United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 168 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022 No. 29

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 10 a.m.

Senate

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Almighty God, Lord of history, if a sparrow does not fall without Your knowledge, certainly the issues facing our Senate concern You.

Your Word assures us that in everything, You are working for the good of those who love You. May that promise guide our lawmakers as they seek equitable and just solutions to complicated problems.

Lord, give our Senators the wisdom to discern, courage to believe, and the determination to do Your will.

Bless, O God, the faithful men and women who manage the machinery of the Senate, without whom this legislative body could not function. Thank You for their efficient and productive work.

Lord, fill this Chamber with Your presence.

We ask in Your merciful 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.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT OF 2022—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3076, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 266, H.R. 3076, a bill to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO BEN RAY LUJÁN

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now, at the beginning, before I speak on the business of the day, I would like to add that yesterday we were all overjoyed, just thrilled, to hear from our colleague, our dear friend, Senator BEN RAY LUJÁN.

Through his first public video message shared on social media, BEN RAY reiterated yesterday that his recovery is going well; that his office continues to work serving the people of New Mexico; and that he expects, praise God, to make a full recovery.

I have been able to get on the phone with him in recent days. He was chipper. He sounded like the same BEN RAY we have come to know and love, and I can report he is in very good spirits, raring to go.

From now until his return, all of us in the Senate miss him greatly. We are rooting for him. We cannot wait to see him walk through the doors of this Chamber once again to get back to work.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Madam President, now on Senate business, on Postal, last week, as you know, the House passed, with overwhelming bipartisan support—I believe a majority from each party—the most important update to the U.S. Postal Service in decades.

The Postal bill is the definition of legislation that should sail through the Congress. Both sides support it. It had diligent work by both Democrats and Republicans, with major input from

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

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both parties. Everyone knows we need it, and the American people so strongly support action to put our Postal Service on sustainable footing.

Our incredible postal workers give us their very best every single day they are on the job. They deserve no less in return.

So many people depend on the mail. You could be a veteran; the VA sends your prescriptions through the mail. About one-fifth of Social Security recipients, as I understand, don't have the internet and depend on the mail. Small businesses depend on the mail. Rural areas depend on the mail. Just about everybody does. People don't want snail mail.

It has been no fault of the workers at the post office that postal delivery is slow. They don't have the resources they need, and, in part, they don't have the resources they need because they have a crazy, antediluvian-type system of how they calculate pensions and healthcare.

We have to change all this. We have been waiting a long, long time. Later today, I am going to move to have the Senate approve a few technical fixes to the bill so we can move closer to final passage. The House made these fixes on their end through unanimous consent last week. Not a Democrat nor Republican in that whole body blocked it, and anyone could have. We want to do the same here in the Senate.

I hope my Republican colleagues will give consent to allow these necessary fixes to go through, just as it happened in the House. As I said, Members from both sides worked very, very hard to put this bill together. It commands strong, bipartisan support, and we should move forward with it as soon as we can. Bipartisan postal reform already has enough support to become law. I hope it happens quickly.

Let me just say this once again so people understand what is going on here. All we are asking for is to fix a small clerical error made by the House of Representatives when they sent their bill to the Senate. It has nothing to do with the substance of the bill. As I mentioned, this fix—this small, little, immaterial change that is technical—received unanimous consent, every Democrat and every Republican, in the House. So let's have the same outcome here in the Senate tonight. Let's move forward on this proposal.

At the end of the day, it is about making sure the post office can fulfill its obligations to its workers and to the American people. We all know how many of us—millions of us—depend on the mail. We all know how we have been disappointed that mail service has slowed down. We all know that we should get together, Democrats and Republicans, to fix it.

The bipartisan reform bill will make sure Americans can continue relying on the post office the same way they have relied on it all their lives.

I hope that here in the Senate, we will keep working on this bill with the same bipartisan spirit we have seen for the past week.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Madam President, our other priority this week will be approving legislation to keep the government open until March 11 so we can give appropriators from both parties more time to draft the yearlong omnibus funding bill.

This is another place where we are making bipartisan progress. Led by Senators LEAHY and SHELBY and their counterparts in the House, Representatives DELAURO and GRANGER, we have come to good agreements on top-line numbers, and we can move forward—not with a CR, which simply just reenacts what was in place last year despite the need for changes, in many ways—but we can enact what we call an omnibus, which is what we should be doing.

We have had positive conversations, and Democrats are united to keep the government open so we can achieve this omnibus. We will continue working with the Republican leadership to move forward on a CR before the deadline later this week.

SUPREME COURT NOMINATION

Madam President, on SCOTUS, the Supreme Court of the United States, well, one of the most solemn responsibilities entrusted to the U.S. Senate is offering our advice and ultimately our consent on the President's appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court. It is a responsibility that stands apart from just about all others. Those whom we approve sit on the Court, and they will render judgment and exert influence on the most consequential legal matters for years and potentially for decades. The impact of any one Supreme Court nominee is often felt long after the work of a single administration comes to an end.

Very soon, this will be precisely the task the Senate will be asked to take up once again when President Biden announces his choice to replace Associate Justice Breyer. I have no doubt President Biden will name someone who can not only bring Members of this body together but someone with a proven record for excellence and evenhandedness. When President Biden makes his announcement, I intend to have the Senate move quickly to take up and confirm his nominee.

The President has promised he will nominate a Black woman to serve as a Justice for the first time ever. This will not only be one of the most important moments in the history of our courts but of our entire country. Precious few have held the title of ''Justice'' in American history—only 115 to date—and none of them has been a Black woman. So the President's announcement is truly historic and potentially game-changing for the future of Supreme Court nominees.

Imagine the impact the President's pick will have on countless young people who look up to the Nation's courts and see men and women who better reflect our country's makeup. Imagine how that will inspire the next generation to pursue their own interests in public service and law and government. The judges and Justices of the future have their eyes on this body right now in the present.

If our democracy is to prosper in this century, we need people from all walks of life to see that they have a place at the table when it comes to public service. The President's promise is a big step in that direction.

The Democratic-led Senate has already played an important role in bringing balance and diversity to our courts with highly qualified nominees. It has been one of our highest priorities from the moment we entered the majority.

Under President Biden, the Senate has confirmed 46 judges to serve lifetime appointments to the Federal Bench. Indeed, this majority has confirmed the most judges in the first year following the President's inauguration since the time of John F. Kennedy. Three-quarters of these new judges have been women—three-quarters. Two-thirds have been people of color. More than a quarter of all of President Biden's appointees have been Black women, who are still too far underrepresented in our Federal Judiciary.

It is not just their demographic diversity that makes them remarkable, although that is unquestionably important; the new judges are also diverse because of their professional backgrounds. We have confirmed more Federal defenders in the President's first year than any President in modern history. We have confirmed more civil rights lawyers, election lawyers, more individuals with deep experience in public service.

I want to emphasize one other thing. These nominees are also extremely qualified. We are not sacrificing qualifications and excellence for diversity. President Biden's nominees are both more diverse and more qualified, in my judgment, than any President's in recent history.

So Senate Democrats are proud of this record, and we are going to keep going. Diversity in all of its forms matters. It is good for the justice system, and it is vital to the health of our democracy.

When the President announces his historic pick, the Senate will be ready to move quickly and fairly to confirm her to the Supreme Court.

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. Madam 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 Republican leader is recognized.

MASK MANDATES

Mr. MCCONNELL. About 2 weeks ago, I spoke on this floor about the

state of the pandemic 2 years in, about letting American families get back to normal. The current science clearly supports the 70 percent of Americans who believe we must accept this virus is here to stay, trust the science, and proceed with normal life.

At the time, this was not a universal sentiment. The next day, across the river, liberals tried to shame Virginia's new Governor for forgoing a mask in an incredibly vaccinated area where cases had been falling for weeks.

The top Democrat in the Virginia State Senate criticized the Governor and backed ongoing school mask mandates as ''common sense.'' But, my goodness, how quickly things can change.

A few days ago, I understand the same State senate leader did a 180-degree turn and voted for an amendment to end school mask mandates. A dam had begun to break nationwide. A week ago, leaders in Democrat-run New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, and Oregon announced they would ax or relax their mask and/or vaccine mandates in the near future. By the end of the week, States, including California, Illinois, Nevada, New York, and Rhode Island had followed suit to varying degrees.

Now, obviously, the scientific facts have not changed in the last few weeks. We have known for many weeks that this variant is significantly milder, and we have known for many months that the universally available vaccines reduce the odds of hospitalization or death down to the level of many routine risks that we all face constantly in our daily lives. The only science that has changed in the last 2 weeks is the political science. The only data that has changed in the last 2 weeks is the Democrats' polling data.

The Washington Post put it like this: The ''abrupt end to mask mandates reflects a shifting political landscape.''

Ah, but there is a problem.

While Democratic leaders are stampeding to finally follow the science and end burdensome mandates on adults in many places, America's children are still being left behind. States like New York and California are rolling back restrictions on adults but have yet to provide any end date or off-ramp for mask mandates in K–12 schools. This is completely backward since we have known for well over a year that COVID poses far lower risks to children than to adults.

Officials in Illinois and the District of Columbia have embraced the same double standard, winding back general public mandates while leaving the schools with no end date in sight. In other words, here in Washington, the Mayor's office will be lifting mandates next week in all kinds of adult establishments, from bars to fitness studios, while keeping kids in classrooms, masked up for at least—at least—another month.

Even as Democrats permit grownups to get back to normal, they are clinging onto their emergency powers over K–12 classrooms. The ultrarich, ultrapowerful teachers unions that have been antagonists of normal childhoods at each step of the pandemic are continuing to drag their heels.

For 2 years now, Democrats at the local, State, and Federal levels have let a labor executive named Randi Weingarten become something of an unelected national classroom czar, holding millions of kids' fates in her hand. Science has proven over and over again that in-person schooling is safe for kids, but Big Labor has sought to move the goalposts every time, and Democrats have mostly gone along with it.

Last year, Ms. Weingarten bragged publicly that the Biden administration had invited her own hyperpolitical teachers union to basically author the scientific guidelines for school reopenings. The Biden administration took the pen away from doctors and experts and handed it to Big Labor. She boasted:

> They asked us for language and we gave them language.

Reporters found multiple instances where the union's words were copied and pasted directly—directly—into the final CDC document.

Now the same Ms. Weingarten is trying to move the goalposts again on America's kids to an even more extreme and unscientific place. She asserted last week that little kids should have to keep covering their faces in schools until there is ''no dissemination and transmission in schools.''

With respect, that is completely bonkers, absolutely bonkers. There is no credible scientist or doctor in America who believes that we are headed toward zero COVID. We are not going to magically eradicate this virus; it is heading endemic. So Ms. Weingarten's latest made-up standard would have K–12 kids covering their faces literally forever. Little kids in masks forever? That is the upshot of this top Biden administration's ally's public demands. This is utter madness.

Two years ago, the American people accepted temporary disruptions to their daily lives in order to prevent our hospitals from collapsing and to buy scientists time to invent vaccines and therapeutics. Check, check, and check. Our healthcare system endured. We have remarkable, safe, and effective vaccines; we have therapeutics; and we know that, thank God, none of these variants have posed a medical emergency for the vast majority of children—period.

Americans who watched the Super Bowl saw rich celebrities having a grand time with hardly a mask in sight, but under the Democrats' policies, first graders who watched that big, maskless party last night had to wake up this morning and cover their own faces in order to go to school. America's classrooms seem to be the last places where local, State, and Federal Democrats will accept that cost-benefit calculations exist, and zero transmission is simply not possible.

For 2 years now, the Democratic Party has allowed some of the most powerful special interests in our country to profoundly—profoundly—disrupt children's lives. The political left has put kids last. That is simply not acceptable. American families deserve normalcy; they deserve it right now; and this side of the aisle, the party of parents, has their back.

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

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

RUSSIA

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, it is no secret that Vladimir Putin longs to restore and rebuild part of the old Soviet Union. Putin wants Russia to be a superpower, and he knows what he is lacking.

Russia is a one-trick pony with a lot of energy. It offers little except that. Its population is a tenth of the size of China's. Putin knows he needs to strengthen his military, economy, and position in the world, and he has been ruthless in that pursuit.

We should not, then, be surprised that he is escalating his actions. It is a quest he has been on for many, many years. In 2008, Russia invaded the country of Georgia; in 2014, Russia invaded Ukraine to take the region of Crimea; and last year, Russia began to gather troops along the Ukrainian border.

Putin rejects Western ideals; he toys with sovereign nations; and he plays by an entirely different set of rules—his own. And when President Biden signals that our words are hollow or that we will disregard our allies, our adversaries, like Putin, take notice.

In September of last year, the world watched as our military was ordered to retreat from Afghanistan; we abandoned our allies; and we left civilians at the mercy of the Taliban. In October, Russia further built up its invasion force along the Ukrainian border. Last month, North Korea, once again, tested missiles. Iran is, perhaps, a few weeks away from building its own nuclear bomb; and today, as I speak, China struts at the Olympics while it tortures its citizens.

The Chinese Communist Party seeks to dominate its neighbors and devour our ally, Taiwan. Communist China's navy has more ships than the U.S. Navy's, and their weapons grow more sophisticated than ours every day. Here is just an example: The Chinese successfully tested a hypersonic missile in December while we are still at the drawing board.

Dictators and bullies zero in on weakness like a homing beacon. In the absence of our inaction, our adversaries will move with a level of decisiveness President Biden could only dream of.

Putin does not want a war with the United States and our allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO. This would be foolish. Putin's goal is to deter Ukraine from joining NATO. He wants their pro-democracy government to collapse, for Ukrainians to abandon their resolve, and wants to take over the country that largely despises him. He wants a buffer between him and the West, and he wants the United States to step aside and let him do this.

To be clear, we do not—we do not—want American bloodshed in Ukraine, but neither do the Ukrainians.

Last year, I traveled to Ukraine with several other Members of Congress and met with President Zelenskyy of Ukraine. The Ukrainian President told me, ''Ukrainians do not want Americans' boots on the ground.'' Ukrainians are willing and ready to fight their own fight. All they ask is for support; not blankets and helmets, but weapons—weapons that can help them fight off the aggression.

While Ukrainians have been sounding an alarm, our President has been asleep at the wheel. When Russia was amassing troops along the Ukrainian border, President Biden was giving a blistering speech about voting rights, saying anyone who disagrees with him wants to destroy our country. Instead of studying war plans on Afghanistan or addressing the growing threats from Russia and China, our servicemembers were forced to spend hours upon hours on ''woke'' training, not on readiness and becoming a first-class soldier.

But the missed opportunities don't stop at this administration. The Senate already missed a chance to hit Putin where it hurts.

A few weeks ago, Senate Republicans voted in support of sanctions on Russia's pipeline through Europe, the Nord Stream 2. Senate Democrats refused to support these sanctions. Who are they more afraid of, President Biden or Putin?

President Biden has spent a year deploying a diplomacy-first strategy—the same page out of the same playbook from when he was our Vice President. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results.

Flawed decisions leads to failed outcomes. And weak leadership leads to bullies pushing the boundaries, like Vladimir Putin. It is time for President Biden to step up. Aggression must be met with resolve.

We need to bring the full might of sanctions and squeeze Russia's economy so tight it chokes Putin's wealth. This includes sanctions on Nord Stream 2 and actions like delisting Russian companies in our capital markets, hopefully, to devalue their currency, the ruble.

We need to show Putin that it is shortsighted to take Ukraine and think it is a victory. This may be another effort in a decades-long pursuit, but it will be met with fury and a fury of sanctions.

Looking forward, the question becomes this: When our adversaries like Russia and China test our resolve again, will they be met with meekness or might? Standing on this floor, lobbing advice to our President to be stronger, to get tough, is not enough and is not going to work. That is too simplistic of a view. This moment requires more than that.

The answer is not to simply project strength; it is to be strong. We have to be a strong nation that impresses and scares the bullies—not a weak country but a country that is strong. We need to get back to what makes this country so great in the first place, and that is the following:

First, practice peace through strength. That means we make the necessary investments to modernize our military. The highest possible percentage of money we spend at the Department of Defense should go to building a killing machine. We are a superpower; we are not trying to be one. But our adversaries are outpacing us.

Second, return our economic strength. We have to get our physical house in order, and it starts in Congress. Inflation has engulfed our economy. Families face bare grocery shelves and gas that is more, in some places, than $5 a gallon. Our national debt just crested at $30 trillion, amounting to almost $100,000 per citizen in our country alone, just their debt themselves. We need to return to a free market enterprise with less government intervention.

And, third, regain our political strength by anchoring in our American strength of character. That is what this country is about.

In the past year, the administration has shown our borders and our laws are not important. Over 2 million immigrants entered our country illegally day by day, and that figure increases as we speak.

Additionally, COVID's winter surge caught the administration flat-footed, leaving the most vulnerable among us short of tests and of therapeutics.

Our country is divided on issues ranging from education to public health. The administration has attacked the policies and beliefs that made our country so great. But we have to return to champion that spirit of American resolve and determination in all facets of life. The strength of our Nation depends on it. The future of our Nation depends on it.

After this dark year marked by uncertainty, Americans are ready to return to the path of American independence. Americans across the country want to reignite the American dream and rekindle American ingenuity. We should all—this is something all of us—from Members of Congress to our President—should want.

Putin thinks that because our President has projected weakness, America is weak. How wrong he is.

To Russia and China, I say, betting against the United States and rolling the dice against Ukraine or Taiwan is a losing game.

We need to show the world that the United States is still the brightest beacon of freedom, hope, and democracy. Again, I do not want American blood to be shed in Ukraine, but we should support a democracy against any tyrant.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF PARKLAND SCHOOL SHOOTING

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I am here today to take a moment and remember the tragedy that occurred 4 years ago at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL. And I want to discuss some legislation that I have introduced that results from that. But remember that day.

On that day, we lost 17 innocent souls from this globe of ours, and it was at the hands of a troubled and evil young man who entered the school and opened fire.

This tragedy can't be forgotten and should not be forgotten, not by the survivors of this attack, not by the families who lost loved ones, and then, eventually, not by this Congress because we can do something about it. We must continue finding solutions to prevent these attacks. In this spirit, today, I am back here on the Senate floor pushing for passage of my bipartisan and bicameral EAGLES Act.

My bill is supported by over 40 State attorneys general, along with several groups, including Stand with Parkland, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and, lastly, the Major County Sheriffs of America.

Passing the EAGLES Act is very vital in our fight to protect our schools and to promote a safe and healthy learning environment for our children.

Just this month, the National Institute of Justice published an article discussing common traits of people who engage in mass shootings. This study covers the years between 1966 and 2019.

Their analysis showed that the people who commit these acts were commonly troubled by personal trauma before the shooting, nearly always in a state of crisis at the time they committed their awful acts, and in most cases even engaged in leaking their plans before they opened fire. Every single one of those findings applies to the shooter at Parkland, FL.

It is clear that we need to ramp up prevention efforts. We need the EAGLES Act because that act would achieve these aims, and it would do it by reauthorizing and expanding the U.S. Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center to proactively identify and manage threats before they result in more tragedies. The National

Threat Assessment Center studies targeted violence and proactively identifies how to manage threats before they result in more tragedies.

The bill that I introduced, the EAGLES Act, also establishes a Safe Schools Initiative to look at school violence prevention and expands research on school violence.

My bill also provides funding to hire social scientists with expertise in child psychological development to support the National Threat Assessment Center's work. This is important to make sure that proven and evidence-based policies will continue to support everyone in the school environment and do it positively.

Students need more support from Congress for a safe, positive, and inclusive learning environment. The EAGLES Act delivers just that by providing resources and training to school personnel, which will enable them to identify troubled youth and give them the intervention and treatment they need, hopefully long before an intervention is needed by law enforcement.

While we cannot undo the tragedies of the past, we must continue working on ways to prevent future tragedies.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). The Senator from West Virginia.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT MCKINNON CALIFF

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to once again express my extreme disbelief and disappointment that the U.S. Senate will vote to confirm Dr. Robert M. Califf to yet again lead the Food and Drug Administration. My opposition is nothing new. In fact, it was exactly 5 years ago next week that I came to the Senate floor to urge my colleagues to oppose Dr. Califf's nomination to serve under then-President Obama in this same role.

In the 5 years since Dr. Califf was confirmed, more than 400,000 Americans and 5,000 West Virginians have died from a drug-related overdose. And 2020 was the deadliest year on record for drug-related overdoses, when 1,386 West Virginians and nearly 95,000 Americans died from a drug-related overdose. That number is just increasing, with over 100,000 Americans having died from overdoses between April 2020 and April 2021. Let's not beat around the bush: Dr. Califf bears a great deal of responsibility for these deaths.

We have a luxury with this nomination that we are not usually granted. Because Dr. Califf has already served as the FDA Commissioner, we have insight into how he will lead the Agency.

During Dr. Califf's previous tenure, drug-related overdoses went up. Five years later, they are up again—and this time at record numbers. In fact, despite his pledge to overhaul the FDA's policy, during his tenure and immediately following it, the FDA approved five new opiates for market. In that same time, they removed only one.

The wise Dr. Maya Angelou famously said, ''When someone shows you who they are, believe them.'' Well, Dr. Califf has shown us who he is, and he has shown a complete lack of interest in actually making the difficult decisions that we need the leader of the FDA to make. Nothing that Dr. Califf has said or done has led me to believe he will operate the FDA any differently than he did during his previous tenure.

As if this is not enough, reports have circulated that Dr. Califf intends to keep Dr. Janet Woodcock on board as a senior advisor at the FDA if confirmed. Dr. Woodcock bears more responsibility for the opiate epidemic in our country than any other person at the FDA because of her oversight role in the approval of every single one of the opiates that went on to ravage communities like ours in West Virginia.

She was in charge in 1995 when the FDA approved OxyContin—what we know now to be the tip of the spear of the opiate epidemic. In 2014, she ignored the advice of the FDA advisory committee that voted overwhelmingly, by a vote of 11 to 2, against approving Zohydro. She decided to approve Zohydro anyway at a time when we needed less opiates, not more. Zohydro is a questionable, pure hydrocodone drug with a strong risk of overdose and death. Experts estimated that just two pure pills can kill an individual.

The pharmaceutical industry has greatly benefited from the status quo that people like Dr. Califf and Dr. Woodcock have established at the FDA. In fact, Dr. Califf himself joined the board of directors for a pharmaceutical company immediately following his tenure at the FDA. He prospered financially in that position as thousands more died of overdoses.

Due to the continued negligence of the FDA, more than 400,000 Americans have died since Dr. Califf first served. Among those Americans was Lauren Cole from Morgantown. Her father Michael Cole graciously allowed me to share Lauren's story with all of you.

Lauren was the definition of the girl next door: a person who is approachable, dependable, and who everyone saw as their best friend. She was also a fierce competitor with a strong will to be the best.

The little girl who became a competitive athlete was swimming at 2, she was tumbling at 3, and she was skiing at age 4. In college, she represented West Virginia University at the National Cheerleaders Association collegiate cheer nationals 2 years in a row. Everything Lauren did looked effortless. After completing her bachelor's degree in social work, she worked with foster care and recovering addicts while pursuing her master's degree in social work. She had a true helper's heart.

This life story sounds like a girl who had it all, a girl who was happy and content. She was beautiful, smart, funny, athletic, well liked by her friends, and loved deeply by her family. She appeared to not have a care in the world, but Lauren had been facing an epic battle since she was 16. One evening, she experimented with prescription opiates with her boyfriend and a few friends. She did not plan to be an addict. Lauren said once that she thought it was recreational like marijuana.

She was embarrassed and fought this disease alone for 2 years while maintaining good grades, excelling in sports, and taking college courses while in high school. She kept this secret from her family, her teachers, her coaches, and her friends.

Toward the end of her first semester of college, she had to swallow her pride and ask her parents for help. They immediately sent her to a prestigious rehab facility and committed to helping her recover. They were willing to try every option available to them.

Lauren was in it for the long haul. She had a lot to live for. She was constantly making good choices about what she wanted her life to be. After all, she was working on her master's degree in social work and knew that she could make a difference in the world.

On July 5, 2020, after a 10-year battle with substance use disorder, Lauren learned that her gym workout partner had tested positive for COVID–19. This meant that Lauren had to self-quarantine until she could be tested. She could not work. She could not go to the gym. She could not volunteer. She could not even visit her family and friends.

She contacted her dad and asked him to find a COVID test as soon as possible. Unfortunately, there were none to be found until that Thursday, July 9. Her dad Michael texted and called Lauren all morning and midafternoon that day but could not reach her. He left work to go to her apartment to tell her that he had located COVID tests.

When he pulled into the parking lot, he saw her slumped over in her car. He immediately called 9–1-1. He rushed over and pulled her out of the car. He tried to resuscitate her, but it was too late. Lauren had a slipup that took away her chance to live up to her full potential. It was a sunny afternoon on July 9, 2020, when she died of fentanyl poisoning at the age of 26—fentanyl, which is another approved opiate under the FDA. She was alone in her car, hiding from the stigma of addiction. Her ability to recover was stolen from her.

Approximately 3 weeks before Lauren relapsed, she came home to talk to her dad. She said: Dad, there are so many people suffering from addiction who need and want help, but they just don't have the resources or a family like mine to get it. Do you think that, when you retire, we can do something to help them?

Her parents took that wish to heart and have created Lauren's Wish, an organization working to establish a long-term women's residential substance use disorder treatment facility in West

Virginia. Lauren may no longer be with us, but her story will continue to inspire action and change in West Virginia and across our Nation.

Dr. Califf's nomination is an insult to Lauren's memory and to the millions of families who have lost a loved one at the hands of this epidemic. I cannot for the life of me understand why this administration is so committed to asking each of us in the Senate to reconfirm a person who had the opportunity to make a difference but showed us who he really was. Do not expect a different outcome if he is given another opportunity to lead the FDA. That won't happen.

I will vote no on Dr. Califf's nomination, and I have never been more profoundly confident of a vote I am going to cast than I am right now. I strongly urge my colleagues to examine the devastation the opiate epidemic has wreaked in your home State and on your loved ones and those whom you know and those of your constituents and the lives lost and all the families who are left heartbroken and join me in voting against Dr. Califf's confirmation to serve as the Commissioner of the FDA and send a message to this administration, to our President, that we need a new direction at the FDA. We need people who want to protect us, not people who allow drugs to destroy us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

ISSUES FACING AMERICA

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, today—I should say, these days—the United States is breaking all kinds of records and all the wrong kinds. In 2021, illegal border crossings hit a new high, with more than 2 million border encounters along our southern border, 1,200 miles of which is the U.S.-Texas border with Mexico.

Other numbers: the worst inflation in the last 40 years, 7½ percent—meaning that your paycheck is worth 7½ percent less than it was before this inflation rocket took off. A number of major cities are experiencing their deadliest year as the murder rates have spiked. A combination of inflation, open borders, and rising crime rates is a dangerous combination.

Drug overdose deaths reached a grim new milestone as well. For the first time on record, more than 100,000 Americans died of drug overdoses during a 12-month period. That is 100,000 families who lost their children, parents, siblings, and loved ones to an entirely preventable cause.

Our country has been fighting this scourge of the opioid epidemic for years now. In 2018, we celebrated incremental progress, as overdose deaths dropped 4 percent—dropped 4 percent—from the previous year, the first decrease in three decades. Unfortunately, that trend did not last. Overdose deaths increased in 2019, and they absolutely skyrocketed in 2020. We are still waiting for complete data for 2021, but it is not looking good.

The isolation, the anxiety, and the financial stresses of the pandemic have taken their toll on virtually every American, but our most vulnerable friends and neighbors are the ones who have been hit particularly hard. On top of the physical and financial struggles of the pandemic, many individuals are battling substance use disorders and lost access to treatment centers and outreach facilities.

There has never been a more important time for us to examine our response to the opioid epidemic and to take decisive action to stem the tide.

Last week, the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking released its report, which analyzed the state of the synthetic opioid crisis and offered recommendations. The Commission referred to illicit synthetic opioids as ''a slow motion weapon of mass destruction in pill form.'' Now, that may sound a little dramatic until you consider how much death and destruction this crisis has created. Since the Centers for Disease Control began collecting overdose data in 1999, more than 1 million Americans have died from drug overdoses. If you combined the number of servicemen who died in battles throughout our country's history, the number of overdose deaths would still be higher.

We all know there is no silver bullet when it comes to addressing this crisis. But it is not a matter of diverting illicit drugs or stopping overprescription or breaking the cycle of addiction; it is all of the above. But one of the most important places to start is by addressing the flow of illegal drugs across our border. Reducing the supply of drugs that eventually reach our streets is critical.

As we have discussed the crisis at the border that has been going on in its current form for a year now, I have talked about the cascading impact of the migration surge.

Customs and Border Protection deserves a lot of credit for their good work. The Agency plays a major role not just in migration or intercepting illegal immigration but also a major role in stopping illicit drugs. But when thousands of migrants flood our borders each and every day, their anti-drug mission stumbles because, frankly, the cartels know that if they flood the zone with so many migrants that the Border Patrol has to manage those, it leaves open avenues, veritable avenues and expressways across the border into the United States to bring in illegal drugs. If Border Patrol is changing diapers and passing out meals, as they have done throughout this humanitarian crisis, they can't be on the frontlines combating illegal drug smuggling; they can't interdict dangerous drugs or deter the cartels from moving their poison across our borders.

One of the most effective ways to avoid overdose deaths is to prevent those drugs from entering the country in the first place, and Customs and Border Protection is literally on the frontlines of that fight.

In recent years, Customs and Border Protection has seen an alarming amount of drugs coming across our border, one of the most concerning of which is fentanyl. Fentanyl is a uniquely dangerous drug because it is so potent; it is so strong. Depending on a person's body size, 2 milligrams can be lethal. A kilogram of fentanyl, 2.2 pounds, could kill 500,000 people—2.2 pounds of fentanyl could kill half a million people.

A few years ago, CBP seized about 2,800 pounds of fentanyl in a year. The next year, it jumped to 4,800 pounds. The following year, Customs and Border Protection seized more 11,200 pounds of fentanyl, enough to wipe out the entire U.S. population many times over. That is how potent it is.

Once it reaches the United States, this synthetic opioid, fentanyl, often makes its way into other substances, such as in combination with methamphetamine and heroin, which, too, can also lead to deadly consequences.

Cities across America are experiencing waves of overdose deaths caused by counterfeit opioids laced with fentanyl. In Texas, authorities recently seized more than 100,000 counterfeit pills laced with fentanyl—a haul with a street value of more than a million dollars.

Mexico, our neighbor to the south, is the principal source of illicit fentanyl, and unfortunately the Biden administration has made it incredibly easy for the drug cartels to ply their trade. Now, it is true that many of the precursors to make that fentanyl come from places like China, but ultimately it ends up ending in Mexico and making its way into the United States.

As the border crisis has grown to unprecedented proportions, it has become easier for fentanyl, heroin, and other illicit drugs to cross the border and reach communities throughout our country. There is a beyond-urgent need for the administration to address the border crisis—not just to stem illegal immigration, not just to stop criminals from preying on our country by mixing among economic migrants and making their way into the country; it is also about stopping the trade in illegal drugs that are literally killing men, women, and children in communities all across our country.

Until action is taken to alleviate the humanitarian crisis and get the Border Patrol back on the frontlines, we are not going to make a lot of progress. We have to stop the drug cartels and criminal organizations in their tracks, and we can't do that if law enforcement officers are on diaper duty.

We need a comprehensive approach to address this crisis and address additional support for those who are already struggling with addiction.

Last year, the Senate passed a bipartisan bill that I introduced with Senator WHITEHOUSE, the Senator from Rhode Island, called the Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment Act in order to help incarcerated individuals break the cycle of addiction and

transition safely and productively back into society. This legislation updates the residential substance abuse treatment program and expands access to treatment in jails and prisons across the country. The program already provides incarcerated individuals with access to treatment for substance use disorders. That treatment is coupled with programs to prepare them for reentry and provide community-based treatment once they are released. The changes included in this current legislation will give incarcerated men and women the best possible shot at living healthier and more productive lives once they are released.

I am sure it is no surprise that this bill has strong support both here in the Senate and among outside organizations that do a lot of good work in this area. More than two dozen organizations have endorsed this bill, including those in law enforcement, criminal justice, and behavioral health.

The bill passed the Senate with unanimous support last year, but it is still lingering on the House calendar. It is unclear when or if Speaker PELOSI and House Democrats will allow this bill to pass so we can invest crucial resources in the fight against drug abuse.

There are a number of challenges that we face that transcend politics here in Congress and inside the beltway, and this definitely is one of them. Fighting the opioid epidemic is a cause everyone in this Chamber should get behind because each of our States and indeed the entire country have been impacted. Families across my State and the rest of the 49 States have lost children, parents, siblings, and friends to the opioid epidemic. In 2020 alone, we lost more than 4,000 of my fellow Texans to drug overdoses. Unless we take action to thwart the slow-motion weapon of mass destruction, our communities will face even more suffering and more deaths.

I am tired of the pain and suffering the opioid epidemic has inflicted on families across the country. I am angry. I am fed up. And I believe we need a call to action because there is an urgent need to address drug addiction in America. I am committed to being part of the solution, and I would hope every Member of Congress in the House and the Senate, Republicans and Democrats alike, would join us in becoming a part of the solution.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have come to the floor of the Senate many times over the last several years to discuss an aspect of higher education only few people even know exists. The so-called for-profit colleges.

This disgraceful industry enrolls 8 percent of all postsecondary students in America—8 percent—and yet accounts for 30 percent of all Federal student loan defaults. Those two numbers tell the story. For-profit colleges get 8 percent of the students and are responsible for 30 percent of the student loan defaults. Why? For obvious reasons. They are too expensive. They charge a higher tuition than community colleges or even many private colleges. Secondly, the students don't end up finishing because they get mired in debt. And third, if they end up with a degree, it turns out to be virtually worthless.

When I think of cases that we have looked into in Illinois, in Chicago, of the exploitation of well-meaning students, sometimes the first in their families to go to college, who are lured in by the siren song of the marketing of for-profit colleges—they sign up, sign all the papers, turn over all their Pell grants, then sign up for Federal student loans and other private loans and have a disastrous experience where they can't even finish. They are so deeply in debt or, if they finish, they find their degree was worthless.

How many of those young people I remember coming to me and saying: I was majoring in law enforcement, and I was getting this degree from one of the local for-profit colleges to go into law enforcement. And you know what, Senator? They laughed at me when they saw the name of the school: That isn't a real school; that isn't a real degree.

Senator—they tell me—it is a real debt.

And that is the reality of these for-profit colleges.

I have called for greater oversight of this industry, as they exploit these students and their families. We have called out some of the most vicious predatory players in the industry like Corinthian, University of Phoenix, DeVry, ITT Tech, Westwood—institutions that are more likely to lead students into a lifetime of debt rather than a lifetime of opportunity.

Now, just imagine, if you will, that one of the leading architects of this fraudulent industry was chosen to be one of its watchdogs by the Federal Government. Well, that is the situation we have today. Dr. Arthur Keiser, who embodies the worst of the for-profit industry, is the chairman of the board of for-profit Southeastern College. He is also chancellor and CEO of Keiser University, a so-called nonprofit university that he converted from for-profit status in the year 2011. This so-called conversion to not-for-profit is misleading. The overlap between Southeastern College and Keiser University is well established. For example, multiple executives at Keiser University are also executives at Southeastern.

An IRS filing shows that executives at Keiser University, a supposedly nonprofit school, are paid hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. You know when you hear the term ''not-for-profit,'' you think of charitable institutions, people just barely making enough to get by, service to principles and values. Well, Mr. Keiser and his gang have turned that upside down. They make hundreds of thousands of dollars each year, a hefty salary for part-time employees working for a nonprofit college.

Arthur Keiser is also notorious for shady dealings. I am not making this up or going to a source of fake news for it. These were detailed in a GAO report last year. For example, in the year after Keiser University was converted into a not-for-profit college—not-for-profit—the school paid out more than $34 million to members of Mr. Keiser's family—$34 million? That is right, to Arthur Keiser's family. Not bad for a not-for-profit venture.

Arthur Keiser's financial misdeeds are so grave, so serious, that his own mother has filed a lawsuit against him over shifty financial handlings of the colleges that they cofounded. This would be a dramatic situation comedy were it not for the victims, the students.

Rather than being chastised by this GAO report and lawsuit by his mom, Mr. Keiser is now seeking to dramatically extend his influence within the for-profit college industry. How exactly is he planning to do this? Lucky for Arthur, the power is already in his hands.

Today, Arthur Keiser serves as chair of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, also known as NACIQI. I have never heard of it, but those in the industry know it quite well. NACIQI is the Department of Education's Federal advisory board that approves the creditors who act as gatekeepers for Federal student dollars. So in order to offer a Federal student loan, the Department of Education has to first establish that you are a real school—I mean, a real school with real teachers and classrooms or some other means of teaching students and that your degree is being presented to you in real terms, whether it is really going to help your life. This NACIQI is the watchdog of all the Federal watchdogs when it comes to for-profits. And guess who is the Chair: Arthur Keiser.

As Chair of NACIQI, Arthur Keiser poses a systematic threat to student borrowers. His chairmanship is a major conflict of interest in NACIQI's vital role of maintaining integrity of Federal student aid.

For-profits are already one of the most heavily subsidized sectors in America. I took a look at what these companies, these for-profit colleges, were taking out of the Federal Treasury. They put some of the worst Federal contractors to shame. And of course, they often leave students saddled with debts they will never be able to pay for worthless degrees.

Now, naturally, you may wonder, how do these for-profits spend all the Federal dollars sent their way?

Well, this is what it is all about. They spend millions on advertising their worthless degrees to underprivileged students.

There was an ad that was running out here a couple years ago, one of my favorites from the for-profits. It showed this young lady; she couldn't have been more than 19 years of age. And she was lounging in her bedroom with her laptop on the bed next to her, talking about how she was going to college in her pajamas. I am not making this up.

They spend millions of dollars just like that, advertising to young people who may not know any better that you have to put in a real effort to get an education. It pays off, but it doesn't come to you sitting in your pajamas.

Instead of reforming the for-profit advertising model, Dr. Keiser is expanding it. He likes this marketing. He has applied some of the same predatory practices to the so-called nonprofit college space.

In 2017, Keiser University—aptly named after himself—which Dr. Keiser claims is nonprofit, racked up the second largest advertising bill of any private nonprofit institution.

Keiser University spent nearly one-fifth of its entire budget on ads and marketing—more than $82 million.

We found some of the colleges that have been investigated in the past were spending more money on advertising than they were on faculty salaries. And it showed.

For the sake of comparison, other nonprofit colleges—real nonprofit colleges—are estimated to spend 1.5 percent to 6 percent of their budget on marketing. Dr. Arthur Keiser, his university spent almost 20 percent.

Southeastern College, Dr. Keiser's for-profit school, reported in 2018 to the IRS that 87 percent of its annual revenue came from student aid. That is close to the 90-percent cap imposed by the 90–10 rule. What does that mean in the big picture? It means this is just a conduit. Follow, if you will, the process. The student sits in the admissions office, and the admissions officer says, We are ready to launch. We are ready to put you in the courses. All you have to do is sign this. Here is your contract, the contract where you are going to seek Federal student aid.

The student signs it, naturally. Got my Pell grant. Got my Federal student aid. It is all going to the for-profit school. Then what happens next? Well, the student has got the debt to pay back for the loan. The school gets the cash. The school turns around—Dr. Keiser turns around and has a big distribution party, and the student finds out 6 months later it is a worthless undertaking, but they have still got the debt to pay.

And unless some action is taken by the Department of Education that proves up fraud and releases that student from his obligation, that is going to be a debt he is going to carry for years. It is going to change his life.

Do Dr. Keiser and his gang care? They have got their money. They have distributed it among themselves. Dr. Keiser has also demonstrated questionable conduct as chair of NACIQI, namely, protecting his own interests at the expense of students and taxpayers. This is a real fox in the chicken coop.

In 2020, under Dr. Keiser's leadership, NACIQI wrongfully penalized the Higher Learning Commission, an accreditor that tried to rescind accreditation from two fraudulent for-profits. Just last year, Dr. Keiser was forced to recuse himself from the review of Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges—or ACCSC.

Why exactly did he have to recuse himself? Because this organization accredited his college, so he was putting the pressure on that entity.

And in Dr. Keiser's absence, the other NACIQI members rightly considered student outcomes in determining whether they would continue as an accreditor. But when Dr. Keiser returned from recusal, he chastised the same members for having the gall to prioritize the needs of students.

So even when he was forced to recuse himself, Dr. Arthur Keiser found a way to use his position as Chair to advance his own interest. This week, I am going to lead a letter with SHERROD BROWN, my colleague from Ohio, requesting the Department of Education finally take a hard look at Arthur Keiser's Chairmanship and his obvious conflicts of interest.

It is worth noting that we are not alone in raising these concerns about Dr. Arthur Keiser.

Earlier this month, the House Education and Labor Committee chairman, BOBBY SCOTT of Virginia, also raised the issue of Keiser's manipulative conversion of his for-profit college to nonprofit status.

Time and again, Arthur Keiser has put his own personal priorities over the needs of the students and taxpayers he is supposed to serve. His conflicts of interest have become abundantly clear, and now it is time for the Department of Education to put an end to this party.

Last month, Secretary Cardona announced the Department of Education's priorities. One of them is holding postsecondary institutions accountable for taking advantage of kids.

Right now, the Department of Education has an opportunity to uphold that priority by bringing Arthur Keiser's nefarious conduct to an end. We are going to be watching. On behalf of those students and their families, on behalf of colleges and universities that do a good job, we have got to put an end to this rip-off.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, last week, most of my friends on the left pretended to be shocked by a new CNN poll that proved what a lot of Tennesseans have known for quite a while, and it is that Joe Biden and his agenda with the Biden administration is truly upside down with the American people.

Here is what we found out: Fifty-eight percent of the American people disapprove of the way he is handling his job as President. That alone is really an indictment on what they have been putting forward, but it gets a little bit worse. Sixty-two percent disapprove of how he has mishandled the economy.

Fifty-seven percent think his approach to fighting crime is not working. They believe that because they are seeing it in their streets in their hometowns.

Fifty-five percent don't like how he is responding to Xi Jinping. Fifty-six percent are worried about how he is handling Putin, and I am sure that number, in particular, will go up before the next poll comes out.

These numbers are brutal, but here is the cherry on top. Fifty-seven percent believe Biden's first year in office has been a total failure; and when asked whether or not Joe Biden's government represents the views of people like themselves, 68 percent of the people polled said, No, Joe Biden and his administration do not represent my views.

It is pretty simple—the American people are not buying what Joe Biden and this administration are selling. And the people in the White House seem to put their hands up, and they just cannot figure this out. They can't understand why the people won't just shut up and do what they are told.

Here is the secret: It is because when the people look at Washington—when Tennesseans look at Washington, and they look at who is in charge of our government—and Democrats have control of the House, the Senate, the White House—all they see is an empty suit with an agenda.

There is no vision, but there is agenda. They have got the to-do list. They have got the list of boxes they need to check off. We killed the Keystone Pipeline. We put mandates in place. We have got people in masks. We have got people in lockdowns. They are going to lose their job if they don't go get a jab. They have got an agenda.

For all of his bluster about fundamentally transforming our way of life, all Joe Biden has managed to do is to alienate his fellow countrymen.

Now, his allies are trying to turn the tide by revamping their talking points. But here is the problem: It won't work, because this administration—the Biden administration—does not have a messaging problem. Their problem is their agenda that they have that is lackluster with no vision.

But the American people are paying attention to this. And you know what they are seeing? I have to tell you, it really frightens them. It frightens them.

Doesn't matter if I go to one of the grandkids' ballgames, go to church, go

to the grocery store, run some errands, I am hearing from people what they see happening. The cramdown, the control, it frightens them.

And there is no distracting them from the fact that the President is weaponizing this liberal wish list against what they have as the vision for their future, for their children, for their family.

For the past year, Tennesseans have watched Biden dodge and weave and ignore what the people are telling him—the people are telling him. Democrats in Washington have treated their political rivals like enemies and accused them of racism, treachery, all for the crime of drawing a line in the sand and saying no.

It is amazing. I wish some of my colleagues did want to stand up for freedom. The people deserve better than that. And I will tell you what, they know it. No talking point is going to convince them to tolerate the intolerable from their government. And, yes, inflation, mandates, lockdowns, the open border, crime in the street, the debacle of Afghanistan, problems with Russia, the situation with Russia, Ukraine, China, Iran, the list grows every single day—every single day.

It is the wrong agenda. As I said, it lacks vision. At the beginning of these remarks, I said that the liberals pretended to be shocked by Biden's terrible poll numbers, and I stand by that statement because the truth is the White House, my Democratic colleagues, and their allies in the media know that they are kind of circling the drain when it comes to what they are pushing forward on the people.

But for some reason, they think that just one more power grab is going to do the trick. It will be the magic bullet. That certainly is a tactic, but it also will fail because the people know that it is the people of this country that have built this country. And it is built on a foundation that treasures faith, family, freedom, hope, and opportunity.

And if you have got an agenda and a checklist and a to-do list, but you have no vision for a better future, the American people will not buy what you are selling.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motions filed on Thursday, February 10, ripen at 5:45 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 2497

Mr. LEE. Madam President, on February 19, 1942—and that will be 80 years ago this coming Saturday—President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing the blatantly racist mass incarceration of essentially all Japanese Americans inside the United States at the time. This was an indefensible move—one that resulted in locking up about 120,000 decent, hardworking, innocent people based on nothing other than their race.

Two years later, in one of the most shameful moments in America's judicial history, the U.S. Supreme Court deferred to the Roosevelt administration's blatantly racist and equally unconstitutional imprisonment of Japanese Americans. Writing for the majority in a case called Korematsu v. United States, Associate Justice Hugo Black, a Justice with a history of bigotry, unconscionably glossed over the countless constitutional violations built into the race-based interment of innocent American citizens, who the Court acknowledged ''were loyal to this country overwhelmingly,'' based on the fact that ''[t]here was evidence of disloyalty on the part of some'' Japanese Americans and ''military authorities considered that the need for action was great.''

In a moment one might expect from someone like Justice Black, who had a history of bigotry, he cavalierly dismissed the blatant racism inherent in this action, reasoning that ''[t]o cast this case into outlines of racial prejudice, without reference to the real military dangers which were presented, merely confuses the issue.''

Tragically, Justice Black, blinded perhaps by his own intolerance and bigotry or perhaps by his loyalty to the President who had appointed him just a few years earlier, missed the obvious point: Racial prejudice was the issue. That was the whole point. I agree with the characterization later provided by now-Chief Justice Roberts, just a few years ago, in 2018, when he noted that ''Korematsu was gravely wrong the day it was decided, [and] has been overruled in the court of history, and—to be clear—'has no place in the law under the Constitution.'''

No person should ever be in prison solely due to their race. It shouldn't be even a factor in anyone's imprisonment—certainly not in the United States of America.

Japanese internment is one of the very worst examples—one of the very worst examples—of our government rejecting its founding principles. It is something that should be remembered so that it can never be repeated. Despite this mistreatment by government, Japanese Americans served faithfully in many capacities during World War II and have continued to serve our Nation and their communities in irreplaceable ways. Their contributions are worthy of remembrance and celebration.

Regrettably, the United States has failed to meet other, admittedly, far less fundamental obligations it has made to individuals and to States. One of those obligations is relevant here, ironically arising in the context of an effort to honor victims of FDR's internment of Japanese Americans. The Federal Government has neglected commitments made by Congress to Western States at the time of their admission to dispose of large swaths of Federal land. Similar promises had been made to most States that were admitted into the Union ever since the Louisiana Purchase. But for the fact that Congress honored such promises with respect to a lot of these States, including States like Illinois and Missouri, the Federal Government would still, to this day, own around 90 percent of those States. The same could be said of many, many others.

Although Utah received such assurances from Congress prior to its admission into the Union in 1896, using essentially identical language, Utah is still waiting for the Federal Government to honor its end of the bargain. However, unlike States like Illinois and Missouri, which received the benefit of the Federal bargain, Utah did not. The Federal Government still owns more than two-thirds of all the land in my State, resulting in an extraordinary amount of environmental, economic, and educational consequences that hurt Utahns, particularly those Utahns in poor and rural communities.

In fact, in a blatant insult to the people whose families settled and developed much of the rural West and their communities, the Federal Government continues to limit and restrict access, commerce, mining, drilling, and grazing on land it had promised to relinquish. Rural farms, industries, and communities are shrinking and dying because of this continually broken promise.

To add insult to injury, the Feds routinely fail to care properly for the land in their portfolio. The maintenance backlog in the National Park System is years long and $12 billion in the hole. The Bureau of Land Management controls vast swaths of the Western United States, and it controls them from Washington, DC, with little interest or regard for the people whose livelihoods and way of life depend on that land.

This relationship remains a vexing problem for everyday life in Utah. Businesses are shuttered because the Federal Government capriciously halts mineral extraction authority. Ranches go bankrupt because the Bureau of Land Management ends grazing rights in areas where families have raised cattle for generations. And just last week, Federal land managers damaged an exquisite collection of dinosaur fossils and would have continued doing so but for the intervention of a noble citizen named Jeremy Roberts, who was willing to call them out on it.

At a time when the Federal Government already owns far more land than it can manage, Congress should be really cautious about decreasing Federal land holdings. It should be going out of its way to decrease its Federal land holdings and doing that rather than increasing them. Recognition of sites like the Amache camp deserve better than Federal management. However, if

those representing the State of Colorado think the Federal Government can do better or, for whatever reason, just want it to be under the National Park's jurisdiction rather than subject to local control, then I am not inclined to argue with them.

What I would like to ask is that this land not continue to be acquired by the Federal Government with no plan in sight for dealing with the size of the Federal footprint. It is the size of the overall Federal land estate that worries me because the Federal Government has not proven a good steward of what it has got. So if we keep adding to that, it is only going to perpetuate some of these problems.

Now, I have been wrongfully portrayed by some in the media as being somehow against this historical recognition and against commemorating, as a warning to future generations and to honor the victims of the past, one of this Nation's and its government's most tragic missteps. I continue to negotiate in good faith to find a way forward with this bill. I have been in communication with the lead sponsor in the House, and I think there are ways that we can address this—to address both goals at issue.

I think we need to be able to commemorate these events and we also need to do so in a way that won't lead to the unfettered expansion of the Federal land footprint.

So, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 255, H.R. 2497. I further ask that the Lee amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the committee-reported amendments be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I strongly disagree with Senator LEE's proposal amending what has been agreed to—not agreed to but what has gotten every single Member of the Senate but for one. I want to also say that I was on the floor about 10 days ago, I think, on the subject of this. I want the Chair and the Senator from Utah to know I didn't even mention who had objected while I was here, but it was 1 out of 100 Senators. This bill passed the House of Representatives with all but two votes. It passed with every single vote from the Colorado delegation, and we have this gamut of people in from Colorado.

The bill is strongly supported by my friend KEN BUCK, whom I ran against in 2010. And if KEN were here, he would say there is very little upon which we agree. I hope there is more than he thinks we agree on, but we definitely agree on this.

So let me just explain why we wrote this bill. In 5 days, as the Senator from Utah has said, we are going to mark the 80th anniversary of Executive Order No. 9066, which began the forced dispossession and internment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. Two-thirds of them were citizens of this country, American citizens, forced out of their homes into camps by our own government—by their own.

One of those camps was Amache on the Eastern Plains of Colorado, where the Federal Government detained nearly 10,000 Japanese Americans against their will. Most of them had less than a week—most of them had less than a week—to get rid of virtually everything they owned and crowd onto buses and trains with no idea where they were going or what was going to happen to them.

Some of the first arrivals at Amache were kids younger than the pages who are on the floor here today with us, who were forced to build the camp where their own families were interred during the duration of the war. The conditions were horrible. Walls didn't always reach the ceilings. The windows weren't always sealed. It meant that snow blew in during the winter, and dust blew in during the summer.

This is what our government did to our fellow Americans, to children, forced to work in the fields to grow their own food in the jail that the United States of America had committed them to. And what is even more remarkable is that despite this treatment, 1 out of 10 of the people at Amache still volunteered to serve during the war—a higher rate than any other camp in America. Think about that. They were willing to defend the very government that was detaining them, that had locked up their children. That is how much they believed in America, even when America turned our back on them.

And I had the opportunity to visit Amache a few years ago with John Hopper, a high school principal in Grenada who worked with his students to create the Amache Preservation Society. They have been taking care of this site themselves all of these years, collecting items from all over the world that former prisoners have sent back because they want people to remember. They want a memorial to their captivity. Year after year, these high school students and their teacher have worked to restore this site so that the next generation of Coloradans can learn about what happened there.

If it were up to me, every student in Colorado and throughout the American West would go there—throughout our entire country—and learn about the Americans of Amache, the men and women who held on to hope year after year, who supported one another, who forged a community behind the barbed wire of this site, who never gave up on the United States of America, even as it was interning them on their own soil.

After I visited this site, I introduced a bill with Senator HICKENLOOPER to make Amache a part of the National Park System so it would have the resources and recognition it deserves for years to come. We have to get this done because the survivors of Amache are growing fewer and fewer in number each year, and we have to keep the memory of what they went through alive for the next generation.

That is what Colorado wants. I have a list of over 70 groups that support it, from the Asian Chamber of Commerce to the Colorado Council of Churches, to the town of Grenada, which owns the site today.

So, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have this list printed in the RECORD.

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

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS ENDORSING THE AMACHE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE ACT

ENDORSING ORGANIZATIONS

National Veterans Network; Japanese American C1t1zens League (JACL); Colorado Municipal League; Colorado School of Public Health; Interfaith Alliance of Colorado; Colorado Council of Churches; Japanese American National Museum; Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium (JACSC) Japanese American Services Committee; National Trust for Historic Preservation; Anti-Defamation League Mountain States Region; Fred T. Korematsu Institute; Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA); Amache Preservation Society; The Nikkeijin Kai of Colorado; Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans; University of Denver Amache Project; History Colorado; Colorado Community College System; Coalition to Protect America's National Parks; Sand Creek Massacre Foundation; Sakura Foundation; Outdoor Asian Colorado Chapter; Canyons & Plains of Southeast Colorado; Colorado Preservation, Inc.; Japan-America Society of Southern Colorado; Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc.

Southeast Colorado Business Retention Expansion & Attraction; The Wilderness Society; National Japanese American Historical Society; Japanese American Resource Center of Colorado; Amache Alliance; Simpson United Methodist Church; Densho; Amache Historical Society II; Defiende Nuestra Tierra; Change Matrix; Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network; Japanese Arts Network; Continental Divide Trail Coalition; High Country Conservation Advocates; Rocky Mountain Wild; Canyons & Plains of Southeast Colorado No Ke Aloha; Great Old Broads for Wilderness; San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council; Asian Avenue Magazine; Nathan Yip Foundation; Friends of Minidoka; Asian Chamber of Commerce; Action 22; Colorado Next 100 Coalition; Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Colorado; CORE: Community Organizing for Radical Empathy; Lamar Community College; Trinidad State Community College; Bent County Historical Society; Otero Junior College; Colorado Dragon Boat Festival.

ENDORSING LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Town of Granada; Baca County Commissioners; Crowley County Commissioners; Otero County Board of Commissioners; City of La Junta; Kiowa County Board of Commissioners; Prowers County Board of Commissioners; Mayor's Office: City & County of Denver.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, this bill wasn't controversial in Colorado,

and it wasn't controversial in the House, where Republican Congressman KEN BUCK, whose district this is, took up the bill with JOE NEGUSE, a neighboring Congressman. Amache is in the 10th District in Prowers County, and I said that the bill passed the House by 416 to 2.

It wasn't controversial in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, where it passed with bipartisan support from the chairman and ranking member, and that is why I came here 2 weeks ago to pass the bill by unanimous consent. But now there has been an objection.

And I should mention, by the way, that this site is less than 1 square mile. It is a tiny, tiny fraction of even the county that it is in. It seems to me that if we believe in federalism at all, we shouldn't be blocking Colorado's right to preserve less than 1 square mile the way we see fit; that we shouldn't have to reduce the public lands of the United States by an equal amount. And I will say, in that connection, that I formally object to the Senator from Utah's motion for this reason. The land here is owned by Grenada. It is already public land. The town has said it wants to donate it to the National Park Service.

I have a letter from the town making this intention perfectly clear.

So it is not even private land that is becoming public. It is public land transitioning from a local government to the Federal Government at the request of the community.

And they are not asking for anything in return. And I think that is an important point that the Senator from Utah has raised. And we have worked with the town to show that they are not asking for an exchange. They want to donate the land as their patriotic contribution to America to protect this part of our history.

I would think all of us here should agree that, unless it is hurting somebody else, the town can do whatever it likes with its own land, just like a private landowner can do with their own land.

Let me stop there and see whether the Senator from Utah has any reaction to that.

I will formally object to his motion, and I will stop there. I have got other things to say, but I hope that maybe we can get to an agreement based on what I would offer. So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I have a couple of points, and I don't think we are far off in where we are on this.

It is true that it is not an expansive land that is as big as some other land transfers we see—1 square mile. On the one hand, a lot of people would regard that as large—640 acres. It is the acreage equivalent of 1 square mile.

I would note here that I wouldn't call it a federalism argument in that we have to allow this. There are Federal implications to this that extend far beyond what a local unit of government might want to do. What happens is, when you transfer it into the Federal estate, we do incur additional obligations to make sure that that land is maintained and managed appropriately. It does cost money, and it takes an expense off the books of those who would otherwise be maintaining it. So it is not without any consequence at all. In other words, it is a matter of a simple operation of federalism to say that we should allow this in this circumstance.

I would note, moreover, that we have come closer on this. The amendment that I offered a moment ago that my friend and colleague, the Senator from Colorado, objected to is one that would allow this to happen but would require an offset to be made by the appropriate Federal land managers within 1 year of the transfer of this land.

There is nothing about that that strikes me as being particularly objectionable, particularly given the fact that the Federal Government owns and manages about 30 percent of the land mass in the United States. In my State and in Colorado, it is much more than that. There is nothing about that that should be particularly objectionable.

With that said, the Senator from Colorado has shaped this legislation in a meaningful way, and because I have a desire to honor those victims of this horrific event in American history and the Senator from Colorado has offered up a separate solution, one that would involve donation rather than acquisition by the Federal Government, although that also raises some concerns—over time, I think we have to watch this because the more we enhance the Federal land footprint, the more difficult it will be for the Federal Government to keep up with the maintenance backlog.

But given that this doesn't directly impact concerns quite the way those same concerns might be implicated if we were having to purchase it at the outset, I would be inclined, if my friend from Colorado were interested in offering that amendment, to withhold any objection from that while noting that it is my hope and expectation that, in moving forward, we could be more aware of these issues and that, as we see the Federal land footprint increasing, we can take steps as a body to make sure that there is some natural stopping point even before we turn to what I believe we have still got to turn to, which is the commitment made at statehood that still needs to be honored.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. I thank, through the Chair, the Senator from Utah.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 255, H.R. 2497. Further, I ask that the Bennet amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the committee-reported amendments be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, 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?

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, this is all happening on the fly right now, so I am actually going to withdraw that in the spirit of what Senator LEE has said. Hopefully, we can do this later today. We need to make sure that everybody has the benefit of seeing the language, and then we will be back later to do this.

I thank the Senator from Utah, and I will spare him the rest of my speech except that I think he deserves to hear this, and I think everybody here deserves to hear this, which is, when the ENR Committee took this legislation up this fall, here is what the survivors from Amache wrote to the committee, and I just want to put their words into the RECORD before I withdraw:

> During World War II, we were forced to live as prisoners in our own country. Along with our parents, we were forced from our homes, tagged like animals, and sent to the desolate prairie of southeast Colorado, where we lived in trauma, a constant presence of armed guards, barbed wire, and suffering too large to describe in one correspondence. Our families suffered a loss of jobs, homes, property, and businesses, and many of us lost family members. Many of our parents went to their graves without even an apology from their country. Our nation still has a long way to go to learn from this mistake, and our community, both old and young, continues to suffer from anti-Asian hate crimes, increasing to this day. Our national parks and the stories they honor reflect our values as a nation. Adding Amache to the National Park System would allow us to protect a unique story that has largely been forgotten and can only be told through the power of place. With each year that passes, there are fewer of us. We are counting on you to see us through.

Because of the discussion we have had tonight, we are going to have the chance later to be able to do that.

I thank my friend from Utah.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that after Senator SCOTT speaks and blocks the proposal, that I speak, Senator PETERS speaks, and then Senator MURRAY speaks on the Califf nomination and that then we move forward on the cloture vote.

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

The majority leader.

RETURN OF PAPERS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate agree to the request of the House to return the papers with respect to H.R. 3076 and that when the Senate receives from the House the corrected engrossment of the bill, it be in the same procedural posture as it was at the time of the granting of this request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, reserving the right to object, let me first say that I care deeply about fixing the problems with the U.S. Postal Service. The Postal Service provides an essential service and touches the lives of nearly every American. The Postal Service also consumes billions in taxpayer and consumer money every year, meaning that it has to be accountable to taxpayers and consumers not only in how effectively it delivers but in how it spends the dollars it receives. So I absolutely support getting something done to reform the Postal Service and ensure it is more accountable to taxpayers and consumers.

I also support provisions of this bill, like its focus on enhanced services for rural communities, which will benefit many families across my great State, and I like the fact that it maintains the current 6-day mail delivery schedule. Unfortunately, there are also pieces of this bill that set us back and block the opportunity for us to achieve our shared goal of responsibly reforming the Postal Service.

What I am asking for here is not unreasonable. I simply want the Senate to have the opportunity to work on this, improve it, and deliver a bill that truly works.

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has jurisdiction over the Postal Service. I am actually very proud to serve on this committee. Unfortunately, the committee has not held one hearing or member meeting on the bill, nor has the bill even been considered at a markup.

We aren't here considering just a simple resolution. This is a massive, multibillion-dollar bill that has huge impacts on Medicare recipients, and the Democratic majority skipped the committee process and rushed the bill to the floor.

Despite the rushed process throughout the bill, a few details need to be highlighted, and they are not pretty.

First, as I said before, this bill does not fix the underlying issues with the Postal Service, nor does it make it profitable. I don't understand why the Postal Service loses money and cannot be profitable. I don't think many Americans understand why.

America is more than $30 trillion in debt. We can't afford to add more stress on our already enormous national debt with poor financial planning, which I think this bill absolutely does. In fact, this bill simply shifts risk to Medicare recipients by adding billions in new costs to Medicare.

I am not sure why the Democrats are so eager to threaten the viability of Medicare or the benefits for Medicare recipients. The Democrats triggered billions in Medicare funding cuts in 2021 in Florida and other States in their wasteful, partisan COVID spending bill. Now they are putting even more stress on Medicare and the benefits of Medicare recipients by shifting billions in new costs onto the program.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, between just 2025 and 2031, this bill would increase costs to Medicare by more than $1.9 billion for Part B and $4.2 billion for Part D. This will hurt Medicare recipients. And even that score is based on the limited number of future budget years that were covered in the CBO's review.

We must have a long-term CBO score on this bill so that Congress can clearly review the future impacts to Medicare recipients. That is why I sent the director of the CBO a letter earlier today asking for more information about this bill.

Over 60 million seniors across our country, including more than 4.5 million seniors in Florida, rely on Medicare. It is unconscionable to add further expenses to them and place the future care of postal workers on the line when Medicare is already on the road to insolvency.

The retiree health benefits for the Postal Service are partially unfunded. This bill provides no new funding for the retiree health benefits of postal workers. It doesn't solve the problem.

Now, I heard that my Democrat colleagues say this bill will address the massive supply chain crisis that millions of American families have suffered from. I could not disagree with them more on this point. And, frankly, I am shocked that they are willing to unfairly stick our postal workers with the blame for the failures of the Biden administration that have created and worsened our supply chain problems. This bill does nothing to address this supply chain problem.

I know that the hard-working men and women of the Postal Service are not the ones causing this crisis; but if my colleagues insist that they are, that is even more of a reason to make sure this bill is heard in committee so we can really dig into the problem and make sure we come with up a sustainable solution.

There is no looming deadline that would necessitate rushed action by the Senate. This bill perfectly captures everything that is wrong with the way Washington solves problems. Instead of taking the time to craft a sustainable, affordable, and accountable solution that serves the interests of taxpayers, Medicare recipients, consumers, and postal workers and achieves our policy goals, Congress rushes bills into law so that politicians can send out a press release saying they did something, even if that something actually makes the problem worse.

If any business operated like this, it would absolutely fail. We have to stop this insanity. Given the scope of the legislation, the potential negative impact to postal workers, taxpayers, consumers, Medicare recipients, and seniors, the Senate should carefully and thoughtfully consider this bill. We should take all appropriate steps to make sure that we get this right. The Senate has simply not been afforded the opportunity to do that; therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, what we heard is why people really are frustrated and angered at the U.S. Senate. This is a broad, bipartisan bill months and months in the making, with large amounts of discussion, has the support of the Democratic chair of the committee, the Republican chair of the committee, was voted in the House with a majority of Democrats and a majority of Republicans, and would finally fix the post office.

I wonder if my colleague from Florida has ever heard his colleagues in Florida, his voters, talk about snail mail, about everything coming late—prescription drugs coming late, Social Security checks coming late, birthday cards arriving weeks after the birthday occurred. Finally, both parties come together in a bipartisan way in the House and Senate to pass this legislation, and the Senator from Florida is using a technical detail to hold us up.

It is the same bill that was on the floor Thursday, where we had agreement to move to vote on it tonight. But the House sent us a bill with a technical change. Five times in the past, this has happened; and each time, no Senator had the temerity to get up and block it on a technical issue. It just passed by UC, and we went and moved forward.

Our constituents want us to fix the post office. An overwhelming majority of Democrats and Republicans want us to fix the post office. All the postal workers are for this bill.

My colleague from Florida says he is defending postal workers. Ask the people who represent them. I dare say, it is the head of the letter carriers and the head of the postal workers and the head of the mail handlers who represent the postal workers more than the Senator from Florida; and they are overwhelmingly for the bill, as is the Postmaster—an appointee of President Trump.

So everyone tries to come together and get something done, and the arcane rules of the Senate allow one person to stand up—on a bill that has been out there and discussed repeatedly—at the last minute and raise objections. It is regrettable, and it is sad.

There is good news, though. Even though this will delay the bill, we will pass it. We will have to just go through this elaborate process—the old-fashioned and often discredited rules of the Senate that the Senator from Florida is employing—we will have to use them, but we will pass this bill because America needs it. Rural people need it. Senior citizens need it. Veterans need it—80 percent of veterans' prescriptions are sent through the mail. Nobody should be standing in the way of this bill. It is a sad day that just one Member has.

I yield the floor to Senator PETERS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Thank you, Leader SCHUMER.

Madam President, I stand in support of this bill.

This bill is absolutely essential to make sure that the Postal Service is on sound financial footing.

As Leader SCHUMER mentioned, Americans all across our country rely on the Postal Service to deliver critical items to their home—things like medicines, which go via the Postal Service. They expect that service to provide it 6 days a week and to do it on time. But, unfortunately, the Postal Service has been saddled with rules that may make it very, very difficult.

The legislation before us is an attempt to fix those rules that make it more difficult for the Postal Service to deliver essential services and do it in a cost-effective way.

It is something that has been discussed here in Congress for a decade or more—a decade or more. This is not an issue that just came out of nowhere. This is something we have been trying to fix for nearly a decade.

Over the last year and a half, we have been working on bipartisan, bicameral legislation, bringing people together and saying, Let's just focus on what is common sense.

Now, let's see, what is common sense? Right now, the Postal Service has had to prefund retirement healthcare for decades. No other company in America needs to do that. No other Federal agency in the government does that. No one does it, but the Postal Service is saddled with this requirement, which has billed tens of billions of dollars. It is common sense to treat the Postal Service like every other business and every other government agency in the Federal Government.

Also, it makes sense to have retirees integrated into Medicare. Like every single company in America, it will be integrated into Medicare. And let's be clear: Those postal workers have been paying into Medicare their whole working career. They are paying into Medicare. They should have the ability to actually get Medicare.

This will also help the Postal Service be able to function in an efficient and effective way.

The bipartisan, bicameral work that we did—I worked with my ranking member, Senator PORTMAN. We have been working with our counterparts in the House, and both the Democratic chair and the Republican ranking member came up with an agreement, got wide consensus from folks throughout Congress. In fact, the bill that I introduced here in the Senate, which is basically the bill that is before us from the House, has 28 cosponsors—14 Republicans, 14 Democrats. How many bills do we have here on the floor that have that much support from both sides?

This is bipartisan. This is common sense. It addresses a critical issue for the American people, and they want us to come together and solve it. But instead, we have a procedural blocking technique to slow this down. And every day we wait, it puts the Postal Service in more jeopardy. It is time for action now.

As the leader mentioned, since 2000, there have been similar kinds of mistakes by the transfer of a bill; five times—five times in 20 years. And every time, it has been settled quickly because people say it is just a mistake; let's move on with the business of the people. Let's not play games. I would hope we could do that now.

Five times, it went quickly. In fact, three of those times, the bills that came over had less bipartisan support than this bill. This bill had 120 Republicans support it in the House.

It is time to move this forward. Let's stop playing games. Let's help the Postal Service. Let's help the American people, and let's show that the U.S. Senate knows how to get a job done.

Mr. SCHUMER. And I dare say, the Senator from Michigan speaks for the vast majority of Members in this Chamber and in the House of either party.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate lay before the body a message from the House with respect to H.R. 3076 and that the Senate vote on the request without further intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I notice neither of my colleagues addressed the fact that, still, why didn't this go to committee? Why wouldn't we go through a process? This massive, billion-dollar bill, why wouldn't we go to a committee? They did not address that.

And, by the way, they talk about a technical error. I was here when my colleague from Florida had a technical change where the number was wrong, and my Democratic colleagues blocked the amendment. So this is not unheard of.

On top of that, they never addressed the fact that this puts our Medicare recipients and our Medicare Program at further risk because the program is not fully funded, and this is nothing to fix it. On top of that, with our retiree benefits in the Postal Service, their funding is underfunded. This doesn't do anything to improve their funding.

So I am not going to object, but let's make sure we clear up the facts here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the request is agreed to.

MESSAGE

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Ordered, That the Clerk be directed to request the Senate to return to the House of Representatives the bill (H.R. 3076) entitled ''An Act to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.''

VOTE ON RETURN OF PAPERS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on agreeing to the request of the House to return the papers.

The request is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT MCKINNON CALIFF

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I come to the floor tonight to urge my colleagues to vote here in a minute to confirm Dr. Robert Califf to serve as Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. He was confirmed to this role previously with strong bipartisan support. I hope to see that again this evening.

At this critical moment, we need a trusted hand to lead the FDA, and Dr. Califf's previous service in this role, his career as one of the Nation's leading research scientists, give him the experience to take on this challenge.

Families across the country count on the Food and Drug Administration every day to follow the science and the data to keep them safe, and COVID–19 has put its work in the spotlight like never before.

This pandemic has been incredibly hard on our Nation. It has killed over 900,000 Americans. And throughout this crisis, as people have sought to keep their families safe, they have looked to the FDA and depended on the tireless work of FDA scientists to confirm the safety and effectiveness of treatments and vaccines, ensure we have high-quality masks, and review tests to make sure they give us accurate results and more.

Parents across the country are continuing to wait anxiously for the FDA to greenlight safe, effective vaccines for kids under 5—something I know we all want to see as quickly as the science allows.

But while the COVID–19 pandemic remains one of the most urgent challenges we face, there are countless other ways the FDA works that matters to families.

Every day, people put the well-being of themselves, their families, and even their pets in the FDA's hands. When we sit down for a meal, we count on the FDA's efforts to ensure the safety of our food supply and provide us with the information we need to make healthy choices. When we get our prescriptions filled or rely on medical devices to stay healthy, we count on the FDA's work to uphold the gold standard of safety and effectiveness.

The FDA needs strong leadership to continue that work and to address other pressing challenges: challenges like the opioid crisis, which recently claimed over 100,000 lives in a year—that is a new record; challenges like youth tobacco use—according to the CDC, 2 million of our youth use e-cigarettes; challenges like antimicrobial

resistance, which could make common procedures more dangerous by making current infection treatments ineffective; challenges like skyrocketing drug costs and pharmaceutical companies who game the FDA approval system to keep more affordable drugs off the market; and challenges like improving health equity.

I have repeatedly raised the need for the FDA to improve diversity in clinical trials because, when women or people of color or others are left out of the clinical trials, this undermines people's health by delaying information they and their healthcare providers need to understand how a treatment will affect them specifically—for example, whether it is safe during pregnancy—and by making it hard to identify differences in the safety and effectiveness of treatments for those populations.

As the hard-working staff at the FDA continues to tackle these challenges, they deserve a Senate-confirmed leader with experience on these issues to lead those efforts. Dr. Califf worked on these challenges before, when he was previously confirmed to lead FDA in an overwhelming bipartisan vote, and he demonstrated in his hearing with the HELP Committee that he is ready to take them on again and return as Commissioner.

So I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting to confirm Dr. Califf and working with him to ensure that the FDA continues to protect our families, uphold the gold standard of safety and effectiveness, and put science and data first.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 668, Robert McKinnon Califf, of North Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Gary C. Peters, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Richard J. Durbin, Sherrod Brown, Tammy Duckworth, Tim Kaine, Mazie K. Hirono, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Christopher A. Coons, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of North Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) would have voted ''nay.''

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 54 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Heinrich	Romney
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Kelly	Shaheen
Burr	King	Sinema
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Leahy	Stabenow
Carper	Menendez	Tester
Casey	Merkley	Van Hollen
Collins	Murkowski	Warner
Coons	Murphy	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Murray	Warren
Duckworth	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Durbin	Padilla	Wyden
Feinstein	Peters	
Gillibrand	Reed	

NAYS—45

Barrasso	Hagerty	Portman
Blackburn	Hassan	Risch
Blumenthal	Hawley	Rounds
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Braun	Inhofe	Sanders
Cassidy	Johnson	Sasse
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Lee	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lummis	Shelby
Crapo	Manchin	Sullivan
Cruz	Markey	Thune
Daines	Marshall	Tillis
Ernst	McConnell	Tuberville
Fischer	Moran	Wicker
Grassley	Paul	Young

NOT VOTING—6

Capito	Hoeven	Luján
Graham	Kennedy	Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the Senate will now proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of North Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. I would ask consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this evening to talk about Black History Month and, in particular, to talk about a program that my office has been presenting every February for many years now.

Each February, it has been my privilege to honor several Pennsylvanians as part of the celebration of Black History Month. This year, we pay tribute to four esteemed Pennsylvanians who have helped their community and the Commonwealth build resilience.

And I will list them first, and then I will be talking about each of them in greater detail: First, Tyrone Holmes, from my hometown of Scranton, PA; Della Clark of Philadelphia, PA; Julius Boatwright of Pittsburgh; and Theo Braddy of Harrisburg—all Pennsylvanians. And their work is demonstrative of this year's theme for our program: ''Resilience in the Face of Adversity.''

As their persistence and strength has helped their communities surmount significant difficulties this year, their enduring leadership is an encouragement to me after a year where, sadly, resilience has been sorely needed throughout our Commonwealth and throughout our country.

Now, in some ways, we have made some progress in the last year. Just consider this: The national economy created 6.7 million jobs, the most ever in the first year of a Presidency. Pennsylvania's unemployment rate went way down from 7.1 to 5.4. Tens of thousands of jobs have been added just in Pennsylvania. Wages are up, and child poverty is down. The number of fully vaccinated Americans has increased from 2 million to 213 million in just the last year. And we have more tools to manage COVID–19 and keep us safe.

And, finally, the number of schools open for in-person learning has skyrocketed from just 46 percent a year ago to now 95 percent of schools. Some believe it is as high as 98 percent.

However, despite those measures of progress, we are still grappling with so much—grappling with a virus that is adaptable and still deadly, especially for people with preexisting health conditions, and even more so for those who are unvaccinated.

And as COVID–19 has lingered, so, too, have the attendant direct effects. Our schools still struggle to teach our kids and to maintain the regularity that is critical to learning.

Our businesses must contend with fluctuating demand and a fragile supply chain. Many of our children have fallen behind on their other critical vaccinations and routine doctor visits. Many children and adults struggle with isolation and pandemic-related mental health challenges.

We know that much of the adverse impact of COVID–19 has been particularly acute for communities of color. In the United States, Black Americans have experienced higher rates of COVID–19 hospitalization and death compared to White Americans. And

Black Americans have had higher levels of COVID–19-related unemployment.

Beyond the pandemic, other challenges remain. Systemic racism persists in our economy, in our schools, in our healthcare system, and, of course, in our criminal justice system, just to mention a few. And even as we strive as a nation to achieve our high ideals of liberty and freedom for all, we must openly acknowledge a history of discrimination and racism and reckon with its present-day manifestations and implications, including disturbing efforts around the country to turn back the clock on voting rights.

It is only the challenges brought about by adversity that occasion the rise of resiliency and the triumphs of the human spirit and of community action that can lift all of us.

The late Member of Congress, Shirley Chisholm, once said:

> Leadership is to have the vision for what is necessary and the courage to make it possible.

Leadership is to have the vision for what is necessary and the courage to make it possible.

Following a year of difficult challenges, it is fitting that as part of our Black History Month celebration, we honor innovative, courageous, and enterprising Pennsylvania leaders who have both the vision and the courage to help our communities and our Commonwealth to exhibit resilience in the face of that adversity.

TRIBUTE TO TY HOLMES

Mr. President, let me start with Ty Holmes, our first honoree. I am proud to honor Ty as a fellow resident of Scranton, and the President of the Lackawanna branch of the NAACP. Ty Holmes is well known in Scranton as an avid volunteer and advocate for diversity and inclusion through his work with multiple community organizations, including as a Penn State advisory board member, the vice president of the Scranton Rotary, and as a Lackawanna County Democratic Committee member.

Following the death of George Floyd in 2020, community members were inspired to make change in Northeastern Pennsylvania and establish the Lackawanna County NAACP. Since its founding in 2020, this NAACP branch has grown to 131 members. Under Ty Holmes' leadership, the branch is working to be a voice for underrepresented groups and serve as a bridge between them and the broader community in Scranton.

Ty also has a particular interest in bettering the lives of young people in Scranton, leading him to run for the Scranton School Board. This past November, he was elected to the board and sworn in last month. With his election, Ty Holmes becomes the first African American to ever be elected to public office in the city of Scranton. He also serves as a board member for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Youth Shelter, which provides quality emergency shelter and related services to unaccompanied youth, ages 14 through their high school graduation.

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Youth Shelter has a specific focus on social justice and advocacy and is welcoming to young people from all backgrounds, especially LGBTQ+ youth in the area.

Ty Holmes' life has been one of service, both to his community and to his country. He retired after 25 years of Active Duty in the U.S. military, where he received numerous decorations from both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army. He began his military career in 1991 with the Navy and served in various duty stations throughout the South Pacific and the Middle East.

In 2003, he crossed branches and entered the U.S. Army, deploying in the Middle East. He also worked as part of the support and rescue operations in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Through his work with many community organizations and his role on the Scranton School District Board of Directors, Ty continues to build the Scranton institutions that provide support to people and those institutions that lift them up during times of adversity.

So I look forward to seeing Ty Holmes' continuing contributions to my hometown for years to come.

TRIBUTE TO DELLA CLARK

Mr. President, our second honoree is Della Clark from Philadelphia, PA. Della Clark is a true community shepherd. I am not the first to recognize Della's exemplary work, and I certainly won't be the last, but I am honored to add my voice to her chorus of admirers. Her work in the city of Philadelphia, particularly in West Philadelphia, has undoubtedly been a saving grace 100 times over.

Della is indefatigable, a true force of nature who has shown true dedication and steadfast leadership.

Since January 1, 1992, Della Clark has served as president of the Enterprise Center. This center supports minority entrepreneurs and underresourced communities and is one of the most trusted organizations in the region to advise and deliver transformative economic development and community wealth-building initiatives.

Under Della's leadership, the Enterprise Center has experienced tremendous growth. Among its accomplishments is its purchase of a dilapidated building at 46th and Market Street in West Philadelphia, which was completely renovated and now serves as the center's state-of-the-art center for business and entrepreneurship.

Additionally, affiliate organizations have been added to the center's portfolio, including the Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation and the Enterprise Center Capital Corporation. Today, the Enterprise Center is leading a project that will be transformative for the city of Philadelphia—the 52nd Street Initiative.

This commercial corridor along 52nd Street in West Philadelphia has been an important historical and cultural hub, but unfortunately has seen significant decline and recent disinvestment just over the last number of years.

Further exacerbating the already existing troubles for business owners and residents, the COVID–19 pandemic and civil unrest have made recovery and revitalization challenging at best. The Enterprise Center has a bold vision for this 52nd Street Initiative, which will transform this street—52nd Street—into a national model for integrating technology to improve public safety, enhance visitor experience, and support businesses and residents.

With Della Clark at the helm, I am confident she will move mountains to see to it that this project reaches its full potential and that this vital neighborhood and its residents can thrive once again.

Della Clark speaks eloquently—yet fiercely—on the importance of investing in Black and Brown businesses and is a tireless advocate for equitable distribution of and access to resources and capital. For that, I thank her for being a champion, a leader, and a true servant for her community.

TRIBUTE TO JULIUS BOATWRIGHT

Mr. President, in Southwestern Pennsylvania, our third honoree is Julius Boatwright. Not only has the pandemic taken a toll on the Nation's physical health, but many Americans struggle with mental health challenges, particularly isolation and grief. Julius Boatwright knows that good mental health is fundamental, foundational, to overall well-being.

He has made delivering critical mental health services his life's work. At a time when the pandemic has left many Americans feeling isolated, alone, and depressed, Julius's mission has renewed urgency.

In his work as a licensed social worker, community-based therapist, and outpatient therapist, Julius Boatwright has led with profound vulnerability and understanding. His passion for mental health is derived from a deeply personal place. Julius has bravely discussed his own mental health struggles in an effort to open up a conversation about mental well-being. His experience of growing up in a household and a community where mental health was never talked about planted the desire for him to address silent suffering.

In college, the death of a friend by suicide could have disrupted Julius's journey to becoming a mental health professional. Instead, this deeply personal challenge spurred him onward. He would go on to earn a bachelor's degree in communications and a master's of social work, with a certificate in human services management, from the University of Pittsburgh, as well as establish the Pittsburgh-based nonprofit Steel Smiling.

Julius is now the founding and managing director of Steel Smiling. The organization's mission is to bridge the gap between Black people and mental

health support through education, advocacy, and awareness. Steel Smiling has an ambitious goal, to connect every Black person in Pittsburgh to a positive mental health experience that improves their quality of life by the year 2030.

Julius's empathy and vision is encouraging and inspiring, and I look forward to witnessing the transformative impact of his work. Steel Smiling has already begun to improve the mental well-being of Pittsburgh's Black community. Since 2019, the organization has been a significant provider of community services, helping Black Pittsburghers to receive mental health treatment, training, and support.

The implementation of culturally sensitive programs, trainings, and workshops have helped combat the cultural stigma that exists in Black and Brown communities surrounding mental health.

The need for sensitive, stigma-free mental health support has been a longstanding one, but there has been a long gap between the need for services and the availability of them.

Furthermore, the COVID–19 pandemic has even more starkly illustrated the critical need for behavioral health services, especially for people of color. So I am grateful to Julius for not just recognizing the need but for stepping up and working to address critical community need.

(Ms. SMITH assumed the chair.)

TRIBUTE TO THEO BRADDY

Madam President, finally, Theo Braddy, our fourth honoree.

Theo is from Harrisburg, PA, and he is the personification of resilience in the face of adversity, and I am honored to recognize him today.

At the age of 15, Theo was involved in an accident while playing high school football, and the resulting neck injury left him paralyzed and a wheelchair user. This life-changing experience would become a catalyst for his future work in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

After his accident, Theo moved to Pennsylvania and completed high school. He furthered his education by graduating from Edinboro University in Erie County, and then he earned his master's degree in social work from Temple University in 1988.

Later that year, Theo Braddy established and became the founding director of the Center for Independent Living of Central Pennsylvania, a position he held for over 30 years. As CEO, Theo was instrumental in creating an independent living center that would become a strong and vibrant voice for people with disabilities in central Pennsylvania and, indeed, throughout the Commonwealth.

Under Theo's leadership, the Center for Independent Living of Central Pennsylvania not only provided essential services for people with disabilities but has also advocated for accessible transportation, more access to assistive technology, and expanded home- and community-based services.

Theo crafted his leadership role to both create services for people with disabilities and to advocate to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

In addition to his work leading the center, Theo has served on numerous boards and committees over his career, influencing disability policy.

He was appointed by three different Governors of Pennsylvania to serve as a commissioner for the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. Theo also served on the Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council.

He has taken his years of service and advocacy to the classroom to help shape the disability leaders of the future, teaching at several institutions of higher education. For example, in 2019, after leading the Center for Independent Living of Central Pennsylvania for those 30 years, Theo retired to begin his next venture. Today, Theo serves as president of his own consulting firm.

I have had the opportunity to work with Theo on a number of disability issues over the years, and his professional and personal knowledge about the importance of home- and community-based services has been invaluable in shaping meaningful policy and communicating it to Members of Congress.

For over 40 years, Theo has proudly and inclusively served the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with his advocacy for people with disabilities. We are grateful for his commitment to making our State and our Nation fairer and more accessible for all.

In conclusion, it is a privilege and a pleasure to be able to honor these remarkable Pennsylvanians: Ty Holmes, Della Clark, Julius Boatwright, and Theo Braddy. While their work as repairers of the breach varies from community activism and youth development to economic development, to mental health support, to the civil rights of people with disabilities, all four share a commitment to lifting up their neighbors and their neighborhoods. They believe that we are stronger when we stand together and that, by joining hands with our brothers and sisters, we can overcome adversity, build resilience, and flourish together.

As we head toward the light at the end of the tunnel of this pandemic and continue to strive to ensure the ideals of our Nation are fulfilled for all Americans, the stories of these exceptional leaders will continue to inspire all of us to pursue a brighter tomorrow for America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

UKRAINE

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I come to the floor tonight with my colleague from New Hampshire, Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN, to discuss the critical situation in Ukraine.

Ukraine is an independent country. It is a democracy. It is an ally of ours. It is a country that is currently under siege. There is a threat of invasion by Russia that grows every single day.

Right now, there are more than 130,000 Russian troops under the command of 100 tactical groups surrounding Ukraine. This Russian deployment includes nuclear-capable missiles, rockets, tanks, and artillery, and it is no longer just on the eastern border of Ukraine, where there has been activity before, as we will discuss, but now on the northern border, where Russian combat troops and heavy equipment have moved into the country of Belarus and also in Crimea. Additionally, Russia has now deployed amphibious assault ships and other ships into the Black Sea, to the south, and has positioned its S–400 missile defense systems, which could stop flights into Ukraine.

So from the east, from the north, and from the south, Ukraine is facing this threat. News accounts say additional equipment is actually being moved to the Ukrainian border, not being pulled away.

While there are differing views on whether Russia has made the final decision as to whether to invade or not, there is no question that they have now amassed the capability needed to conduct a full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Let's not forget that Russia has invaded Ukraine twice in the past 8 years, illegally annexing Crimea and inserting troops and offensive military equipment into the Donbas region in the east.

They have also targeted cyber attacks against public and private entities in Ukraine and continue to use information to try to destabilize the democratically elected Government of Ukraine.

By the way, Ukrainians have lost about 14,000 citizens in the last 5 years at the hands of the Russians—14,000—fathers, brothers. That would be, as a percentage of our population, like the United States losing about 115,000 people. That is more than we lost in Vietnam and Korea combined—actually, Vietnam, Korea, Iraq, and Afghanistan combined. Think how we would feel.

And let's not forget that Russia continues, day by day, to conduct this low-grade but serious war against Ukraine.

We all hope that instead of an invasion, Russia chooses a diplomatic end to this current crisis, but we had better treat this threat of an invasion as a very real and serious possibility. Doing anything else would be irresponsible, given the massive mobilization and the past malign behavior.

And all freedom-loving countries have an interest here. Ukraine is where the cause of freedom is under siege today in our generation.

Eight years ago, Ukrainians made a very deliberate choice. They stood up to a corrupt Russian-backed government, and they turned to the West, to the European Union, to America. They said that they wanted to be like us.

I was in Ukraine in 2014 shortly after what is called the ''Euromaidan,'' the revolution of dignity. The barricades

were still there in the center of town. The Maidan is a square that was still occupied by Ukrainian patriots. They sat there in makeshift tents in the cold because they believed that their hard-won freedom was worth defending.

And they did defend it. In the protests against the Russian-backed government, they lost 100 Ukrainian citizens by the security forces of the Russian-backed government. These individuals were called the ''Heavenly Hundred,'' and they are still honored today by memorials at the Maidan. Their freedom came at a high price, and they were willing to defend it then, as they are today.

I was there as an election observer with other American and European officials, mostly parliamentarians from Europe, and we witnessed a fair and robust Presidential election with a huge turnout. I saw their patriotism and national pride.

The Ukrainian people are proud and consider themselves Ukrainian, not Russian. They have been a free and independent country for 30 years, and since the protests in 2014, they have been on a track toward a Western-focused democracy and a free-market economy. It is their choice to be free and independent, and no country—no country—has the right to take that away from them.

I also want to highlight a change since 2014, and that is in the proficiency of the Ukrainian military and the great tragedy that would result from an illegal invasion of Ukraine. The Ukrainian military will stand up, and they are ready. The military of today is a professional force that has been fighting this low-grade war with Russia for the past 8 years. It is not the military they had in 2014. They are, instead, battle hardened today. And thanks to the United States and our allies, including many NATO allies, they are better trained and better equipped than ever before.

I have been to the line of contact in the Donbas region—the line of contact, which is where the Russian troops are on one side and the Ukrainian troops are on the other, firing back and forth periodically. I have seen these troops from Ukraine. They are tough. They know how to fight, and they will fight to defend their country.

And Ukraine is a big country. It is a nation of 418 million people. In the capital city of Kyiv, there are almost 3 million people. Think about the humanitarian disaster that will ensue if there is an invasion—millions of innocent civilians displaced from their homes in the dead of a Ukrainian winter, fleeing desperately for safety, while fighting rages around them. This is not a sight anybody wants to see.

By the way, the blood of these innocents will be on the hands of the Russians.

And there will be significant Russian casualties as well, and severe multilateral sanctions that will be devastating for the Russian economy and targeted sanctions that will ensure that the era of Russian oligarchs treating the West as their playground while pillaging their own country of resources and wealth will be no more.

In 2014, the Ukrainian people rejected authoritarianism and chose instead democracy, freedom of speech, freedom to gather, respect for the rule of law, free markets, prosperity. They are not going back.

Despite Russia's underlying efforts to destabilize Ukraine over the past 8 years, the people of Ukraine remain committed to this independent, sovereign, and democratic nation. They don't want State control, repression, and fear. They instead seek liberty and opportunity.

Moscow would have the world believe that somehow this massive, unwarranted Russian buildup is about trying to shore up its border against threats from Ukraine and NATO. This is, of course, patently false and should be rejected out of hand by America and its many allies. Ukraine's military posture has always been defensive. They just want to be left alone. And unlike Russia, Ukraine has upheld its commitments under the Minsk agreements, which were designed to ensure a ceasefire in the Donbas region. NATO is defensive and is no threat to Russian territorial integrity.

It is important to note that Ukraine is not asking for us to fight this war for them. They are asking us for increased lethal military assistance to help them defend themselves should Russia make a mistake and invade Ukraine again. And they are asking all of us to abide by commitments we have made. In 1994, after the Berlin Wall came down, Ukraine signed what is called the Budapest Memorandum. It was a treaty where Ukraine agreed to give up its nuclear weapons in exchange for security guarantees from Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom; that we would all respect the independence and sovereignty of Ukraine and refrain from the threat or the use of force against Ukraine. These are commitments that must be honored.

I know there is a lot that our country and this Congress are divided over today, and we see it played out on the floor and in the media constantly. But I will tell you, Republicans and Democrats alike are united in backing Ukraine in this crisis. That is why it is so important that my colleague from New Hampshire is on the floor with me today. She has been a stalwart. We traveled to Ukraine 2 weeks ago and had the opportunity to meet with the leading officials there, including President Zelenskyy, but also talked to the Ukrainian people. And we let them know that on a bipartisan basis we support Ukraine. We have a bipartisan consensus on the broad structure of sanctions and an aid package for Ukraine.

The sanctions, by the way, would cripple the Russian economy. We have some disagreement perhaps over preinvasion or postinvasion sanctions and how much on each, but we agree on sanctions.

We also agree on assisting Ukraine with further and much needed support: defense against cyber attacks, as an example, that the Russians are already conducting—and we expect more to come—and disinformation attacks coming from Russia. We agree, Republicans and Democrats alike, not just on sanctions but providing more support to Ukraine for these critical areas. And of course we agreed on providing more military assistance to Ukraine so they can defend themselves.

We have come to a consensus on these issues. What we now need is for all of us to work together, including the White House, to ensure that we can step forward and put legislation or a resolution on the floor to ensure that we are doing whatever we possibly can to make it clear what the consequences will be to act as a deterrent to Russia from making a terrible mistake.

This is a critical time for us to act and to lead. It is time for us and the Congress and for this government to speak with one voice. Freedom in Eastern Europe depends on it but so does the cause of freedom all around the world.

I now yield to my colleague from New Hampshire Senator SHAHEEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I couldn't agree more with the comments of my colleague Senator PORTMAN from Ohio.

We are here on the floor today to convey strong bipartisan opposition that exists in this Senate to Vladimir Putin's unprovoked aggression against our partner Ukraine.

Now, like everyone in this body, I have been closely following the deteriorating political crisis that has been fabricated by Russia because, as Senator PORTMAN says, Ukraine has always been defensive. It has not been offensive going against Russia, but Russia intends to further undermine and threaten Ukraine's sovereignty.

This Senate has a long history of supporting an independent and democratic Ukraine. Since Russia's initial invasion in 2014, Congress has provided more than $2.7 billion in security assistance and supported its government in advancing critical reforms to help Ukraine on its journey to greater Euro-Atlantic integration.

I am proud to have been involved in a number of those bipartisan efforts to support Ukraine. As Senator PORTMAN said, last month, we traveled with a bipartisan delegation of seven Senators—four Democrats and three Republicans—to meet with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy and other officials. We met with his national security team to discuss the Russian threat and how the United States can help our Ukrainian friends.

The message from the Ukrainians was clear. They see their future in

partnership with the West. They share our democratic values, and their people are proud of their hard-won independence.

So it is worth asking, if Ukraine has made its sovereign wish clear that it wants a future with Europe, why does Putin have more than 130,000 troops at its border?

As Senator PORTMAN pointed out so well, it is not just its eastern border with Russia; it is its northern border with Belarus. So it has been said—but I think it is worth repeating—that this unprecedented Russian threat to Ukraine's sovereignty is on Putin. It is on no one else. He has designed this crisis to advance his own revanchist agenda. He wants to reconstruct the Soviet Union and recreate his own sphere of interest, and he wrongfully sees Ukraine as part of this authoritarian future.

But make no mistake, this isn't just about Ukraine. Putin wants to diminish U.S. presence in Europe and to rewrite the European security order for his benefit and in blatant disregard for previous international agreements and treaties that Russia has signed. Senator PORTMAN talked about the Budapest Memorandum. There have been other efforts to try and reduce tensions between Russia and Ukraine by Europe, but Putin has basically thumbed his nose at all of those efforts. He has shown repeated attempts to subvert democratic institutions in the United States, to attack our infrastructure, and to compromise the sovereignty of our allies around the globe.

This is why what happens in Ukraine matters here in the United States. It is important that we stand up for our values; it is important that we stand up to protect our national security; and it is critical that we continue to uphold and protect the transatlantic security order that has given us peace and prosperity for over 70 years, since the end of World War II.

As Putin tries to dismantle and divide the very alliance that has kept us safe for more than 70 years, it is all the more important that we strengthen our resolve through a strong message of unbreakable unity.

It is critical that the Senate take up and pass bipartisan legislation that shows our support for Ukraine and our opposition to Russia and what Putin is doing. I have been working toward this goal. I especially want to commend Senator PORTMAN for his work and leadership because he has also been working toward this goal. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman and ranking member, Senators MENENDEZ and RISCH, continue their efforts to find a bipartisan path forward. And I am sure Senator PORTMAN would agree with me that when we say we are committed to doing our part to forge a path forward on this legislation, we mean that is what we want to do; that this is an opportunity for us to show the rest of the world that we are united.

That is why we are here today, to send a strong bipartisan message to Putin, to Ukraine, and to our allies. We must lead by example and convey, as we have done through our Ukrainian partners and our transatlantic allies, that we must not leave any space for Putin to sow further discord.

Therefore, the Senate doesn't really have a choice; we must send a message of strong, unequivocal bipartisan resolve. For many years, Senator PORTMAN and I and others in the Ukraine Caucus have worked closely to support the Ukrainian people. We traveled to Kyiv to ensure the U.S. resolve for our Ukrainian partners was absolute. We teamed up to increase military assistance to Ukraine, and we have spoken to ensure, on the topic of Ukraine, that this Senate speaks with one bipartisan voice.

So today we stand united here on the floor of the Senate to send an unequivocal message to Putin: You will not divide the Senate; you will not divide the United States; and you will not divide the transatlantic alliance.

Diplomacy remains an option, I hope, to deescalate this situation and to pursue a peaceful resolution, but if Putin decides to further invade Ukraine, he will only succeed in uniting us all—Democrats, Republicans, Americans, and the transatlantic alliance—in sending a message of unmistakable resolve against his belligerence. I hope he chooses peace rather than war, but we plan to be ready.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. I would like to commend my colleague from New Hampshire for her strong statement. There should be no mistake here. The United States of America is united, as this place is united, the Senate and the House, Republicans and Democrats alike, in standing with Ukraine.

And if there were to be another invasion, the consequences would be devastating for Russia. It would also, by the way, be harmful to the stability of Europe and the cause of freedom all around the world because then you would have an authoritarian country coming into a democratically elected smaller country and invading it, as Russia has already done in Crimea and parts of Donbas.

So this effort tonight on the floor is simply to make it very clear that regardless of what legislative vehicle we end up choosing or resolution or other, there is no question that we are united, both Republicans and Democrats, in doing what is nonpartisan, which is standing up for freedom, which is what America has traditionally done.

I thank my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Would my colleague yield for a question?

Mr. PORTMAN. Absolutely.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Because as he points out, if Putin does invade Ukraine, as he said, it would be devastating for Ukraine, for those of us who believe in freedom, and the right of each individual country to determine their own future; but this would also be the biggest conflict in Europe since World War II; is that correct?

Mr. PORTMAN. That is correct. And if there is an invasion, it would be the first time since 1945 that we have seen this kind of malign behavior—not just an invasion but even the proof we have seen of the so-called hybrid attacks, the cyber attacks, the disinformation attacks, which is why so many in Europe are alarmed, particularly in the Baltics and Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland, Romania. Countries that are right on the border, they realize that this is not going to end in Ukraine if this is what happens. It will send a message that we no longer have this post-World War II security system in place in Europe that has kept the peace.

So my hope is that we will continue to see not just unity here on the floor of the Senate and in the House and in the White House to stand up for Ukraine but among our allies because all of us are engaged in this.

And I must say I think what Russia and Vladimir Putin have done quite well in the last several weeks is unify the transatlantic alliance in ways I have rarely seen it. So NATO is stronger than ever because the Secretary General of NATO talked about this. He sounds exactly like we do, meaning that this shall not stand and cannot happen. So I think this is going to bring us together.

But deterrence is what we are all about—a peaceful resolution, a backing off, and the ability to allow a free and independent people of Ukraine to have their sovereignty and territorial integrity respected.

Now, may I ask my colleague from New Hampshire a question?

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Absolutely.

Mr. PORTMAN. We have seen here on the floor of the Senate lots of back-and-forth and partisanship. I made the assertion earlier that I see colleagues on both sides of the aisle being unified on this. I certainly feel that way with my Republican colleagues. Can the Senator speak to it as to her Democratic colleagues?

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Certainly, the Presiding Officer would agree with me that in the Democratic caucus we are also united with the Republican caucus in wanting to support Ukraine to ensure that they can determine their own future and to hold Vladimir Putin accountable.

As you say, hopefully, diplomacy will win out, and there will be some way in which we can work with Vladimir Putin to address some of his concerns. We are certainly not going to allow Putin and Russia to determine Ukraine's future—to say to Ukraine ''You can't join NATO'' or to say to Europe and NATO ''You can't expand into Europe if countries want to join.'' Hopefully, he will choose a path that is

going to be good not just for Europe and the United States and Ukraine but for Russia, because, as the German Chancellor said to us last week when he met with a number of Senators: In the long run, this will not be good for Russia—for its energy future—because Europe is going to get off Russian energy a lot faster if Russia invades Ukraine, and it is not going to be good for Russia's standing either in Europe or in the world.

So, hopefully, Putin will choose the reasonable approach, which is that he will choose diplomacy and not choose war.

It is our job—that of the transatlantic alliance and those of us here in Congress—to hold Putin accountable if he makes the wrong choice, to make sure that we put in place crippling sanctions, that we provide the assistance that Ukraine needs in fighting Russia, and that we make it clear to the world that the world order that we have defended for the last 70 years we are going to continue to defend.

Mr. PORTMAN. Well said.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Califf nomination be expired and that the vote on confirmation be at 12 noon, Tuesday, February 15, and that if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 692.

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 Celeste Ann Wallander, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. 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. 692, Celeste Ann Wallander, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Christopher A. Coons, Benjamin L. Cardin, Joe Manchin III, Catherine Cortez Masto, Debbie Stabenow, Tammy Baldwin, Christopher Murphy, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tammy Duckworth, Jeanne Shaheen, Michael F. Bennet, Tina Smith, Brian Schatz, Mark R. Warner, Richard J. Durbin.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 476.

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 A. Honey, of Virginia, to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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. 476, David A. Honey, of Virginia, to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

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.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, February 14, be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 21–46 concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Jordan for defense articles and services estimated to cost $70 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public ofthis proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JAMES A HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 21–46

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Jordan.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $50 million.

Other $20 million.

Total $70 million.

Funding Source: Foreign Military Financing (FMF).

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

One hundred fourteen (114) Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) Unitary High Explosive (HE) Tri-Mode Fuze (GMLRS–U) (M31) Rockets.

One hundred fourteen (114) Reduced Range Practice Rockets (RRPR).

Non-MDE: Also included is support equipment; publications and technical data; personnel training and equipment; systems integration support; U.S. Government and contractor engineering technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (JO–B–YAY).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: JO–B–WYB.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 8, 2022.

*As defined in Section 47(6) ofthe Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Jordan—Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (GMLRS) Alternate Warhead (AW) Unitary Rocket Pods

The Government of Jordan has requested to buy one hundred fourteen (114) Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) Unitary High Explosive (HE) Tri-Mode Fuze (GMLRS–U) (M31) Rockets; and one hundred fourteen (114) Reduced Range Practice Rockets (RRPR). Also included is support equipment; publications and technical data; personnel training and equipment; systems integration support; U.S. Government and contractor engineering technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is $70 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security ofthe United States by helping to improve the security ofa Major Non-NATO Ally that is an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will improve Jordan's capability to meet current and future threats on its borders and provide greater security for its economic infrastructure. This sale will provide Jordan with a long-range precision artillery support capability that will significantly improve U.S.-Jordan interoperability and provide for the defense of vital installations. Jordan will have no difficulty absorbing these additional systems into its armed forces.

The proposed sale ofthis equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Lockheed Martin Missile and Fire Control, Dallas, TX. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Jordan.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result ofthis proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 21–46

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) is a solid propellant artillery rocket for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). GMLRS uses GPS-aided inertial guidance to accurately and quickly deliver a single high-explosive blast fragmentation warhead to targets. The GMLRS has an operational range of 15–70km.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the Government of Jordan can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Jordan.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 0L–21. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 09–53 of October 26, 2009.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 0L–21

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(B)(5)(A), AECA)

(i) Purchaser: Government of Morocco.

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 09–53.

Date: October 26, 2009.

Military Department: Army.

Funding Source: National Funds.

(iii) Description: On October 26, 2009, Congress was notified by Congressional certification transmittal number 09–53 of the possible sale, under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, of three CH–47D CHINOOK Helicopters with 6 (2 per helicopter) T55–GA–714A Turbine engines, 2 spare T–55–GA–714A Turbine engines, 4 AN/ARC–201E Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio Systems (SINCGARS), mission equipment, communication and navigation equipment, ground support equipment, spare and repair parts, special tools and test equipment, technical data and publications, site survey, U.S. government and contractor technical and logistics personnel services, and other related elements of logistics support. The total estimated cost was $134 million. Major Defense Equipment (MDE) constituted $63 million of this total.

This transmittal reports the inclusion of one (1) additional T–55–GA–714A engine (spare) (MOE). The total value of the new MDE item is $950,000. The total MDE value will remain $63 million, and the total notified case value will remain $134 million.

(iv) Significance: This notification is being provided to report the inclusion of an MDE item not previously notified. The proposed article and services will support Morocco's ongoing effort to sustain its current fleet of three (3) CH–47D aircraft, enabling their armed forces ability to maintain regional stability and security, as well as contribute to United States foreign policy and national security objectives.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in North Africa.

(vi) Sensitivity of Technology: The Sensitivity of Technology Statement contained in the original notification applies to items reported here. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is UNCLASSIFIED.

(vii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: February 8, 2022.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO TAMI ROSSILLON

• Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I wish to honor a brave citizen of Topeka, KS, Tami Rossillon. This brave woman put herself in the face of danger to rescue not only a drowning dog, but the dog's owner as well.

In late January, Tami was taking a quick work call in her car near Lake Shawnee, when she saw a dog going near the edge to grab a drink. Suddenly, the dog fell through the ice, and shortly after, the owner dove right in to save her pet. Before Tami even saw the owner go into the water, she raced over to offer assistance. She initially tried breaking the ice to get through, but she couldn't puncture enough. With quick thinking, Tami then grabbed the dog leash from another person walking their dog nearby and, after a few attempts, was successfully able to throw the leash to the dog owner and pull her out of the water.

Once everyone was out, Tami's nurse instincts and training were able to ensure that the owner and dog stayed

warm and not harmed. All the while, Tami's work call was still going on and what an explanation she had to give to her coworkers.

Brave acts like this truly showcase the best in Kansans. Tami put her life on the line to save others, showcasing the selfless nature we all possess. She is a true hero for her actions and makes me proud to be a Kansan. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and recognizing this noble woman.●

RECOGNIZING GRAND AVENUE MARKET

● Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, today I wish to honor the hard work, determination, and sheer grit of the community of Plains, KS. Last month, Grand Avenue Market, the first grocery store in Plains in more than 20 years, opened for business.

For too many across Kansas, food deserts—areas with little access to fresh produce—are all too commonplace. Last month, thanks to the decades-long commitment of community members in Meade County, especially the Community Enhancement Foundation of Plains, the grocery drought was finally brought to an end. But it wasn't easy.

The project to bring a grocery store to Plains began in 2008, when the communities of Kismet and Plains raised nearly $500,000 out of the $2 million required for the initiative. Every day since, amid turbulence and trial, the greater community and the people of Plains never gave up.

After receiving a loan from a USDA, the dream of not having to travel between up to 25 miles to neighboring towns to simply get groceries began to look more like reality. But hurdles in the form of a bank unwilling to honor a letter of credit and banks reluctant to supply another made that dream look rather dim. That is when the community contacted my office.

Using our knowledge of USDA rural development financing programs, we reached out to banks in the area to see if they would be willing to participate in the project to bring fresh produce to Plains. Exploring community banks that understand the importance in investing in community infrastructure, one bank in particular began to emerge.

Heartland Tri State Bank in Elkhart simply made this dream of so many in southwest Kansas possible. I know I speak for all Kansans when I say thank you. Thank you for your investment. Not merely an investment in a grocery store, but a much more important investment—an investment in people and their lives.

It was my sincerest honor to play a small part in helping make Grand Avenue Market a reality. It is with great pleasure that I recognize Plains, KS; Heartland Tri State Bank; the Community Enhancement Foundation of Plains; and the surrounding community for their diligence, effort, and pure will in bringing an end to the grocery drought in their parcel of the prairie that we Kansans call home.●

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

As 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

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 3:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 566. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 42 Main Street in Slatersville, Rhode Island, as the ''Specialist Matthew R. Turcotte Post Office''.

S. 583. An act to promote innovative acquisition techniques and procurement strategies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1281. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Gaylord, Michigan, as the ''Navy Corpsman Steve Andrews Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Clinic''.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The message further announced that the Clerk be directed to request the Senate to return to the House of Representatives the bill (H.R. 3076) to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1004(b)(2)(C) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (Public Law 117–81), the Minority Leader appoints the following member to the Commission on Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution Reform: Mr. Jonathan Burkes of Arlington, Virginia.

At 6:37 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, 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. 3076. An act to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 3076. An act to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, February 14, 2022, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 566. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 42 Main Street in Slatersville, Rhode Island, as the ''Specialist Matthew R. Turcotte Post Office''.

S. 583. An act to promote innovative acquisition techniques and procurement strategies, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC–3191. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act that involved fiscal years 2015 through 2019 Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E), Army funds and was assigned case number 19–02; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–3192. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2022 Cumulative List of Changes in Section 403(b) Requirements for Section 403(b) Pre-approved Plans'' (Notice 2022–8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3193. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2021 Calendar Year Resident Population Figures'' (Notice 2021–19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 20, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3194. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Requirements Related to Surprise Billing; Part 1'' (RIN1545–BQ04) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3195. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revenue Procedure 2022–10'' (Rev. Proc. 2022–10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 1, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3196. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidance on Application of Section 305 to Stock Distributions by Real Estate Investment Trusts and Regulated Investment Companies'' (Rev. Proc. 2021–53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 1, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3197. A communication from the Principal Deputy Performing Duties of the Inspector General, Department of Health and

Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''COVID–19 Tests Drove an Increase in Total Medicare Part B Spending on Lab Tests in 2020, While Use of Non-COVID–19 Tests Decreased Significantly''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3198. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''State Challenges and Best Practices Implementing PDMP Requirements Under Section 5042 of the SUPPORT Act''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3199. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Most Favored Nation (MFN) Model'' (RIN0938–AT91) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 14, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3200. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information System (T–MSIS) Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Data Book''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3201. A communication from the Branch Chief of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury , transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Adjusted Applicable Dollar Amount for Fee Imposed by Sections 4375 and 4376'' (Notice 2022–4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 14, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3202. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, notice of the intent to designate Qatar as a Major Non-NATO Ally; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3203. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the Peace Corps, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 11, 2022; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3204. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13936 with respect to Hong Kong; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3205. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2022–0001 - 2022–0007); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3206. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Interdiction of Aircraft Engaged in Illicit Drug Trafficking, 2021''; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3207. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2022–0008 - 2022–0024); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

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. 2991. A bill to establish a Department of Homeland Security Center for Countering Human Trafficking, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 117–73).

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 Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 3641. A bill to extend protections to part-time workers in the areas of family and medical leave and pension plans, and to ensure equitable treatment in the workplace; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 3642. A bill to permit employees to request changes to their work schedules without fear of retaliation and to ensure that employers consider these requests, and to require employers to provide more predictable and stable schedules for employees in certain occupations with evidence of unpredictable and unstable scheduling practices that negatively affect employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 3643. A bill to direct the Attorney General to study issues relating to human trafficking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRAUN:

S. 3644. A bill to require the collection of certain data relating to Bureau of Land Management land acquisitions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 3645. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for local substance use disorder services for the purchase of sterile needles or syringes for the injection of illegal drugs, or to procure, supply, or distribute pipes, cylindrical objects, or other paraphernalia that can be used to smoke, inhale, or ingest narcotics; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. 3646. A bill to authorize an additional period of beach nourishment for a certain Corps of Engineers project, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCHATZ:

S. 3647. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Navy to close the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility in Hawaii, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 3648. A bill to amend the DNA Sexual Assault Justice Act of 2004 to increase access to Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. PAUL):

S.J. Res. 38. A joint resolution relating to a national emergency declared by the President on March 13. 2020; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. WICKER, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S.J. Res. 39. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services relating to ''Vaccine and Mask Requirements To Mitigate the Spread of COVID–19 in Head Start Programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 509

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 509, a bill to establish a program to assist States in establishing or enhancing community integration network infrastructure for health and social services.

S. 777

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 777, a bill to prohibit taxpayer-funded gender reassignment medical interventions, and for other purposes.

S. 819

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 819, a bill to enhance the security of the United States and its allies, and for other purposes.

S. 1084

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1084, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the portability of professional licenses of members of the uniformed services and their spouses, and for other purposes.

S. 1284

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1284, a bill to establish the Amache National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

S. 1943

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1943, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to, and utilization of, bone

mass measurement benefits under part B of the Medicare program by establishing a minimum payment amount under such part for bone mass measurement.

S. 2981

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2981, a bill to amend the National Housing Act to establish a mortgage insurance program for first responders, and for other purposes.

S. 3189

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3189, a bill to amend title XX of the Social Security Act to provide a pathway to health careers through health profession opportunity grants.

S. 3486

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJAN) 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 Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) 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. 3541

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 3541, a bill to improve health care and services for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

S. 3573

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3573, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to seek to enter into negotiations with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office to rename its office the ''Taiwan Representative Office'', and for other purposes.

S. 3589

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3589, a bill to require a United States security strategy for the Western Hemisphere, and for other purposes.

S. 3591

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3591, a bill to strengthen the bilateral partnership between the United States and Ecuador in support of democratic institutions and rule of law, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, and conservation.

S. 3617

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3617, a bill to amend the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 to modify the authority of the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the United States Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes.

S. 3632

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3632, a bill to amend the program for local substance use disorder services.

S.J. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 32, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services relating to ''Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Omnibus COVID–19 Health Care Staff Vaccination''.

S. RES. 334

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 334, a resolution memorializing those impacted by and lost to the COVID–19 virus.

S. RES. 377

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 377, a resolution urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. WICKER, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S.J. Res. 39. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services relating to ''Vaccine and Mask Requirements To Mitigate the Spread of COVID–19 in Head Start Programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S.J. RES. 39

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services relating to ''Vaccine and Mask Requirements To Mitigate the Spread of COVID–19 in Head Start Programs'' (86 Fed. Reg. 68052 (November 30, 2021)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 4926. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. BENNET) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2497, to establish the Amache National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a Unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 4926. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. BENNET) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2497, to establish the Amache National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a Unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; as follows:

In section 3, strike subsection (f) and insert the following:

(f) LAND ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may acquire land or interests in land located within the boundary of the Camp Amache National Historic Landmark, as generally depicted on the Map, only by donation.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 3076

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that all previous action prior to today, February 14, with respect to H.R. 3076 be vitiated.

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

AMACHE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 255, H.R. 2497.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2497) to establish the Amache National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a Unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which

had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with amendments, as follows:

(The parts of the bill intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are shown in italics.)

H.R. 2497

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 ''Amache National Historic Site Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) MAP.—The term ''Map'' means the map entitled ''Amache National Historical Site Proposed Boundary'', numbered 100/175348 and dated July 2021.

(2) NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.—The term ''National Historic Site'' means the Amache National Historic Site established by section 3(a).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. AMACHE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subject to subsection (c), there is established the Amache National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a unit of the National Park System.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the National Historic Site is to preserve, protect, and interpret for the benefit of present and future generations resources associated with—

(1) the incarceration of civilians of Japanese ancestry during World War II at Amache, also known as the Granada Relocation Center, and the military service of center incarcerees;

(2) public reaction in the State of Colorado to the incarceration of Japanese Americans, including the position of Governor Ralph Carr and the local community; and

(3) the transition of the incarcerees and their descendants following the closure of the center and resettlement in the State of Colorado and other States.

(c) DETERMINATION BY THE SECRETARY.—The National Historic Site shall not be established until the date on which the Secretary determines that a sufficient quantity of land or interests in land has been acquired to constitute a manageable park unit.

(d) NOTICE.—Not later than 30 days after the Secretary makes a determination under subsection (c), the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register notice of the establishment of the National Historic Site.

(e) BOUNDARY; MAP.—

(1) BOUNDARY.—The boundary of the National Historic Site shall be as generally depicted on the Map.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The Map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(f) LAND ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may acquire any land or interests in land located within the boundary of the Camp Amache National Historic Landmark, as generally depicted on the Map, by—

(1) donation;

(2) purchase from a willing seller with donated or appropriated Funds; or

(3) exchange.

(g) ADDITION TO BOUNDARY.—Any lands or interests in land acquired under **[**paragraph (1)**]** *subsection (f)* shall be included within the boundary of the National Historic Site.

(h) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer the National Historic Site in accordance with—

(A) this Act; and

(B) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System.

(2) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(A) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to the Secretary for this purpose, the Secretary shall prepare a general management plan for the National Historic Site in accordance with section 100502 of title 54, United States Code.

(B) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—On completion of the general management plan under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives the general management plan prepared under that subparagraph.

(i) ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES.—For the purposes of ensuring the preservation, protection, and proper management of the site and associated resources, the Secretary may establish facilities for administration, visitor services, and curation of personal property, outside the boundary of, and in the vicinity of, the National Historic Site.

(j) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into agreements with—

(1) the public or private entities for the purpose of establishing and operating facilities outside of the boundary of the National Historic Site for administration, visitor services and curation of personal property; and

(2) other public or private entities for the purposes of carrying out this Act.

(k) EFFECT ON WATER RIGHTS.—Except as provided for in subsection (l), nothing in this Act shall affect—

(1) the use, allocation, ownership, or control, in existence on the date of the enactment of any water, water right, or any other valid existing right;

(2) any vested absolute or decreed conditional water right in existence on the date of the enactment;

(3) any interstate water compact in existence on the date of the enactment; or

(4) State jurisdiction over any water law.

(l) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND APPURTENANCES.—

[(1) The town of Granada, Colorado, shall maintain responsibility for the operation and maintenance**]**

(1) EFFECT.—Nothing in this Act affects the authority of the town of Granada, Colorado, with respect to the operation and maintenance of all water infrastructure, systems and appurtenances located within the boundary of the National Historic Site in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, including but not limited to wells, pumps, tanks, water lines, valves, and water treatment facilities.

[(2) The Secretary shall provide the town of**]**

(2) DETERMINATION.—The Secretary shall provide the town of Granada, Colorado, with access to those areas of the National Historic Site determined as necessary for the operation and maintenance of water infrastructure and appurtenances.

[(3) The Secretary may permit the city of Granada, Colorado, to construct or install new water infrastructure, systems and appurtenances consistent with applicable laws, limited only to those areas determined in subsection (i)(2), and in a manner that ensures the preservation, protection, and proper management of the National Historic Site.**]**

[(4) At such time that all water infrastructure, systems and appurtenances located within the boundary of the National Historic Site are no longer utilized by the city of Granada, Colorado, associated improvements and associated water rights may be acquired through donation to and made part of the National Historic Site in a condition satisfactory to the Secretary.**]**

(3) NEW WATER INFRASTRUCTURE.—The Secretary may permit the town of Granada, Colorado, to construct or install new water infrastructure, systems, or appurtenances—

(A) consistent with applicable laws;

(B) limited to the areas determined to be necessary under paragraph (2); and

(C) in a manner that ensures the preservation, protection, and proper management of the National Historic Site.

(4) ACCEPTANCE OF DONATED WATER INFRASTRUCTURE.—The Secretary may accept, for addition to and administration as part of the National Historic Site, the donation of water infrastructure, systems, or appurtenances within the boundary of the National Historic Site, including associated water rights, if the water infrastructure, systems, or appurtenances are no longer used by the town of Granada, Colorado.

Mr. SCHUMER. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the Bennet amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; the committee-reported amendments be agreed to; the bill, as amended, 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4926) was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To provide that land may be acquired for inclusion in the Camp Amache National Historic Site only by exchange)

In section 3, strike subsection (f) and insert the following:

(f) LAND ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may acquire land or interests in land located within the boundary of the Camp Amache National Historic Landmark, as generally depicted on the Map, only by donation.

The committee-reported amendments were agreed to.

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

The bill was read a third time.

The bill (H.R. 2497), as amended, was passed.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 3076

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3076) to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, February 15; further, 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 Wallander nomination; and that the Senate recess following disposition of the Califf nomination until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:53 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ERIK KRISTOPHER RAVEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, VICE THOMAS B. MODLY.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PHILIP S. GOLDBERG, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER AMBASSADOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

CARRIN F. PATMAN, OF TEXAS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF ICELAND.

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on February 10, 2022 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

ROBERT LUIS SANTOS, OF TEXAS, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE CENSUS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2021, VICE STEVEN DILLINGHAM, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON APRIL 15, 2021.

MARY CATHERINE PHEE, OF ILLINOIS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 27, 2021, VICE LINDA THOMAS–GREENFIELD, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON APRIL 29, 2021.

KIMBERLY CAUDLE LEWIS, OF ALABAMA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 18, 2025, VICE RICHARD CAPEL HOWORTH, TERM EXPIRED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 4, 2022.

CYNTHIA C. HOGAN, OF OHIO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING FEBRUARY 8, 2024, VICE LISA M. QUIROZ, TERM EXPIRED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 4, 2022.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, February 15, 2022 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Business meeting to consider the nominations of David M. Uhlmann, of Michigan, to be an Assistant Administrator, and Carlton Waterhouse, of Virginia, to be Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste, both of the Environmental Protection Agency; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Environmental Protection Agency's Renewable Fuel Standard program, focusing on challenges and opportunities.

SD–106

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation

To hold hearings to examine the Western Balkans, focusing on supporting peace and prosperity.

SD–G50/VTC

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine pending nominations.

SD–226

11 a.m.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To receive a briefing on foreign policy and human rights in Turkey.

VTC

2 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine reinvigorating U.S.-Colombia relations.

SD–G50/VTC

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 2264, to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine S. 3123, to amend the Siletz Reservation Act to address the hunting, fishing, trapping, and animal gathering rights of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, S. 3126, to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to address the hunting, fishing, trapping, and animal gathering rights of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community, S. 3273, to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and S. 3381, to require the Bureau of Indian Affairs to process and complete all mortgage packages associated with residential and business mortgages on Indian land by certain deadlines.

SD–628

Select Committee on Intelligence

To receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters.

SVC–217

FEBRUARY 17

9 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD–106

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Franklin R. Parker, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Agnes Schaefer, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army, and Ravi Chaudhary, of Virginia, and Frank Calvelli, of Virginia, both to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, all of the Department of Defense.

SD–G50

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the state of the American economy, focusing on a year of unprecedented economic growth and future plans.

SD–538

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine IRS customer service challenges.

SD–215

10:15 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the gaps in America's biosecurity preparedness.

SD–342/VTC

11 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine Warrior Met, focusing on what corporate raiders are doing to workers and consumers.

SH–216/VTC

MARCH 2

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold an oversight hearing to examine implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act by the Department of Transportation.

SD–106

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S653–S677

Measures Introduced: Eight bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3641–3648, and S.J. Res. 38–39. **Page S674**

Measures Reported:

S. 2991, to establish a Department of Homeland Security Center for Countering Human Trafficking, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 117–73) **Page S674**

Measures Passed:

Amache National Historic Site Act: Senate passed H.R. 2497, to establish the Amache National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a Unit of the National Park System, after agreeing to the committee amendments, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S675–76**

Schumer (for Bennet) Amendment No. 4926, to provide that land may be acquired for inclusion in the Camp Amache National Historic Site only by exchange. **Page S676**

Measures Considered:

Postal Service Reform Act—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 3076, to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service. **Pages S653–66**

Senate agreed to return the papers with respect to the bill to the House of Representatives. **Page S665**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that all previous actions prior to today, February 14, 2022, with respect to the bill, be vitiated. **Page S675**

Califf Nomination—Cloture: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of North Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services. **Pages S666–671**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 49 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. EX. 54), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S666**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that all post-cloture time on the nomination be expired, and that the vote on confirmation of the nomination be at 12 noon, on Tuesday, February 15, 2022. **Page S677**

Wallander Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Celeste Ann Wallander, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense. **Page S671**

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 on Wednesday, February 16, 2022. **Page S671**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S671**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S671**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination at approximately 10 a.m., on Tuesday, February 15, 2022. **Page S677**

Honey Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of David A. Honey, of Virginia, to be Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. **Page S671**

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 Celeste Ann Wallander, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense. **Page S671**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S671**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S671**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Erik Kristopher Raven, of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary of the Navy.

Philip S. Goldberg, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Korea.

Carrin F. Patman, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland. **Page S677**

Messages from the House: **Page S673**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S673**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S673**

Executive Communications: **Pages S673–74**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S674–75**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Page S674**

Additional Statements: **Pages S672–73**

Amendments Submitted: **Page S675**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—54) **Page S666**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m. and adjourned at 7:53 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, February 15, 2022. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S677.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, February 15, 2022.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Robert Phillip Storch, of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General, Lester Martinez-Lopez, of Florida, and Christopher Joseph Lowman, of Virginia, both to be an Assistant Secretary, and Peter J. Beshar, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Air Force, all of the Department of Defense, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the President's Working Group on Financial Markets report on stablecoins, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Full Committee, business meeting to consider the nominations of Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, to be Chairman, Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, to be Vice Chairman, Sarah Bloom Raskin, of Maryland, to be Vice Chairman for Supervision, and to be a Member, and Lisa DeNell Cook, of Michigan, and Philip Nathan Jefferson, of North Carolina, both to be a Member, all of the of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and Sandra L. Thompson, of Maryland, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, 2:15 p.m., SVC–201–00.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine protecting youth mental health, focusing on identifying and addressing barriers to care, 10 a.m., WEBEX.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine supporting quality workforce development opportunities and innovation to address barriers to employment, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: business meeting to consider S. 1617, to modify the requirements for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration relating to declaring a disaster in a rural area, S. 2042, to reauthorize the Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise, S. 2521, to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to establish an SBIC Working Group, and H.R. 3462, to require an annual report on the cybersecurity of the Small Business Administration, 2:30 p.m., SR–428A.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SVC–217.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations, hearing entitled "Review of the Office of the Inspector General Report on 'USDA Oversight of Civil Rights Complaints' ", 12 p.m., Zoom.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change, hearing entitled "Back

from the Brink: Restoring Brownfield Sites to Economic Engines'', 11:30 a.m., Webex.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Americans in Need: Responding to the National Mental Health Crisis'', 11:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn and Webex.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations and Global Corporate Social Impact, hearing entitled ''Renewed American Engagement with International Organizations: Goals, Priorities, and Successes'', 2 p.m., Webex.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security, hearing entitled ''Concealed Carry-Ons: Confronting the Surge in Firearms at TSA Checkpoints'', 2 p.m., Webex.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship, hearing entitled ''Is There a Doctor in the House? The Role of Immigrant Physicians in the U.S. Healthcare System'', 2 p.m., Zoom.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 2021, the ''Environmental Justice For All Act'', 10 a.m., Webex.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Research and Technology, hearing entitled ''Strengthening the U.S. Microelectronics Workforce'', 10 a.m., Zoom.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Underserved, Agricultural, and Rural Development, hearing entitled ''The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act's Benefits for Small Businesses'', 11 a.m., Zoom.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures, hearing entitled ''Examining the Economic Impact of Federal Infrastructure Investment'', 2 p.m., Webex.

Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Keeping the Lights On: Strategies for Grid Resilience and Reliability'', 2:30 p.m., Zoom.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of February 15 through February 18, 2022

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Celeste Ann Wallander, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

At 12 noon, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of North Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Armed Services: February 15, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Robert Phillip Storch, of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General, Lester Martinez-Lopez, of Florida, and Christopher Joseph Lowman, of Virginia, both to be an Assistant Secretary, and Peter J. Beshar, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Air Force, all of the Department of Defense, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

February 17, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Franklin R. Parker, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Agnes Schaefer, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army, and Ravi Chaudhary, of Virginia, and Frank Calvelli, of Virginia, both to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, all of the Department of Defense, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: February 15, to hold hearings to examine the President's Working Group on Financial Markets report on stablecoins, 10 a.m., SD–538.

February 15, Full Committee, business meeting to consider the nominations of Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, to be Chairman, Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, to be Vice Chairman, Sarah Bloom Raskin, of Maryland, to be Vice Chairman for Supervision, and to be a Member, and Lisa DeNell Cook, of Michigan, and Philip Nathan Jefferson, of North Carolina, both to be a Member, all of the of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and Sandra L. Thompson, of Maryland, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, 2:15 p.m., SVC–201–00.

February 17, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the state of the American economy, focusing on a year of unprecedented economic growth and future plans, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on the Budget: February 17, to hold hearings to examine Warrior Met, focusing on what corporate raiders are doing to workers and consumers, 11 a.m., SH–216/VTC.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: February 16, business meeting to consider the nominations of David M. Uhlmann, of Michigan, to be an Assistant Administrator, and Carlton Waterhouse, of Virginia, to be Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste, both of the Environmental Protection Agency; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Environmental Protection Agency's Renewable Fuel Standard program, focusing on challenges and opportunities, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Finance: February 15, to hold hearings to examine protecting youth mental health, focusing on identifying and addressing barriers to care, 10 a.m., WEBEX.

February 17, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine IRS customer service challenges, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: February 16, Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation, to hold hearings to examine the Western Balkans, focusing on supporting peace and prosperity, 10 a.m., SD–G50/VTC.

February 16, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine reinvigorating U.S.-Colombia relations, 2 p.m., SD–G50/VTC.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: February 15, to hold hearings to examine supporting quality

workforce development opportunities and innovation to address barriers to employment, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: February 17, to hold hearings to examine the gaps in America's biosecurity preparedness, 10:15 a.m., SD–342/VTC.

Committee on Indian Affairs: February 16, business meeting to consider S. 2264, to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine S. 3123, to amend the Siletz Reservation Act to address the hunting, fishing, trapping, and animal gathering rights of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, S. 3126, to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to address the hunting, fishing, trapping, and animal gathering rights of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community, S. 3273, to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and S. 3381, to require the Bureau of Indian Affairs to process and complete all mortgage packages associated with residential and business mortgages on Indian land by certain deadlines, 2:30 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: February 16, to hold hearings to examine pending nominations, 10 a.m., SD–226.

February 17, Full Committee, business meeting to consider pending calendar business, 9 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: February 15, business meeting to consider S. 1617, to modify the requirements for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration relating to declaring a disaster in a rural area, S. 2042, to reauthorize the Interagency Committee on Women's Business Enterprise, S. 2521, to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to establish an SBIC Working Group, and H.R. 3462, to require an annual report on the cybersecurity of the Small Business Administration, 2:30 p.m., SR–428A.

Select Committee on Intelligence: February 15, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SVC–217.

February 16, Full Committee, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SVC–217.

House Committees

Committee on the Budget, February 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Why Congress Needs to Abolish the Debt Limit'', 11 a.m., Zoom.

Committee on Education and Labor, February 16, Full Committee, business meeting to approve new subcommittee assignments, 12 p.m., Zoom.

February 16, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, hearing entitled ''Serving All Students: Promoting a Healthier, More Supportive School Environment'', 12:15 p.m., Zoom.

February 17, Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions, hearing entitled ''Exploring Pathways to Affordable, Universal Health Coverage'', 12 p.m., Zoom.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, February 16, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled ''Connecting America: Oversight of NTIA'', 12 p.m., Webex.

February 17, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation, hearing entitled ''Americans in Need: Responding to the National Mental Health Crisis'', 11:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn and Zoom.

Committee on Financial Services, February 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''An Unprecedented Investment for Historic Results: How Federal Support for MDIs and CDFIs Have Launched a New Era for Disadvantaged Communities'', 12 p.m., Webex. February 17, Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Financial Institutions, hearing entitled ''Small Businesses, Big Impact: Ensuring Small and Minority-Owned Businesses Shar in the Economic Recovery'', 3 p.m., Webex.

Committee on Homeland Security, February 17, Subcommittee on Oversight, Management, and Accountability, hearing entitled ''Call to Action: Private Sector Investment in the Northern Triangle and its Impact on Homeland Security'', 2 p.m., Webex.

Committee on House Administration, February 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Big Data: Privacy Risks and Needed Reforms in the Public and Private Sectors'', 2 p.m., 1310 Longworth and Webex.

February 17, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the January 6th Capitol Attack: Ongoing Review of the United States Capitol Police Inspector General Flash Reports'', 3 p.m., 1310 Longworth and Webex.

Committee on the Judiciary, February 17, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, hearing entitled ''The Rise in Violence Against Minority Institutions'', 10 a.m., Zoom.

Committee on Natural Resources, February 16, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1546, the ''Combating Online Wildlife Trafficking Act of 2021''; H.R. 3525, the ''Commission To Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture Act''; H.R. 3540, the ''Chesapeake Bay Science, Education, and Ecosystem Enhancement Act of 2021''; H.R. 4458, the ''KELP Act''; H.R. 4677, the ''New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act''; H.R. 5973, the ''Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Reauthorization Act of 2021''; H.R. 6023, the ''Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2021''; H.R. 6142, the ''Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study Act of 2021''; H.R. 6199, the ''Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act''; H.R. 6201, the ''National Liberty Memorial Preservation Act''; H.R. 6337, the ''Biking on Long-Distance Trails Act''; H.R. 6434, the ''Japanese American World War II History Network Act''; H.R. 6435, the ''Self-Determination Act of 2000 for fiscal year 2021''; and H. Res. 641, recognizing and celebrating the 75th anniversary of the National Association of Conservation Districts and their commitment to our lands, 10 a.m., Webex.

February 17, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled ''Securing the Future of Climate Adaptation Science at the United States Geological Survey'', 1 p.m., 1324 Longworth and Webex.

February 17, Office of Insular Affairs Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 6504, the ''Native Pacific Islanders of America Equity Act'', 4 p.m., Webex.

Committee on Oversight and Reform, February 16, Subcommittee on National Security, hearing entitled ''Defending U.S. Allies and Interests Against Russian Aggression in Eastern Europe'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn and Zoom.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, February 17, Subcommittee on Energy, hearing entitled ''H2Success: Research and Development to Advance a Clean Hydrogen Future'', 10 a.m., Zoom.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, February 16, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, hearing entitled ''FEMA Priorities for 2022: Stakeholder Perspectives'', 2 p.m., 2167 Rayburn and Zoom.

Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, February 16, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Congress Back Home: Modernizing District Office Operations'', 12 p.m., Zoom.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: February 16, to receive a briefing on foreign policy and human rights in Turkey, 11 a.m., VTC.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, February 15

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Celeste Ann Wallander, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

At 12 noon, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of North Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

(Senate will recess following the vote on confirmation of the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Tuesday, February 15

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 10 a.m.

Congressional Record

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