do our part as well.

HONORING RAYMOND L. CRAWFORD, JR.

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of a great man, Mr. Raymond L. Crawford, Jr. of Denton, Texas who passed away on January 17, 2022. He lived a full life and was a respected business leader, philanthropist and beloved husband and father.

Mr. Crawford was born and raised in Lewisville, Texas where he was baptized at the First Presbyterian Church. He attended Lewisville High School and was a four-sport letterman. As President of the Senior Class of 1958, he led a class trip to Washington, D.C., where the group met with their Congressman, Frank Ikard. He furthered his education at North Texas College in Denton. As a student, he was a football player and a member and President of the Geezles fraternity, graduating in 1963 with a BA in Mathematics.

He was a life-long financial and insurance services professional, beginning his successful five-decade career with Northwestern Mutual with an on-campus interview at his alma mater. The trade association, Million Dollar Roundtable, recognized him in 2018 with a lifetime membership for having 50 consecutive years meeting the organization's ethical standards and sales requirements. In addition, he was recognized by Northwestern Mutual in 1983 as one of its top 20 salesmen in the nation. He prided himself on doing his best to build client relationships based upon trust and integrity, and advising them with the best investment products to protect and provide for those most important in their lives.

R.L.'s love for the University of North Texas manifested in his financial support and volunteer service on many UNT boards, including the UNT Board of Regents from 1989 to 1995 and as chairman and emeritus director of the UNT Foundation Board. He was also a proud member of the Mean Green Club and the UNT Alumni Association. He also actively engaged in his community, serving in leadership roles as the President of the Greater Lewisville Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of Medical City Lewisville, and President of the Lewisville Rotary Club as well as multiple non-profits. He was named Lewisville's 1983 ''Citizen of the Year'', an honorary lifetime board member of the Dallas United Way and a Paul Harris Fellow Rotarian.

He was devoted to Brenda, his college sweetheart, and wife of 57 years. Their marriage was blessed with two sons, R.L. ''Trey'' Crawford III, and F. Guy Crawford. Following in the steps of their parents, both men also graduated from the University of North Texas. R.L. Crawford, Jr. was a great personal friend and advisor to me and my wife. We extend heartfelt condolences to R.L.'s family; he will be deeply missed by his friends and family and the North Texas community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN ''JACK'' CASEY, JR.

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a man who lived selflessly and embodied the true definition of a patriot. John ''Jack'' Casey, of Groton, Connecticut, who passed January 4th after a lifetime of service to his community, his state, and his nation.

Jack Casey was born on September 30, 1946, to Catherine Agnes Keane McDonald and John George Casey, Jr. in Allston, Massachusetts. He attended high school in Brighton, Massachusetts, and graduated in 1964. Immediately following his graduation, Jack heeded the call to serve his country and enlisted in the United States Navy. During his time in the Navy, he completed Disbursing Clerk Class A School in Newport, Rhode Island; and soon advanced to the rank Disbursing Clerk Third Class while stationed in New London, Connecticut.

Jack chose to extend his enlistment by thirteen months, volunteering to serve his nation in Vietnam. He attended Counter Insurgency Training in Little Creek, Virginia; and served at National Security Activity in Da Nang, Vietnam RVN from July 1967 to July 1968. His time in the Navy earned him the Navy Unit Commendation, Navy Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with four bronze stars, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, Republic Navy Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Unit Citation, and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Following his discharge from the Navy, Jack returned to Groton and found employment at the Navy Exchange. In November 1968, Jack began his 33-year career at Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, working as a chemical operator. Jack worked for Pfizer until his retirement in November 2001.

Soon after his retirement, he started volunteering for numerous groups. Jack epitomized the spirit of volunteerism; his tireless dedication to fellow veterans and to his community would define his life. While Jack volunteered for Meals on Wheels, he would frequently go above and beyond for the seniors on his route—buying them items from the store without accepting reimbursement. In 2001, Jack began volunteering as a Registrar for the World War II memorial, inducting more than 100,000 people into the World War II Registry. He also volunteered as a Registrar for the U.S. Navy Memorial and U.S. Army Memorial, registering over 75,000 heroes as Sea Service Personnel and over 75,000 heroes for the U.S. Army Memorial.

I had the honor to witness first-hand Jack's deep compassion for his country and fellow veterans when he joined my Veterans Advisory Board in 2007. His participation and input as a member of the Board was invaluable as he identified real life problems within the Veterans Administration that impacted our veterans. However, the most remarkable quality about Jack was that for each issue he raised, he also brought forth constructive ideas to address the problem. Veterans in eastern Connecticut and all across the country benefited from his passionate well-informed advocacy.

Jack continued to be a champion of veterans, becoming a member of the Patriot Guard Riders in 2008. During his time as a member of the Patriot Guard, his role would encompass that of a general member, a Ride Captain, and Assistant State Captain. He completed 5,000 missions from Vermont to New York. Jack also went on to serve as a board member for the Connecticut Patriot Guard from April 2008 to June 2019.

In the midst of his work with the Patriot Guard, from 2009 to 2015, Jack volunteered as Logistic Support Manager and Guardian for American Warrior. He escorted World War II veterans to the World War II Memorial, something that he found deeply gratifying.

Jack's selflessness did not go unrecognized. In 2011, he was awarded the Outstanding Citizenship Award by the National Society of the Son of the American Revolution. A year later, he was awarded the Norwich Area Council Veteran of the Year Award for his support and dedication to Norwich area Veterans organizations. And, on November 1, 2013, Jack was inducted into the 9th class of the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame—a well-deserved nomination that I enthusiastically supported.

Not one to rest, in 2015, Jack helped establish a series of veteran coffeehouses across Southeastern Connecticut. These coffeehouses offered and continue to offer veterans a network of support, resources and comradery.

Jack stayed active in the veteran community until the end, participating in the Vietnam Veterans of American, Chapter 20, and Easter Seals veterans Rally Point. Jack was a lifetime member of the VVA, VFW, DAV, and Submarine Veterans Association.

Madam Speaker, it is a privilege and an honor to represent constituents as selfless and humble as John ''Jack'' Casey, Jr. Though the gap he leaves in the fabric of Eastern Connecticut's veterans' community is one that won't be soon filled, we can find solace in the reality that Jack's hard work has touched thousands. Jack undoubtedly left those he interacted with better and achieved his goal of leaving things better for those who come after him. I ask that my colleagues please join me in honoring Jack Casey, a man to whom we can all look as a model of leadership and service.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE, SPIRIT, AND LEADERSHIP OF REVEREND PETER C. WEISS

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise to remember the life, spirit, and leadership of The Very Reverend Peter C. Weiss, S.S.J.

I knew Father Weiss during his service as a Pastor to All Saints Catholic Church in my home community of Algiers and his time as Chaplain at the New Orleans Fire Department.

He was an inspiring orator and a kind soul that steered the church through difficult times.

Peter C. Weiss was born in Brooklyn on June 26, 1951 to Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Weiss.

He was a member of the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart for 43 years until he passed away last week at the age of 70.

Ordained in 1979, Father Weiss ministered primarily to African American communities across the country, including in Baltimore, Houston, Birmingham, and Washington, D.C.

However, his longest ministerial service was in New Orleans, where he made a lasting mark on the community.

Along with ministering to elderly, sick and homebound parishioners, Rev. Peter Weiss was a reserve fireman, a Chaplain to the local branch of the FBI, and taught at St. Augustine High School for 30 years.

At the school he played indispensable roles as a Theology Teacher, Director of Color Guard, and Chief Religious Officer.

In everything he did for St. Augustine, All Saints Catholic Church and the community, he kept Christ at the forefront.

I'm sending prayers to Father Weiss' family, friends, students, colleagues, and church community.

He will be so missed.

I take comfort that now, he is at peace with his Savior in heaven.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MIKE JILOTY

HON. MICHAEL WALTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. WALTZ. Madam Speaker, on December 25th Volusia County lost a great businessman and valued community leader, Mike Jiloty. Through Mike's hard work and personal approach to business, he received hundreds of industry awards. Serving as the President of United Way of Volusia and Flagler, Mike fought for the health, education, and stability of every person in his community. He dedicated his time to the FUTURES Foundation for Volusia County Schools to better prepare students for their careers.

As a graduate of the Leadership Florida Class XIV, Mike used his skills as a leader to serve his community and was honored by several organizations, including the Volusia Association of School Administrators, the Daytona Beach Community College Foundation, and the Conklin Center for the Blind Lodging.

Madam Speaker, Mike Jiloty was a true example of a servant leader. He sought to inspire others, to make his community a better place, and he is missed dearly. It is my honor to recognize him today.

NANSEN SKI CLUB

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Ms. KUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the first competitive ski jumping event at the Nansen Jump Park in nearly 40 years that will take place January 23, 2022.

The Nansen Ski Jump was constructed in 1936-38 by the city of Berlin and the National Youth Administration with help from with the Nansen Ski Club.

For almost fifty years the Nansen Ski Jump was the premier ski jump in the country, hosting Olympic trials and National Championships. In 1988, the jump was closed and the site of the jump was overgrown and rundown.

Winter sports are more than just a hobby in New Hampshire and throughout the United States; they are a way of life. I was proud to support Nansen Ski club's efforts to restore and renovate the Nansen Ski Jump. The restoration of the Nansen Ski Jump site, and the return of ski jumping to New Hampshire's North Country, will create an economic and communal boost to the region.

On August 27, 2021 I was excited to visit the Nansen Ski Jump in Milan to see the progress on renovations. I am proud of the North Country community for coming together to make the project a reality.

On behalf of my constituents across New Hampshire's Second Congressional District, I thank them for all they do to ensure New Hampshire remains such a wonderful place to live, play, and raise a family.

RECOGNIZING CAPTAIN JOHN ''JACK'' A. WALTER, A VIETNAM WAR HERO, ACTIVE VOLUNTEER, AND FAMILY MAN

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Vietnam Veteran Captain Jack Walter. Jack was born and raised to serve his country, community, and family. He grew up on the East Side of Buffalo and was the 8th of the 9 children of Joseph and Frances Walter. His father was a bricklayer, so he always knew what it meant to work hard in life and never give up. He graduated from St. Matthew's Grammar School in 1960, Canisius High School in 1964, and Gannon University in 1969. While in college he was a member of the Army ROTC Advanced Corps. With this solid foundation, Jack was ready to put his leadership skills to the test. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army, Field Artillery. He went to Vietnam and served with the 1st Cavalry Division, 1st/21st Artillery. He was an Artillery Forward Observer with an Infantry Company, an Artillery Liaison Officer for an Infantry Battalion, and an Assistant Executive Officer for his Firing Battery. While in Vietnam he served in part of the incursion into Cambodia in May and June of 1970 and was promoted to 1st Lieutenant in Cambodia.

Jack used his skills to save the lives of others on the battlefield. He was awarded a Silver Star, the third-highest military decoration for valor in combat. He received the Silver Star for ''Gallantry in Action while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile enemy force in the Republic of Vietnam. First Lieutenant Walter distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on June 22, 1970 in the Kingdom of Cambodia. During an intense ground battle involving a well-entrenched enemy force, First Lieutenant Walter, serving as Artillery Liaison, repeatedly came upon heavy enemy fire as he diverted devastating aerial and field artillery on enemy positions. With complete disregard for his own safety, First Lieutenant Walter performed in a courageous and professional manner as he effectively directed artillery while braving the intense hostile fire.''

Jack was also awarded a Bronze Star with an oak leaf cluster representing two Bronze Star Awards. He received a Bronze Star Award with Valor, the fourth highest award for military combat bravery during combat actions against an enemy force. The Bronze Star Award with Valor was ''for heroism in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Second Lieutenant Walter also distinguished himself by valorous actions on February 27, 1970 in Binh Long Province, part of the Republic of Vietnam. When his Platoon encountered small arms and automatic weapons fire from an enemy bunker complex, he immediately called in artillery and air strikes. His pinpoint accuracy forced the aggressors to flee their fortified positions.'' He was awarded a second Bronze Star award for Meritorious Achievement in ground operations against hostile forces during the period from October 1969 to October 1970 in the Republic of Vietnam. In addition, Jack received an Air Medal with 4 oak leaf clusters representing 5 Air Medals in total, Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 1960 Device, and several other awards for his service in Vietnam. When he returned home from the warzone, he continued his military service by joining the U.S. Army Reserve. He was promoted to Captain in 1973. In 1974, when his military career ended, he spent the next 36 years in the aerospace and defense industry.

When Jack came back from Vietnam, he did whatever he could to use his leadership skills to help his family and his community. He was active in the Amherst Girls Softball League where he spent 11 years as a coach, Vice-President, Treasurer and Registrar and where he received the Amherst Girls Softball League Hall of Fame Award in 1991. He was the coach for Christ the King girls' basketball team for 8 years and then went on to be the assistant head coach for the Nardin Academy Varsity Basketball team for 5 years. He is active in Christ the King Church, having served as a member of the Parish Council for 12 years and president of the Parish Council for 2 years. He was also Chairman of the Finance Committee at Christ the King Church for 5 years.

Jack couldn't have been so successful in his life without the support of his family which includes his wife Janice, his three daughters which include Dr. Jacquelyn Dougherty who is an optometrist at the VA Western New York Healthcare System, Judith Dehn who is an athletic trainer at Excelsior Orthopaedics, Mary Colpoys who is a science teacher at Grand Island High School, and his 10 grandchildren. Jack's friend and fellow Vietnam Veteran Tom Bubar was instrumental in securing this special recognition for Jack. Jack's dedication to his troops in Vietnam, his family, and his community is an example of the selfless sacrifices that we should all make to ensure that our world and community is a better place to live.

RECOGNITION OF THE NORTH SHORE SENIOR HIGH MUSTANGS

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the North Shore Senior High Mustangs for their victory at the Texas 6A Football State Championship.

This victory reflects the incredible passion and dedication of the students, parents, and staff at North Shore both on and off the field.

I know I can speak for the North Channel community and East Harris County when I say that we are proud of our student athletes.

The Mustangs have now won 3 state championships in the past 4 years, and I know they have a bright future ahead of them.

To each and every member of the North Shore football team, to Coach Jon Kay, and to all of the parents and teachers who have supported this team, I wish them continued success.

Their futures are bright, and I can't wait to see them shine even more.

HONORING THE LIFE OF HEMPSTEAD COUNTY DETENTION LIEUTENANT JERRY S. BUSH

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of retired Lieutenant Jerry S. Bush, a committed servant of the Hempstead County Sheriff's Department. Lieutenant Bush passed away on Wednesday, January 5, leaving behind a legacy of joyful service to his beloved Hope, Arkansas home.

Having started his career as a Reserve Deputy, Lieutenant Bush worked his way up to Deputy and was later promoted to Lieutenant in the county's detention center. Lieutenant Bush also served many years as a Bailiff to the Arkansas Circuit Court. Remembered most for his service to the citizens of Hempstead County, Lieutenant Bush will always be remembered as a friend and servant to his community.

I take this time today to honor the life of service exemplified by Lieutenant Jerry S. Bush. I thank him and his family for their dedication to our fellow citizens and our beloved Fourth District of Arkansas.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE HON. E. G. ''BUD'' SHUSTER

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Congressman Bud Shuster, who represented the people of central Pennsylvania for over 30 years and wish him a happy 90th birthday.

Throughout his career, Bud Shuster worked tirelessly to serve his constituents. As Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, he built broad coalitions of support that tackled some of our nation's greatest challenges and worked to improve virtually every aspect of the nation's infrastructure including our roads, bridges, airports, ports, and waterways. Congressman Shuster was also a driving force in the construction of Interstate 99, a vital route that connected Altoona, Bedford, and State College to the rest of our Commonwealth and beyond.

His work in Congress as the top Republican on the House Select Intelligence Committee was key in the creation of the CIA's Counternarcotics Center and in passing legislation that specially equipped intelligence planes to locate Central American drug cartels, which attempted to bring deadly drugs into our communities.

His work in the halls of Congress undoubtedly made our nation stronger, safer, and more prosperous.

As his 90th birthday approaches, Bud Shuster's example should continue to inspire every member in this body to work to serve their constituents. On behalf of the people of the 13th Congressional District, I wish Congressman Bud Shuster a happy birthday and many more happy and healthy years to come.

IN MEMORY OF MARILYN BERGMAN

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute and to honor the life and legacy of Marilyn Bergman, who passed away on January 8, 2022. Marilyn was an accomplished songwriter and a longtime President of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). I offer my most sincere condolences to her family and friends on her loss.

A native New Yorker, Marilyn broke barriers as one of a relatively few women in the then-male-dominated songwriting business in her early career and as the first woman to serve as President of ASCAP, a position she held for a decade and a half.

Over the course of her long and impressive career, Marilyn wrote the lyrics for many iconic songs as part of a songwriting duo with her husband Alan, including the Academy-Award winning ''The Way We Were'' and ''The Windmills of Your Mind,'' as well as songs for the film Yentl and the theme songs to a number of popular television shows. During the course of her illustrious career, she was nominated for sixteen Academy Awards, winning three times, as well as earning four Emmy Awards and two Grammy Awards. Among her many accolades, in 1980 she was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

In addition to her work as a lyricist, Marilyn was a tireless advocate to protect the rights of songwriters. In 1985, she became the first woman elected to the Board of Directors of ASCAP. She later served as President and Chairman of the Board and presided over unprecedented growth in the organization. Through her leadership of ASCAP, she was a strong partner to Congress, and particularly to the Judiciary Committee, in its work to support the music industry and to protect the rights of creators. Among her accomplishments, she worked to help pass the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, a landmark piece of legislation governing copyright and the internet. This is but one example of her diligent efforts to ensure that songwriters and music creators can sustain a living through their creativity notwithstanding the dramatic changes in technology that occurred during her leadership in the industry.

Marilyn is survived by her husband, Alan, her daughter, Julie, and her granddaughter, Emily.

Marilyn will be remembered by many Americans for her artistic talents, as her lyrics graced our lives in so many ways. She will also be remembered by many songwriters for her strong advocacy on their behalf. May her memory be a blessing.

HAPPY 107TH BIRTHDAY TO CAPTAIN SYDNEY COLE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Sydney Cole as he celebrates his 107th birthday. A decorated World War II veteran and lifelong resident of Buffalo, Mr. Cole is a beloved fixture of his community. Mr. Cole is a true inspiration to all those around him.

Mr. Cole grew up in Buffalo, New York, and attended City Honors High School, where he was later inducted into the Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame. Before the United States entered World War II, Mr. Cole enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. In 1943, Mr. Cole joined the United States Army to continue to support the Allies. Then, First Lieutenant Cole recalls flying the artillery observation plane for the 776th Field Artillery Battalion and being involved in the Battle of Rhineland and the Battle of Bulge. Mr. Cole will never forget what happened in the early morning hours of January 2, 1945, when his plane was shot down. Mr. Cole heroically saved his copilot, risking his life and becoming a prisoner of war. Captain Cole then went on to serve at a POW camp before discharging from the Army on December 27, 1945.

The immense bravery, patriotism, and sacrifice of Mr. Cole does not go unrecognized. Mr. Cole's exemplary service to our country is honored through his numerous medals and awards, including the Purple Heart Medal, Bronze Star Medal, and POW Medal.

Mr. Cole returned to Buffalo to marry the love of his life, Sybil, and raise their son Richard together. From 1978 to retirement, he was the owner of Cole Motors and worked as the manager of the Buffalo Athletic Club. Mr. Cole is highly cherished and admired in the community for his extraordinary lifetime of accomplishments.

I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Captain Cole a very happy 107th birthday. I look forward to celebrating many more milestones in the coming years and wish to extend my greatest gratitude to Captain Cole for his service and dedication to our country.

FIGHTING FOR PRO-LIFE

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, last week in my district, under the leadership of Lisa Van Riper, Holly Gatling, and Sally Zaleski with South Carolina Citizens for Life, along with Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette and Attorney General Alan Wilson, I was grateful to participate in the largest ever-attended pro-life events in the state.

Tomorrow in Washington, the annual Pro-Life March will take place where thousands come together to embrace the birth of babies on the anniversary of the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision.

This increasing level of support is better understood than ever before.

I am grateful to fight for pro-life values and am committed to advocating for the lives of the unborn, while also protecting the rights of health care providers who refuse to engage in abortions.

The Democrat elite think they are smarter than everyone and think Democrat voters and Democrat media are ignorant to believe that trillion-dollar spending ''costs zero dollars.''

In conclusion, God Bless our troops, who successfully protected America for 20 years, as the Global War on Terrorism continues moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DOUG HEAD

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, Doug Head was born in Midland, Michigan. He earned a degree in economics at Lawrence University in Wisconsin but spent over a year studying at the University of Singapore. He served in the Peace Corps in Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay before becoming a Central Florida resident in the early 1980s. Doug became the Executive Director of an organization that lobbied on behalf of AIDS patients, which he received recognition for in Forbes magazine calling him one of the ten most powerful voices in the insurance industry.

In the late 1980s, Doug became interested in politics and ran his first campaign in 1986. He also volunteered for the local Democratic party and worked to modernize their computer database. Soon after, Orange County's party registration flipped from a majority of Republican voters to a majority of Democratic voters. Doug served as Orange County Democratic Executive Committee (DEC) Chair from 1992 to 2004 and as the Orange County DEC's State Committeeman from 2016 to 2020.

As Chair, Doug encouraged interest groups to form clubs within the party. The first of which was the Orange County Rainbow Democratic Club, which was created in 1993 to promote the rights of members of the LGBTQ+ community. He also hosted a monthly social event, called ''First Friday,'' which became a gathering place for likeminded Democrats in Central Florida who attended the event to network and strategize about campaigns and registering Democrats.

Doug later became the chair of County Watch, a local watchdog group, that pushed for transparency and accountability in county government and agencies. He also worked with local non-profit organizations to empower minority committees. Doug was a mentor to many aspiring political operatives and community leaders. His wealth of knowledge was widely recognized and respected among political leaders across Florida.

He made several TV appearances, including the Daily Buzz and Central Florida news affiliates for FOX (WOFL) and ABC (WFTV), as well as being quoted in journals and newspapers, including The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, National Underwriter and Chicago Tribune, among others.

Doug Head passed away on the evening of November 13, 2021, in Orlando and is survived by his sisters, Meredy Jenkins and Barbara Cornelius, and his brother-in-law, Dennis Jenkins. His decades of commitment to the Central Florida community and the Democratic Party left a lasting foundation for others to build upon. His wisdom and guidance will be missed by many.

LAND CONVEYANCE FROM BEALE AIR FORCE BASE TO THREE RIVERS LEVEE IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I introduce legislation that would convey a small land parcel at Beale Air Force Base (AFB) in northern California to the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority for the Congressionally authorized Yuba Goldfields Levee Improvement Project. I thank my colleague Congressman DOUG LAMALFA (R–CA01), the bill's original cosponsor, who represents the neighboring Congressional district.

The Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority is responsible for providing 200-year flood protection for southern Yuba County in California, protecting homes, businesses, and military infrastructure at Beale AFB. As a senior member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, I secured authorization for the Yuba Goldfields Levee Improvement Project in the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–270). The Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority is the non-federal sponsor for this project, which will provide 200-year level of flood protection to the community surrounding Beale AFB.

Specifically, this project extends the Yuba River South Levee and crosses Beale AFB outside the fence line. Upon completing survey work for the proposed levee improvement project, the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority discovered that the U.S. Air Force owned a small parcel of approximately 0.3 acres outside the fence line and separated from the rest of Beale AFB by Smartville Road. In September 2020, I helped to secure a 25-year easement from the Air Force on behalf of the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority needed to construct, operate, and maintain the levee.

However, this legislation would convey ownership of the 0.3-acre parcel from the Air Force to the Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority, so that the non-federal sponsor can continue to ensure area flood control in perpetuity. This public interest land conveyance will ensure that the area, including Beale AFB, is better protected from future flooding.

As chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, I plan to legislate this land conveyance necessary for the long-term maintenance of the Yuba Goldfields Levee Improvement Project in the FY2023 National Defense Authorization Act, if necessary. This is but one example of how Congress can make our military installations more resilient to flooding and other extreme weather exacerbated by climate change by improving coordination between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' civil works projects and the service branches.

REMEMBERING DONALD EUGENE JORDAN

HON. HALEY M. STEVENS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Donald Jordan, who passed away on November 28th after a courageous and lengthy battle with cancer.

Mr. Jordan is a lifelong Michigander born in Flint, Michigan, on April 15, 1943. In 1961, he graduated from Plymouth High School but stayed connected to his school and classmates through his leadership as a member of the Class Reunion Committee. In college, he was an active member of the Fraternity Phi Delta Tau and graduated from the University of Michigan in 1975 with a Degree in Mechanical Engineering. Mr. Jordan worked at Ford Motor Company for over 30 years, during which time he earned his Professional Engineering Certification. He is survived by his wife Alice Jordan, his sons James and David, and his grandchildren Maxwell, Isabella, and Josue.

Mr. Jordan loved spending time with his family. They traveled on many vacations, including camping trips up North, Cooperstown, Myrtle Beach, Toronto, and Key West, but his favorite was the annual trip to Cancun. As a husband, he was deeply devoted to Alice, and they cared for each other through the course of their 49 years of marriage. As a father and grandfather, he was dependable and comforting, very involved in his children and grandchildren's activities, and always in the stands cheering them on.

In his free time, Mr. Jordan was a band member at his church and a proud member of the Plymouth Community Band. He played several instruments, including the euphonium, and taught accordion lessons. Furthermore, he volunteered at the Ascension Hospital for many years, where he valued the opportunity to care for others.

Mr. Jordan lived his life devoted to his family, helping others, and caring for the community around him. His example of love for his family and his community will forever be a reminder to his children, his grandchildren, and

all who knew him. Mr. Jordan will always be remembered for his love of family, spirit, and commitment to his community—all of which he passed down to his children and grandchildren.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF JAMES HOOLEY, HEAD OF POLITICAL SECTION AT THE BRITISH EMBASSY

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the invaluable service of James Hooley, who has served as the head of the political section at the British Embassy in Washington D.C. for the past five years. Throughout his tenure, James has personified the Special Relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom with his tireless work, diligent commitment, and affable personality.

As one of our key liaisons with the United Kingdom, James has facilitated bipartisan engagement with Congressional members and all levels of the British Government, from Prime Ministers to Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, and members of the Royal Family. Through two Presidential Administrations and two Prime Ministers, James has led the British Embassy's political operations, ensuring we in the United States remain well connected with our allies across the Atlantic. James has been steadfast in ensuring the highest diplomatic channels between our two countries remain open and well-used for the range of issues covered by the U.S.-U.K. relationship.

James will be transitioning back to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in London where I have no doubt he will achieve the same success. The Special Relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom remains special thanks to the work of diplomats like James Hooley. We in Congress will miss his work at the Embassy and wish him nothing but the best for his future endeavors.

REMEMBERING THE SECOND VICTIM OF THE COVID–19 PANDEMIC IN ERIE COUNTY, WALTER MONAHAN, A DECORATED VETERAN, FAMILY MAN, AND A FRIEND TO ALL

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the remarkable life of Walter Monahan, an exceptional man who was taken far too soon due to COVID–19. Walter was a decorated Vietnam military veteran, an active community leader and volunteer, and a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. Unfortunately, on Wednesday, March 25, 2020, Walter became the second resident in Erie County to pass due to COVID–19. His wife, Valerie Monahan, and his family, wishes for the public to remember Walter for the extraordinary person he was, not just as a statistic in a public health emergency. Walter's unfortunate passing allows us to honor his legacy and the incredible work he did while reminding us all that we must continue to actively take a stand against COVID–19.

Walter's lifelong commitment to serving his country is beyond commendable. He was a Petty Officer second class in the United States Navy. Walter's military career began when he served two tours on a destroyer during the Vietnam War. From there, the Navy truly became a part of Walter's blood. When his tours ended, Walter was transferred to the Pentagon to work for the Chief of Naval Operations. Walter also was a dedicated and active veteran. He marched with the Rochester Vietnam Veterans Chapter 20 marching unit and served on the board of directors.

I had the honor of meeting Walter myself and presenting him with a Vietnam Lapel Pin in thanks for his remarkable service. Walter's immense dedication, sacrifice, and service does not go unrecognized. He exemplified what it means to truly be a patriot, dedicating himself to our American values and serving his country proudly.

It was while he worked at the Pentagon that Walter met the love of his life, Valerie. The two soon got married and returned to Rochester, where Walter had grown up. Together, Walter and Valerie raised two lovely children, their daughter, Kelly and their son, Michael. After moving to Buffalo in 2007, Walter worked as a facilities director for People Inc's Senior Centers. He is remembered by his co-workers for his exceptional customer service, incredible family-oriented mindset, and his immense compassion. They reflect on Walter as being ''the kind of employee everyone would want on their team—skilled, caring, friendly, funny and enjoyable to know.''

A pinnacle of his community, Walter additionally dedicated his time to being an active member of numerous organizations. He served as a Eucharistic minister at St. Joseph University Parish, a docent at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park, a Meals-on-Wheels volunteer, and a school bus driver. Walter, a true family man at heart, also became a fixture at just about every event involving his grandchildren during his retirement. Walter nobly dedicated his life to service in all manners. He went above and beyond in working to make a better community for all, a true testament to his dedication to service.

COVID–19 wrongfully claimed the remarkable life of Walter, taking his life all too soon. After noticing Walter was not getting enough oxygen, his wife of 50 years, Valerie, called 911 and Walter was admitted to Kenmore Mercy Hospital. Walter's family believed he would recover quickly, thinking he simply had pneumonia or bronchitis. Unfortunately, Valerie was never able to see her beloved husband conscious again. Hours after he arrived at the hospital, Walter was attached to a ventilator and put under a medically induced coma. The family was allowed just moments at his bedside before Walter's passing. Despite the persistence and dedication of the doctors, there was nothing more that could be done for Walter. Walter passed on March 25, 2020 at the age of 74 due to COVID–19, being the second Erie County resident to lose their life to the deadly disease.

After Walter's tragic passing, Valerie dedicated herself to mobilizing people in the community to take a stand against COVID–19. Valerie's early and persistent calls for mask usage along with her active pursuit in spreading the truth about the virus was vital in keeping our community safe during such challenging times. The people are forever in debt to Valerie for her work in taking preventive measures against COVID–19 and advocating for others to do the same.

Today, I wish to echo Valerie's calls for action and encourage the American people to get the COVID–19 vaccine. We now have the means to protect ourselves and our loved ones from this horrible disease. Getting the COVID–19 vaccine is the best way we can prevent another loss such as Walter. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Walter and the extraordinary life of service he led and in choosing to actively stand against COVID–19 by getting vaccinated. Walter was an incredible man who dedicated his life to serving his country and community nobly. His life was cut all too short due to this horrible and deadly virus. By getting the COVID–19 vaccination, each person is actively taking a step to ensure we do not lose any more American citizens to this illness. May we honor Walter's legacy and remarkable life by ensuring his death is not in vain; we must continue to protect our communities and country in the same fashion Walter did during his lifetime.

HONORING NIKOLA ''NICK'' VOYVODICH

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Nikola ''Nick'' Voyvodich in celebration of his longstanding career in law enforcement.

Born in Oakland, California, at Oaknoll Naval Hospital, Nikola ''Nick'' Voyvodich was no stranger to the definition of bravery, as his father was wounded in action as a United States Marine. After receiving an associate of the arts degree from Ohlone College, on August 25, 1994, Mr. Voyvodich joined the Newark Police Department as a reserve officer, jump starting his career in law enforcement. A few years later, on March 2, 1994, Mr. Voyvodich became a full-time police officer with the Martinez Police Department.

His illustrious career included a strong dedication to training others in the law enforcement field and in defensive tactics, and so much more. He served as a member of the bicycle patrol team, detective, corporal, and a special agent in Central County Narcotic Enforcement Team (CNET), which is a team that specializes in narcotics. He was often accompanied by his beloved late K9 partner, Brit.

Mr. Voyvodich received two awards while serving as the President of the Police Officers Association, further highlighting his dedication to his community. He received a Chiefs Commendation in 2012 and a Life Saving Award in 2016. Specializing in narcotics, he worked tirelessly to maintain the safety of Martinez.

Mr. Voyvodich and his wife Melissa Voyvodich have six beautiful children: Austin, Elizabeth, Kaitlin, Christopher, Thomas, and

Dakota. Christopher and Thomas are currently serving in the United States Marine Corps. Mr. Voyvodich's family describes him as a dedicated husband, father, and grandfather. His tireless dedication has resonated with his family, his co-workers, and his community.

Madam Speaker, it is evident that Mr. Voyvodich has dedicated his life for the betterment and safety of the Martinez community through his service. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

TRIBUTE TO GLEN AND KERRY FLETCHER

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Glen and Kerry Fletcher, who are jointly being honored as the 2021 Citizen of the Year by the Corona Chamber of Commerce. Glen and Kerry have been true leaders in my hometown of Corona for more than three decades, and residents throughout our community deeply appreciate their many contributions.

Glen and Kerry first met in high school where Kerry was a song leader and Glen was president of the Future Farmers of America. After a few dates, Kerry was introduced to the family business, Pete's Road Service, which was run by Pete and Clara Fletcher. Soon after, Kerry would join Glen by working at the business and contributing to its success. Eventually they would marry, and after living for stretches in Fullerton and Norco, the Fletcher family moved to Corona in 1986. In addition to expanding Pete's Road Service, the Fletcher family grew with the additions of their children, Amanda, Melissa, and Nathan.

Over the past 30 years, the Fletchers have volunteered their time and resources into the Corona community in many ways. With children active in youth athletics, the Fletchers recognized a need for additional soccer development opportunities in the region. In 1992, they founded the Corona United Soccer Club, and Glen served as its President for 12 years. Not to be outdone, Kerry contributed in a variety of roles over the years, including as a coach, Board Treasurer, and Registrar. In 2005, Glen joined the Corona Rotary where he chaired the club's Lobsterfest fundraiser in 2011 and served as President in the 2011/2012 year. Glen and Kerry have also been members of the Navy League and a number of other local clubs and organizations benefitting our city.

Today, Glen and Kerry enjoy another treasured role—being grandparents. With their incredible record of service, the Fletchers are incredibly deserving of the Citizen of the Year award from the Corona Chamber of Commerce. I would like to thank Glen and Kerry for their dedication to our community and wish them the very best in the future.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT TITLE EQUALITY ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Government Title Equality Act. This bill would amend the D.C. Home Rule Act to redesignate the Mayor of the District of Columbia as the Governor, the D.C. Council as the Legislative Assembly, the D.C. Councilmembers as Representatives and the Chair of the Council as the Speaker. The new titles are the ones used in the State of Washington, Douglass Commonwealth constitution, which the District adopted in 2016 in anticipation of passage of the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, which would make D.C. the 51st state.

I introduce this bill to highlight to the American people and Members of Congress that there would be a seamless transition to D.C. statehood because D.C. already operates as the functional equivalent of a state, providing state-, county- and city-level services, despite being denied voting representation in Congress and full local self-government.

This bill would not change any D.C. legal authorities.

This is an important step to provide greater equality for the District, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

REMEMBERING WILLIAM J. WOOD

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, my wife Roxanne, the Wilson family, and I would like to express our condolences to the family of William J. Wood. He, his late wife, Nancy, and his daughter, Lou, have been greatly appreciated civic and business leaders of the Midlands of South Carolina. With Eastman Chemicals, Midlands Technical College, and Nephron Pharmaceuticals, the Kennedy Family has provided innumerable people with meaningful jobs. I am grateful to include in the RECORD his obituary in fond remembrance.

WILLIAM J. WOOD

(June 23, 1937–January 16, 2022)

OBITUARY OF WILLIAM J. WOOD

William Jerry Wood, of Lexington, passed away on Sunday, January 16, 2022 at his home.

The son of the late Oscar Benjamin and Faye Hooper Wood, Mr. Wood was born in Commerce, GA, started his career at Eastman Chemical Company in Kingsport, TN, and made Lexington his home for more than a half century. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather.

As a young man, Mr. Wood's family moved around Appalachia. During this period, Mr. Wood's father was following his calling to serve Baptist congregations around the region, as a minister. His father also owned a dry cleaning business, in which the entire family pitched in. At the age of 18, Mr. Wood started his career at Eastman in Kingsport, TN, where the family had settled.

Mr. Wood devoted more than four decades in leadership and management to Eastman Chemical Company. With the exception of his family, Mr. Wood did not take more pride in anything than his work. He left an indelible mark on the company and its employees, many of whom continue to pass down the lessons they learned working with Mr. Wood. He taught a Machine, Tool, Technology class to local technical college students for more than 15 years.

The Midlands Technical College Life Skills Center is named in honor of Mr. Wood. Since opening in 2014, the center has helped Midlands Tech students prepare for life after school by honing essential skills needed to start a career.

The father of Lou Wood Kennedy, Mr. Wood embraced life in the Midlands of South Carolina when he relocated his family here, in 1965, as he continued to grow in management at Eastman. Mr. Wood was active in community endeavors, such as service organizations like the Lions Club, hobby-focused clubs, such as the Antique Car Club of America South Carolina Chapter, and in the Baptist church. His daughter, beaming with pride, called Mr. Wood the greatest man she has ever known, and he loved watching the role she plays in making her own mark today on the community he chose as their family home.

Mr. Wood met his wife, Nancy Thomas Wood, as a teenager. They dated as students at East Tennessee State University. His father married the couple. Mr. and Mrs. Wood celebrated 61 years of marriage last year.

Surviving Mr. Wood are his daughter, Lou Wood Kennedy of Lexington (Bill); granddaughter, Xanna Bailey of Lexington (Travis) and great-grandson, Lincoln Bailey. Mr. Wood is also survived by Paul Wood (Mildred), Sarah Benson, Daniel Wood (Cara), Rebecca (Chuck) and countless nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. The family wants to say a special thank you to Amya Bryant for the love and care she provided over the last five months.

HONORING MONTFORD POINT MARINE ROSCOE BROWN FOR HIS COURAGE, TRAILBLAZING DETERMINATION, AND SELFLESS SERVICE TO OUR GREAT NATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Roscoe Brown, a member of the Montford Point Marines, an elite team of men who bravely signed up to fight abroad for our nation's freedom even while they were being denied equal rights here at home. We will never forget his courage, trailblazing determination, and selfless service.

In 2011 I co-sponsored H.R. 2477, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines. The legislation was approved by Congress and signed by President Obama. In November of 2012 a ceremony was held to present many of the Marines with their medals, however Mr. Brown was unable to attend. In April of 2013 my office secured the medal and at Mr. Brown's request, I presented the honor in a special ceremony at Bethesda World Harvest International Church in Buffalo, where Brown served as a Deacon.

During the struggle of World War 11, America called Mr. Brown and the Montford Point Marines to duty, and they answered with selfless service in defense of our freedoms. The 1941 Fair Employment Act prohibited racial discrimination by federal agencies; finally giving African-Americans the right to enlist in the Marine Corps. However, like the rest of America at the time, military training facilities were segregated. Camp Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina served as the training site for African-American men eager to serve in the Marines. Over a 7 year period beginning in 1942, approximately 20,000 African Americans were trained at the Camp, many serving during World War II. In 1949 Montford Point Camp was deactivated and all recruits were trained side-by-side.

The Public Affairs office of the United States Marine Corps added, ''The sacrifice of these men paved the way for other minorities and all women to be integrated into the Marine Corps. By their sacrifice, MPM's engineered social and cultural change in the Marine Corps that created a lasting impact and has contributed to the success of the Marine Corps today.''

Born in 1927 in Texas, Roscoe Brown came to Buffalo in 1944 and resided in Williamsville, New York. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps in July of 1945, was squad leader in boot camp and served as a personnel clerk in the United States Marine Corps before being honorably discharged on August 30, 1946.

After his military service, Mr. Brown briefly worked for the United States Postal Service in Chicago before returning Western New York to work at the Bethlehem Steel plant, where he was employed for 33 years and rose to the rank of foreman. After retirement from the plant, Mr. Brown opened a Laundromat at 2116 Fillmore Avenue in Buffalo. He operated the small business, named ''Thrif-T-Wash,'' from 1983 to 2005.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian award given by Congress. It is awarded to those who have performed an achievement that has impacted American history and culture. Others receiving the medal include, but are not limited to: George Washington in 1776, Rosa Parks in 1999, Pope John Paul II in 2000, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King in 2004, the Tuskegee Airmen in 2006 and the Victims of 9/11 in 2011. Mr. Brown will always be remembered as a hero alongside others who have received this high honor.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S357–S389

Measures Introduced: Six bills and six resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3528–3533, S. Res. 494–498, and S. Con. Res. 28. **Page S382**

Measures Reported:

S. 2305, to enhance cybersecurity education, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 117–59) **Page S381**

Measures Passed:

100th Anniversary of the Alabama Farmers Federation: Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 471, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Alabama Farmers Federation and celebrating the long history of the Alabama Farmers Federation serving as the voice for Alabama agriculture and forestry, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S386**

University of Wisconsin Badgers: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 487, congratulating the University of Wisconsin Badgers on winning the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women's Volleyball Championship, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S386**

University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Blugolds: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 488, congratulating the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Blugolds on winning the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III Women's Volleyball Championship, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S386**

North Dakota State University Bison: Senate agreed to S. Res. 497, congratulating the North Dakota State University Bison football team for winning the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Football Championship Subdivision title. **Pages S386–87**

50th Anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act: Committee on Indian Affairs was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 482, recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and the lasting impact of that Act on the State of Alaska and Alaska Native people, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S387**

National Day of Remembrance for Native American Children: Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 28, expressing the sense of Congress that September 30 should be observed as a national day of remembrance for the Native American children who died while attending a United States Indian boarding school and recognizing, honoring, and supporting the survivors of Indian boarding schools, their families, and their communities. **Page S387**

Appointments:

United States—China Economic and Security Review Commission: The Chair announced, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 106–398, as amended by Public Law 108–7, and in consultation with the Ranking Members of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, the appointment of the following individuals to serve as members of the United States—China Economic and Security Review Commission: The Honorable Randall Schriver of Virginia and Aaron Friedberg of New Jersey. **Page S386**

People-to-People Partnership for Peace Fund Advisory Board: The Chair announced, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 116–260, the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the People-to-People Partnership for Peace Fund Advisory Board: The Honorable Elliott Abrams of Virginia. **Page S386**

Pro Forma Sessions—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Senate adjourn, to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next

pro forma session: Monday, January 24, 2022, at 1 p.m.; Thursday, January 27, 2022, at 10 a.m.; and that when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, January 27, 2022, it next convene at 3 p.m., on Monday, January 31, 2022. **Page S387**

Brennan Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Bridget Meehan Brennan, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio. **Pages S360–61**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, January 20, 2022, a vote on cloture will occur at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 31, 2022. **Pages S360–61**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S360**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S360**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Senate resume consideration of the nomination at approximately 3 p.m., on Monday, January 31, 2022; and that the motions to invoke cloture filed on Thursday, January 20, 2022 ripen at 5:30 p.m. **Page S387**

Fleming Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Charles Esque Fleming, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio. **Page S361**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Bridget Meehan Brennan, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio. **Page S361**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S361**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S361**

Ruiz Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of David Augustin Ruiz, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio. **Page S361**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Charles Esque Fleming, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio. **Page S361**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S361**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S361**

Puttagunta Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Rupa Ranga Puttagunta, of the District of Columbia, to be Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. **Page S361**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of David Augustin Ruiz, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio. **Page S361**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S361**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S361**

Lopez Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Kenia Seoane Lopez, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. **Page S361**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Rupa Ranga Puttagunta, of the District of Columbia, to be Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. **Page S361**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S361**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S361**

Staples Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Sean C. Staples, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. **Page S362**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition

of the nomination of Kenia Seoane Lopez, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Page S362

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S361**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S362**

Scott Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Ebony M. Scott, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Page S362

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Sean C. Staples, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. **Page S362**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S362**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S362**

Tunnage Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Donald Walker Tunnage, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. **Page S362**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Ebony M. Scott, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. **Page S362**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S362**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S362**

Howard III Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of John P. Howard III, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Page S362

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Donald Walker Tunnage, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Page S362

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S362**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S362**

Alikhan Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Loren L. AliKhan, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Pages S362–63

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of John P. Howard III, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Page S363

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S362**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S362**

Gutmann Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Amy Gutmann, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Department of State.

Page S363

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Loren L. AliKhan, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. **Page S363**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S363**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S363**

Carty Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Lisa A. Carty, of Maryland, to be Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, Department of State. **Page S363**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the

Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Amy Gutmann, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Department of State. **Page S363**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S363**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S363**

Nathan Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Scott A. Nathan, of Massachusetts, to be Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation. **Page S363**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Lisa A. Carty, of Maryland, to be Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, Department of State. **Page S363**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S363**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S363**

Wong Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Chantale Yokmin Wong, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank. **Pages S363–64**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Scott A. Nathan, of Massachusetts, to be Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation. **Pages S363–64**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S363**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S363**

Camarillo Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Gabriel Camarillo, of Texas, to be Under Secretary of the Army, Department of Defense. **Page S364**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Chantale Yokmin Wong, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank. **Page S364**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S364**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S364**

Hunter Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Andrew Philip Hunter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Department of Defense. **Page S364**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Gabriel Camarillo, of Texas, to be Under Secretary of the Army, Department of Defense. **Page S364**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S364**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S364**

Coffey Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of John Patrick Coffey, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Navy, Department of Defense. **Page S364**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Andrew Philip Hunter, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Department of Defense. **Page S364**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S364**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S364**

Baker Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Alexandra Baker, of New Jersey, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. **Page S364**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of John Patrick Coffey, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Navy, Department of Defense. **Page S364**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S364**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S364**

Lewis Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Reta Jo Lewis, of Georgia, to be President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. **Pages S364–65**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Alexandra Baker, of New Jersey, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. **Page S365**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S364**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S364**

Stark Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Leonard Philip Stark, of Delaware, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit. **Pages S365–75**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Reta Jo Lewis, of Georgia, to be President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. **Page S365**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S365**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S365**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 48 yeas to 40 nays (Vote No. EX. 11), Holly A. Thomas, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit. **Page S360**

Joseph Donnelly, of Indiana, to be Ambassador to the Holy See.

Routine lists in the Foreign Service. **Page S375**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Franklin R. Parker, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

Elizabeth Frawley Bagley, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Jane Hartley, of New York, to be Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Alexander Mark Laskaris, of the District of Columbia, to be an Ambassador to the Republic of Chad.

Alan M. Leventhal, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark. **Page S388**

Messages from the House: **Page S381**

Measures Referred: **Page S381**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S381**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S381–82**

Notice of a Tie Vote Under S. Res. 27: **Page S375**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S382**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S383–86**

Additional Statements: **Pages S380–81**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S386**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—11) **Page S360**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 11 a.m. and adjourned at 4:39 p.m., until 1 p.m. on Monday, January 24, 2022. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S387.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 2992, to provide that certain discriminatory conduct by covered platforms shall be unlawful, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

The nominations of Alison J. Nathan, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, Victoria Marie Calvert, and Sarah Elisabeth Geraghty, both to be a United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, John H. Chun, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington, Georgette Castner, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, Ruth Bermudez Montenegro, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California, Julie Rebecca Rubin, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland, and Cristina D. Silva, and Anne Rachel Traum, both to be a United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 33 public bills, H.R. 6434–6466; and 4 resolutions, H. Res. 881–884, were introduced. **Pages H287–89**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H290–91**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2543, to amend the Federal Reserve Act to add additional demographic reporting requirements, to modify the goals of the Federal Reserve System, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 117–228);

H.R. 4590, to require the Federal banking regulators to jointly conduct a study and develop a strategic plan to address challenges faced by proposed depository institutions seeking de novo depository institution charters; and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 117–229);

H.R. 1277, to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the submission by issuers of data relating to diversity, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 117–230); and

H.R. 4685, to require the Government Accountability Office to carry out a study on the impact of the gamification, psychological nudges, and other design techniques used by online trading platforms, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 117–231). **Page H287**

Ensuring Veterans' Smooth Transition Act: The House passed H.R. 4673, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the automatic enrollment of eligible veterans in patient enrollment system of Department of Veterans Affairs, by a yea-and-nay vote of 265 yeas to 163 nays, Roll No. 14. **Pages H257–70**

Rejected the Bost motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, by a yea-and-nay vote of 206 yeas to 221 nays, Roll No. 13. **Pages H268–69**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117–26 shall be considered as adopted. **Page H257**

Agreed to:

Takano en bloc amendment No. 1 consisting of the following amendments printed in part B of H. Rept. 117–225: Delgado (No. 1) that allows the VA Secretary to consider mass texting as a way to notify veterans about VA services; Delgado (No. 2) that directs GAO to submit a report to Congress determining the best methods for the VA to provide notice of the automatic enrollment in the patient enrollment system; Hayes (No. 4) that clarifies that notices shall include instructions for how the veteran may elect to enroll at a later date, as well as ensuring that notices be provided via physical mail and, to the extent practical, via electronic mail to ensure veterans are aware of notice and information related to this Act; and Tlaib (No. 5) that requires a report on the automatic enrollment not later than one year after the first veteran is enrolled to preserve lessons learned from the rollout of this automatic registration program for other agencies and entities that may pursue similar initiatives in the future; and **Pages H264–67**

Escobar amendment (No. 3 printed in part B of H. Rept. 117–225) that extends automatic enrollment to Veterans who were discharged within 90 days before the enactment of this Act (by a yea-and-nay vote of 228 yeas to 198 nays, Roll No. 12). **Pages H266–68**

H. Res. 860, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1836) and (H.R. 4673) was agreed to Tuesday, January 11th.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H267–68, H268–69 and H269–70.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

Committee Meetings

TO REVIEW THE STATE OF THE RURAL ECONOMY WITH AGRICULTURE SECRETARY TOM VILSACK

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "To Review the State of the Rural Economy with Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack". Testimony was heard from Thomas J. Vilsack, Secretary, Department of Agriculture.

CLEANING UP CRYPTOCURRENCY: THE ENERGY IMPACTS OF BLOCKCHAINS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled "Cleaning Up Cryptocurrency: The Energy Impacts of Blockchains". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

COSTA RICA, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, AND PANAMA: A NEW ALLIANCE FOR PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND PROSPERITY IN THE AMERICAS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Civilian Security, Migration

and International Economic Policy held a hearing entitled ''Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and Panama: A New Alliance for Promoting Democracy and Prosperity in the Americas''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FEMA: BUILDING A WORKFORCE PREPARED AND READY TO RESPOND

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery; and Subcommittee on Oversight, Management, and Accountability held a joint hearing entitled ''FEMA: Building a Workforce Prepared and Ready to Respond''. Testimony was heard from Chris Currie, Director, Homeland Security and Justice Team, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

SECURING DEMOCRACY: PROTECTING AGAINST THREATS TO ELECTION INFRASTRUCTURE AND VOTER CONFIDENCE

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Innovation held a hearing entitled ''Securing Democracy: Protecting Against Threats to Election Infrastructure and Voter Confidence''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

VOTER SUPPRESSION AND CONTINUING THREATS TO DEMOCRACY

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties held a hearing entitled ''Voter Suppression and Continuing Threats to Democracy''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FOR THE RULE OF LAW, AN INDEPENDENT IMMIGRATION COURT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship held a hearing entitled ''For the Rule of Law, An Independent Immigration Court''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife held a hearing on H.R. 1546, the ''Combating Online Wildlife Trafficking Act of 2021''; H.R. 3540, the ''Chesapeake Bay Science, Education, and Ecosystem Enhancement Act of 2021''; H.R. 4057, the ''Albatross and Petrel Conservation Act''; H.R. 4092, the ''Coastal Habitat Conservation Act of 2021''; H.R. 4677, the ''New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act''; H.R. 4716, the ''Refuge From Cruel Trapping Act of 2021''; H.R. 5973, the ''Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Reauthorization Act of 2021''; H.R. 6023, the ''Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2021''; and H. Res. 641, recognizing and celebrating the 75th anniversary of the National Association of Conservation Districts and their commitment to our lands. Testimony was heard from Chairman Nadler, and Representatives Costa, Dingell, Lowenthal, Tonko, Sarbanes, Newhouse, and Carter of Georgia; Stephen Guertin, Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

WHAT MORE GULF OF MEXICO OIL AND GAS LEASING MEANS FOR ACHIEVING U.S. CLIMATE TARGETS

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing entitled ''What More Gulf of Mexico Oil and Gas Leasing Means for Achieving U.S. Climate Targets''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FITARA 13.0

Committee on Oversight and Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled ''FITARA 13.0''. Testimony was heard from Ann Dunkin, Chief Information Officer, Department of Energy; Guy Cavallo, Chief Information Officer, Office of Personnel Management; Carol C. Harris, Director, Information Technology and Cybersecurity, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

A VIEW FROM THE STATES: GOVERNORS RESPOND TO THE OMICRON VARIANT

Committee on Oversight and Reform: Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis held a hearing entitled ''A View from the States: Governors Respond to the Omicron Variant''. Testimony was heard from Jay Inslee, Governor, Washington; Jared Polis, Governor, Colorado; Muriel Bowser, Mayor, Washington D.C.; and Pedro Pierluisi, Governor, Puerto Rico.

RACE, ETHNICITY AND THE ECONOMY: HOW IMPROVING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY BENEFITS ALL

Select Committee on Economic Disparity and Fairness in Growth: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Race, Ethnicity and the Economy: How Improving Economic Opportunity Benefits All''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MAKING CONGRESS WORK BETTER FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE: A RECOMMENDATION STATUS REPORT

Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Making Congress Work Better for the American People: A Recommendation Status Report''. Testimony was heard from J. Brett Blanton, Architect of the Capitol; Catherine Szpindor, Chief Administrative Officer, U.S. House of Representatives; and Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D1416)*

H.R. 1192, to impose requirements on the payment of compensation to professional persons employed in voluntary cases commenced under title III of the Puerto Rico Oversight Management and Economic Stability Act (commonly known as ''PROMESA''). Signed on January 20, 2022. (Public Law 117–82)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 2022

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, hearing entitled ''The First Step Act, The Pandemic, and Compassionate Release: What Are the Next Steps for the Federal Bureau of Prisons?'', 10 a.m., Zoom.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

1 p.m., Monday, January 24

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, January 21

House Chamber

Program for Friday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 9 a.m.

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