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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, who rules the raging of the sea, give to the Members of this body a special measure of wisdom and strength for the living of these days.

Lord, help them to see what a practical resource they have in You as You empower them to complete their daily business with civility, cooperation, and competence.

Bless the Senate leadership, the leaders of both parties, and their assistants and aides. Bless those who chair committees and subcommittees who manage bills.

Lord, fill Capitol Hill with the unmistakable sense of Your presence as You enable our lawmakers to accomplish those things that without You would be impossible.

We pray in Your precious 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.

The Senator from Georgia.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 3076

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, first, Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second 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. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Mr. President, last night—and this is relevant to what we just did, putting the new bill on the calendar for a second reading. Last night, we had a chance to continue progress on a bipartisan, long-overdue postal reform bill when I moved to expeditiously fix a few technical errors to the legislation sent to us by the House. Sadly, my request was blocked by the junior Senator from Florida without much in the way of clear explanation.

For instance, he says he wants to stand up for postal workers, but all the organizations representing postal workers strongly support this bill. They are eager for it. He says he wants to protect and strengthen Medicare, but the Postal Service already pays into Medicare; and the CBO says this proposal, this bill, will save the government money.

So I hope for the sake of our postal workers, our Postal Service, and for the millions, tens of millions, and even hundreds of millions of Americans who depend on the Postal Service, that this is not obstruction for obstruction's sake.

This is a textbook example of why Americans often get frustrated with the Senate and with Washington. Postal reform is highly bipartisan. It got a majority of votes in the House from both parties. It is desperately needed. We all hear from our constituents about snail mail and the price they pay for it. It is backed by both parties in both Houses, including the chairman and ranking member of the relevant committees—the Democratic and Republican leading members of both committees. And it has broad support from the postal workers, who tend to be Democratic, and Postmaster DeJoy, who is a friend of President Trump's and was appointed by him.

Nevertheless, it was blocked. I am sure that Republicans don't want to be the party that was responsible for blocking popular and bipartisan postal reform.

The delay is regrettable, but the good news is that we will get bipartisan postal reform done. It has been negotiated for months and debated for a decade. It has enough bipartisan support—more than enough—ample support to become law, and I am hopeful we will move it through this Chamber as quickly as we can. And that is what the procedural motion I did before was about.

And I certainly want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working on this bill, particularly, my

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

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friend Chairman GARY PETERS, who spoke passionately last night in defense of the bill and rebutted all of the Senator from Florida's arguments handily. And I look forward to getting postal reform passed through this Chamber very soon.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Next, on the CR, before the end of the week, the Senate must come to an agreement to pass a short-term extension of government funding in order to give appropriators more time to complete a yearlong omnibus. It is the most responsible thing we can do to support our appropriators as they continue their bipartisan work to finish an omnibus. No one—and certainly not my Republican colleagues—wants a Republican government shutdown; so I am hopeful that they will cooperate with us to pass this necessary CR, which every single Democrat wants to happen and will cooperate to make sure that it happens.

Once again, I thank Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member SHELBY for their leadership and for working in good faith to arrive at a yearlong spending agreement. I also commend my colleagues in the House, Chairman DELAURO and Ranking Member GRANGER, Democrat and Republican, for their work. A yearlong omnibus is a thousand times better than relying on CRs—continuing resolutions—to lurch from one short-term extension to the next. I remain optimistic that both sides will keep working together on drafting legislation to fund the government so it can fully serve the American people while keeping us safe here at home.

In the meantime, both sides should come to an agreement to make sure the CR—the continuing resolution, the short-term funding of the government—is passed by this Chamber to avoid even any hint of a government shutdown.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night I filed cloture on additional Defense nominees, including Celeste Wallander, nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. If this were any other time, Ms. Wallander's nomination most certainly would have sailed through the Senate with unanimous consent, without the need for a rollcall vote.

At the committee level, her nomination was approved with strong support from both parties; and, frankly, she should have been approved unanimously the moment she was reported out of the Armed Services Committee. Many on both sides of the aisle recognize we need her at the Pentagon now. As one of our Nation's top experts on Russian affairs, her leadership is vital right now.

Sadly—sadly—one Republican, just one, has objected to Ms. Wallander's confirmation without offering any concrete justification. So we are going to take up floor time to advance her nomination the long way, just as we have done for many nominees who face unprecedented obstruction by a small group of Republicans. This is not the majority of the Republican Party or the majority of Republican Senators, but a small group using the Senate rules—many of which are arcane and outdated—to stand in the way and slow the whole process down, endangering our security.

Let's be clear. To intentionally delay the confirmation of a critical Pentagon position—an expert on Russia at a time when we need her in the position most—just to score political points is the definition of cynical and is actively making the American people less safe.

Sadly, Ms. Wallander is far from the only nominee being held up by these obstructionists on the right. The junior Senator from Arkansas has also placed blanket holds on a number of U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals, men and women whose job is literally to protect the public and prosecute criminals.

If my Republican colleagues are so concerned about public safety, why are they standing in the way of confirming some of the most important law enforcement officers in the Federal Government? It is ''Alice in Wonderland'' logic. It is delay for delay's sake, especially when new reasons keep coming up to justify these tactics. One reason is rebutted, and then another one comes up. It seems like some of these colleagues just want to obstruct to obstruct, oppose to oppose—bad for America, bad for Democrats, bad for Republicans.

Hijacking the rules of the Senate to place blanket holds on nominees has no legitimate justification. And when it comes to nominees tasked with advancing our national defense, our diplomacy, and our public safety, it only makes the American people less safe.

As long as these delay tactics continue, we will continue to hold votes on these nominees as necessary. If that means more late nights with a large number of votes in one sitting like we had to do over the last 2 weeks, then that is what we will do.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on lowering costs, in President Biden's first year, the economy added an amazing 6.6 million new jobs, the most ever—ever—for a President's first year. This figure surpassed just about every forecast from a year ago. It is a reflection of how far our economy has come since the start of COVID and that the right leadership in office makes all the difference.

But we all know Americans still need more help, especially when it comes to lowering the cost of living. Democrats know what the American people know. The pandemic decimated our supply chains, our labor supply, and much more, causing prices to increase for everyday items. We never had a pandemic to this extent in 100 years, and obviously it interrupted the economy and its supply chains and labor supply.

For the past year, Democrats have been the party focused on finding solutions to lowering the cost of living for everyday Americans. As early as last summer, Democrats pushed to have the Senate approve legislation to relieve U.S. supply chains and increase domestic manufacturing, which, thankfully, was bipartisan and which the House passed recently as well. Soon the conference process for that bill will begin.

But this is just one example out of many. For the past few weeks, I have heard from my colleagues about a number of proposals they have been working on aimed squarely at helping Americans better afford the basics, from medications, to the cost of food, to the cost of cars, to more. Later today, Democrats will use our weekly caucus lunch to talk more about some of the ideas my colleagues are working on.

Lowering costs must—must—be a bipartisan effort. Americans in States, those blue and red and in between, need relief as soon as possible.

While many on the other side of the aisle have spent a lot of time giving floor speeches and presenting charts about rising costs, where are their actual proposals? We don't hear what they would do to solve the problem. Attacking the problem doesn't make it any better; proposing solutions, as Democrats are doing, does. Republicans should step up and say what their plan is to fight inflation, not just point fingers. That solves no problem.

Democrats will continue to propose legislation on cost cutting, and we are going to continue to focus on helping everyday Americans find relief. Some of my Democratic colleagues have already released their proposals publicly, and I am sure many of them would welcome Republican cooperation. Instead of sitting on the sidelines, Republicans should join Democrats in our efforts to help Americans reap the full benefits of our historic recovery.

Our goal: to have the wages that have increased stay up but lower the costs down so the average American has more money in his or her pocket.

We Democrats are committed to working in good faith to get things done in this Chamber. I hope our Republican colleagues will constructively join us instead of just pointing fingers.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

INFLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, at this time last year, Washington Democrats were beginning their quest to dump trillions of dollars in leftwing spending on a recovering economy that already had the preconditions for some inflation. Everybody warned Democrats to pump the brakes. Just weeks earlier, Republicans had already supported a smaller, targeted, bipartisan stimulus that had barely started to take effect. Even top liberal economists warned the Democrats' agenda could spark massive inflation.

The consequences for working families have been particularly harsh. Essential goods have played an outsized role in driving up prices overall. It is harder to put dinner on the table when eggs, meat, and fish are 12 percent more expensive. It is harder to fill up cars with gas that is 40 percent more expensive and to heat a home with natural gas that has gone up 24 percent or fuel oil that has gone up 47 percent. This is reality for millions of Americans. They are living it every single day.

Yet the Biden administration seems less interested in trying to solve this problem than in trying to persuade families that the pain is actually just in their heads. One recent story reported that members of President Biden's team were ''seemingly mystified'' about why the American people weren't celebrating this economy.

Well, if Washington Democrats spent 5 minutes talking to a middle-class family, I am confident they would cease to be mystified. The middle 40 percent of American earners have seen their disposable incomes fall more than an entire percentage point over the last year—entirely due to inflation. Any American who hasn't managed to secure an 8-percent pay raise in the last year has actually received a real pay cut, thanks to Democrats' inflation.

The American people are reporting their lowest consumer sentiment in over a decade. Seventy-five percent say our economy is doing badly. Almost 80 percent expect inflation to get worse. Six in ten say their family's income isn't keeping pace with their costs of living.

These are not statistics the White House can wave away. We are actually talking about human pain. A working mother in Michigan said:

> I cannot buy the food that I would normally buy for my family.

In Washington State, a single mom of four who also cares for her elderly parents says she has had to take favorite family foods like frozen pizza and wings and make them ''more of a treat than just a regular meal.''

This is where Democrats' policies have left working families.

FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOMINEES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now, on a related matter, this Democrat-caused inflation has forced the Federal Reserve and its Board of Governors into a very tricky position. But while the country is carefully watching the Fed Board of Governors, the Senate happens to be considering several of President Biden's nominees to that very same Board.

Later today, I will meet with Chairman Powell, whom President Biden wisely renominated to serve another term atop the Fed. Chairman Powell has proven to be a straight shooter within the mainstream of monetary policy. His creative leadership helped stabilize our entire economy through the uncertain early days of the COVID recession. I look forward to discussing inflation and the state of our economy with Chairman Powell this afternoon.

Unfortunately, several of President Biden's other Fed nominees appear to have been significantly less wise selections. One nominee, Professor Cook from Michigan State University, has previously promoted partisan conspiracy theories. In 2020, she called for a fellow academic to be fired because he opposed defunding the police.

The White House cites among Professor Cook's qualifications that she sits on the Board of Directors of the regional Fed in Chicago. She was appointed to that position just a few days before President Biden nominated her for this one.

More troubling still is President Biden's nominee to the extremely powerful position of Vice Chair for Supervision. This slot comes with major unilateral power. But the President's nominee, Sarah Bloom Raskin, has spent recent years pressuring the Fed to stop being a neutral regulator and instead become an ideological, leftwing activist body.

Ms. Raskin has argued openly that unelected Fed Governors should use their powers to declare ideological war on fossil fuels and affordable American energy.

Ms. Raskin wants our banking system to start picking winners and losers in ways that would stick American families with higher gas prices, higher electricity bills, and more dependence on China. And she wants to implement this agenda from inside one of the least directly accountable institutions in our government so that voters simply have no recourse.

The far left is already boasting that this backdoor Green New Deal would only be the first step. Democrats have already introduced legislation that would get the Federal Reserve into the racial redistribution business and inject racial preferences into our financial system. These unpopular ideas would completely upend an institution that Americans need to remain nonpolitical, nonpartisan, and nonideological. Fed Governors are supposed to be neutral regulators, not economic policy dictators whom voters can't get rid of.

If this weren't disqualifying enough, potentially significant ethical questions have begun to swirl around Ms. Raskin's nomination. During her time out of government, Ms. Raskin became affiliated with an obscure financial technology firm in Colorado. Shortly thereafter, somehow, mysteriously, this small company became what appears to be the only nonbank financial tech company in the entire country to receive a special master account that allowed them to directly access a core Federal Reserve system.

This is an obviously worrisome topic, but I understand that Senators have not even been able to get Ms. Raskin to satisfy their basic requests for information. So I would urge President Biden to find a better, more mainstream, more bipartisan candidate to serve this crucial institution.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Celeste Ann Wallander, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO COREY TELLEZ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to say a special word of thanks to a former member of my staff who has meant a lot to me and has performed great service in my office.

Corey Tellez was part manager and part legislative magician. She was also my deputy chief of staff. She was one of the first persons I would reach out to. She seemed to always find a way to translate big ideas into legislation and then legislation into law.

Corey is driven by solid values. She has a special talent for management and organization. Every Senator

should be so lucky to have a Corey Tellez on their staff.

Corey joined my staff nearly 11 years ago as my economic policy adviser. Her first assignment was to help craft and build support for a bill called the Marketplace Fairness Act. Here was the goal: give Main Street businesses across America, mom-and-pop shops, a level playing field on which to compete against the giant online retailers by giving States the option to require out-of-State businesses to collect sales tax on online sales, the same way local businesses do.

The big online retailers resisted. Corey would not back down. She worked with the staff in the offices of our main cosponsors—Senators Mike Enzi, Heidi Heitkamp, and Lamar Alexander—and together they came up with a solution that won support on both sides of the aisle and even won the support of some of the giant retailers.

In 2013, the Marketplace Fairness Act passed the Senate. Corey was still working on getting the bill signed into law when, to our surprise, in 2018, the Supreme Court issued a ruling negating the need for it by giving the States the same option our bill created.

Corey had made her mark, and she became a critical part of our legislative team. Six years ago, I moved her up to be my legislative director. Three years ago, she became my deputy chief of staff.

At the end of last year, to my disappointment, she announced she was moving on from the Senate for a new opportunity, working for the Department of the Treasury in their congressional relations office. She is returning to the field she loves, with a special emphasis on international economic policy. I have no doubt she is going to be successful just as she was in the Senate.

Corey first came to the Hill 15 years ago, working in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus as an intern to the office of Representative HENRY CUELLAR of Texas. She already had a degree in political science and history and a law degree from the University of Illinois.

She worked on the House side as a legislative assistant for Representative Carolyn McCarthy of New York and as deputy chief of staff and counsel for Representative Debbie Halvorson of Illinois.

It is an impressive resume, but I think that Corey has put as much effort and passion into advancing the careers of others as she has her own. My own staff is filled with talented men and women whom she encouraged and gave a chance to grow professionally.

There is a danger, when you work with policy and dry legislative text for a long time, that you might forget the people whose hopes and dreams ride on the laws we enact. That never was a problem for Corey. While growing up, Corey's mom was a single mother.

She views every bill and every initiative through the eyes of a proud, hard-working American, just like her mom. Basically, she has two basic questions when it comes to these issues: Are they true to the Constitution? Do they treat working families with fairness and dignity? That was her litmus test for any legislative undertaking. I can't think of a better one.

Since joining my staff, she became a mother too. She and her husband are parents to a little daughter, Elliott.

With her move to her next exciting assignment, I want to say again: Thank you, Corey, for all that you have given our office, the Senate, and our State of Illinois. I am wishing you the very best of luck in your new position.

JOHNSON & JOHNSON BANKRUPTCY

Mr. President, what would a great corporation do, one that is just so identified with America that new parents trust their products and the work they do with the health of themselves and their brandnew baby?

When you think back, for many of us, to when we became fathers, there was hardly a time when we didn't have, holding in our hands, Johnson & Johnson's Baby Powder. It clouded the room as we sprinkled it all over our babies and knew that it was just the right thing because others before us, other generations, had used the same product.

What is a company like Johnson & Johnson to do, then, when it turns out that there was an ingredient in that talcum powder that was dangerous? Asbestos. Literally, asbestos. Well, it turns out they knew about it. They knew there was asbestos in Johnson & Johnson Baby Powder long before the lawsuits were filed.

So what does a corporation worth $450 billion do when they discover that the product that they had been selling for generations to trusting American families was actually a danger and was now being connected to cancers and mesothelioma?

Years ago, there was a great folk singer in America known as Woody Guthrie. He said there are two ways to get robbed. ''Some will rob you with a gun, some with a fountain pen.''

There are two systems in America, and Johnson & Johnson bears that out. There is a justice system for rich, powerful people and corporations, and then there is a justice system for everybody else. And many days, it seems that the gulf between these two systems is just getting wider and deeper.

There is something called the Texas two-step. It used to be just a dance step, but in recent years, it has taken on a new meaning, and it relates directly to Johnson & Johnson. It is a name given to a highly controversial form of legal strategy that some of the biggest corporations are using to shield their assets from accountability. It allows massively wealthy corporations whose products caused harm to avoid paying damages to the victims.

Not just that, the Texas two-step denies the victims their right to make their case in court and take their issue to a jury or a judge. And it can stretch the process of seeking justice out for years and years and years, while victims get sicker and die.

Does that sound like justice? It doesn't sound like American justice. It sounds like somebody getting robbed with a fountain pen.

A big law firm that is credited with dreaming up this Texas two-step charges over $1,000 an hour to advise large corporations on how to perform this maneuver.

But we received a lesson on the Texas two-step in our committee last week for free.

The Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Federal Courts, Oversight, Agency Action, and Federal Rights held the first ever Senate hearing on the Texas two-step. We heard from experts just how it works. We also heard from one of its victims, Ms. Kimberly Naranjo, who has been given a fatal diagnosis from the lung disease mesothelioma. The name of that corporation she believes caused her illness: Johnson & Johnson.

Here is what we heard about how the Texas two-step works now, in a nutshell. Here is a big corporation like Johnson & Johnson that is being sued because it sold a dangerous product or it is likely to be sued for causing harm to victims. Well, they take their corporation and reincorporate in the State of Texas and execute what is called a ''divisive merger.'' They cut their corporation not in half but legally in half.

In a traditional merger, two companies become one. With a divisive merger, it is just the opposite: One company becomes two. The original company keeps all the wealth, all the assets, and all the operations. The new company, created in this Texas procedure, is really just a shell. It receives the original company's debts and liabilities and a small trust fund.

The new company then reincorporates and turns around and files for bankruptcy in a jurisdiction where it is hard to get a bankruptcy filing dismissed for bad faith. This bankruptcy filing prompts a stay of litigation by people like Ms. Naranjo. The stay of litigation applies to both the shell company and the original company. So instead of being able to seek justice in a court of law for injuries, perhaps fatal injuries, victims are forced to try to recover from this newly created shell company that was made up in a bankruptcy court. How long does that take? Years. Sadly, for many of these victims, they don't have years.

As the victims wait for some measure of justice in bankruptcy court, the original company goes about its business. It has shielded all its assets, passed its liabilities off in divisive merger to a shell corporation. The good corporation, so to speak, or the rich corporation ends up with no liabilities, admitting no wrongdoing.

Under the laws of most States, companies cannot move assets around like this through divisive mergers, but you can do it in Texas, hence the nickname

the Texas two-step. So, step 1, create a shell company and transfer your legal liabilities; step 2, have the new company immediately declare bankruptcy.

So far, four major corporations have used the Texas two-step and bankruptcy to try to avoid legal accountability for their own wrongdoing.

The case that the subcommittee examined last week involved the healthcare and pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson, the maker of Johnson's baby powder. As I mentioned earlier, how many of us fathers, mothers, and kids changing diapers did it in a cloud of Johnson & Johnson's baby powder?

For years, Johnson & Johnson denied the story that its products contained asbestos. We know that substance can cause cancer and mesothelioma. Then it claimed that any amount of asbestos in its baby powder was just too small to cause any harm. But internal company documents at Johnson & Johnson obtained through discovery told a different story. They showed that Johnson & Johnson knew of tests going back decades which found the presence of asbestos in their products. While they were actively advertising the use of this product by adults for use on our babies, they knew there was asbestos in their product.

In 2018, a jury in Missouri ruled in favor of 22 women who attributed their ovarian cancer to Johnson & Johnson talc products. The women won an award of $2 billion. Remember that number: 22 women in Missouri, an award of $2 billion.

Today, there are an estimated 38,000 people with ovarian cancer or mesothelioma who have sued Johnson & Johnson, alleging that the company's talcum products caused their illness, but Johnson & Johnson's use of this Texas two-step divisive bankruptcy means that these 38,000 cancer victims are no longer able to bring their claims against the company. They have lost their right to have their case heard in court because Johnson & Johnson, this giant company, has created a bankruptcy in a shell corporation that has absorbed all of the legal liabilities of the original Johnson & Johnson. So anybody who wants to sue them now has to get in line in bankruptcy court with all the creditors and alleged victims and wait and hope there will be a day when some fraction of the trust fund that Johnson & Johnson gave to its shell company when it spun it off and loaded it down with legal liabilities may provide some relief. The chances: next to none.

Stick with me and do the math. We ended up with two companies. Once, it was just Johnson & Johnson, and then two companies emerged out of the bankruptcy court in Texas. The one company with the liabilities—the one you can actually sue if you can get into court—they created a trust fund for that company of $2 billion. They have 38,000 outstanding claims. Twenty-women women in Missouri recovered $2 billion from them already, so you know that 38,000 people are not going to go very far with $2 billion total. What is left in the other fat corporation—profitable corporation, big corporation—in that bankruptcy division? More than $430 billion. Johnson & Johnson stuck all of its assets into more than the healthy corporation that can't be sued and left $2 billion for all of these victims of its dangerous product. What a cynical move for a company to make.

Kimberly Naranjo, a mother of seven, is one of those 38,000 Americans who will lose her right to sue Johnson & Johnson and be forced to wait in line in bankruptcy court for some sliver of justice.

She testified at last week's hearing. Her story is not an unusual one. Ms. Naranjo grew up surrounded by addiction and abuse. She moved from one foster family to another. She had her first baby when she was 19 years old. She used Johnson's baby powder on all seven of her children. It was, she said, ''that white plastic bottle that I associated with motherly love.''

That was the same message Johnson & Johnson used in its baby ads. They used to say their product ''feels like love.''

Ms. Naranjo started her dream job. But a week later, she felt a pain in her side. She went to the doctor and, sadly, learned she has mesothelioma. She was told she had 12 to 16 months to live. She knows she can't beat mesothelioma. Nobody does. All she wants is a chance to make her case in court before she dies so she can leave something to her kids.

So she came to Washington to testify before us in that Judiciary subcommittee last week, her voice representing thousands of cancer victims who went through exactly what she did, exposing themselves to Johnson & Johnson's dangerous product. I commend her and thank her for her courage. She is fighting for her kids and all the other victims, incidentally, whose voices would be silenced by this Texas two-step bankruptcy. As she said in her testimony, ''I don't have much time left, but I will not quit.''

Over the past few months, I decided to write to Johnson & Johnson. This is a company that used to take such pride in their products. I remember all through my life the advertising associated with their products: wholesome, safe help for families. I wrote to the former CEO and the current CEO, and I urged them to change course, back way from this Texas two-step, abandon this cynical scheme, and hold yourself accountable to the people who trusted your product. I urged Johnson & Johnson to live up to its reputation of being a company that family and consumers can trust. Sadly, they ignored me.

This week, a bankruptcy court is considering a motion by talc claimants to dismiss the bankruptcy of the shell company that Johnson & Johnson spun off to unload its legal liabilities. It is a key test of this Texas two-step and whether wealthy corporations continue to abuse chapter 11 bankruptcy to dodge their legal obligations to victims like Ms. Naranjo.

It is not just lawmakers like me who believe that the Texas two-step can deprive victims like her of their day in court; listen to what the author of the Texas divisive merger statute, Steven Wolens, said earlier this week about the law that brought the Texas two-step to life: ''Had we known in 1989 that [the] provisions could be dubiously interpreted for entities to avoid known liabilities such as those causing severe and permanent injuries and deaths, [the law] would never have passed with the 'Texas two-step' provision. Never, never, never.''

Mr. Wolens also said: ''Shame on [Johnson & Johnson] for trying to evade its liabilities for products it sold with its golden stamp of approval for safety.''

When a legislator like Mr. Wolens publicly states that the company is intentionally misusing the law he wrote, I don't think there is any room for uncertainty or equivocation; this is a shameful, indefensible strategy on the part of Johnson & Johnson.

I hope the courts reject Johnson & Johnson's abuse of bankruptcy laws, but I also believe Congress needs to do something. We need to close this loophole for good.

In July last year, I joined two of my colleagues, ELIZABETH WARREN and RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, in cosponsoring legislation which would rein in various bankruptcy loopholes like the Texas two-step. I am committed to working toward this goal. I hope Democrats and I hope Republicans can work together on a bipartisan basis to stop this bankruptcy abuse. Bankruptcy is supposed to be a good-faith way to accept responsibility, pay one's debts as best you can, and then receive a second chance—not a Texas two-step, get-out-of-jail-free card for some of the wealthiest corporations on Earth, like Johnson & Johnson.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

INFLATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the AP headline from last Thursday said it all: ''U.S. inflation highest in 40 years, with no letup in sight''—with no letup in sight. That is life in the Democrats' America. In January, U.S. inflation hit 7½ percent—the highest inflation since February of 1982. Inflation has now been above 5 percent for the last 8 months.

There are people raising families today who have never experienced this

kind of inflation in their entire lifetimes. American families are hurting—hurting badly. The average American household spent an estimated $3,500 more last year as a result of inflation—$3,500. That is a lot of money for an ordinary family—a lot. Everywhere they turn, families are facing higher prices. Whether it is ground beef for the chili, bunk beds for the kids' room, or a new car to accommodate a new addition to the family, higher prices are the order of the day.

The price of chicken is up 10 percent. Pork is up 14 percent. Beef roasts are up 19 percent. Eggs are up 13 percent. Citrus fruits are up 10 percent. Whole milk is up 8 percent. The list goes on. Furniture and bedding were up 17 percent. Major appliances are up almost 10 percent. Tires are up 14 percent. Used cars and trucks are up 40 percent.

And then there are energy prices. Fuel oil is up 46 percent. Gas prices are up 40 percent. Natural gas is up nearly 24 percent—and on and on and on.

Predictably, inflation is having its biggest impact on those least able to afford it. A recent Penn Wharton Budget Model study found that lower-income houses, on average, faced an even greater spending increase in 2021 when compared to higher-income households, as a result of inflation.

It is no wonder 69 percent of Americans disapprove of the President's handling of inflation. Democrats have talked about wage growth. Here is the story on wages. Despite wage growth, Americans received a de facto pay cut in 2021, thanks to inflation. Between January 2021 and January 2022, real average hourly earnings declined by 1.7 percent—a pay cut.

How did we get here? Obviously, the reopening of economies and supply chain issues have created inflationary pressures for the United States and countries around the world. But a big part of the reason things are so bad in the United States today is because Democrats decided to pass a massive so-called COVID relief bill last March that far exceeded anything the economy needed. That is right. When Democrats took office last January, inflation was 1.4 percent, well within the Fed's targeted inflation rate of 2 percent.

It might have stayed there had Democrats not decided that they needed to pass a massive and partisan $1.9-trillion spending spree under the guise of COVID relief mere weeks after Congress had already passed a major COVID bill—one of five COVID bills, I might add—that passed in 2020, all bipartisan.

The definition of inflation is too many dollars chasing too few goods and services. That is exactly the situation Democrats helped create with their so-called American Rescue Plan. They sent too many dollars into the economy, and the economy overheated as a result. You don't have to take my word for it. Let me just quote a recent New York Times article:

''The United States has had much more inflation than almost any other advanced economy in the world,'' said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard University and former Obama administration economic adviser, who used comparable methodologies to look across areas and concluded that U.S. price increases have been consistently faster.

The difference, he said—

This is Jason Furman, former Obama administration economic adviser.

The difference, he said, comes because ''the United States' stimulus is in a category of its own.''

Despite all of this, despite the fact that it was Democrats' massive March spending spree that helped plunge our economy into this inflation crisis—there are still Democrats out there who want to double down—double down—on the strategy that helped get us into this mess in the first place and pass yet another massive spending spree that would undoubtedly make this inflation disaster even worse.

''U.S. inflation highest in 40 years with no letup in sight.''

''No letup in sight.''

That was the headline. That is where Democrat policies have gotten us.

I was actually pleased to hear this morning the Democratic leader come down here and talk about inflation. It seems to be at least—maybe because of polling or whatever—starting to be realized by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that this is an issue that is having a massive and very adverse impact on the pocketbooks of the American people, particularly low-income Americans, because, you see, inflation is a tax that hits every American, but it affects and impacts lower-income and middle-income Americans the most.

The Democratic leader said that Republicans should quit complaining about inflation and start doing something about it. Well, we obviously don't have the majority. The Democrat's solution to this, as I pointed out, is another $5-trillion spending bill. Oh, yeah, that will solve the problem. Let's flood the zone with another $5 trillion on top of the $2 trillion already out there, have even more dollars chasing fewer goods, driving inflation even higher.

One thing we can do, what Republicans have advocated, is let's end wasteful spending. Let's don't do crazy stuff. Let's don't massively expand the size of government and flood the economy with more dollars at a time when inflation is already raging. That is a really simple solution.

Another solution is not to raise taxes, which is, again, something Democrats have proposed: raising taxes by $1.5 to $2 trillion to partially—and I say partially because the cost of $5 trillion doesn't get compensated for by $1.5-trillion tax increase but tax increases, nonetheless; all of which, of course, get passed on to consumers, raising inflationary pressures even more. They want to raise taxes massively and grow the government and spend money and add about $3 trillion to the debt, which is already $30 trillion. Those are the solutions of our colleagues on the other side.

I would say, end—stop in its tracks cold—the wasteful spending. Two, don't raise taxes. Provide some certainty. Maybe even make permanent a lot of the tax relief that was put in place in the 2017 tax law. Three—how about this? How about this idea? How about we become energy independent in America, which is where we were?

We were actually exporting energy in the previous administration for the first time in American history—at least in my lifetime—where we actually had energy policies that were producing American energy on a level that was keeping energy costs low for Americans and enabling us to actually export energy to other places around the world.

That came to an abrupt end when President Biden came to office. Democrats got control of both Houses of Congress, and what happened? First thing, day one—day one in office, first day, first thing he did—President Biden canceled the Keystone XL Pipeline, which would have allowed us to get energy fuel oil from where? Our friend, our neighbor, Canada, the Canadians, and move it through a pipeline to places across the United States, helping fill the demand with additional supply that Americans need to power their everyday lives—first thing in office, first day in office. It hasn't stopped there.

The administration decided that energy, evidently, is evil, at least if it comes from the ground, and decided to cancel a bunch of projects. There are all kinds of areas now that are off-limits to energy exploration, energy production in this country. There are lots of regulations and permitting things that are slowing down energy projects, making it more difficult, more expensive to produce American energy, leading us, leading Americans, to a place we didn't want to be, a place where we were a few years ago; but we are going hat in hand to Saudi Arabia, to OPEC countries, saying: Please, please produce more energy. We need more energy in this country.

What has happened is predictable, and what has happened is this: The demand for energy in this country is great. We are coming out of a pandemic. People are going back to work. They need, during the winter months, to heat their homes. They need fuel to get where they need to go—transportation—to work, to travel. So the demand for energy is up, the supply is going down; so what is happening?

Boom. Simple. It is really pretty simple. It is economics. The price is going up. So the price of oil in this country is now pushing $100 a barrel. Gasoline prices, as I mentioned, are up 40 percent—40 percent—over a year ago. It is simple math. It is simple economics. And there are some Democratic Senators now who are suggesting: Let's just waive the gas tax temporarily—

the gas tax which pays for all the infrastructure that we travel on in this country and which would leave a huge hole, obviously, in the highway trust fund, which is critically important to every State in the Union that depends upon the Federal Government and the highway trust fund and the fuel tax—to fund the infrastructure that enables our economy to move and keeps us competitive in the global marketplace. That is their solution.

Now, it is short-term—short-term, obviously to benefit—to try to gain some political advantage at a time when people, all of a sudden now on the other side, are starting to worry. Efforts are being led by four Democrats who are up for reelection this year. No surprise there because they have understood now what we know, and that is the American people are fed up and frustrated—fed up and frustrated with policies that are driving up the cost of everything that they have to buy, from the groceries in the store, to the rent that they pay, to the gas they put in their automobiles. Everything is going up.

Energy factors into almost everything we do. A pound of hamburger that you buy at the grocery store probably had to get there from somewhere, unless you live in the middle of the country where some of us do. But if you live on one of the coasts, you probably had to have transportation to get it to the destination, so it is factored in—it is baked in the cost of everything. When fuel prices go up, natural gas prices go up, when the cost of energy generally goes up, everything else goes up with it. It is economics.

The solution isn't a short-term political ruse to try and provide political cover to people who are running for reelection. It is to put policies in place that encourage American energy independence, that invest in American energy. That can be done in ways now with technologies we have that are environmentally friendly.

But we have to be energy independent. We can't depend upon other countries around the world that are unreliable to fuel and fund and run our economy. That investment should be here in the United States of America. And if we solve more of that, we would see less inflation, lower fuel prices.

If we end the crazy spending ideas and tax ideas coming out of the other side, we could restore some sanity to this country when it comes to these out-of-control prices, which is a tax, literally, on every American and hits particularly hard those who are struggling to make ends meet.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT MCKINNON CALIFF

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in opposition to the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to lead the Food and Drug Administration.

For more than two decades now, the United States has suffered a devastating epidemic of opioid use disorder, overdoses, and deaths. Since 1999, almost 1 million Americans have died of drug overdoses, with the vast majority of those deaths attributable to opioids.

As our country continues to deal with the COVID–19 pandemic, we must remember and prioritize this other deadly public health emergency.

In 2020, overall drug overdose deaths reached an alltime high for the year, with approximately 93,000 Americans losing their lives. More than 60 percent of those deaths were from synthetic opioids like fentanyl. That is a staggering 69,000 Americans dead from an opioid-related overdose—more than gun violence, more than car accidents, more overdose deaths than ever before in our history.

We cannot let the tragedy of COVID–19 overwhelm the daily suffering of the opioid epidemic. Sadly, for the scourge of opioid misuse and overdose in our country, there is no vaccine.

My home State has been hit especially hard. In Massachusetts, more than 2,100 residents died from an opioid overdose in 2020—a 5-percent increase from the previous year—and many more struggled with opioid use disorder. Early data from 2021 shows this unfortunate trend continued through the first 9 months of last year, where 1,613 people died in Massachusetts from opioid overdoses.

We cite these numbers with outrage and disbelief, but for impacted families and loved ones, it is an ever-present mourning for lost opportunities, futures gone too soon, and unanswered questions; all the while, for each and every community, there is the growing challenge still to be addressed.

In Congress, my colleagues and I have worked to respond to this crisis, passing several bipartisan packages—the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, and the SUPPORT Act to help bring relief to our communities.

I am proud several pieces of legislation I authored to fund and expand opioid use disorder prevention and treatment programs became law in those packages. Those investments are important, and we must continue to build on them, but we cannot forget how we reached this epidemic in the first place or we are doomed to repeat it for those families.

Those failures started at Big Pharma and were aided and abetted by the Food and Drug Administration. The FDA is supposed to be our Nation's pharmaceutical gatekeeper, but over many years, it repeatedly rubberstamped new prescription painkillers that increased the risk of misuse and dependence.

As evidence of the deadly harm those opioids caused became clear, the FDA did almost nothing. It acted too slowly to remove them from the market, to limit access to those supercharged opioids.

What started as an OxyContin prescription for back pain became full-blown dependence on heroin for countless Americans. Even well into the crisis, the FDA continued to approve powerful new opioids, either over the express objections of its own advisory committees or without convening an advisory committee at all. The FDA became the country's biggest pill pusher, and Big Pharma made billions in profits.

The Nation's pharmaceutical watchdog became the Nation's pharmaceutical lapdog, and the country became the ''United States of Oxy.'' I consistently raised concerns about the FDA's egregious mishandling of opioid approvals when Dr. Califf was first nominated to be Commissioner in 2015.

At that time, I opposed Dr. Califf's nomination until the Agency took steps to rescind approval for pediatric OxyContin—yes, OxyContin for kids. I demanded the FDA commit to impanel advisory committees for all opioid regulatory decisions and consider public health factors in opioid regulatory decisions, in particular the impact of new opioids on opioid misuse and dependence.

When the FDA did attempt to address its failures in regulating opioids after strong criticism from me and many of my colleagues, Dr. Califf and Dr. Janet Woodcock requested a National Academy of Sciences study of FDA's policies for evaluating opioids—not a major step but at least an effort to recognize its participation in the epidemic.

That study emphasized many of the efforts which I urged Dr. Califf and the FDA to undertake back in 2015; in particular, the need to include public health factors at every level of FDA regulation of opioid drugs. But to date, the FDA still has not implemented many of those recommendations. And where it has taken steps to do so, it has not gone far enough to address its past failures.

There was no real commitment to reforming the FDA or to learning from the mistakes that enabled this public health crisis.

At this point, the opioid epidemic has evolved from being driven by prescription drugs to being fueled by the illicit synthetic opioids, like fentanyl. But that does not dismiss the FDA from accountability or the need for reform.

When I met with Dr. Califf last year, I asked him to commit, if confirmed as FDA Commissioner, to finally change FDA's processes to ensure it does not make the opioid overdose epidemic worse than it already has. During our meeting, Dr. Califf did not commit to the decisive and comprehensive action which we need.

After years of Agency failures and in the midst of a worsening opioid epidemic, we need FDA leadership that is fully committed to using all of the Agency's oversight authority to protect public health.

I cannot support Dr. Califf's nomination in light of that critical mandate which we need. We need a leader at the

FDA who will center public health and implement reforms to its review of opioids.

And, specifically, we need the FDA to conduct a full, comprehensive review of approved opioids as the National Academy of Sciences study recommends. We need to finalize strong rules for opioid approvals that require analysis of the impact of new drugs on opioid dependency and misuse. And the FDA needs to be aggressive in mitigating the risks of approved opioids by requiring robust prescriber education on opioids and performing regular, formal reviews of approved opioids.

These are not all the steps that must be taken, but with these, we can at least be sure that we are on the road to opioid misuse disorder reform; that there won't be another FDA green light in front of it.

Here in the Senate we must also commit to doing more to addressing the opioid overdose epidemic. Prescription opioid medications still lack a clear, concise, and consistent warning label informing patients of the risks of the drug for dependence and misuse.

Some physicians still lack the education and tools necessary to identify and help patients with substance use disorders. And, critically, treatment remains inaccessible and stigmatized for many people in need, especially those ensnared in the criminal justice system.

We have to pass legislation to address these concerns, and I stand ready to work with my colleagues. I recently introduced legislation with Senator RAND PAUL that would modernize the outdated and burdensome Federal regulations on methadone, one of the most effective forms of treatment for opioid use disorder.

We can do a lot. And working with Senator COTTON, I worked to promulgate and now we need to implement the recommendations of the Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioids Trafficking, and we need to do that this year.

We need leaders in all branches of the Federal Government to bring this aggressive, intentional approach to their work, if we have any hope of ending the epidemic of opioid overdose deaths.

Dr. Califf is simply not that person for the FDA, and I will vote no on his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

UKRAINE

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today in response to Russia's alarming and impending threat toward its neighbor, the independent nation of Ukraine.

As we speak, Vladimir Putin continues to ready more than 100,000 soldiers, tanks, artillery, aircraft, and missiles along Ukraine's border.

To Ukraine's north, in Belarus, Russia has positioned tens of thousands more troops, nominally, as part of a military exercise. To Ukraine's south, Russian ships are amassing in the Black Sea.

Propaganda and disinformation are on the internet and on Russian TV channels as part of the Russian playbook we now know very well.

The Kremlin's intent is to manufacture a pretext for its aggression and sow divisions in the West. Russian troops already occupy vast tracts of Ukraine in Crimea and continue a ''low-grade'' war in eastern Ukraine, a war initiated by Mr. Putin that has cost already over 14,000 lives. Ukrainian soldiers have been bravely fighting and dying to protect their country from what has been naked aggression from Russia.

We hear—even from Ukrainian leadership—that their forces would face an unequal fight in a full-scale Russian invasion and, unfortunately, probably couldn't help but be outnumbered and overwhelmed.

And while Moscow has amassed the largest concentration of military forces seen in Europe since the end of the Cold War, it continues to make shrill accusations that it is not Ukraine but somehow Russia that is under threat, all the while making demands that Ukraine never join NATO or control its own destiny.

Even as he threatens war with Ukraine, Mr. Putin demands to be treated as head of a normal government. He thrills at being given one-on-one meetings with other world leaders or being invited to diplomatic fora. He rails that Russia has been unfairly singled out for sanctions.

He demands respect, even as he lays out a thesis denying that Ukraine is—or ever was—a country with its own traditions, language, aspirations, or sovereignty.

What Mr. Putin really fears is that if Ukraine succeeds in building a nation where Ukrainian speakers and Russian speakers have genuine freedoms, can vote in free elections and control their own destiny—if that happens, then maybe Russians may start to wonder why they have to live in a country where Putin has practically made himself President for life, eligible to stay in office until 2036, where questioning the endemic corruption of the Russian state, trying to run a business without paying off officials, or even expressing an opinion can lead to detention, trumped-up charges, or, as we have too often seen, even death from a military-grade nerve agent.

Mr. Putin fears that Ukraine could prove to be a model of what Russia could become without his kleptocratic regime. Mr. Putin says he feels threatened by NATO. He wants to go back to the good old days, when the USSR held Eastern Europe—including Ukraine—in its iron grip. So he has decided to seize chunks of Ukrainian territory and unilaterally change Europe's borders.

Now, this isn't a new position for Putin. It reflects a long-held view. In 2005, he called the fall of the Soviet Union ''the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century.''

In 2008, he invaded Georgia. When Russian troops seized control of Crimea, he sent in his ''little green men'' and adopted his doctrine of hybrid warfare. He felt unconstrained to send agents of the Russian state to assassinate those he sees as his enemies, whether in Kyiv or London or Berlin or Sofia or Vienna.

And he has built up his arsenal and threatened his neighbors. Putin, as we know and have read about, has crushed even the slightest hint of political opposition at home in Russia—all of this while wanting to be seen as a victim and as the leader of a normal participant in the community of nations. These actions are not and cannot ever be accepted or acceptable by the civilized world.

So what can the United States and the West do? President Biden and other Western leaders have undertaken the right approach offering Putin multiple diplomatic off-ramps—as recently, again, as the visit by the German Chancellor this week—and a dialogue about Russia's exaggerated fears regarding European security.

Nobody wants a military conflict between two nuclear powers so the President has clearly stated that U.S. troops are not being sent to Ukraine to fight Russia.

At the same time, President Biden has made it extremely clear that if Russia rejects this diplomatic path and conducts further aggression against Ukraine, there will be a heavy price to pay. Russia will face the immediate imposition of strong, robust, and effective sanctions—including sectoral sanctions against its banking and financial system as well as stringent export controls that will damage Russia's economy.

At the same time, while we do not want to ensure that there are any miscalculations or an unintended escalation, the United States and European nations have increased their supply of defensive weapons to Ukraine to ensure that Putin knows that any invasion will impose costs on the Russian military. Mr. Putin may find that if he invades, he may not find the going so easy.

Ukrainians do not want to be part of Russia, especially at the point of a gun. As someone who has argued that Russia and Ukraine are one fraternal people, it will be difficult for Putin to explain why Russian soldiers are dying while trying to kill their Ukrainian brothers.

As a major part of his policy, President Biden has endeavored to keep NATO together and unified since one of Putin's major goals is to undermine that unity. The administration's approach is, frankly, significantly different from the previous President in this country, who undermined the transatlantic alliance, questioned the very need for its existence, and took every opportunity to weaken the shared bonds that have kept peace in Europe since World War II.

President Biden, though, has put thousands of U.S. forces on standby

and has deployed U.S. forces to NATO's eastern flank. I saw some additional troops from the 82nd heading over to Poland even as we speak. Now, again, these movements are not to inflame the situation but to ensure that there is no mistake about our commitment to NATO's collective defense, our willingness to defer aggression, and to make sure that we continue to bolster this critical alliance. The truth is, it is not just Americans. Other NATO members have agreed and are sending military forces to its eastern border to ensure that Putin knows that the alliance stands united.

Let us be very clear on who the aggressor is in these provocations. The eyes of the world have been on Vladimir Putin and Russia, as he has initiated a steady and deliberate buildup of Russian forces and military assets, as I mentioned earlier, to the north, east, and south of Ukraine, and he has rebuffed multiple diplomatic overtures to deescalate the situation. Through media reporting, satellite imagery, and intelligence shared by our government and by the British Government, much of Putin's incitement has been out in the open for all to see.

It is as clear today as it will be through the lens of history that this march of aggression has been led by one man, and that is Vladimir Putin. But it is important for Putin to know it is not too late to back down from this foolish and destructive course of action. Even at the eleventh hour, diplomatic avenues remain very much open. Putin can still choose against leading further aggression and invasion that would have the opposite effect from what he imagines.

While there have been some reports in the media that he may be moving, we have seen no clear efforts. This is clearly a case that we will believe what the Russians do, not what some of their leaders say, because if Putin does invade, he will have unleashed a tragedy not just for Ukraine but for the Russian people. Putin will rightly have earned the enmity of all free nations and people everywhere, and Russia's economy and citizens will suffer.

I want to be clear. In the event of an unwarranted, unjustified, and illegitimate attack on Ukraine, the United States will stand with the people of Ukraine. Russia will become a pariah nation, a rogue state. The legitimacy of Putin's regime will be significantly undermined. And the NATO alliance that Putin worries so much about? It will be reinvigorated to fulfill the mission it was created for: as a defensive alliance against Soviet or, now in the 21st century, Russian aggression.

I urge President Putin to choose the right path. Deescalate tensions. Don't just talk about deescalation but actually deescalate. Engage in a real and honest diplomatic process, and end any plans leading towards a violent confrontation in Ukraine. By doing this, he would ultimately spare Russia the crippling economic consequences that would be necessitated by his aggression.

I also say, I was very proud yesterday, when the administration briefed the bipartisan leadership of all the committees that are dealing with this potential invasion, to see the broad and bipartisan support behind standing with the people of Ukraine and the message that should Putin take these actions, the level of sanctions that we will impose upon him and his economy will be unprecedented.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator BURR and I be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each prior to the vote.

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

NOMINATION OF ROBERT MCKINNON CALIFF

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the Biden administration's nomination of Robert Califf to be the FDA Commissioner.

As FDA Commissioner during the Obama administration, Mr. Califf showed blatant disregard for the unborn and for the health and safety of women and girls when he weakened safety and reporting requirements for a dangerous chemical abortion drug.

In fact, this past December, the Biden administration went further and announced it would eliminate entirely the in-person dispensing requirement for the abortion drug. This very reckless decision promotes mail order, do-it-yourself abortion-on-demand and disregards the growing threat to women's health posed by chemical abortion drugs. For example, without physician in-person screening, women are denied the opportunity to be screened for dangerous conditions like ectopic pregnancies, which can cause life-threatening complications.

Mr. Califf has refused to distance himself from the FDA's decision to abandon vulnerable pregnant women to the reckless and predatory actions of the abortion industry. Mr. Califf has a track record of putting an extreme abortion agenda above the science.

The nomination of Robert Califf to be FDA Commissioner endangers the well-being of unborn babies, women, and girls, and I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing his nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I actually rise today to support Bob Califf and to say to my colleagues there has been a lot of criticism as to what he has done. I have never seen an FDA Commissioner, in 9 months of service—that was the length of his time at the FDA—who accomplished anything, much less as many negatives as have been raised.

But as the ranking member of the HELP Committee and as a fellow North Carolinian, I would like to share with my colleagues that Dr. Califf is a supremely qualified nominee with bipartisan support. He has the robust agency and private sector experience needed to help build on the success of the FDA in helping Americans get back to normal life with the approval of tests, vaccines, and therapeutics that are bringing the pandemic to an end.

He is the leader we need today but also for the future. Now, let me take a few moments to explain why.

It has been 391 days since the FDA has had a Senate-confirmed Commissioner—391 days. No matter how effective and successful an Acting Commissioner can be—and we have been blessed with Janet Woodcock's leadership—the full backing of a Presidential nomination and confirmation by the U.S. Senate carry a weight that allows a confirmed Commissioner to push forward necessary, meaningful change and leadership within a Federal Agency.

There has never been a more critical time for the FDA to have effective leadership. While the FDA has long played a leading role in the lives of the American people, regulating 20 cents of every dollar of the U.S. economy, the COVID pandemic brought the actions of the FDA during the response to the dinner-table conversation of every family in this country.

In the 391 days since our last confirmed Commissioner stepped down, there have been two new, serious variants of the COVID virus; case counts that topped 1 million per day; shortages of vital therapeutics and diagnostic tests; and, tragically, the loss of hundreds of thousands of American lives. The FDA has and will continue to play a leading role in our response to a once-in-a-century pandemic.

The Agency's unprecedented work helped innovators bring forward countermeasures, tests, treatments, and vaccines that have helped us withstand and fight against the virus and instill hope in Americans in some of the darkest moments of the pandemic. The FDA has made significant progress to advance medical product development.

As new cases continue to slow and spring approaches, we are at what I am hopeful is an inflection point. Mask mandates are lifting, children are back in school, and the FDA is ready to move into the next phase of the response that will hopefully bring us back to normal. The FDA needs a leader who will not lose sight of the progress it has made.

The silver lining of COVID has been its ability to show the value of American innovation and ingenuity. No one understands that better than Dr. Califf. His expertise at translational science means that he understands what it takes to transform an idea from a research bench into a real solution for patients.

COVID catalyzed the FDA and the private sector to compress the timeline of the transformation without—without—sacrificing our world-renowned gold standard for safe and effective

medical products. Platform technologies were developed through programs like Operation Warp Speed and RADx that put us leaps and bounds ahead. These types of technologies are force multipliers, allowing us to bring new options to patients with cancer, infectious diseases, and life-threatening conditions by adapting the same underlying technology. We need a Commissioner who understands and will advance these breakthroughs.

I urge my colleagues, support Dr. Califf's nomination because he will provide the leadership needed to promote today's biomedical advancements and help to pave the way for tomorrow's innovation.

As many know, I have been one of the FDA's toughest critics over the years. However, I am critical because I believe in the Agency's mission, and I know that American patients pay the price if the FDA falls behind.

The FDA has an opportunity to be forever changed for the better, but it needs effective leadership to get there. Dr. Califf knows the Agency well, understands the value of innovation underway in academia, and knows firsthand how the private sector is advancing cutting-edge science that can benefit all Americans.

I urge my colleagues this morning to support the nomination of Robert Califf.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to Dr. Califf, and I have spoken before on this. I just want to say this for a minute or two here.

I respect everyone's position on this and their decision, but I have never had anything that has affected my State and constituents in my State and our country more than the opioid addiction.

This opioid addiction started because of the FDA's decision to bring a product to market in 1995 that has destroyed many families, many communities, many businesses, people's lives forever. In story after story—there is not a Senator in this body who doesn't have someone in their family, immediate family or extended family, or a constituent who hasn't been affected.

With that, you need to change the dynamics of the leadership over there. Dr. Califf was there 5 years ago. He is coming back. Nothing has changed. Four hundred thousand people have died since he was there, and we are going down the same path.

Unless we change that dynamic, that leadership position on trying to protect the people of America without putting more and more horrible drugs on the market—there was one drug back in, I think it was 2014, 2013 or 2014, called Zohydro, and the advisory committee recommended 11 to 2: Do not bring this drug to market. They did it anyway. It was 11 to 2, don't do it. These are experts. They said two pills can kill a human being. They brought it continuously. They continue to bring more opiates to the market.

We don't need this product on the market to kill more Americans. This Administration, under Robert Califf, will take the same old, same old as they did before. Nothing will change.

I urge all of my colleagues, please consider what you are doing. Consider your family and your constituents and please vote against Robert Califf.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute before the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I urge all of my colleagues to give families across the country the peace of mind and give the hard-working staff at the FDA the experienced, Senate-confirmed leadership it needs by joining me in confirming Dr. Califf today and working with him and FDA to continue protecting families across our country, upholding the gold standard of safety and effectiveness, and putting science and data first.

We previously confirmed Dr. Califf in this role in a bipartisan way, and we recently advanced his nomination out of the HELP Committee with bipartisan support. So I hope today, once again, this qualified nomination passes with the bipartisan support it deserves.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). Under the previous order, the Senate will 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.

VOTE ON CALIFF NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Califf nomination?

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The 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) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 55 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—46

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

PRESENT AND GIVING A LIVE PAIR—1

Rounds, against

NOT VOTING—3

Capito	Graham	Luján

Mr. ROUNDS. On this vote, I have a pair with the junior Senator from New Mexico, Mr. LUJÁN. If he were present and voting, he would vote yea. If I were permitted to vote, I would vote nay. I, therefore, withdraw my vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SINEMA). On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 46, and one Senator responded ''present.''

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:13 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Kansas.

POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I rise this afternoon to express my support for the Postal Service Reform Act, a piece of legislation that we expected to be on the Senate floor this week and look forward to it appearing shortly.

The U.S. Postal Service has been struggling to stay financially solvent for years, and I am pleased Congress is finally—I say ''finally.'' I think for as long as I have been in the Senate and perhaps as long as I have been in Congress, we have been working to address

this issue, and I am pleased we are about to do so.

The Postal Service has long been an essential piece of American communication and commerce, but its financial condition has recently, at least, threatened its future. Kansas's rural communities, in particular, where broadband access to brick-and-mortar businesses is limited, rely heavily upon the essential services of the Postal Service as a means of staying connected and competitive.

The familiar sight of a U.S. Postal Service truck—the jeep, the truck that goes down our country roads making its deliveries—is part of the daily life for Kansas's farmers, ranchers, businesses, and neighborhoods.

For rural America, the Postal Service—their mailman or their mailwoman—is often the glue that keeps those communities connected to the rest of the country. In many instances, we rely upon our postal carriers to make certain that somebody is alive and well, that they are OK in their homes, and report odd behavior or a crime that might occur. Our postal carriers are a significant component of the fabric of our communities.

Unique in its ability to reach nearly every address in America, the Postal Service is an indispensable piece of infrastructure, in fact, created by the Constitution of the United States giving us the instructions to provide postal roads.

During the height of the pandemic, the Postal Service employees maintained their delivery routes, bringing essential medicines, groceries, and vital supplies to families' doorsteps.

We pay a lot of attention to veterans' issues, and I would highlight how important the Postal Service is for those who served our Nation. In most instances, it is how they receive their prescription drugs. It is beyond just handwritten cards and notes, although those are clearly important and, again, an important component of our life. We all enjoy receiving those. But the Nation is reminded firsthand about the irreplaceable role of the Postal Service.

As I said, in my earliest days since representing Kansas in Congress, I have advocated for the preservation of rural post offices and commonsense reforms to ensure the Postal Service's stability.

With every conversation I have had with the Postmaster General, I have reminded them perhaps they should spend less money on consultants and listen to their employees who might be the best people to tell them what they might do to improve their efficiency and save costs.

When a post office closes—and we have had a few of those happen too frequently in Kansas—it creates problems for businesses and families; it may cause significant harm to the local economy; and it certainly makes a difference in the lives of seniors in those communities.

For the past several sessions of Congress, the Senator from Delaware, Senator CARPER, and I have introduced postal reform legislation and worked together with the goal of putting the Postal Service on firmer financial footing, improving service, and allowing for the development of new revenue streams and enhancing transparency through performance metrics.

I have indicated to the Postmaster General in my conversations that the solution to the post office's financial conditions cannot be simply reducing services. The more services are reduced, the less likely Americans will or can use the Postal Service.

So closing post offices, shortening the number of days in which mail is delivered, reducing the hours of the post office, slowing the delivery of the mail, closing mail-sorting centers can't be the solution to making certain that the post office has a bright future and that Americans are served.

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, which I hope is on the floor soon for our consideration, was passed by the House last week, and we look forward to its arrival here. It builds upon our previous attempts to accomplish postal reform.

Included in these reforms is the creation of a new Postal Service Health Benefits Program and focusing on reestablishing—stabilizing the USPS's finances, instead of funding benefits in advance.

The bill will allow the Postal Service to enter into agreements with State, local, and Tribal governments as a new method of revenue for the Agency.

I am also pleased that the bill will codify 6-day delivery, which is a provision I have long supported in my role as an appropriator and one that greatly benefits rural Kansas homes, where mail delivery is more difficult.

The Postal Service Reform Act represents a great step forward to ensure that Kansans and Americans can continue to rely upon the U.S. Postal Service. I am a sponsor of this bill, and I intend to support it when it arrives in the Senate for a vote and urge my colleagues to join me in doing so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Alaska.

UKRAINE

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I have asked to be recognized this afternoon to speak to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.

As we all know, the current situation is that it is pretty tough right now. Russia has amassed more than 100,000 troops on or close to Ukraine's border and may be planning to launch a full-scale invasion within a matter of days. And this follows, of course, their illegal seizure of the Crimean Peninsula back in 2019 and a hybrid war in the Donbas that has been going on now for over 8 years.

As a Senator from Alaska—the State that is clearly most proximate to Russia—we are all too familiar with Russia's aggressive tactics. They routinely fly near our airspace. They sail through our waters. They test our defenses and reactions.

In August 2020, a flotilla of Russian warships and military aircraft encroached into our EEZ, our exclusive economic zone, there in the Bering Sea. They repeatedly harassed our fishermen, forcing them to leave their waters from which their very livelihood flows. The fishermen were shocked, I mean, just stunned with what they saw, and they literally left millions of dollars of fisheries' assets out on the line.

Provocative actions, and we felt that provocation. They are disturbing. They are alarming. But there are also some perhaps smaller, maybe symbolic actions that can also be a little unsettling. It was several years ago now that we were at an Arctic conference, and the Russian delegation gave me a diplomatic gift at a conference that featured maps showing Alaska back as part of their territory. Maybe they thought it was funny; I did not take it as such.

What is happening on the Ukrainian border is something else entirely. It is impossible not to be rattled by what we are seeing, worried by where it could lead.

But I think we recognize in this body what we need to do, what we need to focus on. We need to turn these concerns into resolve, and that resolve needs to lead to action. I know that there are many in this Chamber working very, very hard—and I thank them for that—working toward a sanctions package.

The bipartisan goal is to deter both—to deter Russia from invading Ukraine but also to impose severe sanctions if that happens. And I know that the joint effort has perhaps stalled out right now, but, hopefully, the two sides and the White House will come together to finalize it.

I believe it is an imperative that we have a united front on this matter. A united Congress on the matter of sanctions, I think, is a powerful message in and of itself.

If we can bring a sanctions package to the floor, I am going to be asking colleagues to consider two additions to that: one, to restrict imports of Russian seafood and a second related to Russian energy.

So with respect to seafood, Russia has had an import ban on American seafood since 2014—since 2014. Most Americans don't know that Russia responded to U.S. sanctions imposed after their annexation of Crimea by banning U.S. seafood imports, among other goods, at that time. So that has been in place all these many years.

And it is absolutely unfair that Russia has unlimited access to sell its seafood in the United States, while America's fishermen and our seafood processors, particularly those in my State of Alaska, have no access to markets in Russia. So this embargo either needs to end or we need to incorporate reciprocal measures.

And when it comes to energy, we simply do not need U.S. dollars to be financing Russia's territorial aggressions, especially—especially—when we have everything that we need here at home.

There is a lot to understand about the crisis in Ukraine: how Russia is undermining the international order and disrupting well-established global norms, how the potential for an invasion threatens not just Ukraine but European and global security, how an invasion could lead to catastrophic escalation and enormous loss of life, and how this situation impacts the United States, whether we want to involve ourselves or not, and how a diplomatic solution still exists if Russia chooses such a path.

What I want to focus on today are two aspects of this crisis that have received less attention so far. And the first is how an invasion could destabilize the Arctic as part of a far-reaching wave of secondary impacts. And the second is the role that poor energy policy has played in actually strengthening Russia's hand.

Now, I have come to this floor many, many times to talk about the importance of the Arctic. The United States is an Arctic nation because of Alaska. We rely on the region for everything from energy, minerals, seafood, shipping, national defense. And we have always worked—we have always endeavored to keep the High North as a region of peace, an area where geopolitical challenges are often compartmentalized in favor of collaboration and partnership. You need to work hard in remote, isolated, cold, dark places. You need to work together.

So my concern today, as we are talking about Russia and Ukraine, is for the ripple effects that an invasion could have in the Arctic. I am worried that it will derail much of what we have been able to accomplish in the region and make it hard or impossible for the United States to trust and work with Russia in the region.

I am also worried about what Russia's brinksmanship means for our friends in the Arctic. Certainly, if I were Finland or Sweden, I would be looking over my shoulder right now. This is the type of crisis that could convince them to join NATO.

At the same time, however, I certainly respect those nations' rights and discretion to choose their alliances carefully, and discussions about them should include them. I also fear for the health of the Arctic Council, the leading governmental forum promoting cooperation in the Arctic. Last year, I had an opportunity to join Secretary Blinken in representing the United States at the Council's biannual ministerial. It was at that time that Iceland transferred the gavel to Russia, which is chairing the Council through May of 2023.

I think it was important that Secretary Blinken attend this event in person to reaffirm the role of the United States in this important governing body, but attending the meeting did more than that. Convening in the Arctic provided an opportunity for Secretary Blinken to meet for the first time with his Russian counterpart. While there, the two diplomats agreed that while our countries have differences, the world would be safer if we worked together where our interests intersect. One of those areas is the Arctic, and we need to be able to continue to work together in that region.

It is interesting to note that with all the ongoing diplomatic discussions between the United States and Russia playing out in places like Geneva and Paris, the first time this administration discussed the topic of troop movements on the Ukrainian border with Russia in person was on the sidelines of the Arctic Council ministerial in May.

There are very few places in the world that a meeting like this would be politically palatable for either country. Yet, for decades, the Arctic has provided a place for the United States and Russia to convene even when we have our differences. All you need to do is look back to 1986, the Reykjavik Summit between President Reagan and Premier Gorbachev. Inside a small, little house in a small Arctic country, the leaders of the two biggest powers convened and nearly agreed to ban all ballistic missiles. That meeting in Iceland paved the way for nuclear forces treaties and the eventual end of the Cold War.

But the situation we face today begs the question, what will become of our relationship with Russia in the Arctic if they move forward with war against Ukraine?

Last week, I participated in a virtual meeting of the Arctic Parliamentarians. This is a group composed of members of Parliaments and Congresses of the eight Arctic nations. I have been representing the United States on the Standing Committee for years and years, decades now. These are all of the Arctic countries, including Russia, of course. But the purpose of this body is to promote regional cooperation, and, as was the norm at our meetings, we focused on things that are impacting the people in our region. This past week's meeting was no different. We focused on COVID impacts, mental health, environmental issues, and Arctic infrastructure. While the growing security issue was not raised, it was kind of an unspoken shadow.

I throw this out there because I know that while I think about the Arctic every day, I can guarantee you that the Arctic is not top of mind for most on Capitol Hill. It took us nearly a decade to secure funding for a new icebreaker, which won't be put to sea for another 5 years, all while Russia launches a new one every year.

I want the Foreign Relations and the Armed Services Committees to pay more attention to the Arctic and to look to the region as both a strategic asset and a diplomatic tool. We often talk about how valuable this region is, but it can only be useful if we use it. I am afraid that sometimes we just overlook or we neglect its importance, and I think it is time that we change that.

Now, another aspect of the situation that I mentioned at the onset of my comments here is the issue of energy. It certainly deserves discussion when we look to Europe's energy policies, which have only served to weaken their ability to respond to Russia's aggression. This is a crisis for many countries in Europe, but I think it is also a timely warning for us here in the United States.

Europe imports about 40 percent of its natural gas and 27 percent of its oil from Russia. The Nord Stream 2 Pipeline would only add to that total, while sidelining Ukraine as a key transit point, and therein lies the problem. Europe is already heavily dependent on Russia for energy, but they are doubling down. Their needs are particularly acute in the depths of winter, and that has perhaps undermined some European nations' willingness to respond to Russian aggression.

I would suggest that the Biden administration is putting us on a similar path when it comes to our oil and gas. If they continue to shut down domestic resource production, we cannot magically shift to renewables and do this overnight. What will happen is, we will become more dependent on others for our supply. We have already seen some signs of this happening—perhaps not directly the fault of the Biden administration but, instead, the thinking that it has embraced.

Look at California. California's foreign oil imports—their foreign oil imports—have risen significantly over the past 30 years as production in their State and especially Alaska has declined. For the last 3 years, the United States has actually imported more oil from Russia than we were allowed to produce in Alaska.

So why—why—would we choose to forgo the jobs and revenues from domestic energy production to instead send our dollars to Russia and others? It is beyond me, and so are the actions the Biden administration has taken over its first year or so in office, which have been explicitly designed to limit production from States like Alaska even further.

They shut down Federal oil and gas leasing for months, with an eye toward making that permanent until the courts intervened. They have refused to implement the law when it comes to the 1002 area of ANWR. They are taking millions of acres out of leasing in our NPR–A. They have stalled projects and rejected pipelines, which, of course, are the safest and cleanest ways to move energy to where it is needed. As energy prices have risen, the Biden administration has gone to OPEC to ask them to just produce more.

Just as our allies and partners around the world realize they need and

they want our energy, the administration has halted Federal investment that helps facilitate overseas LNG terminals.

I have suggested that the President and his team really ought to be thankful that the provisions in Build Back Better that target the domestic oil and gas industry did not go through because they would have only made the situation worse.

If there were ever a moment for energy realism, it is right now. The Biden administration and many here in Congress need to recognize the immense benefits of American resource production here at home and for the rest of the world, and they need to see clearly the immense consequences of refusing to allow those activities to proceed.

I will just add one further point here. If Russia can leverage Europe on Ukraine over natural gas, China can do the same to the United States on Taiwan over minerals. We are deeply, deeply dependent on China, and they are well aware they can inflict massive economic consequences by cutting off our access to a range of raw materials and components.

We have to address this weakness through every option we have available to us. We certainly have opportunities in my State of Alaska for mines and mine access projects to help address this very real situation with our minerals.

None of us know exactly what will happen in Ukraine. We pray for deescalation. We take some solace from the continuation of diplomatic talks. But almost no one believes Russia is just going to walk away. All I can think is that we have to find ways to make it not worth it for Russia. Every little bit we can do to make this painful for Russia to prevent the loss of life, to punish this behavior, to call out its unwillingness to be a responsible global actor—all we can do at this point is necessary.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SINEMA). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SPECIAL COUNSEL DURHAM COURT FILING

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor to give you an example of some of the hypocrisy that goes on in this town.

On February 11, last week, Special Counsel Durham made another filing with respect to the case against Clinton campaign lawyer Michael Sussmann.

I have spoken to my colleagues before to discuss Special Counsel Durham's findings in this matter. Today, I want to highlight new evidence that has come with this filing.

Special Counsel Durham's filing said that at trial, his team will establish that a firm tied to the Clinton campaign misused internet traffic pertaining to four entities: a healthcare provider, Trump Tower, a Donald Trump apartment building in New York, and the Executive Office of the President of the United States.

The Clinton campaign essentially spied on the Trump campaign. After Trump was elected, the Clinton campaign's work continued.

Now, how did they do it?

According to Special Counsel Durham, the Clinton campaign worked with cyber researchers to infiltrate private and government servers connected to Donald Trump. Their main conduit was Tech Executive–1.

In July 2016, according to Special Counsel Durham, ''Tech Executive–1 also enlisted the assistance of researchers at a U.S.-based university who were receiving and analyzing large amounts of Internet data in connection with a pending federal government cybersecurity research contract.''

In addition, Tech Executive–1 had access to dedicated servers for the Executive Office of the President as part of a ''sensitive arrangement.'' This individual ''exploited this arrangement . . . for the purpose of gathering derogatory information about Donald Trump.''

According to Special Counsel Durham, the Clinton campaign through Tech Executive–1 abused ''non-public and/or proprietary Internet data.''

One question that needs to be answered is whether any of this exploited information and data included classified information.

The available facts show that the Clinton campaign abused Federal Government contracts to exploit government information to use against Trump. If the Republicans did the same thing, we all know you wouldn't hear the end of it. The Democrats and media would want another impeachment of Trump.

All of these outrageous acts were done to create fake connections between Trump and Russia. That included the fake Alfa Bank narrative. That narrative centered on allegations that Trump had a secret communications channel with the Russian bank. It was all fabricated by the Clinton campaign. There was nothing to it.

And let's not forget that Jake Sullivan spread the fake Alfa Bank narrative, and he spread it far and wide. Sullivan is now President Biden's National Security Advisor. He needs to answer for his role in this entire fiasco.

Even the Obama administration's servers communicated with the same Russian servers that were apparently the basis of the false Russia connections. Now, just think how ridiculous this rollout was. With this so-called evidence against Trump in hand, on February 9, 2017, Sussmann provided updated allegations to an unnamed U.S. Government Agency. Of course, he left out the Obama administration connections.

Some of those allegations included that Trump and his associates used rare, Russian-made wireless phones near the White House. Durham said that there was no evidence of that.

But some evidence is very, very clear. During the election, the Clinton campaign spied on the Trump campaign. After Clinton lost, the Clinton campaign spied on the Trump administration. And they did it by abusing Federal Government contracts; and they did it by abusing their access to government information.

Trump has repeatedly said that the Clinton campaign spied on his campaign. The mainstream media either ignored him or called him a liar.

Based upon Special Counsel Durham's filings, Trump, it turns out, was right.

The Clinton campaign, mainstream media, and the Democratic Party did whatever they could do to destroy Trump, no matter the cost to the truth or the cost to the country.

The House Democrats, with the backing of corporate media, set up the January 6 Commission to investigate what they termed the Big Lie.

Where are those on the January 6 Commission when it comes to investigating the Big Lie where the Clinton Campaign worked with the sitting Obama administration and taxpayers' money in trying to destroy their political opponent?

That is just as dangerous to our democracy.

As I conclude my remarks, lets come to grips with this absolute fact: The Clinton campaign's conspiracy of dirty tricks set in motion a chain of events that have ripped this country apart for years.

So much for a peaceful transition to power.

Now, what is disturbing to me about the hypocrisy in this town is that we have the First Amendment, freedom of press, where I see journalists as keeping government honest, and I don't see the people that knew that they were wrong about this issue for 4 or 5 years willing to admit that now they haven't done their job properly.

And a lot of things that made government dishonest—and I just told you how this was done—don't seem to be worried about policing the political system the way they should.

I haven't seen anybody apologize.

I did see a rerun of something that happened October 2020 within the last couple of days, an interview between one of these journalists and President Trump where President Trump was trying to tell people that this stuff was going on, and they said, No, there is no proof of it. There is no proof of it.

Are they saying today there is no proof of that?

I think we all know that Trump wasn't in government. Maybe he even lacked some understanding of how the political system works, but he came to town to challenge the elite that are inside the beltway and change things.

And somebody knew that he was up to that, and they wanted to stop him from doing it; so they spied on the campaign so he wouldn't be elected. And once he was elected, they spied on the Executive Office to see what they could do.

I remember a story that a friend of mine told me about talking to some Democratic Senator in February of 2017, who told that friend of mine that Trump would not be President by the end of that year of 2017. Now, whether that Senator knew what he was talking about, I don't know; but I reflect back on that conversation I had with that friend, and I wondered if they really thought that by doing what we know now they were doing, that they were going to be able to get him out of office before the end of 2017. So I give you a little example of what I call hypocrisy in this city.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about the economy.

You know, right now, inflation is at a record high. At the same time, what we are seeing is that Joe Biden's approval rating by the people all across this country is at a record low. And there is a connection.

This morning, the majority leader came to the floor of the Senate and said that Democrats were going to talk about inflation at their policy lunch today—today, February 15, 2022—13 months after Joe Biden took office.

Democrats have been in power for almost 13 months. They control the White House. They control the Senate. They control the House of Representatives. Ten months into this inflation crisis, what they are doing is putting forward gimmicks, not solutions.

They want to get past the upcoming election. They don't want to get to long-term solutions for our Nation.

On Thursday, the world found out that prices in the United States had risen at their fastest pace in 40 years, and of course that was the same day that Joe Biden's approval rating dropped to 40 percent.

The American people are getting squeezed financially. They are feeling the pain, and they are furious with President Biden. Since Joe Biden became President, wages have gone up slower than prices. Prices have gone up faster than wages. People can't keep up. It is hard to even stay even. As a result, the American family today can afford a lot less than it could the day that Joe Biden took office. Over the last year, inflation outpaced wages by over $1,400. That is an over-$100-a-month differential.

So who gets hurt the worst when your wages fall behind the increasing costs of Joe Biden's economy?

Well, it is families who are struggling; it is young couples; it is people living on fixed incomes; it is people trying to go to work every day to put bread on the table. In other words, the people who are hurt the most are the people who can afford it the least. They are feeling the pain and paying the price every time they go to the grocery store and every time they go to the gas pump.

Big price increases have occurred in energy. CNBC reports that one in five American families couldn't afford to pay the energy bill over the past year. The same number, roughly, kept their homes at an uncomfortable and unhealthy temperature because they can't afford the cost of energy to heat them. Many have had to choose whether they are going to heat or to eat. Gas prices have gone up by over $1 a gallon since Joe Biden became President.

American energy production is still not to the level that it was before the pandemic. We are still producing 1.2 million fewer barrels of oil each day than we were before the pandemic. We are not producing it here, but—oh, by the way—Vladimir Putin is selling 5 million barrels a day of crude oil in the international markets. This is a direct result of the anti-American energy policies of Joe Biden and his entire administration and the Democratic Party in this country. People understand simple supply and demand. When the supply goes down and the demand stays the same or goes up, prices go up as well.

It is also what happened with America's workforce. The Democrats created the worst labor shortage in American history. We have broken records for unfilled jobs in 5 of the last 12 months.

So when did it start?

Well, it started in March of this past year, when Democrats passed their $2 trillion spending bill, which was not paid for and added to the debt, and the bill gave a bonus payment for people to stay home from work. People were getting paid more not to go to work than they were able to make had they gone to work.

What happened when the bonuses ran out?

Joe Biden imposed a national vaccine mandate, saying that if you don't get the vaccine, you lose your job. The vaccine mandate took a sledgehammer to the American workforce. According to one survey, half of America's small businesses couldn't find enough workers in just this past December. If you drive around Wyoming, you will see ''Help Wanted'' signs all around my home State. What happens when you have fewer workers? It means empty shelves and higher prices. When supply goes down, prices go up.

Now the opposite is also true. That is what we have seen with the value of the dollar. Last March, Democrats flooded the country with government cash. Now the dollar, in many people's wallets and pocketbooks, doesn't go as far as it did before.

Democrats passed the largest single spending bill in American history. They put $2 trillion on the Nation's credit card. Republicans warned: Do not do this. It will cause inflation. Democrats didn't listen. Every single Democrat in this Senate voted for it; every single Democrat voted for it; every single Republican voted against it; and Joe Biden signed it.

Since then, prices have gone up faster than wages. First, they said it was going to be temporary. Then, astonishingly, in July, Joe Biden said inflation was expected. He kind of bragged that he had seen it coming all along. Well, if he had seen it coming all along, why didn't he do something about it? All that this President has done is put jet fuel on the fire of inflation. He told us inflation would be transitory, and he said it month after month, after month, after month. He can't say it anymore. Oh, no. Inflation is here, and people are paying the price and feeling the pain.

Last week's inflation report should be a blaring siren to the Democrats in Washington, and I was so happy to hear the majority leader, this morning, saying, finally, today, at lunch, February 15, 2022, that the Democrats were going to start talking about inflation at their policy lunch today. They should all be suffering from significant indigestion.

This is a crisis, and Democrats are doing nothing about it. The Democrats borrowed trillions of dollars this year.

This week, Democrats in the House are talking about getting rid of the debt ceiling completely—of spending more. They are talking about a blank check, unlimited borrowing, and trillions and trillions more in spending, which will only mean higher and higher inflation.

Inflation will not go away on its own. Democrats need to stop the reckless spending. They need to stop the nationwide mandates. They need to stop shutting down American energy. The American people cannot afford any more records like the ones that Joe Biden is setting right now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

NOMINATION OF GIGI SOHN

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I always strive to treat each and every nominee—regardless of party affiliation—with dignity and respect. I evaluate their credentials and make a decision on whether to support them based on their qualifications, their temperaments, and whether they will serve the interests of all of the American people.

That is actually why, in my role on the Judiciary Committee, I have voted for almost half of President Biden's nominees. In my judgment, some were qualified and deserved confirmation, and in my judgment, some weren't. Again, I evaluate each nominee on an independent and fair basis. With this in mind, I hope my colleagues will take seriously what I have to say today.

I rise to speak in opposition to, perhaps, one of the most radical nominees the President has put forward to date.

I am talking about the nomination of Gigi Sohn to be an FCC Commissioner.

Ms. Sohn is exactly the type of radical activist we should avoid confirming to lead any Agency, especially an Agency as critical as the FCC. Her radical activist track record and her out-of-the-mainstream views on everything from free speech to intellectual property indicate to me she will weaponize the FCC against the American people.

Ms. Sohn has made no secret of the fact that she loathes Republicans, conservatives, and any media organization that doesn't share her world view. One need look no further than her deeming FOX News as ''state-sponsored propaganda.'' She has supported State governments and used their power to destroy conservative news outlets. When California's liberal legislature tried to pressure broadcasters into dropping conservative news organizations, she supported—yes, she supported—their effort.

It doesn't stop there. If confirmed, she will have the power to censor conservative media and retaliate against any view that is different from her own.

Worse than her disdain—probably even hatred—for conservative news media, she has also made it clear that she simply detests Republicans as people. She has claimed Senate Republicans are a threat to ''our Republic'' and claimed their ''ideology has overtaken their duty to serve their constituents.'' She even claimed that Republicans can only win elections by ''suppressing the vote'' and destroying democracy.

As someone who won reelection in a State with a nearly 80-percent turnout in the last election, I can tell her that that isn't the case.

As if her disdain for conservative media and Republicans isn't enough, she has also demonstrated she is a radical, anti-copyright activist who will use every lever of power at her disposal to harm America's content creators.

For years, she dismissed the economic harms that our outdated copyright laws have caused content creators. She belittled their demonstrated pain and suffering, and she opposed efforts to fix the failed copyright system. During her time at the FCC as a senior adviser to FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, Sohn championed the FCC's attempt to unlock pay-TV set-top boxes.

This disastrous policy would have destroyed the intellectual property rights of copyright owners to the benefit of big tech companies like Google, and these big tech companies have conveniently funded Sohn over the years.

She has never apologized for this disastrous policy. In a 2016 op-ed, Sohn downplayed any concerns with this proposal by proposing only a hypothetical solution to address them.

Finally, anyone who doubts her radical views on intellectual property need look no further than to the fact that she literally served on the board of directors of a company named Locast, whose sole purpose was to engage in illegal copyright infringement.

Let that sink in.

Gigi Sohn, a longtime anti-copyright activist who worked on policies at the FCC to destroy copyright owners' rights, then subsequently served on the board of a company that made money by infringing on copyright and likely made money from the illegal activity in the process and, not only that, I have real concerns that she appears to be hiding relevant information to the lawsuit. She failed to disclose the fact that the amount of money exchanged by Locast was much lower than the reported $32 million settlement. As an explanation, she stated that she answered the questions within the confines of the settlement agreement.

Playing ''hiding the ball'' while seeking a position of public trust is not acceptable. I believe her nomination would undermine public confidence in the FCC and our government.

If this were any other nominee, especially a Republican nominee, any one of these issues would be enough for my colleagues on this side of the aisle to stand up and ask the President of our party to withdraw the nominee. I hope my Democratic colleagues will review Ms. Sohn's record, just like I have, in a fair and impartial manner, and reach the only reasonable conclusion; that she cannot and must not be confirmed.

I again call on President Biden to withdraw the nomination of Gigi Sohn. If he won't, I hope I can count on 51 Senators to stand with me and make it clear that we won't allow such a radical activist to be confirmed to the FCC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 512

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, for nearly 2 years, the U.S. Capitol Building and Senate offices have been largely closed to the American people whom we serve. Our constituents have been unable to enter the Senate buildings to meet with their representatives, and Americans of all ages, from schoolchildren to seniors, have been deprived of the patriotic sense of wonderment that comes from visiting the hallowed halls of the Capitol Building. The openness of the Halls of Congress and public participation in the legislative process have always been hallmarks of American democracy.

It is long past time for the Senate to reopen its doors to the American people. Thanks to Operation Warp Speed, vaccines have been available for more than a year for those who want them. Americans have learned how to safely gather and enter public places despite the pandemic. Over 70,000 people attended the Super Bowl in Los Angeles on Sunday, in fact. Yet there are reports that some of the leadership in this building want to significantly limit the number of lawmakers who are allowed to attend President Biden's State of the Union Address in just a couple of weeks.

From stores to venues and most workplaces and schools, the rest of the United States has reopened to gatherings and regular business. Shouldn't the Senate, whose buildings belong to the public, do the same? That is why I have introduced a resolution providing that the Senate, first, recognizes the importance of reopening the Capitol and Senate office buildings to the public and, second, supports returning to the pre-COVID visitor policies for areas within Senate jurisdiction. I am pleased that 26 of my colleagues have joined me as cosponsors of this resolution.

Importantly, if there are operational matters that need to be worked out as part of reopening, this resolution provides no obstacle to doing so. It simply states that the Senate supports reopening and recognizes the importance of doing so.

I am asking my colleagues to join me today in support of the access to American democracy and a return to normal life and in opposition to endless pandemic lockdown, and I am pleased to be joined here today by my colleague from Indiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, as ranking member of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee, I rise today in support of the Senator from Tennessee's resolution to reopen the Capitol and the Senate office buildings. As he said, for nearly 2 years, we have not been operating from what I was used to for the short time I had been here prior to that. Governors across the country finally are beginning to do the same thing, even in places where they were almost in lockstep with the way we were doing things here.

Today, you can only enter the Capitol Complex with an escort by a staff member. One of the things constituents from back in Indiana enjoyed most—the senior Senator from Indiana, TODD YOUNG, started it before I got here—was the Hoosier Huddle. From 9 to 10 every Tuesday, every Wednesday, we had folks from all over our State coming into the Capitol so we could have that conversation on issues that were important. Now we do it by Zoom.

The rest of the country is saying: Enough is enough; we want to get back to at least some of the ways that were in place prior to COVID.

Now, Washington lobbyists are allowed in because of their close connections with congressional staff, but the American people don't have that same access, and that is just wrong.

The legislative branch Agencies have continued to provide support to Congress throughout the pandemic. It is time that Congress reopens the Capitol to the American public, including Hoosiers from my home State.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed

to the consideration of S. Res. 512, submitted earlier today. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I object.

As chair of the Rules Committee, with oversight of the security of this Capitol, I share Senator HAGERTY's goal and Senator BRAUN's goal of ensuring that this building is open and accessible to the public. I agree with them that it is important to reopen the Capitol, and I personally can't wait to have my constituents back as well for our Thursday morning breakfasts. But we must do this in a way that takes into account the health and safety of everyone who works here and not just the Senators.

This is a decision for the Capitol Police Board, in consultation with the medical experts in the Office of Attending Physician.

While the worst of the Omicron surge is behind us—and that is such a good thing—they have told us there is still work to do. At the same time—and I think this is one of our challenges as we look at how we are reopening and how we do it, because I think we will end up doing this incrementally, and I hope we can start soon—at the same time, ongoing staffing challenges facing the Capitol Police are an important consideration that must be managed carefully by the Capitol Police Board. The Capitol Police are already stretched thin. More than 130 officers have left the force since the January 6 insurrection last year.

At a Rules Committee hearing that I held with Senator BLUNT just last month, Chief Manger testified that the Department is down 447 officers. Let me repeat that: 447 officers. The officers who remain have had vacations canceled and have worked significant overtime. The Department, as we learned at our oversight hearing—we had two in the last 3 months—has taken steps—and I personally asked about this, Senator HAGERTY, because I care so much about reopening the Capitol—they have taken steps to address these shortfalls, including addressing the number of recruit classes, with the goal of recruiting 280 officers per year for the next 3 years. That is additional officers. The Department has also taken steps to retain officers already on the force, including by issuing retention bonuses and hazard pay.

We took a very important step last summer on a bipartisan basis to provide funding for security improvements at the Capitol and to ensure that the Capitol Police have the resources to do their jobs when we passed the emergency funding bill led by Senator LEAHY and Senator SHELBY that the President signed into law. But, as Chief Manger just said at a public hearing when he explained that we were 447 officers short—which, of course, means who is the at the doors, what doors are open, and what backup do they have—he said we still have a ways to go before he has officers to staff all the posts needed to safely reopen to the public.

So there is still much more work to do. I, for one, am in favor of making changes so we can begin the process of reopening as soon as possible. The Capitol Complex should, of course, reopen so Americans from across the country can visit and see our democracy at work. We are simply relying on the health and security experts to ensure that how and when we do reopen, we do it safely for everyone who works here, including the staff.

For these reasons, Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I greatly respect my colleague from Minnesota, and I have enjoyed working with her on the Rules Committee, but her objection to this resolution provides an unfortunate but clear answer: No, Democrats don't support reopening the Senate.

Hopefully sometime soon, my Democratic colleagues will wake up to the fact that Americans are sick of endless lockdowns and the condescending message that it sends to the American people that they need government to tell them what to do.

With regard to the objection that we need a more measured process in consultation with various officials, I talked to the Capitol Police Chief last week, and we can work with his team and the Sergeant at Arms to address any specific operational issues. We can also work with the Attending Physician. All of that is downstream of the basic question here, which is whether the Senate supports reopening. If the Senate supports reopening, then we can figure out the rest.

Senate leadership sets the policy for the Capitol Building and the office buildings that are under Senate jurisdiction. That is why we have different COVID policies than the House. If it was up to the Attending Physician or the Capitol Police, the policy probably wouldn't change at the midpoint of the Capitol Building, as it does today.

We are the elected officials in the building. We are the ones who were elected to make decisions. We shouldn't dodge that responsibility, and we need to lead by making a clear statement that it is time to reopen the Senate to our constituents. It is unfortunate that many of my Democratic colleagues don't feel the same way. We need to reopen the Senate now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, over the past year, the Biden administration has put out some truly absurd propaganda, but last week, they released something that was so over the top that I had to double-check to make sure that it was real. Yes, of course, it has up here that it was issued February 7, 2 p.m., and it is going to expire June 7 of this year at 2 p.m. It had all the markings of something that was legitimate, but it is so outrageous that I confirmed that it was actually a government-issued document.

Of course, I am referring to the Homeland Security memo that is summarizing the current terror threat to the United States. Under normal circumstances, you would expect a threat assessment to be a helpful document. That is what we have come to expect. But in this case, it wasn't obvious before, but now it is so obvious. It is crystal clear that conventional definitions of the word ''normal'' no longer apply to this administration.

If you have not read this, you will not believe your eyes. What makes it so uniquely infuriating is the ease with which DHS used an official document to equate violent terrorists with Americans who refuse to fall in line with the Biden administration's narrative of the day. They did it so easily, just laying out their case of threat assessments to the United States.

Alongside descriptions of actual violence and threats against churches and schools, DHS warns of ''the proliferation of false or misleading narratives, which sow discord or undermine public trust in U.S. Government institutions.'' The bulletin specifically identifies ''widespread online proliferation of false or misleading narratives regarding unsubstantiated widespread election fraud and COVID–19'' as ''[k]ey factors . . . contributing to the current heightened threat environment.''

Yes, you heard me correct. They identify widespread online proliferation of false and misleading narratives regarding unsubstantiated widespread election fraud and COVID–19.

So let's decode this. They are not just talking about acts of violence committed to achieve a political or an ideological goal; they are talking about dissent. What does DHS suggest someone do if they find themselves menaced in the court of public opinion? They want you to report the offender to law enforcement. That is right—report the offender to law enforcement.

I have come to the floor time and again to detail just how frightened the American people are of Joe Biden's radical agenda, but this bulletin is the best evidence I have seen to date of just how frightened Joe Biden is of the American people. They must be scared to death over there in that White House. How dare anybody question them? How dare anybody call them into question for the agenda that they have? I would even go so far as to suggest that this betrays his administration's desire to police the speech,

thoughts, and opinions of American citizens and to deputize the public to help keep dissenters in line.

The Biden administration is as close as they ever have been to declaring that expressing public disagreement with their agenda is akin to an act of domestic terrorism. Think about this. It isn't just an outrage; it is dangerous for a few different reasons, the most important of which is that it ignores the line differentiating violence and threats from constitutionally protected speech. The former have no place in public discourse. Let me be very clear about that. The former have no place in public discourse. The latter is essential to the functioning of our democracy.

Indeed, this Nation's democracy—one of the reasons we have stayed free and have stayed a democratic republic is because we share respect for robust, respectful political debate. But it appears, with this administration, they have thrown that out the window to say: It is our way or it is the highway. We don't want to hear any dissent. We don't want to hear a point, a counterpoint. We don't want to entertain an objection. We are busy. We are busy pushing our socialist agenda. We don't have time for free-thinking, independent individuals to raise their hands and ask a question. It is ''get in line'' time. We have a short window. We have to make this happen.

I would suggest also that it cheapens the horrors of actual terrorism and dilutes the perceived danger of violent extremism. It is an insult to the memories of those who died in the September 11 attacks and the Oklahoma City bombing and to those who were at gunpoint at a Colleyville, TX, synagogue. But lastly and most despicably, it suggests that Americans will never be safe until we consent to live in a constant state of fear. According to this bulletin, security is impossible in the face of dissent. It betrays a nightmarish and completely un-American end game.

Today, I sent a letter to Secretary Mayorkas urging him to make it clear that this is just sloppy communication on their part.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have that letter printed in the RECORD.

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

FEBRUARY 15, 2022.

Hon. ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS,
Secretary of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY MAYORKAS: On February 7, 2022, the Department of Homeland Security (''the Department'') issued a National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin (''the Bulletin'') that summarizes the current terrorism threat to the United States. Among other terrorism threats, the Bulletin warns of ''[t]he proliferation of false or misleading narratives, which sow discord or undermine public trust in U.S. government institutions.'' The Bulletin specifically identifies ''widespread online proliferation of false or misleading narratives regarding unsubstantiated widespread election fraud and COVID–19'' as ''[k]ey factors contributing to the current heightened threat environment.'' To combat these threats, the Bulletin recommends that Americans report ''potential threats'' and ''maintain digital and media literacy to recognize and build resilience to false or misleading narratives.''

I am concerned about the appearance of the Department of Homeland Security policing the speech, thoughts, and opinions of American citizens. In issuing this Bulletin, the Department of Homeland Security appears to endorse particular narratives regarding controversial issues that are at the center of our national political conversation. By identifying dissenting beliefs as ''[k]ey factors contributing to the current heightened threat environment,'' the Department comes dangerously close to suggesting that publicly disagreeing with the current administration is akin to domestic terrorism. And by associating opinions that deviate from this administration's chosen narrative with terrorism threats—and asking the public to report these ''threats''—the Department of Homeland Security is chilling public discourse across the country.

I urge you to make very clear to the American public that the Department of Homeland Security does not consider those who disagree with this administration to be domestic terrorists. I further urge you to clarify that the Department will not interfere with the rights of all Americans to speak publicly about their political views, including any views that might conflict with the policies and political talking points of this administration.

As the Secretary of Homeland Security, you took an oath to uphold our Constitution. Enshrined in the Constitution is the freedom of speech, and that includes the right to question the government and its preferred narrative. Speech that questions the President's position regarding issues like the COVID–19 pandemic and election law reform falls within the heart of the First Amendment's protections. In fact, the Supreme Court has made it abundantly clear that this kind of ''core political speech'' is ''the primary object of First Amendment protection.'' It is your duty as the Secretary of Homeland Security to ensure that your Department does not interfere with this core protected speech in any way.

To be clear, violence and true threats of violence are not constitutionally protected speech and have no place in our public discourse. There are real threats to the United States, our homeland. and our citizens from malign foreign governments and terrorists. The Bulletin correctly recognized this fact and aptly referenced the January 15, 2022 attack on a synagogue in Colleyville. Texas as an example of the continuing threat of violence that our nation faces. The Department of Homeland Security is charged with protecting Americans from these true threats. The Department should not, however, police the public discourse of American citizens simply because that discourse might ''sow discord or undermine public trust in U.S. government institutions.'' Indeed, robust public debate—including debate that questions the government and its policies—is central to any functioning democracy.

Many Americans have expressed doubts regarding topics like COVID–19 mask mandates and the origins of the COVID–19 pandemic. Many others have voiced frustration regarding state and federal election laws. Whether this administration agrees with these views is irrelevant; the First Amendment protects all of them from government interference. I urge you to revise the Bulletin to make clear to the American public that it is decidedly not the role of the Department of Homeland Security to enforce particular narratives or to quash the speech of those who disagree with this administration.

Sincerely,

MARSHA BLACKBURN,
United States Senator.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I would also like to briefly quote for the record precisely what I asked him to do:

> I urge you to make very clear to the American public that the Department of Homeland Security does not consider those who disagree with this administration to be domestic terrorists. I further urge you to clarify that the Department will not interfere with the rights of all Americans to speak publicly about their political views, including any views that might conflict with the policies and political talking points of this administration. . . . I urge you to revise the Bulletin to make clear to the American public that it is decidedly not the role of the Department of Homeland Security to enforce particular narratives or to quash the speech of those who disagree with this administration.

This is a very simple request. My hope is that Secretary Mayorkas recognizes his obligation to put everyone at ease by fulfilling it.

I can guarantee there are people in my beloved Tennessee who are very upset, as they have read this bulletin, because they treasure their free speech. They treasure the ability to have robust political debate. They like talking with their friends and neighbors and having those discussions and seeing if they can pull them to their side of an issue, whether it is a local, State, or a Federal issue. They want to preserve that freedom.

This memo says that freedom does go away, that it overrides the Constitution, that it overrides the rule of law. If you do it, somebody can report you, and it will be considered something not tolerated by this administration.

The Biden administration put out this bulletin to highlight a particular danger, but the real danger lies in the document's subtext.

Even if Secretary Mayorkas makes good on his oath to defend the Constitution and if he moves forward to revise the bulletin, I fear much damage has already been done. Through this document, the Biden administration has made it abundantly clear that they view dissent as a threat and that punishing dissent is the cost of maintaining public safety.

I wish I could dismiss this as yet another political spat, but the White House is the world's biggest and most powerful bully pulpit. When the Biden administration talks, people listen, and they take them seriously.

If what I have laid out today is not the position of the Biden administration, it is their obligation to speak up and to correct the record. If it is their position, it is our obligation as elected representatives to put ourselves between the American people and any official who would dare tolerate such a dystopian power grab.

Also, we should remind those officials that how they feel about our constitutional right to dissent is absolutely irrelevant.

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.

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

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

NOMINATION OF SARAH BLOOM RASKIN

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I rise today regarding President Biden's nominees to the Federal Reserve. I just came from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, where we met in order to advance an extraordinary group of candidates who were nominated to the Federal Reserve. As our Nation's top economic policymakers, these nominees will be charged with steering our country through one of the most difficult environments the Fed has faced in many years. But Republicans have decided to block any attempt for the Banking Committee to consider this group. Why? Because they object to one of the nominees, whom they have pummeled with particularly desperate attacks.

Professor Sarah Bloom Raskin will bring deep experience to the role of the Fed's Vice Chair for Supervision. During the height of the 2008 financial crisis, she was on the frontlines as the State of Maryland's top financial regulator. As our country slogged through the aftermath of the crisis, Professor Raskin was a Governor of the Federal Reserve, facing difficult policy decisions as she worked to help families rebuild. She then served as Deputy Treasury Secretary, helping to shepherd our Nation through the postcrash economic expansion—an expansion that has turned out to be the longest on record right up until the pandemic struck.

Professor Raskin has unparalleled expertise in both the monetary policy and financial regulatory components of the job. Few people in the entire Nation are as qualified for this role as she is.

Now, I understand that Republicans are launching hysterical attacks on her over climate issues—never mind that her views align with those of the rest of the nominees; never mind that she has a history of sound judgment at the Fed; never mind that community bankers have spoken glowingly of how well she worked with them during a time of great stress; never mind anything.

The Republicans are also launching bad-faith attacks about ethics without the facts to back them up. If we are going to discuss ethics, then let's be clear. Professor Raskin has voluntarily committed to the strongest ethics standards and postemployment limitations of any nominee to the Federal Reserve ever.

In fact, each of these nominees has voluntarily committed to stronger ethics standards, except one—Jerome Powell. That is right—Republicans on the Banking Committee are united in voting for the only one of the five Fed nominees we are considering today who has refused to voluntarily commit to stronger ethics standards. This is particularly hypocritical because Chair Powell is currently presiding over the biggest ethics scandal in the Fed's more than century-long history.

We should recognize these attacks on Professor Raskin for what they are. There is no actual concern about Professor Raskin's ethics or about her extraordinary qualifications. No. These are bad-faith attempts to take down a highly qualified candidate who is committed to actually doing the job of regulating the biggest financial institutions.

Let's be absolutely clear about what is happening here. When President Biden decided to renominate Jerome Powell to run the Federal Reserve, he did so over the objections of myself and others who believe that a Trump Republican who is a lifelong Wall Street banker and whose record clearly demonstrates an allergy to financial regulation is a dangerous choice for the Fed Chair. I lost that argument. And the President instead extended an olive branch to all of the Republicans in this Chamber who urged the Democratic President to let Republican Jay Powell stay on.

What has been the Republican response to that olive branch? They are lighting that branch on fire. The Republican minority is getting their preferred Federal Reserve Chair, a member of their party, but they won't support the President's extraordinarily qualified Vice Chair for Supervision. Instead, the Republicans are smearing her daily with unfounded accusations and ugly innuendo.

Now, they are threatening to break the Senate by using a loophole to blow up the process we all agreed on last year for how to deal with nominees in this closely divided Senate. The Republicans lack the votes to block this nomination from going forward, so now they refuse to participate in the process that they previously agreed to follow in the hopes that they can prevent a nominee with majority support from getting a confirmation vote.

If Republican Senators want to boycott the Raskin nomination, that is their choice, but Democrats are the majority in this body, and we can choose how to respond. Republicans who want to vote against Raskin are free to do so, just as I intend to vote against Powell, but we should not reward this effort to block nominees with majority support from even receiving votes.

Every one of these five nominees of the Fed should move together and should get votes on the floor of the Senate. If Republicans refuse to abide by the spirit of the agreement they made last year, then it is up to the Democrats to enforce it. We need to advance all five of President Biden's nominees to the Federal Reserve, and we need to do it now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, as you know and as my colleagues know, our budget process is finally moving.

I wanted to come down to the Senate floor today to say a few words about the need for disaster relief. I am going to talk about Louisiana but not just Louisiana. Two States in particular come to mind: Kentucky and New York. I hesitate to single out specific States because I don't want to denigrate the needs in other States. We have a number of States that need disaster relief, and the way to address that issue, it seems to me, is in our budget bill.

As you know, Louisiana has, like many of our sister States, suffered many natural disasters throughout our history. My constituents, my people, are very tough. They are very tired, but they are very tough. The reason they are tired is because they have been through a nightmare in the past year and a half—I guess 2 years now. They faced what has felt to me like a nonstop series of hurricanes, of storms, of floods. No matter how many times you have been through a natural disaster, I can tell you, it doesn't get any easier to see your home demolished or to see your home flood or to see your business blown away.

That is why, as we are working out a government budget deal—and I hope we can work out a budget deal—I want to make sure that Washington doesn't forget about my people in Louisiana or forget about the other Americans who, through no fault of their own, have sustained damage from a natural disaster and need a little help.

The storms and the floods that hit Louisiana in the last year and a half are not just a distant memory for many of my people. Louisiana families are going to have to live with the consequences of everything the gulf has been throwing at us for a while. That means broken buildings. That means wrecked homes. That means destroyed businesses. That means debris cluttering the streets. And that doesn't even begin to describe the mental anguish of having a hurricane uproot your life and your livelihood and your kids' education and your ability to go to church on Sunday.

I wanted to remind all of my colleagues today of the litany of catastrophes that have befallen my State. I mention this list not to ask for your pity. Let me say it again. Louisianians are tough. We are tough as a boot. We are tired. But I want my colleagues to understand that I am not talking about a simple rain shower here. My people have been through a lot.

In August of 2020, Hurricane Laura made landfall in Louisiana. Hurricane

Laura destroyed or damaged more than 100,000 homes. Laura leveled or damaged almost every single building—every one—in the city of Lake Charles.

Then came Hurricane Delta right behind Laura in October of 2020. Delta left more than half a million Americans—rather, Louisianians and Americans, of course—without power, not just for a few minutes, not just for a few hours, for days.

That very same month, Hurricane Zeta tore through Louisiana. Zeta caused approximately 400,000 Louisianians to lose power and damaged many of their homes and businesses.

A few months went by, and now we are in February of 2021. A historic winter storm hit my State, froze my State, and 37,000 people lost power.

Now, even when temperatures warmed, we didn't find any relief because that May, historic rainfall soaked parts of my State. By parts, I don't mean a little bitty corner of my State; I mean big parts of my State. The rainfall drenched Lake Charles. Remember, I referenced Lake Charles with respect to Laura, which had already been battered. Twelve inches of rain hit Lake Charles. You know the result. If you get 12 inches of rain in a short period of time, as we did in Lake Charles, you are going to flood; I don't care if you live on Pikes Peak.

Then Hurricane Ida made landfall in August of 2021. Ida was one of the worst hurricanes ever to devastate my State and one of the worst hurricanes ever to make landfall in the United States of America. The only hurricanes that have matched its strength in terms of wind speed are Hurricane Laura and the Last Island Hurricane of 1856. Wind speeds for Hurricane Ida were clocked at well over 100 miles per hour; in some cases, 120, 135 miles per hour. Ida damaged more than 90,000 homes and caused roughly a fifth of all the people in my State to lose power—and I don't mean to lose power for a little while; lose power for days, weeks, months.

We are still catching our breath, as you can tell, but just as we were about to catch our breath, we had another hurricane, Hurricane Nicholas. It hit Louisiana with, depending on the area, between 5 and 10 inches of rain, and that was only a few weeks after Ida.

Now, after all of these floods, after all of these hurricanes, after all of these storms, after all of these catastrophic rain events, after this terrible string of disasters, FEMA is implementing Risk Rating 2.0, a plan that is going to make flood insurance virtually unaffordable for the people of America and for the people of Louisiana.

Louisiana families—again, we are not asking for your pity. We don't want pity in Louisiana. We are proud people. We are tough people. But we are tired, and we pay taxes like everybody else does. And just like some citizens in other States—Kentucky and New York, to name two—we need a little help.

We need to address all of these needs—not just for my State but for the other States that need help—in our budget. If you add up the damage estimates from Hurricanes Laura, Delta, Zeta, and Ida, we are talking about 130,000 homes destroyed. According to estimates from my State back home, from the Governor and the legislature, Louisiana still needs hundreds of millions of dollars to help fix the damage Laura and Delta inflicted on our housing and the small businesses of Southwest Louisiana. Frankly—I mentioned Ida and the severity of Ida—the damages for Ida will probably cost a little more than $2.5 billion.

We in Louisiana have recovered from natural disasters before, and we are going to recover from these, but we are going to need help to rebuild, just like the people from Kentucky are going to need help; just like the people from New York are going to need help; just like the folks, my fellow citizens out West, are going to need help to recover from wildfires.

I fought before to get disaster recovery relief for my people. I don't think I have ever voted against a disaster relief bill to help my neighbors in other States, and I am going to keep fighting. I urge my colleagues not to forget the people in Louisiana and the people of America who have suffered these natural disasters as we work out our budget.

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

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

NOMINATIONS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, something happened today in Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee that I have never seen before in the U.S. Senate.

Three weeks ago, Senator TOOMEY—the ranking member, the senior Republican on the committee from Pennsylvania—Senator TOOMEY and I agreed that there would be a committee vote today for six nominees: Sandra Thompson, who would be head of the FHFA; Lael Brainard, Vice Chair at the Federal Reserve; Jay Powell, the Chair—sitting Chair, who has been nominated, to confirm him as the Chair; and then three new members of the Federal Reserve, Sarah Bloom Raskin, who would be Vice Chair of Supervision; also Philip Jefferson; and Lisa Cook.

This would be the—I think the best qualified, most diverse in terms of gender and race, but also most diverse Federal Reserve in terms of knowledge and perspective because one of the most poignant, I think, legitimate, criticisms of the Fed is how sort of the Federal Reserve has always kind of looked like me, except they think like Wall Street.

And this is the first time where I have seen a Federal Reserve with the breadth of knowledge. There is a—the President wants to appoint a gentleman who grew up right near RFK Stadium in a poor part of Washington, who now is a dean at a southern school; another, a woman from a small town in Georgia, who is now at Michigan State; a former bank regulator and Federal Reserve Governor and also was No. 2 at Treasury; in addition to the two Federal Reserve members, Lael Brainard would be elevated to Vice Chair and Jay Powell.

That is just all background to show, Mr. President, the diversity and the breadth and the depth of these five members. And they would bring a perspective on our economy that matters to your voters in Connecticut and mine in Ohio; that they don't have this lean towards Wall Street. They don't have this sort of singular view of the Federal Reserve. They understand that the Federal Reserve should look at the economy through the eyes of workers.

We have a chance right now to appoint a Federal Reserve Board—the seven members of the Board—that really will put workers at the center of our economy. We really haven't had that. We have a President who does that now, I think we have a Senate that increasingly does that, and that will mean that we will pay—the Federal Reserve will pay attention to wages, the Federal Reserve will fight inflation. That is their job. They will do a number of things that will matter to our economy.

Now, this would be the first time that there would be a full complement of seven governors on the Federal Reserve. It is a seven-member board. President Trump never filled all seven of those jobs. President Obama, at the end of his term, tried to and didn't quite get there. So this would be the first time in a decade.

And what makes that important is that their job—they are tasked with fighting inflation.

We know part of the reason for inflation is the excess profits in the oil industry, the excess profits among the meat packers, the excess profits among the shippers and companies that are really taking advantage of shortages and taking advantage of the pandemic. We know that drives inflation. And we also know that some of our best tools are the Federal Reserve to fight inflation.

So what I said earlier, I have never seen something happen like happened today.

Three weeks ago, Senator TOOMEY and I, as I said, agreed to have this vote for these five nominees to the Fed and also the nominee for the Federal Housing Finance Agency and do those all together today. We agreed three weeks ago.

Senator TOOMEY didn't like the answers from Sarah Bloom Raskin. He said: I don't like the way she answered.

And how this works—for people that aren't in the Senate and do this every day—how this works is, after a hearing,

Senators on a committee can simply write questions. It is called QFR—questions for the record—that they didn't get to ask in their 5-minute slots in committee.

Well, Republicans, led by Senator TOOMEY, sent almost 200 questions to Sarah Bloom Raskin. It is clear Republicans don't want her. She has been too strong standing up to Wall Street, too strong speaking out about climate in the role that the Federal Reserve has in assessing risk based on climate in loan—in lending decisions of the Fed. She is not allocating credit or telling banks whom to lend to, she is just saying we should assess risk.

For instance, you don't—it is not really very good policy to loan—to write a loan for somebody in a flood plain when they have had hurricane damage year after year after year after year and to loan a lot of money for a business. I mean, things like that that the Federal Reserve needs to assess—the banks need to assess the Fed needs.

So what happened today is Senator TOOMEY, because he didn't like Sarah Bloom Raskin's answers—as I said, he sent almost 200 letters. She answered 200 letters from Senator TOOMEY and his colleagues in 48 hours, and then another Senator—another Republican Senator sent her several more letters, and she answered those—several more questions, and she answered those when she didn't have to. So she lived up to her side of the agreement and then some.

And so Senator TOOMEY didn't like her answers, so he pulled away every Republican member from our committee. So when we met today at 2:15, as planned for 3 weeks, as noticed by the committee officially about a week ago, no Republican showed up.

And maybe that wouldn't matter, except the Senate rules are you have to have one Republican at least show up. You need 13 members of the committee to conduct business. So we had 12 Democrats sitting in the room, and the other side of the room was empty; and we couldn't take action.

So what that means is we now have Jay Powell, Chair of the Federal Reserve—nominated to be Chair of the Federal Reserve, sitting, waiting; we have Lael Brainard, Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve, nominated, sitting and waiting; we have three people who aren't even on the board of the Federal Reserve yet—Sarah Bloom Raskin and Lisa Cook and Philip Jefferson—who are just in abeyance. And maybe it doesn't matter about the three of them. They are public servants; they chose to do this. What does matter is the Federal Reserve Board only has four people on it now, and I don't know when we are going to fill it because Ranking Member TOOMEY and the other 11 Republicans on the board have decided that they don't want to show up and do their job.

I mean, when we come to the Senate—I think the Senator—the Presiding Officer, the junior Senator from Connecticut, knows this—you aren't given a little sheet that says here is what you do here. You vote yes—check the box yes, no, or I don't think I am going to work today. I think I am going to boycott a vote. That is not what you do. You vote yes or no. They have full rights to vote no and oppose these nominees—I assume they will oppose some of them—but they really don't have the right to just decide: I am going to take my ball and go home; that I am not going to work today; that we are going to boycott this vote.

So we all took an informal vote. All 12 of us voted—well, 11 of us voted for all 6, 1 of us voted for 5 of 6—and would have confirmed them overwhelmingly if Republicans had shown up and split their votes or whatever they would have done.

You know, it is just too bad. It breaks my heart. That is not how we have ever done things in the Banking, Housing Committee. I don't argue our committee is always bipartisan; it is not. But I do argue that most of the—pretty much all of us pretty much all the time, show up and cast votes and do our jobs.

I see there are new pages here on both sides of the aisle. This is the beginning, I think, of their second week. And, you know, I am sure they have learned from their textbooks, their college books. I am sure they watch us here and they think: Well, you know, I don't really like that Senator much or—he's kind of a nice guy, but he votes whatever. But they also know we take positions. You vote yes; you vote no.

And the last thing, and then I will yield the floor, is I have heard so many Republican Members talk about inflation day after day after day, and it is a problem we have to address. It is a problem we absolutely have to address. And they, of course, blame President Biden for everything, and that is OK. I expected that.

But they talk about inflation, but then at a time when we actually could address the problems with inflation, one of the most important tools in the Federal Government to address inflation is the Federal Reserve. And the Federal Reserve—seven members of the Federal Reserve sit with the 12 Fed presidents from around the country and they make decisions on monetary policy and they debate and discuss with a wide perspective of voices and a wide array of voices.

That is just not going to happen until they decide let's vote on these five members of the Federal Reserve.

So I wanted to inform my colleagues of that. Twelve of us showed up today, and 12 members didn't. They didn't have a really good reason except they don't like the answers that one of the Fed nominees gave, and that is simply not a good reason to refuse to do your job.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, for three decades, the Violence Against Women Act has been at the forefront of our efforts to support victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This legislation provides survivors with access to programs and resources that promote safety and healing. It bolsters our criminal justice response through protections for survivors and provides critical training for law enforcement officials. It prioritizes programs and grants to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault from occurring in the first place.

I have been a longtime victims' rights advocate, dating back to my time as attorney general of my State, and I am a proud supporter of the Violence Against Women Act.

And I think that is a common sentiment in this Chamber. Republicans and Democrats alike agree we must do more to provide services and protection for victims of domestic violence, even though we don't always agree on just exactly what those changes should look like.

Unfortunately, like many good bipartisan ideas, this became a political football over time. When the time came to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act in 2019, it was dragged through the gutter of Washington politics. Some of our friends across the aisle prioritized controversial partisan provisions over sound bipartisan policy. They even opposed a short-term reauthorization of the existing law when we couldn't agree. Ultimately, the Violence Against Women Act expired.

Here is the good news: For 3 long years, a bipartisan group of our colleagues has continued to work on a longer term reauthorization, and for a while it looked like we were making good progress.

Our friend from Iowa, Senator ERNST, is an unshakable advocate for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and she has led efforts on this side of the aisle to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. She has worked with a bipartisan group of Senators to come up with something that is acceptable to both sides, but they have never been able to move past the controversial sticking points until now. Apparently, the tides have shifted, and I am grateful for that. After 3 years of waiting, we have seen real progress on efforts to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

Last week, a bipartisan group of Senators introduced legislation to extend and modernize that legislation, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of that. Senator ERNST from Iowa and Senator MURKOWSKI, our Alaska colleague, have

led this effort on the Republican side, and I want to commend our colleagues for their leadership. They have put in countless hours over the last few years to reach this compromise. Obviously, it was not easy. The fact that this bill already has more than 20 bipartisan cosponsors speaks volumes about their success.

We couldn't have gotten to this point without the dedication of our friend, the senior Senator from California, Senator FEINSTEIN, who has been engaged in these discussions from the beginning. I appreciate the hard work that she and Senator DURBIN, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, have put into this bill and their willingness to make sensible compromises so we can, hopefully, get this signed into law without further delay.

Like all legislation, this bill is not perfect, but as the saying goes, you can't let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

Throughout the negotiating process, I have raised concerns about some of the provisions, and I have seen our colleagues work in good faith with us to address many of those issues. There is no question, in my mind, that this is a good bill that will go a long way to modernize the Violence Against Women Act and ensure that it continues to serve survivors.

The VAWA Reauthorization Act extends this legislation through 2027 and builds on the advancements made in previous reauthorizations. It improves access to services, especially those in rural communities with fewer resources. It promotes partnerships with law enforcement and victim services organizations to provide victim-centered training for law enforcement officers. It improves grants that help school-based professionals connect students with victim services, and it strengthens existing campus grant programs for colleges and universities. It establishes a pilot program to support domestic violence victims seeking employment. It takes aim at relatively new threats, including cyber crimes, by establishing a national resource center on cyber crimes against individuals.

This legislation also invests in a broad range of grant programs, trainings, and resources to support survivors of domestic violence and prevent similar crimes from occurring in the future.

I am glad this legislation includes provisions from a number of bipartisan bills that I have introduced with colleagues here in the Senate.

One example is a bill that the Presiding Officer will appreciate, which I introduced with Senator COONS, called the NICS Denial Notification Act.

If someone attempts to purchase a gun—in other words, they lie about their legal qualification to purchase a gun—but is denied when the NICS background check system comes back with a hit, indicating that they are disqualified for one of a variety of legal reasons, right now, local law enforcement is not notified that somebody tried to buy a firearm and lied about it and was denied access to that firearm because of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

Under current law, Federal officials are notified when individuals, including convicted felons and domestic abusers, fail a background check, but they are not required to notify State and local law enforcement—the people in the best position to actually be on the lookout for people who may be a danger to their communities and to themselves.

This legislation will change that. This legislation will require the Department of Justice to notify the relevant State and local authorities within 24 hours of a failed background check.

Now, there are some organizations that are disparaging this particular provision. They are basically misrepresenting what it does. So I want to be clear about what it does do.

What it does do is address somebody who lies in the course of filling out a background check, indicating that they are not disqualified, only to find out, when checking the system, that they, in fact, are. Obviously, these folks are up to no good if they are lying about their ability to purchase a firearm under current law. It just makes sense, in addition to Federal officials being notified of convicted felons and domestic violence abusers, that State and local law enforcement be notified as well. This notification would include the name of the individual as well as when and where they attempted to purchase a firearm. This information gives law enforcement the ability to investigate and intervene before a potentially deadly attack occurs. It should set off all sorts of alarms when a convicted felon or domestic violence abuser lies when attempting to purchase a firearm.

The Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act also includes legislation that I introduced with Senator DURBIN, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is called Supporting Access to Nurse Exams Act.

Sexual assault nurse examiners, known as SANEs, are on the frontlines of our fight to support victims of sexual assault. These are the nurses who perform the forensic examinations on rape victims and who help to identify and convict sexual offenders.

This provision improves an existing grant program that funds sexual assault forensic exam programs. We don't have enough of these SANEs, or nurse examiners. This bill will put more money into the field in order to train more of these SANEs, to provide for their salaries, and to increase access in areas of the country that need SANEs more, particularly in rural areas.

These men and women are crucial to our efforts to deliver justice, and this is an important step we can take to address the nationwide shortage of sexual assault nurses.

Over the years, the Senate and the Congress have done a lot to eliminate the rape kit backlog, which at one point totaled a reported 400,000 in backlog rape kits. These rape kits are forensic examination kits that contain DNA, which is so essential in identifying the perpetrators of sexual assault and which has the miraculous ability—or seemingly miraculous ability—to actually exonerate some people who may be misidentified through visual identification.

It also helps, over a period of a long time, to identify people who may have evaded prosecution because of the statute of limitations. Many of these individuals who commit these sexual assaults will do so on a serial basis. So once we have been able to identify them through successful rape kit evaluations, we can bring them to justice.

Once again, I want to commend Senators Ernst and Murkowski for their tireless efforts, on behalf of victims nationwide, to get us to this point.

The Violence Against Women Act has changed the lives—improved the lives, actually—of countless survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. So it is time for us to come together and reauthorize this crucial program.

I am proud to support this legislation, and I hope Senator SCHUMER, the majority leader, can find time to put it on the Senate's calendar and vote it out without delay.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING LELAND CHRISTENSEN

Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, I am just profoundly sad and also humbled and proud to honor the memory of a cherished son of Wyoming. More than anything, I rise to honor my longtime friend Leland Christensen.

Leland was most recently State director for my U.S. Senate office. Truly, his death cuts me to the depths of my heart. I have known Leland for decades, and there are few losses in my life that I have ever felt as deeply as this one. Leland was all Wyoming. He was tough as nails, endlessly patient, and unwaveringly kind.

Prior to his time in my office, Leland served the people of Wyoming and our great Nation in a number of roles. He was formerly a member of the Wyoming National Guard; a sheriff; a county commissioner for Teton County; a State senator and chair of our State senate's Judiciary Committee; a deputy director of the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security; and, of course, most recently, State director for our U.S. Senate office.

When I was elected to the U.S. Senate, I knew I needed Leland on my

team because he loved Wyoming people. He loved to help his fellow man. He cared about the challenges faced by our State and its people. His smile would light up every room, and his laugh was infectious. He was a joy to be with. He was my dear friend.

He even guided my daughter and me into the Teton wilderness, along with his own family, on horseback to Hawks Rest, the most remote place in the lower 48 States—in tents, in the rain, fishing, with mules, panniers, packs. It was an incredible experience. We also floated the Snake River together, with Leland at the helm of his own raft.

His knowledge and skill had a timeless quality to them. He rescued people in swollen rivers. He rescued their horses. He searched for people in wilderness areas because he knew the wilderness areas like the back of his hand.

He was a totally unique human being. His knowledge and skill were so timeless, he would have thrived and excelled had he lived 200 years ago just as surely as he did in the 21st century, where he skillfully navigated legislation, people issues, computer issues, and listened to endless books on tape while he traveled all over Wyoming. He was a timeless, wonderful individual.

I can honestly say I never worried about whether my team was taking care of the needs of my constituents in Wyoming because I always knew that Leland was watching. He always made sure that anyone who needed help with a Federal Agency was assisted and that our team was doing everything possible to help them resolve their problems. By every estimation—certainly by my estimation—he was 10 feet tall and bulletproof.

But, in His own good time, God calls all His children home to be of service there. Leland was prepared for his service in Heaven each and every day throughout his entire life in Wyoming. I can remember Leland praying before a meal out in the wilderness with such gratitude that you had heard a sermon in gratitude by the time he was done offering grace over a meal.

I have talked a lot about Leland as a public servant and a friend, but he was first and foremost a loving and devoted father and husband. I am mourning his loss with his wife Anita; children Hunter, Brittany, Simone, Jed, and Wyatt; their spouses; and his grandchildren.

My staff and I, many of whom are here today joining me in this Senate Chamber, along with the entire Wyoming community, tens of thousands of whom knew Leland and loved Leland, are all praying for Leland's family. Words cannot truly convey the loss that we as a team feel since Leland passed away.

I have worked with hundreds of colleagues, many of whom I have cared for very much, but rarely do I come across someone whose sincere humility, generosity, and selflessness come close to those of Leland Christensen. Every day spent with Leland was a better day. He was the definition of both ''civil servant'' and ''statesman.''

On behalf of the people of Wyoming, I want to say thank you for his service to our State and our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I overheard some of my colleagues here on the Senate floor complaining about what happened at the Senate Banking Committee today, and I want to address this, set the record straight, and provide a little historical context, which I think is important.

Last week, the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, Chairman BROWN, indicated that he wanted to have votes on six nominees within the Banking Committee jurisdiction. Five were to be Governors of the Federal Reserve—they had been nominated to Federal Reserve posts—and one was the Director of the FHFA.

Now, I told the chairman last week that as far as Republicans on the committee were concerned, we were perfectly fine proceeding to votes on five of the six. Five of the six nominees we were ready to have votes on. Those five included the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Jay Powell; Vice Chair Lael Brainard; nominee Professor Lisa Cook; nominee Professor Philip Jefferson; and the nominee to be the Director of the FHFA, Sandra Thompson. All of those, we were fine with a vote.

By the way, some of those nominees have significant Republican support. At least one, I think, has no Republican support on the committee, but that didn't matter. We were prepared to go and vote on these nominees.

But the sixth nominee whom Chairman BROWN wanted to have a vote on was Sarah Bloom Raskin, and I told him then—this was like last Thursday—that she had chosen not to answer quite a number of important questions that we had. That is the normal part of the vetting process that a committee goes through when there is a nominee. In particular, she chose not to answer questions about a highly unusual transaction that occurred at a company on whose board she sat after she left her position as a Governor at the Fed and then a senior Treasury staffer.

Chairman BROWN said he would help us get answers to these questions, but we have been stonewalled. We were stonewalled before. We have been stonewalled since. So, today, I informed the chairman that it is the view of the Republican members of the committee that we can still go ahead and vote on the five.

I have heard them talk about how important it is that we populate the Fed with Governors. Four out of the five nominees we were prepared to vote on are Fed Governors. We could have had that vote already. We could have that vote tonight. We could do it tomorrow. There is no problem with that. But rather than advance five nominees through the committee, Chairman BROWN decided he would rather have zero, so we are at zero. That is his choice. We could have had five advance through the committee.

You have to ask yourself, why would it be so important to my Democratic colleagues that we forgo the opportunity to move five along the process if it means that, for now, Sarah Bloom Raskin doesn't get a vote for what, by the way, would be a 10-year term on the Fed? And there is only one plausible explanation for why they would be willing to leave all these vacancies when they could go down the road through the process of filling these vacancies. Apparently it is because getting a climate warrior into this spot on the Fed Board of Governors—specifically, the Vice Chairman of Supervision; that is the spot for which Sarah Bloom Raskin has been nominated—getting her there must be the most important thing. In fact, it must be more important than getting all five of the other people confirmed because that is the decision they made today.

So then you have to ask yourself, why would it be that important? Why would it be so important to get Ms. Raskin in this spot at the Fed? Well, again, I think it is pretty clear what is going on here, and that is that our Democratic colleagues have a climate agenda for which they don't want to take responsibility. We are seeing this manifest itself. It is the energy policy of this majority, the Democratic majority and this administration, that has contributed significantly to this huge surge in energy prices. It is kind of causing a panic over there because the American people don't really enjoy paying $5 a gallon or more for gasoline. They are not looking forward to a 20-, 30-, 50-percent increase in the cost of heating their homes. They are not in favor of the policies that our Democratic colleagues advocate, which is to shut down pipelines, ban drilling, make sure we make less energy, make sure we produce less oil and gas, the energy we need for our daily lives, because when you do produce much less, prices go up. The American people are not that enthusiastic about this.

So for our Democratic colleagues, it is a bit of a dilemma, right? How do you satisfy the climate warriors who absolutely want much higher prices, absolutely want to shut down energy production—but how do you do that without getting crosswise with the voters who really don't think that is a good idea? How could you balance that?

Well, there is a way to do it. Just shirk your responsibility and put it on the Fed. Perfect. Don't deal with legislation. Don't let the American people know what you want to do. And certainly don't take responsibility for the consequences of your actions. Let the Fed do it. And then if the Fed does these policies and prices go through the roof, blame them. It is perfect.

And, lo and behold, we have the nomination of Sarah Bloom Raskin. She has very impressive credentials. She is

very smart. But she has also told us exactly what she wants to do. She has told us repeatedly. She has told us in speeches. She has written op-eds. She has written articles, right up through last year, where she has specifically and forcefully advocated that we use the supervisory powers of the Fed, which are enormous, to steer capital away from fossil fuel energy companies and steer it toward politically favored industries. So, in other words, turn the Fed into a body that allocates capital, turn the Fed into a policymaking arm of the government.

It is a shocking notion that the Fed, which is supposed to be responsible for monetary policies, supposed to be responsible for stable prices and full employment, hasn't been doing such a great job on the stable prices front, by the way.

What they want to do is have the Fed take on this whole new—it is perfect, from their point of view. It is a way to advance this climate agenda without having to take responsibility for it.

That is the reason that I am strongly opposed to Sarah Bloom Raskin serving as the Vice Chair for Supervision on the Fed. But that is not the reason that every Republican agreed that it would be premature to vote on her candidacy today. So the reason for that is because she refuses to answer questions. It was very difficult getting a complete—I don't know if we even now have a complete application from her. There were things dribbling out that should have been presented as a complete package much earlier in this process. But now she has refused to answer very fundamental questions, especially about a firm called the Reserve Trust and her role there.

So let me walk through, briefly, the sequence of events, and I think you will see why we have got some questions. Reserve Trust is a fintech company. It is based in Colorado. And like many fintech companies, they decided it would be enormously valuable for them to have direct access to the Federal Reserve's payment wires. To get that access, they applied for something that is called a master account.

Well, to my knowledge, the Fed has never approved a master account for a fintech company of this nature. And so unsurprisingly, the Fed turned down the application by Reserve Trust for a master account.

Then Sarah Bloom Raskin, who is on the board of Reserve Trust—she had been a Fed Governor and she had worked in a senior post at Treasury and then she joined the board of Reserve Trust. Well, after the application got turned down, Sarah Bloom Raskin called the president of the Kansas City Fed and lobbied for them to get the account.

Now, how do I know that? Well, it is because the president of the Kansas City Fed told me. But Sarah Bloom Raskin hasn't. When asked the question, ''Did you call anyone at the Fed on behalf of the Reserve Trust,'' she seemed to have developed a case of amnesia—couldn't recall. That is funny. The person who received the call remembered. And the chairman of the board of Reserve Trust knew all about this call. But Sarah Bloom Raskin had no recollection.

So what happened next? So they applied for the master account; it is turned down; Sarah Bloom Raskin calls the Fed; and then within months, the Federal Reserve does a 180-degree turn, reverses itself, and approves the transaction. A few months after that, Sarah Bloom Raskin steps down from the board and pockets $1.5 million in stocks that she had been granted.

All right. About that sequence of events, I don't think there is anybody that disputes the factual accuracy. What we want to know is, how did this happen? Because now the Reserve Trust is the one fintech in America that I am aware of that got a master account at the Fed. It is enormously valuable, at least it is to them. You should see the advertising they do about it. They were turned down. And then it was all approved.

So I think we have a responsibility to find out how did that 180-degree reversal by the Fed take place? How was that decision taken? Who made that decision and why? And we have asked for the documents that would substantiate that. An explanation first would be nice and documents to back it up.

We have asked that of Sarah Bloom Raskin. She has told us she doesn't recall whether or why it was important to Reserve Trust to get the master account. That is funny. It seems like it was the most important thing to that company and she was on their board and she made the call. But this is the kind of stonewalling we are dealing with. Can't get answers to basic simple questions: Who did you talk to? When did you talk to them? What was the nature of the conversation?

And from the Fed: What was the review process? What led you to change your conclusion? Do you have a memo from the general counsel laying out the case?

By the way, there are lots of applications out there still pending. There are lots of fintech companies that would love to get the master account that Reserve Trust got. If there is a way to do that legally, I think everybody ought to know what it is so that they can decide whether, as a business matter, they want to pursue that. It is pretty hard for anybody to pursue that when they get stonewalled, as we are getting stonewalled.

It is pretty rich when I hear some of my colleagues come down here and complain that Republicans didn't show up at committee today. This is the only recourse we have when we are getting stonewalled, and we can't get an answer to basic questions—which is our responsibility to get answers to these questions—what else can we do? There is nothing else we can do. We offered to vote on the five nominees who actually did provide answers to the questions in their applications. But as I said, the chairman preferred to have zero people advance today rather than have five.

And it is particularly rich when you consider this. The chairman himself, just in the last couple of years, urged his Democratic colleagues to boycott a Finance Committee markup over nominees that he wasn't satisfied with.

So I think this context is important. And I remind my colleagues, Republicans on the Banking Committee are quite happy to vote on five nominees, including four Fed Governors, but we are not willing to vote for Ms. Raskin until we get some answers to our questions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

REMEMBERING WAYNE STENEHJEM

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the late North Dakota attorney general, Wayne Stenehjem.

Earlier this month, North Dakota laid to rest a dedicated public servant for our great State who was both a colleague and a true friend. Wayne spent over four decades serving the people of North Dakota. Throughout that time, he worked to make our State a better place to live. Moreover, he was a fierce advocate for the rule of law and the rights of North Dakotans.

Wayne was the best at what our State has to offer, having called North Dakota his home for the entirety of his life. He was born in Mohall, ND, graduated from the University of North Dakota, and received his law degree from the University of North Dakota School of Law.

Wayne started his career in public service in North Dakota's State Legislature, where he served for 24 years, first as a member of the North Dakota House of Representatives and then as a member of the North Dakota Senate. He then ran for the position of attorney general and was the longest serving attorney general in the State's history, having held the position for 21 years.

In fact, Wayne and I both ran for State office in 2000, Wayne for attorney general and I ran for Governor. We spent much of the year traveling the State together and, once elected, we were able to start our service in statewide office at the same time. It was a blessing to have my time as Governor and now Senator coincide with Wayne's service as attorney general. This not only provided us with many opportunities to work together on issues important to North Dakotans, it allowed me to get to know him as a friend and to experience his many great qualities.

He was incredibly intelligent. He had a tremendous sense of humor, and he possessed a deep knowledge about a wide variety of subjects, from sports to trivia, to history, to law—you name it. Wayne was one of the most intelligent people I ever met. There is much to miss about Wayne and many great memories to be grateful for.

Wayne is survived by his wife Beth Bakke Stenehjem and son Andrew, along with many, many other loved ones. He had a large family, and he loved them all.

Mikey and I extend our deepest condolences to Wayne's family and all of his loved ones. North Dakota lost a strong advocate for our State, but his legacy will continue on.

Rest easy, Wayne. Thank you for your friendship. Thank you for all that you accomplished.

Mr. President, I yield to my colleague from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I, of course, associate with every word Senator HOEVEN said. I think it is fortuitous we are joined in the Chamber today by the next speaker who came here to talk about something altogether different, but Senator WICKER knew our attorney general, Wayne Stenehjem, maybe longer than I did, actually.

As Senator HOEVEN said, a couple of weeks ago, the good people of North Dakota lost a really good friend. We said goodbye to one of our State's most dedicated and beloved public servants. Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem died unexpectedly and suddenly on January 28, just 1 month after announcing his intention to not seek reelection and retire at the end of this year.

Wayne was, as John said, North Dakota's longest serving attorney general, having been in office since 2001. Prior to this, he was in the State legislature, winning his first election while at the University of North Dakota—a law student at the age of 22 and continuing his service in the legislature for 24 more years.

He gave 46 years of continuous service to the people of North Dakota, and we are just now beginning to comprehend the impact of the significance of all that he did for our State and during those important years.

I first became acquainted with Wayne when he was serving as a State senator, and I was a desk page in the legislature. Our friendship and political collaborations continued during the years as I worked for the North Dakota Republican Party and later held State-appointed and elected offices. In the 9 years I have been in Congress, Wayne has been a valued friend, a trusted advisor, and an invaluable champion of States' rights and the U.S. Constitution.

His work representing North Dakota in State and Federal courts and as a member of the State Industrial Commission was monumental. It positioned our State to be an energy powerhouse and, at the same time, an unwavering steward of our environment. Among the most notable Federal issues that Wayne championed for our State was objecting to the onerous Waters of the United States regulations proposed by the Obama administration. Wayne skillfully led a coalition of 13 States in opposition, resulting in a nationwide stay of that rule. He was also instrumental in procuring a historic stay of the Clean Power Plan from the U.S. Supreme Court. In both cases, he skillfully underscored the rights and the responsibilities of States, while drawing a blueprint for cooperative federalism in environmental policy.

Wayne's servant leadership over the past four decades was woven into countless battles, triumphs, and solutions. An ardent supporter of open records and meetings laws and transparency in government, every public group, including Governor HOEVEN, Public Service Commissioner CRAMER, and anybody in government understood that regardless of the size or the importance of your commission or your committee, we all felt Wayne's scrutiny on behalf of transparency for the people.

He developed innovative ways to crack down on illegal meth production and to better control the opioid epidemic. Human trafficking and domestic abuse issues were also always—always—on the top of his priority list and on his radar. He was a fierce advocate and supporter of law enforcement, the brave men and women who protect the safety of our communities. They all knew that Wayne had their backs.

His work was impressive. Yet Wayne was not a grandstander. He worked quietly and had much more respect for good outcomes than for personal gain and benefit. Wayne smiled all the time. He literally smiled all the time. And on the very rare occasion he didn't, you were probably in trouble, and you probably deserved it, but it was rare. He was a fun-loving person. He knew what to take seriously and what to enjoy. His balance of life is really what I think endeared him to so many people.

Wayne was the same person last month that he was in college, which is his greatest testament, I think, to public service. When you accomplish as much as Wayne did and reach the pinnacle of service as he did and he was the same guy who represented the University of North Dakota in the State legislature 46 years ago, that says it all about his character and about Wayne's stature.

Recognized among the very elite attorneys general in the country, the Nation's 36 current and former attorneys general who attended his funeral in Bismarck, speaks volumes about the high regard to which he was held by his peers.

North Dakota and our Nation have lost a true patriot, and Wayne Stenehjem left an incredible legacy we can all celebrate. He dedicated his life to public service in our State, and our State is a much, much better place because of him. Thousands of people knew Wayne. Thousands more—and really millions—were impacted by Wayne's good work, particularly in the attorney general's office.

In the context of eternity, our life is but a snap of a finger, but in the context of history, Wayne Stenehjem's contributions are massive and longstanding.

On behalf of all North Dakotans, Kris and I send heartfelt sympathy to his wife Beth; his son Andrew; his very, very large extended family; and the legion of dedicated friends and admirers.

As a lifelong Eagle Scout, Wayne was no doubt familiar with the famous scouting adage, ''Leave a place better than when you found it.'' Without a doubt, Wayne left North Dakota and this Nation a better place. May we all be inspired by his lifetime of public service and the profound impact it had on all that is excellent about North Dakota today. Rest in peace, Wayne.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise today during this Black History Month to call attention to two remarkable daughters of the State of Mississippi, two basketball legends: Lusia Harris and Ruthie Bolton. These two Mississippi athletes took women's basketball to new heights. And they continue to inspire countless young girls to follow their dreams in sports.

REMEMBERING LUSIA ''LUCY'' HARRIS

Mr. President, last week, when the Academy Awards announced their nominations, we learned that a New York Times documentary on the life of basketball legend Lusia Harris had been nominated for an Oscar.

This hit documentary has already received nearly 700,000 views on YouTube, where viewers can find it under the name of ''The Queen of Basketball.''

I was certainly thrilled to hear the news of this nomination, and I encourage every American to watch the 20-minute film. It is a story of American grit and determination and the story of an extraordinary Mississippian breaking multiple glass ceilings in the world of sports.

Known by her friends as Lucy, Ms. Harris led an extraordinary life, becoming a three-time national champion and Olympian and the first and only woman officially drafted by the NBA—the first and only woman ever officially drafted by the NBA.

Unfortunately, we lost Ms. Harris, all too soon, last month at the age of 66. Lucy Harris, a Mississippi Delta native, was the 10th of 11 children born to sharecropper parents. As a child, she would stay up past her bedtime watching the basketball greats: Bill Russell, Wilt Chamberlain, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Oscar Robertson. In her words, ''I wanted to grow up and shoot that ball just like they would shoot it, and I did.''

At a towering height of 6 foot 3 inches, Lucy became a superstar at Amanda Elzy High School in Greenwood, MS. When she graduated in 1973, title IX was fresh off the books, opening up options for college basketball.

Lucy was quickly recruited to Delta State University on a scholarship, where she led her team to three consecutive national championships as the

team's only African-American player. As she put it:

When I got the ball, I knew my job was to score. And more than likely, I would score.

Lucy averaged 25.9 points per game and 14.4 rebounds while she was at Delta State, where the women's game started to sell twice as many tickets as the men's. Her raw talent and leadership lifted the lady statesman to a record of 109 wins and 6 losses during her tenure—109 and 6. And to this day, she remains Delta State's alltime scoring leader with 2,981 point.

It should be no surprise that Lucy was recruited for the 1976 Olympics in Montreal. There, she made history by scoring the first points ever in a women's Olympic basketball game and led Team USA to a silver medal.

If that wasn't enough, the following year, she was recruited by the New Orleans Jazz, a men's basketball team; but by then, she had married her high school sweetheart, George Stewart, and was pregnant with their first child. And so she turned down the chance to play for the New Orleans Jazz.

Instead, she returned to Delta State University, where she served as an assistant coach and earned a master's in education. She later became a high school teacher and girls' basketball coach at her alma mater in Greenwood. And in between, she spent 2 years coaching women's basketball at Texas Southern University in Houston.

Lucy Harris' name is forever written in the history books. In 1992, she became the first Black woman to be inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame and was later ushered into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame and the International Women's Sports Hall of Fame.

She is survived by her children: Christopher, Eddie, Christina, and Crystal, all of whom have won college degrees and who carry on her memory.

If the WNBA had existed in the 1970s, I think we can safely assume Lucy Harris would have continued to dominate the court for many years. She did not get that chance. The WNBA would not come into existence until 1997.

TRIBUTE TO RUTHIE BOLTON

Mr. President, I am proud to say that another daughter of Mississippi, Ruthie Bolton, followed in the footsteps of Lucy and carried the torch forward.

Ruthie Bolton was born 12 years after Lucy Harris, hailing from Green County, MS. She was the 16th of 20 children. Ruthie first dreamed of a career in basketball as a star player for McLain High School, where she led the team to a State championship.

Then she landed a scholarship at Auburn University, where she helped the Tigers to three Southeastern Conference titles and four NCAA tournament appearances.

Ruthie Bolton went on to play 15 seasons of professional ball in Europe, including the country of Turkey, and in the United States, where she played eight seasons for the Sacramento Monarchs.

She also helped Team USA win two gold medals at the Olympics in 1996 and 2000. Ruthie Bolton now stands shoulder to shoulder with Lucy Harris in the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame.

My wife, Gayle, and I had the honor of meeting Ruthie Bolton a few days ago while touring her native Green County, MS. We each got to hold the two gold medals, and Ruthie and I were given the privilege of leading a local lunch crowd in a verse of ''Amazing Grace.''

As we celebrate Black History Month, I am immensely proud to honor these two outstanding Mississippi athletes.

In her Oscar-nominated film, Lucy Harris had this message to the next generation of young Americans. She said:

I especially want those young children to understand that if you work hard . . . anything is possible.

That was the optimistic attitude that made Lucy Harris such a success. Those were great words of advice to our future heroes, words proved true by people like Mississippians Lucy Harris and Ruthie Bolton.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

FURTHER ADDITIONAL EXTENDING GOVERNMENT FUNDING ACT—Motion to Proceed

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 267, H.R. 6617.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 267, H.R. 6617, a bill making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill 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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 267, H.R. 6617, a bill making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Patrick J. Leahy, Gary C. Peters, Jacky Rosen, Amy Klobuchar, Tammy Duckworth, Tina Smith, Tammy Baldwin, Jeff Merkley, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher A. Coons, Brian Schatz, Jon Tester, Jon Ossoff, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine, Alex Padilla.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, February 15, be waived.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate 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.

HONORING STAFF SERGEANT JESSE SHERRILL

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I join today with people across New Hampshire to pay tribute to and honor the life of Staff Sergeant Jesse Sherrill of the New Hampshire State Police. Sergeant Sherrill dedicated 19 years to serving the people of the Granite State with the New Hampshire State Police, before he tragically lost his life while on duty on October 28, 2021.

Raised in Barrington, NH, Sergeant Sherrill began his career in law enforcement with the Hooksett Police Department in 2001. In December 2002, he was hired by the New Hampshire State Police, assigned to patrol in New Hampshire's North Country. He later worked with the Attorney General's Drug Task Force and was promoted to sergeant and then staff sergeant for Troop A, which serves Rockingham and Strafford Counties.

Sergeant Sherrill excelled in each of his roles and was known for his incredible work ethic. He was a mentor to his fellow troopers and was revered for his leadership and his commitment to the success of his peers.

Beyond his career, Sergeant Sherrill always put family first; his family was at the core of everything that he did. He was a loving and supportive husband to Nicole and an incredible father to Peyton and Quinn, transitioning from a pressure-packed day at work to a very present husband and father with surprising ease. Nicole's nickname for Jesse—''Superman''—reflected how much she, his family, and his colleagues respected and admired his ability to do so many things so well.

Sergeant Sherrill was a Granite State hero. He represented the very best of New Hampshire's law enforcement community, serving valiantly to

keep our communities safe, while also going the extra mile to help his family and community with humility and kindness.

Sergeant Sherrill made New Hampshire a better, safer place. I join Granite Staters in offering our deepest support and condolences to his family and to all those who knew him. Sergeant Sherrill is greatly missed, but his legacy is not and will not be forgotten.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ISLAND FALLS, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the town of Island Falls, ME. As one who was born and raised in Aroostook County, it is a great pleasure to celebrate the generations of industrious and caring people who have made Island Falls such a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families.

Incorporated on February 27, 1872, Island Falls is a small town with a rich history. For thousands of years, the west branch of the Mattawamkeag River was the hunting grounds of the Micmac and Maliseet Native American Tribes. Permanent settlement began in earnest when the long-disputed border between the Aroostook region of Maine and British New Brunswick finally was determined in 1842.

The early settlers created a vibrant community. They cleared farmland and, with the river and falls providing power, established lumber and grain mills. The first school, built in 1859, also served as a church and meeting house.

With the river, pristine lakes, and spectacular views of Mt. Katahdin, Island Falls has long been a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts. With William Sewell, the son of one of the first settlers as his guide, young Theodore Roosevelt often visited Island Falls to hunt, fish, hike, and canoe. Bible Point State Historic Site marks the location where the future President would sit in quiet contemplation on his Sunday mornings in Maine.

Today, Island Falls is a premier four-season destination for outdoor recreation. In addition to the activities Theodore Roosevelt enjoyed, it is an ideal place for golf, leaf-peeping, stargazing, and, with an extensive network of well-groomed trails, snowmobiling.

Island Falls is a town of patriots, and a park pays tribute to those who have defended our nation. Among them is Pvt. George F. Robinson, who served with the Maine Eighth Regiment in the Civil War.

While recovering from wounds received in battle, Pvt. Robinson was reassigned as an attendant to Secretary of State William Seward. On the night of April 14, 1865, as the assassination of President Lincoln was being carried out, a coconspirator entered the Seward home and attacked the Secretary with a knife. Pvt. Robinson fought off the attacker and, despite his own stab wounds, helped render the first aid that saved Secretary Seward's life. This Maine hero rose to the rank of major and was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. In 1965, on the centennial of this act of valor, the Maine Legislature renamed Robinson Mountain in his honor.

The celebration of Island Falls' 150th anniversary is not about the passing of time, but about human accomplishment. We celebrate the people who pulled together, cared for one another, and built a great community. Thanks to those who came before, Island Falls, ME, has a wonderful history. Thanks to those there today, it has a bright future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JANE LEE HAMMAN

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I have the distinct honor of recognizing Jane Lee Hamman of Jefferson County as Montanan of the Month for her patriotism and dedication to serving her community, State, and Nation.

Jane's selfless contributions began at a young age when she started volunteering for Meals on Wheels with her parents. Jane also joined her parents in supporting Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the civil rights movement, believing in equal opportunity and advancements for all people based on their character, not the color of their skin. Her life mantra is, ''living to advance freedom, knowledge and justice for all.'' I think I speak for all who know her when I say she truly embraces these ideals.

Jane's love for her country is on full display in her monthly column she writes for the Boulder Monitor newspaper. The goal of Jane's column is to preserve liberty, educate readers about America's vision of the Declaration of Independence, and celebrate our Constitution. She also shares her values of patriotism and volunteerism with others while serving as the lay leader of the Clancy United Methodist Church and as the Oro Fino Chapter Registrar of the Daughters' of the American Revolution. Additionally, Jane has been appointed by Governor Greg Gianforte to the Montana State Board of Education and is the chair for the North Jefferson County Public Library District Board of Trustees.

I have no doubt that her love for the great State of Montana and the United States of America influences every person she meets. It is my honor to recognize Jane for her commitment to serving her community, State, and country while spreading Montana values of service and patriotism.

Keep up the great work, Jane.•

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3076. An act to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, 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–3208. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revised Procedures for the Announcement of Approvals and Denials of Premarket Approval Applications and Humanitarian Device Exemption Applications'' (RIN0910–AI10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3209. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''French Dressing; Revocation of a Standard of Identity'' (RIN0910–AI16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3210. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revocation of the Regulations for Human Tissue Intended for Transplantation and Human Dura Mater'' (RIN0910–AI41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3211. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''New Method for the Analysis of Sulfites in Foods'' (RIN0910–AI02) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3212. 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 ''Prescription Drug and Health Care Spending'' (RIN0938–AU66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3213. A communication from the Senior Advisor, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging, Department of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 14, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3214. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Charter School Programs (CSP) State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants Program'' (RIN1010–AB62) received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3215. A communication from the Director, Office of Labor-Management Standards,

Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Rescission of Labor Organization Annual Financial Reports For Trusts In Which a Labor Organization is Interested, Form T–1'' (RIN1245–AA12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 1, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3216. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Adjustment of Civil Penalties for Inflation'' (RIN1212–AB45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 1, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3217. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Valuation of Benefits and Assets; Expected Retirement Age'' (29 CFR Part 4044) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 20, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3218. A communication from the Section Chief of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Addition of the United States Space Force as a Registration Waiver and Registration Fee Exempt Military Entity'' ((RIN1117–AB70) (Docket No. DEA–749)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 11, 2022; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3219. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and N Supplemental Awards Fiscal Year 2021''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3220. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Comprehensive Opioid Recover Centers (CORC) Program Fiscal Year 2021''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3221. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Secretariat Division, Office of Government-wide Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986, Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustment'' (RIN3090–AK53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2022; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3222. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Secretariat Division, Office of Government-wide Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation (GSAR); Updating References to Commercial Items'' (RIN3090–AK37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2022; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3223. A communication from the Director, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2022–04, Introduction'' (FAC 2022–04) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 1, 2022; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3224. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Homeland Security, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2022; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3225. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a draft of proposed legislation relative to authorizing the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3226. A communication from the Director, Equal Employment Opportunities and Diversity Programs, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2020 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act) received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3227. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–289, ''Battery Stewardship Program Temporary Amendment Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3228. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–290, ''Department of Health Functions Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3229. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–291, ''District of Columbia Housing Authority Resident Commissioners Election Deadline Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3230. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–292, ''Public Emergency Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3231. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–293, ''Gibbs School and Shaed School Leases Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2022''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3232. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–314, ''DSLBD Noncompetitive Grant Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2022''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3233. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–294, ''Expanding Student Access to Period Products Act of 2022''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3234. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–295, ''Dedication of Land for Street Purposes and Establishment of a Building Restriction Line in Square 2873, S.O. 20–04746, Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3235. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–296, ''Abandonment of the Highway Plan for a Portion of Jackson Street, N.E., S.O. 21–000463, Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3236. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–297, ''Omnibus Progressive National Baptist Convention Redevelopment Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3237. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–298, ''Closing of a Portion of a Public Alley in Square 5730, S.O. 19–45936, Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3238. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–299, ''Closing of a Portion of a Public Alley in Square 5138, S.O. 20–07517, Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3239. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24–312, ''Jackson-Reed High School Designation Act of 2021''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3240. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Acquisition Regulations: Buy Indian Act; Procedures for Contracting'' (RIN0917–AA18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2022; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–3241. A communication from the Assistant to the Director of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''American Indian Probate Regulations'' (RIN1094–AA55) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 1, 2022; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–3242. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report of the National Security Education Program (NSEP) for fiscal year 2021; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

EC–3243. A communication from the Rules Administrator, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''FSA Time Credits'' (RIN1120–AB76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2022; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–3244. A communication from the Departmental Privacy Officer, Office of Law Enforcement and Security, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Privacy Act Regulations; Exemptions for the Physical Security Access Files System'' (RIN1090–AB13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2022; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–3245. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface

Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Monetary Penalties—2022 Adjustment'' (Docket No. EP 716) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3246. A communication from the Attorney, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Standard for Gates and Enclosures'' (16 CFR Part 1239) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 9, 2022; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

Report to accompany S. 140, a bill to improve data collection and monitoring of the Great Lakes, oceans, bays, estuaries, and coasts, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 117–74).

Report to accompany S. 163, a bill to address the workforce needs of the telecommunications industry (Rept. No. 117–75).

Report to accompany S. 381, a bill to establish the National Ocean Mapping, Exploration, and Characterization Council, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 117–76).

Report to accompany S. 1289, a bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to reauthorize and modify the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 117–77).

Report to accompany S. 1894, a bill to designate Regional Ocean Partnerships of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 117–78).

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

Special Report entitled ''Beat China by Harnessing Important, National Airwaves for 5G Act of 2020'' (Rept. No. 117–79).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. REED for the Committee on Armed Services.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Gregg P. Olson, to be Lieutenant General.

*Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Michael E. Kurilla, to be General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. David W. Bennett and ending with Col. Shawn G. Ryan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nomination of Col. Robert M. Sage, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Benjamin M. Cason and ending with Brig. Gen. Jeffrey L. Wilkinson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. Meaghan Q. LeClerc, to be Major General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Paul D. Johnson and ending with Brig. Gen. Mark A. Maldonado, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Michael L. Ahmann and ending with Brig. Gen. Edward L. Vaughan IV, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. April D. Vogel, to be Major General.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. Shawn N. Bratton, to be Major General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. William R. Davis and ending with Col. Ginger D. Turcotte, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022 .

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. Edward S. Jones, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Dianne M. Del Rosso and ending with Col. Blaise Zandoli, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Brian H. Bennett and ending with Capt. Michael S. Wosje, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Christopher T. Donahue, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Douglas A. Sims II, to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators .

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

Air Force nominations beginning with Lorenzo E. Aranda and ending with Samuel M. Zohner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Robert A. Adams and ending with Ryan W. Zipper, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Lucas G. Borg and ending with Sarah M. Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Ashley N. Adams and ending with Richard Chase Zanetti, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Stephen C. Arnason and ending with David J. Weyh, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Johnnie I. Barrett and ending with Shaun S. Westphal, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Cang Quoc Bui and ending with Stacey S. Van Orden, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brian J. Alent and ending with Bryan A. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 31, 2022.

Air Force nomination of Daniel J. Beaudoin, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Andrew W. Mack, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Una Han, to be Major.

Army nomination of Samuel A. Arnett, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of William P. Bass, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Michael M. Townsend, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Zachariah J. Kamla, to be Major.

Army nomination of Thomas A. Watson, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Scott F. M. Duncan, to be Major.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Michael A. Cap and ending with Catherine M. Sumruld, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 5, 2022.

Marine Corps nomination of Jesse C. Tallman, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3649. A bill to establish an advisory committee to provide independent advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation regarding comprehensive, interdisciplinary issues relating to transportation from a variety of stakeholders in transportation planning, design, research, policy, and advocacy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 3650. A bill to require the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to establish and maintain a public directory of the individuals occupying Government policy and supporting positions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3651. A bill to amend the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act to extend the authorization of appropriations of the Lead Exposure Registry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. YOUNG, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. ERNST, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. MARSHALL, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. BURR, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. THUNE, Mr.

ROUNDS, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 3652. A bill to counter the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and Eastern European allies, to expedite security assistance to Ukraine to bolster Ukraine's defense capabilities, and to impose sanctions relating to the actions of the Russian Federation with respect to Ukraine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. KENNEDY:

S. 3653. A bill to direct the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to require the disclosure of violations of Federal law with respect to human trafficking or alien smuggling, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 3654. A bill to amend Chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, to provide procedures for congressional disapproval of the issuance of additional debt; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. HAGERTY (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. Res. 512. A resolution supporting reopening the United States Capitol Building and Senate Office Buildings to the American people; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. CASEY, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. Res. 513. A resolution recognizing the growing threats against women and children, religious and ethnic minorities, and LGBTQI persons in Afghanistan and against allies of such individuals, such as civil society leaders and activists, scholars, former government officials, journalists, and media workers, and expressing solidarity with and reaffirming the dire need to protect vulnerable and minority populations and their allies in Afghanistan under Taliban rule; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PETERS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BROWN, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. Res. 514. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the President and the Secretary of State should ensure that the Government of Canada does not permanently store nuclear waste in the Great Lakes Basin; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAINES, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HAGERTY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. KELLY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROMNEY, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 515. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''Career and Technical Education Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. SMITH, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KELLY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. Res. 516. A resolution designating the week of February 7 through 11, 2022, as ''National School Counseling Week''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 517. A resolution to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Reffitt; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 444

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 444, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide or assist in providing an additional vehicle adapted for operation by disabled individuals to certain eligible persons.

S. 1451

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1451, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 1489

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1489, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to establish an Inspector General of the Office of the United States Trade Representative, and for other purposes.

S. 1574

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1574, a bill to codify a statutory definition for long-term care pharmacies.

S. 1854

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1854, a bill to require reviews of United States investment in foreign countries that may threaten national critical capabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 1943

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) 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. 2005

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2005, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require alternative options for summer food service program delivery.

S. 2100

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2100, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety of cosmetics.

S. 2242

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2242, a bill to prohibit commercial sexual orientation conversion therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 2264

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2264, a bill to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996.

S. 2613

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2613, a bill to provide for climate change planning, mitigation, adaptation, and resilience in the United States Territories and Freely Associated States, and for other purposes.

S. 2644

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2644, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand eligibility for Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to members of the National Guard who perform certain full-time duty, and for other purposes.

S. 3074

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3074, a bill to establish the Payroll Audit Independent Determination program in the Department of Labor.

S. 3203

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3203, a bill to establish the Commission on the COVID–19 Pandemic.

S. 3208

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3208, a bill to establish the Office of Supply Chain Resiliency within the Department of Commerce to provide expansion support to companies and supply chains in the United States that are vulnerable to shortages and price increases, and for other purposes.

S. 3292

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3292, a bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to initiate hearings to review Federal milk marketing orders relating to pricing of Class I skim milk, and for other purposes.

S. 3417

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3417, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 3472

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3472, a bill to conserve global bear populations by prohibiting the importation, exportation, and interstate trade of bear viscera and items, products, or substances containing, or labeled or advertised as containing, bear viscera, and for other purposes.

S. 3541

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) 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.

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 3541, supra.

S. 3580

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3580, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, with respect to prohibited acts by ocean common carriers or marine terminal operators, and for other purposes.

S. 3606

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3606, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the requirement to specify an effective period of transfer of Post-9/11 educational assistance to a dependent, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) 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.J. RES. 37

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 37, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention relating to ''Requirement for Persons To Wear Masks While on Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs''.

S.J. RES. 39

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3649. A bill to establish an advisory committee to provide independent advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation regarding comprehensive, interdisciplinary issues relating to transportation from a variety of stakeholders in transportation planning, design, research, policy, and advocacy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the Transportation Equity Act, which I introduced today.

As our Nation is making historic investments in our transportation infrastructure through the bipartisan intrastructure law, equity should be at the forefront of the Federal Government's plans to revitalize communities and ensure access, mobility, and opportunity for all.

One of President Biden's first actions in office was signing an Executive order on advancing racial equity and support for underserved communities through the Federal Government, which states, ''Our Nation deserves an ambitious whole-of-government equity agenda that matches the scale of the opportunities and challenges that we face.''

To accomplish this bold agenda, we need the interaction and involvement of diverse groups of stakeholders to ensure communities are heard and create effective policies.

Fortunately, we have a model for how we can bring such groups together to infuse equity into our transportation and infrastructure investments. In 2016, the U.S. Department of Transportation established the Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity to provide advice and recommendations on comprehensive, interdisciplinary issues related to transportation equity from a variety of stakeholders involved in transportation planning, design, research, policy, and advocacy.

That is why I am proud to introduce this bill with Senator WARNOCK to permanently reestablish the Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity within the U.S. Department of Transportation.

This bill would help recognize the role that transportation plays on related issues like public health, housing, accessibility, environmental justice, economic opportunity, and more.

I want to thank Senator WARNOCK for coleading this bill with me, and I hope our colleagues will join us in support of this bill to help redress inequities in transportation infrastructure and empower communities to build back better.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 3654. A bill to amend Chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, to provide procedures for congressional disapproval of the issuance of additional debt; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 3654

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 ''Debt Ceiling Reform Act''.

SEC. 2. PROCEDURES FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF ISSUANCE OF ADDITIONAL DEBT.

Section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''§ 3101. Public debt limit

''(a) DEFINITION OF JOINT RESOLUTION.—In this section, the term 'joint resolution' means a joint resolution—

''(1) that is introduced during the period—

''(A) beginning on the date on which a certification under subsection (b)(1) is received; and

''(B) ending on the date that is 3 calendar days after the date described in subparagraph (A) (or, if a House was not in session, the next calendar day on which that House is in session);

''(2) which does not have a preamble;

''(3) the title of which is only as follows: 'Joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the President's exercise of authority to issue additional debt, as submitted under section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, on _____' (with the blank space being filled in with the date on which the applicable certification under subsection (b)(1) was received); and

''(4) the matter after the resolving clause of which is only as follows: 'That Congress disapproves of the President's exercise of the authority to issue additional debt, as exercised pursuant to the certification under section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code.'.

''(b) CERTIFICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall submit to Congress a written certification whenever the President determines that the debt is within $100,000,000,000 of a $1,000,000,000,000 increment and that further borrowing is required to meet existing commitments.

''(2) AUTHORITY TO ISSUE DEBT AFTER CERTIFICATION.—Subject to the requirements of this section, the United States may issue additional debt as necessary to meet existing commitments on and after the date on which the President submits a written certification to Congress under paragraph (1).

''(3) RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—Congress may consider a joint resolution relating to each certification submitted by the President under paragraph (1).

''(c) ENACTMENT OF JOINT RESOLUTION.—The United States may not issue additional debt if, not later than 50 calendar days after the date on which Congress receives a certification submitted under subsection (b)(1) (regardless of whether Congress is in session), there is enacted into law a joint resolution disapproving the President's exercise of authority to issue additional debt.

''(d) EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

''(1) RECONVENING.—Upon receipt of a certification submitted under subsection (b)(1), the Speaker, if the House of Representatives would otherwise be adjourned, shall notify the Members of the House of Representatives that, pursuant to this section, the House of Representatives shall convene not later than the second calendar day after receipt of such certification.

''(2) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—Any committee of the House of Representatives to which a joint resolution is referred shall report it to the House of Representatives without amendment not later than 5 calendar days after the date of introduction of the joint resolution. If a committee fails to report the joint resolution within that period, the committee shall be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution and the joint resolution shall be referred to the appropriate calendar.

''(3) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—After each committee authorized to consider a joint resolution reports it to the House of Representatives or has been discharged from its consideration, it shall be in order, not later than the sixth day after introduction of the joint resolution, to move to proceed to consider the joint resolution in the House of Representatives. All points of order against the motion are waived. Such a motion shall not be in order with respect to a joint resolution relating to a certification after the House of Representatives has disposed of a motion to proceed that joint resolution. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

''(4) CONSIDERATION.—A joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against a joint resolution and against its consideration are waived. An amendment to a joint resolution is not in order. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on a joint resolution to its passage without intervening motion except 2 hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of a joint resolution shall not be in order.

''(e) EXPEDITED PROCEDURE IN THE SENATE.—

''(1) RECONVENING.—Upon receipt of a certification under subsection (b)(1), if the Senate has adjourned or recessed for more than 2 days, the majority leader of the Senate, after consultation with the minority leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate that, pursuant to this section, the Senate shall convene not later than the second calendar day after receipt of such message.

''(2) PLACEMENT ON CALENDAR.—Upon introduction in the Senate, a joint resolution shall be immediately placed on the calendar.

''(3) FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order at any time during the period beginning on the day after the date on which Congress receives a certification under subsection (b)(1) and ending on the 6th day after the date on which Congress receives the certification (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of a joint resolution relating to the certification, and all points of order against the joint resolution (and against consideration of the joint resolution) are waived. The motion to proceed is not debatable. The motion is not subject to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of a joint resolution is agreed to, the joint resolution shall remain the unfinished business until disposed of.

''(B) CONSIDERATION.—Consideration of a joint resolution, and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between the majority and minority leaders or their designees. A motion further to limit debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment to a joint resolution, a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit a joint resolution is not in order.

''(C) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—If the Senate has voted to proceed to a joint resolution, the vote on passage of the joint resolution shall occur immediately following the conclusion of consideration of the joint resolution, and a single quorum call at the conclusion of the debate if requested in accordance with the rules of the Senate.

''(D) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCEDURE.—Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to the application of the rules of the Senate, as the case may be, to the procedure relating to a joint resolution shall be decided without debate.

''(f) COORDINATION WITH ACTION BY OTHER HOUSE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If, before passing a joint resolution relating to a certification under subsection (b)(1), one House receives from the other a joint resolution relating to the same certification—

''(A) the joint resolution of the other House shall not be referred to a committee; and

''(B) the procedure in the receiving House shall be the same as if no joint resolution had been received from the other House until the vote on passage, when the joint resolution received from the other House shall supplant the joint resolution of the receiving House.

''(2) TREATMENT OF JOINT RESOLUTION OF OTHER HOUSE.—If the Senate fails to introduce or consider a joint resolution under this section relating to a certification under subsection (b)(1), the joint resolution of the House relating to the same certification shall be entitled to expedited floor procedures under this section.

''(3) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEASURES.—If, following passage of a joint resolution in the Senate, the Senate receives the companion measure from the House of Representatives, the companion measure shall not be debatable.

''(4) CONSIDERATION AFTER PASSAGE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If Congress passes a joint resolution, the period beginning on the date the President is presented with the joint resolution and ending on the date the President signs, allows to become law without his signature, or vetoes and returns the joint resolution (but excluding days when either House is not in session) shall be disregarded in computing the calendar day period described in subsection (c).

''(B) VETO MESSAGE.—Debate on a veto message in the Senate under this section shall be 1 hour equally divided between the majority and minority leaders or their designees.

''(5) VETO OVERRIDE.—If, within the calendar day period described in subsection (c), Congress overrides a veto of a joint resolution relating to a certification submitted under subsection (b)(1), the United States may not issue any additional debt this chapter.

''(g) RULES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE.—This subsection and subsections (a), (d), (e), and (f) are enacted by Congress—

''(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, and as such are deemed a part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House in the case of a joint resolution, and they supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent with such rules; and

''(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

''(h) DEBT DEFINED.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the term 'debt' means the face amount of obligations issued under this chapter and the face amount of obligations whose principal and interest are guaranteed by the United States Government (except guaranteed obligations held by the Secretary of the Treasury).

''(2) DETERMINATION OF FACE AMOUNT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the current redemption value of an obligation issued on a discount basis and redeemable before maturity at the option of its holder is deemed to be the face amount of the obligation.

''(B) CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS NOT REDEEMABLE BEFORE MATURITY.—For purposes of this section, the face amount, for any month, of any

obligation issued on a discount basis that is not redeemable before maturity at the option of the holder of the obligation is an amount equal to the sum of—

''(i) the original issue price of the obligation, plus

''(ii) the portion of the discount on the obligation attributable to periods before the beginning of such month (as determined under the principles of section 1272(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 without regard to any exceptions contained in paragraph (2) of such section).''.

SEC. 3. REPEAL OF EXPIRED PROVISION.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 3101A of title 31, United States Code, is repealed.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subchapter I of chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 3101A.

SEC. 4. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) Section 8348 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsections (j), (k), and (l).

(2) Section 8438 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsections (g) and (h).

(3) Section 14(d)(2)(A) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1824(d)(2)(A)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''in section 3101(b)'' and inserting ''under section 3101''; and

(B) by striking ''an obligation to which such limit applies'' and inserting ''debt, as defined in subsection (h) of such section''.

(b) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—Notwithstanding the amendments made by paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a)—

(1) paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) of subsection (j) and subsection (l)(1) of section 8348 of title 5, United States Code, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, shall apply to any debt issuance suspension period (as defined under section 8348(j)(5) of such title) that is in effect on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) of subsection (g) and subsection (h)(1) of section 8438 of title 5, United States Code, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, shall apply to any debt issuance suspension period (as defined under section 8438(g)(6) of such title) that is in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 512—SUPPORTING REOPENING THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL BUILDING AND SENATE OFFICE BUILDINGS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mr. HAGERTY (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 512

Whereas the United States Capitol and Senate Office Buildings closed to public visitation on March 12, 2020, at the very outset of the pandemic;

Whereas, since March of 2020, the American people have learned how to safely gather and enter public places despite the existence of COVID–19 and, due to Operation Warp Speed, have had the opportunity to be vaccinated against COVID–19 for more than a year;

Whereas, despite the existence of COVID–19, tens of thousands of people routinely gather across the country for sporting, entertainment, worship, and other events;

Whereas, despite the existence of COVID–19, stores, restaurants, and other public places have been successfully welcoming the public since the pandemic began in 2020;

Whereas, despite the existence of COVID–19, the American people, including Members of Congress, routinely use crowded public transportation vehicles, including airplanes and trains;

Whereas, despite the existence of COVID–19, most Americans have long since resumed working around co-workers, customers, and others;

Whereas it is illogical and unacceptable that, despite the rest of the United States being open, the United States Capitol Building and Senate Office Buildings, buildings that belong to the American people, remain largely closed to public visitation; and

Whereas it is time to once again welcome the public participation in the legislative process and the public visitation of our historic buildings that have always been hallmarks of American democracy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the importance of reopening the United States Capitol Building and Senate Office Buildings to the American people to facilitate public participation in the legislative process and public visitation of these historic buildings; and

(2) supports returning to the public visitation policies for Senate Office Buildings and the portions of the United States Capitol Building and Capitol complex within Senate jurisdiction that were in place before the COVID–19 pandemic.

SENATE RESOLUTION 513—RECOGNIZING THE GROWING THREATS AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN, RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC MINORITIES, AND LGBTQI PERSONS IN AFGHANISTAN AND AGAINST ALLIES OF SUCH INDIVIDUALS, SUCH AS CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS, SCHOLARS, FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, JOURNALISTS, AND MEDIA WORKERS, AND EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH AND REAFFIRMING THE DIRE NEED TO PROTECT VULNERABLE AND MINORITY POPULATIONS AND THEIR ALLIES IN AFGHANISTAN UNDER TALIBAN RULE

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. CASEY, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 513

Whereas the Taliban have a history of prohibiting women from receiving an education and pursuing jobs outside their homes and have publicly executed women who were accused of adultery;

Whereas a 2001 report by the Department of State noted that, from 1996 to 2001, the Taliban ''perpetrated egregious acts of violence against women'' as part of a ''war against women'';

Whereas, in some Afghan provinces taken over by the Taliban beginning in May 2021, there are reports that the Taliban have forced women into marriage with Taliban fighters and have led targeted killings against women;

Whereas United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet has expressed concern with the Taliban's contradiction of ''stated commitments,'' their exclusion of women from the public sector, and their restrictions on women, such as not allowing women to appear in public without a male chaperone;

Whereas, since 2018, the Secretary of State has designated the Taliban as an entity of particular concern for religious freedom pursuant to section 301 of the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act (22 U.S.C. 6442a) for having engaged in ''particularly severe violations of religious freedom'';

Whereas, in October 2021, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom reported on deteriorating conditions for religious minorities in Afghanistan, noting growing fear among Hazara Shi'a Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Ahmadi Muslims, Baha'is, and nonbelievers, and stating, ''Afghans who do not adhere to the Taliban's harsh and strict interpretation of Sunni Islam and adherents of other faiths or beliefs are at grave threat'';

Whereas the Hazaras constitute approximately 10 to 15 percent of the national population in Afghanistan and are considered a minority religious group;

Whereas the Hazaras specifically, along with other religious and ethnic minorities, have historically been explicitly targeted by the Taliban and have been abused with impunity;

Whereas Amnesty International reported that on August 30, 2021, 13 Hazaras were unlawfully killed in the village of Kahor in the Khider district by Taliban fighters, with one of the victims being a 17-year-old girl;

Whereas, in 2021, the Taliban forcibly displaced approximately 4,000 Hazaras from their homes and ancestral lands in Daykundi province while a Taliban court expelled approximately 2,000 families from the city of Mazar-e-Sharif;

Whereas, in 2021, more than 30 instances of violence and threats of violence against Afghan journalists were recorded;

Whereas activists, journalists, civil society actors, and scholars face threats and intimidation and risk being unlawfully detained or tortured or becoming a victim of targeted killings by the Taliban;

Whereas adherence to the rule of law and protection of human rights is rapidly deteriorating under the Taliban, which are reportedly targeting judges, prosecutors, lawyers, human rights defenders, journalists, former parliamentarians, and individuals who previously advocated for human rights and the rule of law, particularly women;

Whereas there are reports of the Taliban conducting house-to-house searches and tracking individuals who served the previous authorities and then carrying out targeted revenge killings;

Whereas, during the previous period of rule of the Taliban, the Taliban reportedly executed Afghan men alleged to have engaged in sexual activity with other men;

Whereas the current Acting Prime Minister of the Taliban reportedly stated in 1996 that ''homosexuality is a great sin'' and ''some say we should take these sinners to a high roof and throw them down, while others say we should dig a hole beside a wall, bury them, then push the wall down on top of them'';

Whereas a Taliban judge, Gul Rahim, stated in July 2021 that ''[f]or homosexuals, there can only be two punishments: either stoning or he must stand behind a wall that will fall down on him,'' and a spokesman for the Ministry of Finance of Afghanistan noted that LGBT rights would not be respected under the Taliban's interpretation of Sharia law; and

Whereas, in 2022, many LGBTQI individuals in Afghanistan are forced to live in hiding due to reports of threats and attacks against such individuals in the community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) stands in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan and with vulnerable groups including women and children, religious and ethnic minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) persons, civil society actors, journalists, and other at-risk populations in Afghanistan;

(2) reaffirms the longstanding commitment of the United States to advance human rights worldwide;

(3) calls on the Taliban to uphold the protection of universal human rights, including the commitments set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Afghanistan is a party;

(4) encourages the executive branch to continue to call for the protection of women and children, religious and ethnic minorities, civil society actors, journalists, and LGBTQI persons under Taliban rule;

(5) calls for the international community to condemn human rights violations committed by the Taliban;

(6) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to support Afghan civil society, individuals who assisted with the war efforts of the United States and allies of the United States, and individuals who advocate for universal human rights; and

(7) calls on the United States Government to work closely with the international community and nongovernmental organizations, particularly such organizations based in Afghanistan, to support at-risk Afghan minority populations and other vulnerable communities, including through efforts to stem the growing humanitarian crisis that will disproportionately impact already vulnerable groups.

SENATE RESOLUTION 514—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA DOES NOT PERMANENTLY STORE NUCLEAR WASTE IN THE GREAT LAKES BASIN

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PETERS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BROWN, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 514

Whereas the water resources of the Great Lakes Basin are precious public natural resources shared by the Great Lakes States and the Provinces of Canada;

Whereas, since 1909, the United States and Canada have worked to maintain and improve the water quality of the Great Lakes through water quality agreements;

Whereas more than 40,000,000 individuals in Canada and the United States depend on the fresh water from the Great Lakes for drinking water;

Whereas the Government of Canada is proposing to build a permanent deep geological repository for high-level nuclear waste in the Great Lakes Basin;

Whereas the Nuclear Waste Management Organization of Canada is examining building a permanent deep geological repository for nuclear waste in the Great Lakes Basin, less than 40 miles from Lake Huron in South Bruce, Ontario, Canada;

Whereas nuclear waste is highly toxic and can take tens of thousands of years to decompose to safe levels;

Whereas a spill of nuclear waste into the Great Lakes, including during transit to a permanent deep geological repository for nuclear waste, could have lasting and severely adverse environmental, health, and economic impacts on the Great Lakes and the individuals who depend on the Great Lakes for their livelihoods;

Whereas more than 232 State, Tribal, county, and local governments have passed resolutions in opposition to the proposed nuclear waste repository of Ontario Power Generation;

Whereas Tribes and First Nations' citizens have a strong spiritual and cultural connection to the Great Lakes;

Whereas the Saugeen Ojibway Nation exercised its Aboriginal and treaty rights by voting against the Ontario Power Generation building a permanent nuclear waste repository in Kincardine, Ontario;

Whereas the protection of the Great Lakes is fundamental to treaty rights; and

Whereas, during the 1980s, when the Department of Energy was studying potential sites for a permanent nuclear waste repository in the United States in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (42 U.S.C. 10101 et seq.), the Government of Canada expressed concern with locating a permanent nuclear waste repository within shared water basins of the 2 countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Government of Canada should not allow a permanent nuclear waste repository to be built within the Great Lakes Basin;

(2) the President and the Secretary of State should take appropriate action to work with the Government of Canada to prevent a permanent nuclear waste repository from being built within the Great Lakes Basin; and

(3) the President and the Secretary of State should work together with their counterparts in the Government of Canada on a solution for the long-term storage of nuclear waste that—

(A) is safe and responsible; and

(B) does not pose a threat to the Great Lakes.

SENATE RESOLUTION 515—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF ''CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH''

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAINES, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HAGERTY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. KELLY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROMNEY, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 515

Whereas a competitive global economy requires workers who are prepared for skilled professions;

Whereas at least 15,000,000 new workers will be needed for the United States' infrastructure in the next decade, including designing, building, and operating transportation, housing, utilities, and telecommunications;

Whereas the COVID–19 pandemic has displaced millions of workers in the United States and fundamentally shifted entire industries within foundational aspects of the economy, creating significant demands for high-quality and efficient upskilling and reskilling opportunities to ensure a quick and equitable recovery;

Whereas career and technical education (referred to in this preamble as ''CTE'') ensures that competitive and skilled workers are ready, willing, and capable of holding jobs in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand career fields such as science, technology, engineering, art and design, mathematics, nursing, allied health, construction, information technology, energy sustainability, and many other career fields that are vital in keeping the United States competitive in the global economy;

Whereas CTE helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas the United States has 30,000,000 jobs providing an average income of $55,000 per year that do not require a bachelor's degree yet increasingly require some level of postsecondary education;

Whereas over 11,000,000 students are enrolled in CTE across the country at the secondary and postsecondary levels, with CTE programs in thousands of CTE centers, comprehensive high schools, career academies, and CTE high schools, and nearly 1,000 2-year colleges;

Whereas CTE matches employability skills with workforce demand and provides relevant academic and technical coursework leading to industry-recognized credentials for secondary, postsecondary, and adult learners;

Whereas CTE affords students the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to secure careers in growing, high-demand fields;

Whereas secondary CTE is associated with a lower probability of dropping out of high school and a higher likelihood of graduating on-time;

Whereas, according to an American Federation of Teachers poll, 96 percent of parents approve of expanding access to CTE and other programs that prepare students for jobs;

Whereas students at schools with highly integrated rigorous academic and CTE programs are significantly more likely to meet

college and career readiness benchmarks than students at schools with less integrated programs;

Whereas, in 2018, Congress affirmed the importance of CTE by passing the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Public Law 115–224), which supports program improvement in secondary and postsecondary CTE programs in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and outlying areas; and

Whereas February 23, 2022, marks the 105th anniversary of the signing of the Act of February 23, 1917 (39 Stat. 929, commonly known as the ''Smith-Hughes Vocational Education Act of 1917''), which was the first major Federal investment in secondary CTE and laid the foundation for the bipartisan, bicameral support for CTE that continues as of February 2022: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of February 2022 as ''Career and Technical Education Month'' to celebrate career and technical education across the United States;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month;

(3) recognizes the importance of career and technical education in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in the United States; and

(4) encourages educators, school counselors, guidance and career development professionals, administrators, and parents to promote career and technical education as a respected option for students.

SENATE RESOLUTION 516—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 7 THROUGH 11, 2022, AS ''NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK''

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. SMITH, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KELLY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. SANDERS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 516

Whereas school counselors are more important now than ever, as the COVID–19 pandemic has magnified the mental health crisis among the youth of our Nation;

Whereas the American School Counselor Association has designated February 7 through 11, 2022, as ''National School Counseling Week'';

Whereas school counselors have long advocated for equitable opportunities for all students;

Whereas school counselors help develop well-rounded students by guiding students through academic learning, social and emotional development, and career exploration;

Whereas personal and social growth can help lead to increased academic achievement;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in ensuring that students are ready for both college and careers;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in making students aware of opportunities for financial aid and college scholarships;

Whereas school counselors assist with and coordinate efforts to foster a positive school climate, resulting in a safer learning environment for all students;

Whereas school counselors have been instrumental in helping students, teachers, and parents deal with personal trauma as well as tragedies in their communities and the United States;

Whereas students face myriad challenges every day, including peer pressure, bullying, mental health issues, the deployment of family members to serve in conflicts overseas, and school violence;

Whereas a school counselor is one of the few professionals in a school building who is trained in both education and social and emotional development;

Whereas the roles and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood;

Whereas the school counselor position is often among the first to be eliminated to meet budgetary constraints;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school counselors is 424 to 1, almost twice the 250 to 1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and other organizations; and

Whereas the celebration of National School Counseling Week will increase awareness of the important and necessary role school counselors play in the lives of students in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of February 7 through 11, 2022, as ''National School Counseling Week''; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National School Counseling Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the role school counselors play in schools and the community at large in preparing students for fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

SENATE RESOLUTION 517—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. REFFITT

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 517

Whereas, in the case of *United States v. Reffitt*, Cr. No. 21–32, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former officers and employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for evidence relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, is authorized to provide relevant testimony in the case of *United States v. Reffitt*, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Mr. Schwager and any current or former officer or employee of his office in connection with the production of evidence authorized in section one of this resolution.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have 7 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, to vote on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

FOREIGN TRAVEL FINANCIAL REPORTS

In accordance with the appropriate provisions of law, the Secretary of the Senate herewith submits the following reports for standing committees of the Senate, certain joint committees of the Congress, delegations and groups, and select and special committees of the Senate, relating to expenses incurred in the performance of authorized foreign travel:

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION AND FORESTRY FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Debbie Stabenow:									
Scotland	Pound sterling		1,217.67						1,217.67
Jacqlyn Schneider:									
Scotland	Pound sterling		4,604.83		2,907.17				7,512.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Scotland	Pound sterling						3,212.80		3,212.80
Total			5,822.50		2,907.17		3,212.80		11,942.47

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

DEBBIE STABENOW,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Jan. 27, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Paul Grove:									
Lebanon	Pound		530.00						530.00
Turkey	Lira		571.45						571.45
Albania	Lek		455.96						455.96
United States	Dollar				9,414.67				9,414.67
Adam Yezerski:									
Colombia	Peso		866.00						866.00
United States	Dollar				1,279.67				1,279.67
Katherine Jackson:									
Colombia	Peso		866.00						866.00
United States	Dollar				1,279.67				1,279.67
Senator Lisa Murkowski:									
Iceland	Krona		1,628.00						1,628.00
United States	Dollar				3,126.57				3,126.57
Emy Lesofski:									
Iceland	Krona		1,384.00						1,384.00
United States	Dollar				2,642.87				2,642.87
Matthew Hickey:									
Iceland	Krona		1,384.00						1,384.00
United States	Dollar				2,151.77				2,151.77
Blaise Sheridan:									
United Kingdom	Pound		2,668.00						2,668.00
United States	Dollar				9,981.67				9,981.67
Christine Blackburn:									
United Kingdom	Pound		2,551.00						2,551.00
United States	Dollar				9,140.37				9,140.37
Senator Richard Durbin:									
United Kingdom	Pound		1,354.00						1,354.00
Senator Richard Shelby:									
Belgium	Euro		1,171.86						1,171.86
United Kingdom	Pound		4,424.26						4,424.26
United States	Dollar				6,086.77				6,086.77
Shannon Hines:									
Belgium	Euro		1,171.86						1,171.86
United Kingdom	Pound		4,424.26						4,424.26
United States	Dollar				6,086.77				6,086.77
Watson Donald:									
Belgium	Euro		1,171.86						1,171.86
United Kingdom	Pound		4,424.26						4,424.26
United States	Dollar				6,086.77				6,086.77
Paul Grove:									
Tunisia	Dinar		705.69						705.69
United States	Dollar				3,130.67				3,130.67
Anna Yelverton:									
United Kingdom	Pound		2,083.81						2,083.81
Belgium	Euro		532.54						532.54
Germany	Euro		921.00						921.00
Israel	Shekel		560.00						560.00
Qatar	Qatari Riyal		399.65						399.65
Senator Lisa Murkowski:									
United Kingdom	Pound		2,118.81						2,118.81
United States	Dollar				19,566.77				19,566.77
Emelyn Lesofski:									
United Kingdom	Pound		4,996.23						4,996.23
United States	Dollar				5,290.37				5,290.37
Lucas Agnew:									
United Kingdom	Pound		4,996.23						4,996.23
United States	Dollar				5,255.37				5,255.37
Senator Tammy Baldwin:									
United Kingdom	Pound		2,118.81						2,118.81
Belgium	Euro		724.54						724.54
Germany	Euro		956.00						956.00
Israel	Shekel		595.00						595.00
Qatar	Qatari Riyal		434.65						434.65
Kenneth Reidy:									
United Kingdom	Pound		2,118.81						2,118.81
Belgium	Euro		724.54						724.54
Germany	Euro		956.00						956.00
Israel	Shekel		595.00						595.00
Qatar	Qatari Riyal		434.65						434.65
Senator Christopher Coons:									
Canada	Dollar		559.81						559.81

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Thomas Mancinelli:									
Canada	Dollar		608.81						608.81
Delegation Expenses:*									
Colombia	Peso						2,350.00		2,350.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Iceland	Krona						3,249.00		3,249.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	Pound						783.97		783.97
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	Pound						3,212.78		3,212.78
Delegation Expenses:*									
Belgium	Euro						2,610.00		2,610.00
United Kingdom	Pound						510.21		510.21
Delegation Expenses:*									
Tunisia	Dinar						4,920.43		4,920.43
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	Pound						12,800.28		12,800.28
Belgium	Euro						1,019.64		1,019.64
Germany	Euro						7,306.26		7,306.26
Qatar	Qatari Riyal						129.30		129.30
Israel	Shekel						1,631.07		1,631.07
Delegation Expenses:*									
Canada	Dollar						3,737.00		3,737.00
Total			59,187.35		90,520.75		44,259.94		193,968.04

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

PATRICK LEAHY,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, Jan. 26, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED FORCES FOR TRAVEL FROM JULY 1 TO SEPT. 30, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Thomas Goffus:									
The Netherlands	Euro		507.21						507.21
Israel	New Shekel		1,265.00						1,265.00
Georgia	Lari		483.08						483.08
United States	Dollar				10,570.49				10,570.49
Katherine Sutton:									
The Netherlands	Euro		477.66						477.66
Israel	New Shekel		1,217.78						1,217.78
Georgia	Lari		457.52						457.52
United States	Dollar				10,570.49				10,570.49
Eric Trager:									
Israel	New Shekel		1,322.72						1,322.72
United States	Dollar				12,988.72				12,988.72
Mariah Cooper:									
Germany	Euro		682.00						682.00
United States	Dollar				16,638.75				16,638.75
Adam Baker:									
Germany	Euro		641.33						641.33
United States	Dollar				16,638.00				16,638.00
Senator Deb Fischer:									
Romania	Leu		659.85						659.85
Bulgaria	Lev		513.04						513.04
Slovenia	Euro		1,051.42						1,051.42
Croatia	Kuna		474.81						474.81
Bosnia	Mark		226.56						226.56
Delegation Expense:*									
Romania	Leu						1,358.96		1,358.96
Bulgaria	Lev						692.60		692.60
Slovenia	Euro						1,332.50		1,332.50
Croatia	Kuna						2,323.70		2,323.70
Bosnia	Mark						182.78		182.78
Emily Leviner:									
Romania	Leu		688.00						688.00
Bulgaria	Lev		463.13						463.13
Slovenia	Euro		1,076.98						1,076.98
Croatia	Kuna		469.40						469.40
Bosnia	Mark		169.30						169.30
Senator Thomas Tuberville:									
Italy	Euro		2,499.82						2,499.82
Ukraine	Hryvnia		6,693.93						6,693.93
Senator Richard Blumenthal:									
Lebanon	Pound								
Israel	New Shekel		1,308.25						1,308.25
Total			23,348.79		67,406.45		5,890.54		96,645.78

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

JACK REED,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Feb. 3, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Jacky Rosen:									
Belgium	Euro		725.43						725.43

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
United Kingdom	Pound		1,573.22						1,573.22
Qatar	Riyal		377.33						377.33
Israel	New Shekel		716.56						716.56
Germany	Euro		716.02						716.02
Senator Jeanne Shaheen:									
Canada	Dollar		128.00						128.00
Jonathan Green:									
Canada	Dollar		85.54						85.54
Amy English:									
Canada	Dollar		85.54						85.54
Delegation Expenses:*									
Belgium	Euro						1,027.34		1,027.34
United Kingdom	Pound						4,484.58		4,484.58
Qatar	Riyal						507.62		507.62
Israel	New Shekel						1,138.66		1,138.66
Germany	Euro						956.00		956.00
Canada	Dollar						5,605.50		5,605.50
Total			4,407.64				13,719.70		18,127.34

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

JACK REED,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Feb. 3, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Jon Ossoff:									
United Kingdom	Pound		1,410.85						1,410.85
South Korea	Won		1,828.16						1,828.16
Reynaldo Benitez:									
United Kingdom	Pound		1,383.43						1,383.43
South Korea	Won		1,307.52						1,307.52
Miryam Lipper:									
South Korea	Won		1,364.28						1,364.28
Senator Mike Crapo:									
Philippines	Peso		5.00						5.00
Taiwan	Dollar		616.66		3,674.90				4,291.56
India	Rupee		165.88		4,304.61				4,470.49
United States	Dollar				6,229.75				6,229.75
Molly Carpenter:									
Philippines	Peso		5.00						5.00
Taiwan	Dollar		526.91		3,674.90				4,201.81
India	Rupee		281.90		4,304.61				4,586.51
United States	Dollar				6,229.75				6,229.75
Delegation Expenses:*									
South Korea	Won						8,205.07		8,205.07
Total			8,895.59		28,418.52		8,205.07		45,519.18

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

SHERROD BROWN,
Chairman, Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,
Jan 25, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Michael Inacay:									
United States	Dollar				9,140.37				9,140.37
Scotland	Pound		2,551.00						2,551.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Scotland	Pound						1,606.39		1,606.39
Amit Ronen:									
United States	Dollar				975.27				975.27
Scotland	Pound		3,091.44						3,091.44
Delegation Expenses:*									
Scotland	Pound						2,047.01		2,047.01
Colleene Thomas:									
United States	Dollar				1,339.87				1,339.87
Scotland	Pound		4,002.00						4,002.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Scotland	Pound						2,047.01		2,047.01
Nicole Teutschel:									
United States	Dollar				1,340.37				1,340.37
Scotland	Pound		4,002.00						4,002.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Scotland	Pound						2,047.01		2,047.01
Jennifer Quan:									
United States	Dollar				1,338.97				1,338.97
Scotland	Pound		4,002.00						4,002.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Scotland	Pound						2,047.01		2,047.01
Kelly Riddle:									
United States	Dollar				1,193.87				1,193.87
Scotland	Pound		4,002.00						4,002.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Delegation Expenses:*									
Scotland	Pound						2,047.01		2,047.01
Total			21,650.44		15,328.72		11,841.44		48,820.60

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

MARIA CANTWELL,
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation,
Jan. 26, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator John W. Hickenlooper:									
United States	Dollar				9,884.87				9,884.87
Belgium	Euro		628.47						628.47
United Kingdom	Pound		1,725.16						1,725.16
Katherine L. Cassling:									
United States	Dollar				9,536.57				9,536.57
Belgium	Euro		676.02						676.02
United Kingdom	Pound		1,771.43						1,771.43
Stephen Eule:									
United States	Dollar				2,352.97				2,352.97
United Kingdom	Pound		2,811.66						2,811.66
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	Pound						3,822.41		3,822.41
Belgium	Euro						414.92		414.92
Total			7,612.74		21,774.41		4,237.33		33,624.48

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

JOE MANCHIN,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
Jan. 13, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Steve Daines:									
India	Rupee		869.41						869.41
United States	Dollar				16,897.89				16,897.89
Jason Thielman:									
India	Rupee		642.78						642.78
United States	Dollar					14,946.99			14,946.99
Delegation Expenses:*									
India	Dollar						8,559.89		8,559.89
Isaac Jalkanen:									
Pakistan	Rupee		128.41						128.41
Qatar	Rial		717.86						717.86
Delegation Expenses:*									
United States	Dollar						357.00		357.00
Total			2,358.46		31,844.88		8,916.89		43,120.23

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 94–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

RON WYDEN,
Chairman, Committee on Finance, Jan. 25, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator John Barrasso:									
Bahrain	Dinar		77.00						77.00
United States	Dollar				14,458.07				14,458.07
Charles Ziegler:									
United States	Dollar				12,734.07				12,734.07
Delegation Expenses:*									
Bahrain	Dinar						144.23		144.23
Senator Ben Cardin:									
Scotland	British Pound		1,380.00						1,380.00
Israel	Shekel		2,420.00						2,420.00
United Arab Emirates	Dinar		900.12						900.12
Tom Melia:									
Scotland	British Pound		1,329.20						1,329.20
Israel	Shekel		1,952.21						1,952.21
United Arab Emirates	Dinar		785.85						785.85
Senator Robert Portman:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		1,994.92						1,994.92

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Scotland	British Pound		545.41						545.41
Israel	Shekel		2,020.00						2,020.00
United States	Dollar				9,946.34				9,946.34
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	British Pound						2,065.33		2,065.33
Scotland	British Pound						8,031.95		8,031.95
Israel	Shekel						12,098.16		12,098.16
United Arab Emirates	Dinar						2,196.65		2,196.65
Senator Christopher Coons:									
Belgium	Euro		724.54						724.54
United Kingdom	British Pound		2,099.72						2,099.72
Qatar	Rial		434.65						434.65
Israel	Shekel		595.00						595.00
Germany	Euro		884.00						884.00
Thomas Mancinelli:									
Belgium	Euro		628.47						628.47
United Kingdom	British Pound		1,977.73						1,977.73
Qatar	Rial		256.65						256.65
Israel	Shekel		517.39						517.39
Germany	Euro		787.70						787.70
Senator Edward Markey:									
Scotland	British Pound		1,729.30						1,729.30
Qatar	Dinar		267.00						267.00
Israel	Shekel		559.40						559.40
Germany	Euro		822.76						822.76
Sarah Trister:									
Scotland	British Pound		1,905.00						1,905.00
Qatar	Dinar		349.54						349.54
Israel	Shekel		547.09						547.09
Germany	Euro		849.98						849.98
Senator Jeff Merkley:									
Belgium	Euro		601.24						601.24
Scotland	British Pound		1,860.51						1,860.51
United States	Dollar				12,794.67				12,794.67
Daphne McCurdy:									
Belgium	Euro		669.60						669.60
Scotland	British Pound		1,814.55						1,814.55
Qatar	Riyal		351.85						351.85
Israel	Shekel		418.17						418.17
Germany	Euro		816.18						816.18
Delegation Expenses:*									
Belgium	Euro						1,359.54		1,359.54
Scotland	British Pound						8,533.54		8,533.54
Qatar	Riyal						215.52		215.52
Israel	Shekel						2,718.45		2,718.45
Germany	Euro						2,435.42		2,435.42
Senator Robert Menendez:									
Qatar	Riyal		1,125.34						1,125.34
Egypt	Egyptian Pound		2,088.00						2,088.00
United States	Dollar				11,769.55				11,769.55
Damian Murphy:									
Qatar	Riyal		1,125.34						1,125.34
Egypt	Egyptian Pound		2,088.00						2,088.00
United States	Dollar				12,411.36				12,411.36
Jason Tuber:									
Qatar	Riyal		1,125.34						1,125.34
Egypt	Egyptian Pound		2,088.00						2,088.00
United States	Dollar				12,341.36				12,341.36
Delegation Expenses:*									
Qatar	Riyal						5,230.43		5,230.43
Egypt	Egyptian Pound						8,599.91		8,599.91
Senator Christopher Murphy:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		857.00						857.00
United States	Dollar				5,932.37				5,932.37
Jessica Elledge:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		957.00						957.00
United States	Dollar				5,932.37				5,932.37
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	British Pound						2,572.11		2,572.11
Senator James Risch:									
Canada	Dollar		648.36						648.36
United States	Dollar				2,554.44				2,554.44
Christopher Socha:									
Canada	Dollar		744.36						744.36
Hannah Thoburn:									
Canada	Dollar		808.64						808.64
United States	Dollar				6,473.29				6,473.29
Annie Kowalewski:									
Canada	Dollar		706.23						706.23
United States	Dollar				6,473.29				6,473.29
Suzanne Wrasse:									
Canada	Dollar		727.00						727.00
Sarah Weinstein:									
Canada	Dollar		835.90						835.90
Delegation Expenses:*									
Canada	Dollar						11,211.00		11,211.00
Senator Brian Schatz:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		2,476.01						2,476.01
United States	Dollar				14,072.07				14,072.07
Will Rogers:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		2,576.01						2,576.01
United States	Dollar				9,038.27				9,038.27
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	British Pound						3,212.79		3,212.79
Joshua Klein:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		4,452.00						4,452.00
United States	Dollar				737.67				737.67
Julia Greensfelder:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		3,519.50						3,519.50
United States	Dollar				1,124.67				1,124.67
Evan McWalters:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		3,630.62						3,630.62
United States	Dollar				1,158.57				1,158.57
Joan Condon:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		2,868.00						2,868.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
United States	Dollar				4,385.67				4,385.67
David Andrew Olson:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		3,528.00						3,528.00
United States	Dollar				4,411.27				4,411.27
Amber Bland:									
United Kingdom	British Pound		2,732.77						2,732.77
United States	Dollar				3,824.47				3,824.47
Lydia Westlake:									
United Kingdom	Pound		2,567.19						2,567.19
United States	Dollar				3,824.47				3,824.47
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	Dollar				11,053.86				11,053.86
Brian Cullen:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		652.01						652.01
Czech Republic	Euro		1,171.00						1,171.00
United States	Dollar				4,883.65				4,883.65
Tyler Brace:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		531.12						531.12
Czech Republic	Euro		963.17						963.17
United States	Dollar				4,576.30				4,576.30
Delegation Expenses:*									
Ukraine	Hryvnia						627.44		627.44
Margaret Dougherty:									
Albania	Dollar		341.58						341.58
Kosovo	Dollar		345.90						345.90
Greece	Dollar		902.23						902.23
United States	Dollar				4,495.47				4,495.47
Hanna Thoburn:									
Albania	Dollar		378.96						378.96
Kosovo	Dollar		337.00						337.00
Greece	Dollar		860.26						860.26
United States	Dollar				4,565.47				4,565.47
Delegation Expenses:*									
Albania	Dollar						402.48		402.48
Kosovo	Dollar						115.72		115.72
Greece	Dollar						2,357.00		2,357.00
Rolfe Michael Schiffer:									
Taiwan	Taiwan Dollar		955.39						955.39
United States	Dollar				1,681.97				1,681.97
Delegation Expenses:*									
Taiwan	Taiwan Dollar						3,098.90		3,098.90
Rolfe Michael Schiffer:									
Korea	Won		1,575.00						1,575.00
Japan	Yen		1,440.00						1,440.00
United States	Dollar				2,656.67				2,656.67
Douglas Levinson:									
Korea	Won		836.50						836.50
Japan	Yen		1,449.33						1,449.33
United States	Dollar				2,885.67				2,885.67
Elizabeth Shneider:									
Korea	Won		818.27						818.27
Japan	Yen		1,278.00						1,278.00
United States	Dollar				2,885.67				2,885.67
Delegation Expenses:*									
Korea	Won						1,145.00		1,145.00
Japan	Yen						603.94		603.94
Christopher Socha:									
Pakistan	Rupee		700.00						700.00
Qatar	Riyal		1,045.95						1,045.95
United States	Dollar				7,468.37				7,468.37
Colin Brooks:									
Pakistan	Rupee		700.00						700.00
Qatar	Riyal		1,045.95						1,045.95
United States	Dollar				7,462.00				7,462.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Pakistan	Rupee						1,045.82		1,045.82
Qatar	Riyal						1,564.31		1,564.31
United Arab Emirates	Riyal						186.32		186.32
Turkey	Lira						222.13		222.13
Total			98,474.96		199,959.55		93,047.95		391,482.46

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Section 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, Jan. 26, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Jeremy Hayes:									
United States	Dollar				2,853.57				2,853.57
Germany	Euro		47.82						47.82
Spain	Euro		481.57						481.57
Amanda Neely:									
United States	Dollar				2,853.37				2,853.37
Germany	Euro		39.91						39.91
Spain	Euro		488.03						488.03
Clyde Hicks:									
United States	Dollar				2,853.57				2,853.57
Germany	Euro		29.63						29.63
Spain	Euro		502.32						502.32
Naveed Jazayeri:									
United States	Dollar				2,983.57				2,983.57
Germany	Euro		50.14						50.14
Spain	Euro		468.34						468.34
Benjamin Schubert:									
United States	Dollar				2,983.57				2,983.57

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Germany	Euro		44.84						44.84
Spain	Euro		445.58						445.58
Delegation Expenses: *									
Germany	Euro						1,165.82		1,165.82
Sam Mulopulos:									
United States	Dollar				1,767.00				1,767.00
United Kingdom	Pound		2,080.36						2,080.36
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		771.60						771.60
Israel	Shekel		2,399.31						2,399.31
Delegation Expenses: *									
United Kingdom	Pound						829.42		829.42
United Arab Emirates	Dirham						1,098.33		1,098.33
Israel	Shekel						4,001.54		4,001.54
Total			7,849.45		16,294.65		7,095.11		31,239.21

* Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

GARY C. PETERS,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs,
Jan. 21, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator John Cornyn:									
Taiwan	Dollar		686.91						686.91
India	Rupee		550.49						550.49
Senator Michael Lee:									
Taiwan	Dollar		686.91						686.91
India	Rupee		550.49						550.49
Isaac Jalkanen:									
Taiwan	Dollar		686.91						686.91
India	Rupee		550.49						550.49
Katherine Thompson:									
Taiwan	Dollar		686.91						686.91
India	Rupee		550.49						550.49
Delegation Expenses: *									
Taiwan	Dollar						2,187.00		2,187.00
The Philippines	Peso						125.00		125.00
United Arab Emirates	Dirham						86.00		86.00
India	Rupee						1,304.00		1,304.00
Christopher Homan:									
Senegal	CFA Franc		517.56		3,735.37		36.38		4,289.31
The Gambia	Dalasi		768.00				147.00		915.00
Total			6,235.16		3,735.37		3,885.38		13,855.91

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

RICHARD DURBIN,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Jan. 25, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Susan Walitsky:									
United States	Dollar				1,649.27				1,649.27
Scotland	Pound		179.65						179.65
Total			179.65		1,649.27				1,828.92

BENJAMIN CARDIN,
Chairman, Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship,
Jan. 25, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Chris Howell:									
			417.82						417.82
			1,099.00						1,099.00
			411.63						411.63
					16,622.07				16,622.07
Michael Pevzner:									
			417.82						417.82
			890.00						890.00
					12,019.07				12,019.07
Caroline Wadhams:									
			339.67						339.67

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
			826.85						826.85
			127.66						127.66
					15,483.97				15,483.97
Jon Rosenwasser:									
			326.49						326.49
			1,006.89						1,006.89
			320.30						320.30
					16,616.57				16,616.57
Delegation Expenses:*									
							474.47		474.47
Stephen Smith:									
			58.73						58.73
			1,030.72						1,030.72
					11,876.97				11,876.97
Tommy Nguyen:									
			244.00						244.00
			1,216.00						1,216.00
					11,876.97				11,876.97
James Sauls:									
			244.00						244.00
			1,216.00						1,216.00
					18,855.94				18,855.94
Valli Sanmugalingam:									
			1,216.00						1,216.00
			244.00						244.00
					11,876.91				11,876.91
Caldwell Willig:									
			782.40						782.40
			468.98						468.98
					15,427.65				15,427.65
Maria Mahler-Haug:									
			729.75						729.75
			412.63						412.63
					15,297.95				15,297.95
Stephen Smith:									
			1,492.71						1,492.71
					3,014.20				3,014.20
Senator Angus King Jr.:									
			2,013.59						2,013.59
					9,365.37				9,365.37
Michael Pevzner:									
			2,649.86						2,649.86
					11,959.47				11,959.47
Tommy Nguyen:									
			1,731.28						1,731.28
					11,959.47				11,959.47
Chris Joyner:									
			1,902.28						1,902.28
					11,959.47				11,959.47
Senator Richard Burr:									
			2,071.28						2,071.28
					14,016.97				14,016.97
Senator Mark Warner:									
			3,348.00						3,348.00
					11,508.87				11,508.87
Nicolas Adams:									
			1,798.59						1,798.59
			175.00						175.00
					9,386.70				9,386.70
Delegation Expenses:*									
							547.87		547.87
Bethany Poulos:									
			1,711.09						1,711.09
			87.50						87.50
					10,100.84				10,100.84
Stephen Smith:									
			41.43						41.43
			67.50						67.50
					10,871.53				10,871.53
James Sauls:									
			314.00						314.00
					10,273.27				10,273.27
Michael Tanner:									
			314.00						314.00
					10,273.27				10,273.27
Arjun Ravindra:									
			314.00						314.00
					10,273.27				10,273.27
Senator Michael Bennet:									
			586.42						586.42
			1,675.88						1,675.88
			296.53						296.53
			456.88						456.88
			817.88						817.88
Alejandro Rosenkranz:									
			624.86						624.86
			1,714.33						1,714.33
			334.98						334.98
			495.33						495.33
			856.32						856.32
Senator Martin Heinrich:									
			2,811.00						2,811.00
					17,534.97				17,534.97
Senator Bob Casey:									
			1,432.00						1,432.00
			2,368.00						2,368.00
			404.00						404.00
Valli Sanmugalingam:									
			1,370.34						1,370.34
			2,306.33						2,306.33
			342.33						342.33
Anais Borja:									
			4,454.21						4,454.21
					7,880.67				7,880.67
John Matchison:									
			471.63						471.63

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
			788.75						788.75
					10,465.90				10,465.90
Delegation Expenses: *									
							848.56		848.56
Brian Walsh:									
			728.33						728.33
			790.00						790.00
					3,591.81				3,591.81
Delegation Expenses: *									
							2,774.00		2,774.00
James Sauls:									
			845.00						845.00
			783.33						783.33
					3,791.81				3,791.81
Samantha Roberts:									
			582.38						582.38
			520.72						520.72
					3,791.81				3,791.81
Senator Ben Sasse:									
			717.00						717.00
			72.70						72.70
					16,726.07				16,726.07
Senator Richard Burr:									
			869.30						869.30
			205.00						205.00
					16,726.07				16,726.07
Senator John Cornyn:									
			15.50						15.50
			659.80						659.80
					16,726.07				16,726.07
Tommy Nguyen:									
			765.30						765.30
			101.00						101.00
					16,726.07				16,726.07
Stephen Smith:									
			52.70						52.70
			717.00						717.00
					16,726.07				16,726.07
Maria Mahler-Haug:									
					35.00				35.00
Kathleen Reilly:									
					35.00				35.00
Total			67,112.51		411,674.09		4,644.90		483,431.50

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

MARK R. WARNER,
Chairman, Committee on Intelligence, Jan. 20, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), MAJORITY LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Adrian Deveny:									
United States	Dollar				1,373.87				1,373.87
United Kingdom	Pound		2,359.15						2,359.15
Lane Bodian:									
United States	Dollar				1,338.87				1,338.87
United Kingdom	Pound		2,406.15						2,406.15
Tim Ryder:									
United States	Dollar				1,338.87				1,338.87
United Kingdom	Pound		5,129.76						5,129.76
Delegation Expenses:*									
United Kingdom	Pound						3,689.20		3,689.20
Total			9,895.06		4,051.61		3,689.20		17,635.87

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

CHARLES SCHUMER,
Majority Leader, Jan. 18, 2022.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), REPUBLICAN LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2021

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Robert Karem:									
United States	Dollar				9,414.67				9,414.67
Lebanon	Pound		150.00						150.00
Turkey	Lira		571.46						571.46
Albania	Lek		355.95						355.95
Delegation Expenses:*									
Lebanon	Pound						11,851.03		11,851.03
Turkey	Lira						314.88		314.88
Albania	Lek						299.08		299.08

Total	1,077.41	9,414.67	12,464.99	22,957.07

*Delegation expenses include official expenses reimbursed to the Department of State, under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and may include S. Res. 179 funds agreed to May 25, 1977.

MITCH McCONNELL,
Republican Leader, Jan. 11, 2022.

NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE WORKERS OF THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 438.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 438) designating October 30, 2021, as a national day of remembrance for the workers of the nuclear weapons program of the United States.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 438) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of November 3, 2021, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions introduced earlier today: S. Res. 515, S. Res. 516, S. Res. 517.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

S. RES. 515

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, by supporting the development of a workforce trained in in-demand skills, we can accelerate the recovery of our economy. The Nation's continued progress and the socioeconomic mobility of our citizens are contingent on the education and skills of the American workforce and its ability to adjust to and fulfill the needs of the 21st century economy, especially in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and with growing infrastructure needs. Career and technical education—CTE—programs are vital to every student's education, providing them access to the important knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to obtain careers in rapidly growing, high-demand industries. Today, approximately 11 million students across the Nation are enrolled in CTE programs offered by thousands of career academies, comprehensive high schools, CTE high schools, community colleges, and CTE centers. Through applied learning, these students obtain workplace skills and technical training that mirror in-demand positions in the workforce.

In the next decade, millions of skilled workers will be needed to fill infrastructure positions in the United States, including jobs related to designing, building, and operating transportation, housing, telecommunication, and utilities facilities. As local governments are able to invest in projects previously put on hold because of the pandemic and with the recent passage of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, there will be even more demand for skilled workers. CTE programs intentionally match skills with workforce demands, lowering the probability of high school drop-out and increasing the likelihood of on-time graduation rates. One study showed that high school students who were CTE concentrators graduated from high school, enrolled in postsecondary education, and were employed full-time at higher rates than their nonconcentrator peers. CTE concentrators also had a higher median income 8 years after graduation. These CTE programs will help fill the estimated 30 million U.S. jobs available with an average annual income of $55,000 that do not require a bachelor's degree yet necessitate some level of postsecondary education.

In 2018, Congress affirmed the importance of CTE by passing the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, which supports CTE programs in secondary and postsecondary education. We also need to ensure we continue reskilling and upskilling workers by supporting workforce development programs.

Today, with my Senate CTE Caucus cochairs Senator PORTMAN, Senator BALDWIN, and Senator YOUNG and more than two-thirds of my Senate colleagues, I am pleased to again introduce a bipartisan resolution to designate February as Career and Technical Education—CTE—Month. CTE Month encourages students, parents, counselors, educators, and school leaders to learn more about the diverse educational opportunities offered in their communities and recognize the valuable role of CTE in developing a well-educated and highly skilled workforce in the United States. By formally recognizing CTE Month through this resolution, we hope to bring greater awareness to improving access to high-quality career and technical education for millions of America's students and our Nation's ongoing economic competitiveness.

S. RES. 517

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the first criminal trial arising out of the events of January 6, 2021, is scheduled to begin on February 28, 2022, in Federal district court in the District of Columbia. The Federal indictment charges the defendant with five felony counts for obstructing the counting by Congress of the electoral ballots for President and Vice President, transporting a firearm for unlawful use in furtherance of a civil disorder, using and carrying a firearm in a restricted area on the Capitol grounds, obstructing the Capitol Police during a civil disorder, and obstructing justice based on statements the defendant made to his children in reference to these matters.

The government has requested trial testimony from Daniel Schwager, formerly counsel to the Secretary of the Senate, related to the obstruction count, including his knowledge and observations of the process and constitutional and legal bases for Congress' certification of the Electoral College vote.

The Secretary of the Senate would like to cooperate with this request by providing relevant testimony from Mr. Schwager at this trial. In keeping with the rules and practices of the Senate, this resolution would authorize the production of relevant testimony from Mr. Schwager, with representation by the Senate legal counsel.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

HOUSE BILLS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following bills en bloc: Calendar No. 163, H.R. 2044; Calendar No. 164, H.R. 3419; Calendar No. 188, H.R. 3210; and Calendar No. 262, H.R. 960.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bills en bloc.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the bills, en bloc, be considered read a third time and passed, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

CAPTAIN EMIL J. KAPAUN POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (H.R. 2044) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 17 East Main Street in Herington, Kansas, as the ''Captain Emil J. Kapaun Post Office Building'' was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

JOSEPH R. LENTOL POST OFFICE

The bill (H.R. 3419) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 66 Meserole Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, as the ''Joseph R. Lentol Post Office'' was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

OFFICER ERIC H. TALLEY POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (H.R. 3210) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1905 15th Street in Boulder, Colorado, as the ''Officer Eric H. Talley Post Office Building'' was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

JOHN H. LEAHR AND HERBERT M. HEILBRUN POST OFFICE

The bill (H.R. 960) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3493 Burnet Avenue in Cincinnati, Ohio, as the ''John H. Leahr and Herbert M. Heilbrun Post Office'' was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2022

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, February 16; 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; that at 11:30 a.m., the cloture motions filed during yesterday's session ripen and the Senate vote on the motions to invoke cloture on the Wallander and Honey nominations consecutively and in the order listed; further, that if cloture is invoked on either of the nominations, the confirmation votes occur at 3:30 p.m. in the order in which cloture was invoked; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Wednesday's session, the motions 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.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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 6:16 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 15, 2022:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROBERT MCKINNON CALIFF, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF FOOD AND DRUGS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.