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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, whose might can save us, we trust You to deliver the Ukrainian people. Save them from those who shoot from the shadows.

Lord, we have trusted You in the past, when everything seemed to be falling apart. We continue to look to Your throne in Heaven for courage to face the worst that sin can do.

Lord, give our lawmakers wisdom to be strong and courageous in these dangerous times. Remind them that You have not given us a spirit of fear but power, love, and self-discipline.

Help us, Lord. We trust Your promises that cannot fail. Continue to hear our prayers and bring peace to our world.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jacqueline Scott Corley, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER
The majority leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, moments ago, speaking through a video feed from Kyiv, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy addressed Members of both the House and the Senate as the war in Ukraine enters its 21st awful day.

It is one of the highest honors of any Congress to welcome remarks by a foreign head of state, but it is unheard of to hear from a leader fighting for his life, fighting for his country's future, and fighting to preserve the very idea of democracy.

I cannot remember the last time a foreign leader united a room full of Members from both sides so quickly and so intensely. He spoke not just to American ears but to America's very soul. In one sense, his speech was reminiscent of the stirring feeling all of us

had in the aftermath of 9/11: equal parts resolve and unity and determination to save democracy from an hour of darkness.

As we have said from the start of the war, the Senate, the Congress, and the American people stand unequivocally behind the people of Ukraine. America will continue to strengthen our NATO allies and reassure our friends in Europe that we will remain a steady ally. It is why, last week, Congress approved nearly \$14 billion for food, shelter, money for Javelins and Stingers and anti-aircraft weapons and refugee help. Every last penny that the United States sends to Ukraine is money well spent.

This morning, it is reported that President Biden will also announce another \$800 million in military assistance. This means even more anti-tank, anti-aircraft missiles and other weapons that have been the most effective on the battlefield for the Ukrainians.

Last night, the Senate also unanimously passed legislation supporting investigations by the International Criminal Court into potential war crimes by Putin and his regime. I thank Senator GRAHAM and the many, many others who backed this bill. The Senate also confirmed the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Criminal Justice, our lead advocate in making sure this investigation is robust and it is swift.

These steps are all necessary. Over the last 2 weeks, we have seen Putin attack the largest nuclear plant in Europe, attack the Chernobyl containment site, attack a children's hospital, and attack designated humanitarian convoys. Putin, so far, is not winning militarily so now this evil man is trying to win by massacring civilians; massacring babies; parents, the elderly; and targeting apartments, just as he did in Syria, just as he did in Chechnya. If this doesn't equal a war crime, I don't know what does.

If it wasn't clear before, it should be clear now that President Putin and his

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



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band of cronies are not going to stop. But in his monomaniacal hubris, Putin has severely—severely—underestimated the Ukrainian people. Every time an innocent Ukrainian is killed, the resolve of the people grows stronger, and we stand with them. I join my colleagues in one voice to say this: “Slava Ukraini,” glory to Ukraine.

And, Mr. President, just seeing the video that the President showed us is heartbreaking and strengthens our resolve. Putin, by being such a villain, by being such a brutal, evil man, is not going to deter the Ukrainians, for sure, and not the American people from helping Ukraine. It strengthens our resolve when we see how vicious, how brutal he is.

COSTS

Mr. President, now, on another issue, this morning I want to highlight two steps Senate Democrats are taking to maintain our laser focus on lowering costs for American families.

First, today the Senate Finance Committee is holding a hearing examining one of the most vexing issues facing Americans everywhere: the alarming rise in prescription drug costs. Few things are as frustrating and debilitating as going to the pharmacy and seeing the price on your receipt go up and up and up for essential medications.

For families struggling to make ends meet, drug costs present a harrowing Sophie’s choice. Do I buy groceries and diapers and take care of my kids, or do I pay for my medications? It is a decision no American should make, but millions have to make it every day.

Insulin is a particularly flummoxing example. According to some sources, a 40-day supply can now climb north of \$600 a month. For millions of Americans who rely on insulin to manage their diabetes, this is a crisis that should compel the Senate to act. I expect that we will consider next steps soon on proposals already presented to my colleagues.

And besides rising prescription drug costs, Senate Democrats are zeroing in on the alarming state of energy prices. In the coming weeks, I expect that Congress will be calling on CEOs from the oil and gas companies to testify on the alarming spike in energy prices.

Over the past few weeks, as war in Ukraine began, the price of a barrel of oil rose precipitously. That immediately translated to oil and gas companies raising the price for Americans at the pump. But something is happening that Americans shouldn’t overlook. Over the past few days, oil prices have actually been decreasing, but the price of gas at the pump has not.

Some of the economists call this stickiness. When the costs go up, the price to the consumer goes up; when the costs go down, the price to the consumer stays high. Stickiness does not come close to describing the outrage that Americans feel about this.

The last time that the price of a barrel of oil was at \$96, gas was \$3.62 a gal-

lon. Oil prices have now come down to \$96 again. Yet the price of gas continues to rise. It is now at \$4.31. The bewildering incongruity between falling oil prices and rising gas prices smacks of price-gouging and is deeply damaging to working Americans.

The Senate is going to get answers, and that is why we will be calling on the CEOs of major oil companies to come testify before the Congress.

Meanwhile, as Americans pay more at the pump, the biggest oil companies in America are making a killing. Twenty-five of the top oil and gas companies reported a combined \$205 billion in profits. That is an astounding figure, blowing prepandemic figures out of the water. But instead of lowering gas prices, oil companies are using these soaring profits to reward their shareholders through stock buybacks. It is outrageous to me. Stock buybacks—they benefit the CEOs because they can tell the shareholders, “See, the price went up.” But it is not because they sold more product, became more efficient, hired more workers, used productivity. It is simply decreasing the number of shares so the price goes up. That, to me, is so wrong. It is one of the disturbing signs of American capitalism.

These disturbing trends demand answers, and the CEOs of large oil and gas companies should be advised they will have to provide answers before the Senate very soon: Why stock buybacks instead of lowering prices or increasing productivity or moving to green energy, which we know we all have to do?

And finally, in conclusion, another issue on prices. The Senate will also take action on the bottlenecks and supply chain crisis crippling our shipping lines. Senator CANTWELL and the Commerce Committee will be holding a markup on March 22 on bipartisan legislation introduced by Senators KLOBUCHAR and THUNE that will target this issue—one of the many, many ways that Democrats are continuing our focus on lowering costs for American families.

So these are some concrete steps we are taking. We are going to hear about many more as Democrats focus keenly—laser-like—on the higher costs for the American people, which we know must, must come down.

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 (Mr. Kaine). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning, Members of Congress received an update on the situation in Ukraine

directly from President Zelenskyy. His presentation was powerful and heartwrenching. It reinforced our sympathy, our outrage, and our resolve.

President Zelenskyy’s courage and leadership have earned the attention and the admiration of the entire free world. He has marshaled Ukraine’s brave and defiant resistance against Russian invasion. He has steeled the resolve of his people beyond what anybody expected and offered the entire world a master class in leadership.

This morning, President Zelenskyy didn’t mince words about what Ukraine needs urgently to keep up the fight: more lethal capabilities and heavier sanctions against Russia and especially the air defense systems that we should have helped Ukraine get weeks ago. His people face a long and difficult road ahead, and the entire world knows what they are up against.

The scale of Russia’s aggression wasn’t just foreseeable; it was foreseen. For 30 years, every step toward democracy and sovereignty in Eastern Europe has tempted the wrath of revanchist autocrats like Putin. That is why I have asked the Biden administration early and often to demonstrate America’s commitment to our allies and partners most squarely in Russia’s crosshairs.

Last June, 8 months before the Russian invasion, I urged the President to “provide serious, lethal support to Ukraine and other vulnerable states on the front lines of Putin’s aggressions”—8 months ago. In December, I specifically called on President Biden to deploy extra U.S. forces to reinforce NATO’s eastern flank—last December. I urged his administration to expedite and expand shipments of lethal aid like anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons. But, as we know, a security assistance package for Ukraine sat down at the White House for months before being approved. Once approved, efforts to transfer the weapons moved at the speed of bureaucracy. And the President waited until February to order U.S. personnel to the frontlines.

The Biden administration had over a year to get this right. They had a year to translate rhetorical support for NATO into leading real, collective defense. But they took 5 months to even nominate an ambassador to the alliance.

On the campaign trail, President Biden called Putin a “KGB thug.” He was right about that. But after 1 week in office, he announced an agreement with the Kremlin to extend the New START treaty for up to 5 years, reducing our leverage to get a better deal that caps Putin’s nuclear ambitions.

As the threats to Ukraine gathered, whenever an opportunity to act has presented itself, the Biden administration has hesitated until political pressure became overwhelming or balked outright.

Since Russia’s invasion began, the administration has publicly shot down efforts from a NATO ally to get working aircraft to Ukrainian pilots. Last

Monday, the White House scuttled a bipartisan congressional bill to end normal trade relations with Russia, only to make a public show on Friday of calling for exactly the same action.

At every step of the way—every step of the way—the self-deterred White House has insisted its hesitation and restraint was aimed at avoiding escalation, but at every step, Putin has escalated.

Now, 3 weeks into Putin's invasion, the reality on the ground is evolving. It is harder now than it would have been a few months ago to keep the pipeline of weapons and supplies and intelligence for Ukraine's brave resistance open. Russia's air offensive in particular is hitting a deadlier, more aggressive stride. But, as I have been saying literally for months, it is not too late for the Biden administration to do the right thing. So here is what President Biden should be doing right now:

No. 1, he should use the money and authorities we have just provided him to expand the scope of our lethal aid to Ukraine to include more effective, longer range air defense capabilities. That means working with NATO allies with urgency to get Ukrainian pilots more aircraft and munitions and facilitating the transfer of weapons Ukraine's forces are most familiar with, like air defense systems from countries with stockpiles of Soviet legacy systems. President Zelenskyy specifically pleaded for these air defense systems this morning—this morning.

No. 2, President Biden should deploy more U.S. forces to reinforce NATO's eastern flank and use the new draw-down and loan guarantee authorities to help harden the defenses of our front-line allies and partners. Many of these partners are generously helping Ukraine, and we should help them backfill their inventories with more modern American capabilities that will improve NATO's interoperability and bolster deterrence at the same time.

No. 3, on a trip to Europe next week, President Biden should go beyond Brussels. He should go to countries like Poland, Romania, or Lithuania to meet with NATO eastern flank allies. He should look beyond NATO to deepen our diplomatic security cooperation with important American partners like Finland and Sweden.

Finally, if President Biden wants the United States to lead our allies by example and to keep pace with adversaries like Russia and China, the place to start is with robust investments in our own defense capabilities. The coming year's appropriations process is an opportunity to finally—finally—show we are serious.

Vladimir Putin has proven to the world that he is willing to stoop low in pursuit of power, and he has shown us exactly—exactly—how he responds to weakness. We cannot afford to stay behind the curve. America must lead and lead with strength.

A few minutes ago, President Zelenskyy reminded us that the United

States is, indeed, the leader of the free world, so it is time we acted like it.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. President, on another matter, last week marked 1 year since Democrats rammed \$2 trillion of runaway liberal spending through the Senate on a party-line vote. Working families were certainly not celebrating this particular anniversary; they were too busy contending with the worst inflation in modern American history, unleashed in large part by that very bill.

Democrats' policies have conjured up the worst inflation in 40 years. Consumer prices rose 0.8 percent in the month of February alone. Annual inflation hit 7.9 percent. It is still getting worse. We just learned yesterday that the Producer Price Index, which measures inflation upstream at the wholesale level, is up 10 percent—10 percent—since last year.

This is hammering American families. Experts estimate that inflation alone is costing the average household more than \$296 every single month—the equivalent of an extra \$300 monthly bill courtesy of Democratic policies. No wonder almost 60 percent of Americans say inflation is causing them personal financial pain and the Democrats' approval ratings on the economy are way underwater. Even with a literal land war in Europe, the Democrats' inflation is so painful that inflation and not Ukraine still tops the American people's biggest list of concerns.

From the gas pump to the grocery store, to clothes, diapers, and baby formula, to furniture and home essentials, to car repairs and car replacements, Democrats' policies have put working families on a treadmill where they have to run faster and faster every month just to stay in place. Rent prices are spiking faster than they have since 1991. Grocery prices are soaring faster than they have since 1981. New cars and truck prices are climbing at their fastest rates ever. Forget about getting ahead and saving—households are lucky if they are even able to tread water.

Lately, Democrats have launched a shameless campaign to blame 12 months of inflation not on 12 months of their bad policies but instead on the last 3 weeks' crisis in Europe. The White House informs us that "Putin's price hike" is the culprit. Of course, that is utter nonsense. Even liberal experts are rejecting their shameless spin.

A former top economist for President Obama directly responded to the Biden administration's attempt to shift the blame. He said:

Well—

This is what he said—

Well, no. These are February numbers and only include [a] small Russia effect. This is Biden's inflation and he needs to own it.

The White House spin has not even persuaded former Democratic officials. Here is another quote:

This is Biden's inflation and he needs to own it.

Working Americans understand it just as well as the experts. Everybody knows where the buck stops. One retired mechanic who lives in Los Angeles recently explained to a reporter that he is facing \$6 gasoline and rising food prices. He is a registered Democrat, but he knows where this inflation came from. Here is how he described it.

He said:

Uncle Joe has put us on a diet. I like to have a steak once or twice a month. I can't do it now.

This is exactly what Republicans said would happen when Democrats dumped trillions of dollars into printing and spending on a partisan basis last year. Even top liberal economists said Democrats' reckless spending spree would bring about inflationary pressures like we have not seen for a generation.

Ah, but Democrats didn't listen. They pushed ahead, and, for 12 months and counting, working families have been paying a heavy price.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Republican leader referred to the American Rescue Plan, which did not receive a single Republican vote in support. He referred to it as runaway Federal spending.

What did we buy with the American Rescue Plan?

We bought vaccines, and we bought an administration and management of delivering those vaccines to the American people in the midst of a pandemic that was claiming American lives every day.

Runaway Federal spending—how much stronger would this Nation be if we were still in the depths of this pandemic?

We are emerging from it, thank God. But it wasn't for lack of effort on our part on this side of the aisle.

Yes, we spent the money. We administered the shots, and people across America are now protected from hospitalizations and death because of it. No apologies here to my colleague from Kentucky. It was money well spent, not just for that—and that was the number one public health purpose—but, secondly, to keep businesses afloat so they can reopen their doors as the pandemic ebbed.

That investment in the capital of America, in the businesses of America, paid off for business owners who otherwise would have lost their life savings and family investments and for their workers who finally returned to work.

I think it helped the small businesses, and I think it helped the families. The child tax credit, which cut in half child poverty in America—that child tax credit, according to the Senator from Kentucky, was runaway Federal spending. Tell that to the family who lives paycheck to paycheck and tries to provide the basics in life for their children. No apologies here for the American Rescue Plan.

And when you ask the American people, “What about this inflation,” it is a problem. Of course, it is. We see it as they do. And we see it all across the world. Inflation isn’t confined to the United States. It is reflected in a world that is emerging from COVID-19, where economies—local economies—were strangled and choked and restricted. Now, they are expanding. People are expanding their needs and spending on that side of it. If the supply doesn’t keep up with it, then inflation results. We have a battle ahead of us and many plans here to try to address it with a number of items to reduce the cost of living for families.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, the second item I would like to mention refers to a moving, historic presentation this morning by the President of Ukraine to a joint session of Congress.

He did it virtually by remote because he is literally in Kyiv, risking his life every single day for his nation.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy may have started his life as a standup comedian, but at this moment in life, he is a standup President of Ukraine, who is confronting the monster of Moscow who has unleashed this invasion on his country. He begged us to continue to help, and we will.

Last week, we added almost \$14 billion to the effort to support the Ukrainian defense and resistance. We need to do that and more.

Many of the suggestions by the Republican Senator are consistent with that goal, and I would endorse it. But I want to leave it to President Biden to make the critical decisions as our Commander in Chief who is really tasked with America’s national security as his highest priority.

I take exception to this notion that Joe Biden didn’t understand the timing of this crisis. He understood it better than anyone. He knew that if he pushed too far and too fast, two things might occur: first, that the Russians would move because we had precipitated it with an action we had taken. He was hoping, as we all did, that this could be ended bloodlessly and that an innocent people would be saved from what we see, the devastation that is happening in Ukraine today. So he was careful to make those moves in a way that Putin couldn’t use them as an excuse for starting the invasion.

Second, and more important, he needed to move at a pace consistent with building the NATO alliance. President Joe Biden succeeded in that effort. The NATO alliance today is stronger than it has ever been. Don’t believe the last President of the United States had anything to do with that, just the opposite was true.

Joe Biden picked up that alliance from the mat and brought them up to fighting trim, to be ready, if needed, to “defend every square inch,” as he says, “of NATO territory.” That timing was crucial. And decisions which seem so easy and obvious in America were

much more complex on the continent of Europe. Joe Biden knew that, and he paced himself accordingly. And because of that today, we have the strongest alliance in the face of Vladimir Putin that he has ever seen and that we have ever seen.

The last point I want to make to this, you could not watch the graphic video presented by President Zelenskyy without breaking your heart. Every parent and grandparent in America watching that video saw a member of his family, a child, a lifeless corpse because of a man named Vladimir Putin and what he is doing to that poor country. Unprovoked, he has invaded them and kills innocent people every single day.

Last night, unanimously, the Senate decided, as they should, that the conduct of Vladimir Putin was nothing short of a war crime. I can’t think of any other way to describe it and certainly never excuse it.

Zelenskyy touched our hearts too. His people are fighting a valiant effort, and the United States and allies and countries that share our values stand behind him and will continue to.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2022

Mr. President, I am honored to join my colleagues Senators MURKOWSKI and ERNST and, of course, my friend and colleague Senator FEINSTEIN to celebrate the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, more commonly known as VAWA. Yesterday, President Biden signed it into law. This is a monumental achievement for the survivors of domestic sexual violence and those who stand by them.

It is an achievement that wouldn’t have been possible without bipartisan cooperation. It, literally, would not have been possible. I have been proud to work with my three colleagues whom I mentioned.

With this strengthened version of VAWA, we have helped to ensure that every survivor in America, no matter where they live, will be able to reach for a lifeline in a moment of crisis. We have expanded and authorized services for rural survivors, survivors who need culturally specific services, and LGBTQ survivors. We have reauthorized programs that ensure survivors and their families can access housing, healthcare, and essential support services. We have improved rape prevention and education, as well as services and protections for young survivors. We have enhanced critical protections for Native American women and children who experience violence at the hands of non-Native perpetrators.

It doesn’t include everything we had hoped for. That is the nature of legislation and compromise. I wish there had been stronger protections for housing and economic assistance, but we had to find an agreement, and we did.

The bill contains several important provisions to help boost enforcement of our gun laws. I wish it would have finally closed the so-called “boyfriend

loophole,” but that was beyond our reach in this effort.

The lack of those provisions could not attract enough bipartisan support in the Senate to pass on their own. They will be saved for another day.

For nearly 30 years, VAWA has transformed the way we address domestic and sexual violence in America and saved countless lives. At a moment when nearly one in three women—one in three—have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence, a crisis that has grown worse during the pandemic, VAWA is going to help save lives.

Let me tell you a story. My office received a letter from a woman named Kesha, who works with Connections for Abused Women and their Children in Chicago. Kesha told me that VAWA provides funding for domestic violence services at Chicago’s Haymarket Center, an amazing agency I know full well.

She shared the story of Cassandra, who was receiving treatment at the Center for Substance Abuse and disclosed to a counselor that she was the victim of abusive treatment. Her counselor referred her to VAWA, and that program gave her an opportunity to “open up about the emotional, financial, and physical abuse she had suffered for years at the hands of [an] abusive husband.”

Kesha wrote:

After weeks of domestic violence psychoeducation, a supportive network encouraging her, and her own personal resilience, Cassandra decided that if she wanted to remain in recovery and not relapse, [she had to find a new home, away from her abuser.] With the help of her domestic violence counselor, Cassandra was able to break free and transition into temporary housing.

She has been able to gain financial independence and find a job. She has remained on her path to recovery, a success story, and a reminder that VAWA doesn’t just help save lives, it gives survivors the power to rebuild their own lives.

VAWA also provides funding for educational programming, and it has done it so well.

I want to thank Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator ERNST, and Senator MURKOWSKI for their partnership and tireless leadership in getting this bill addressed, introduced, and across the finish line.

I want to thank their staff: Jessica Jensen, Senator FEINSTEIN’s chief counsel, as well as Nick Xenakis, her former chief counsel; Corey Becker and Kristina Sesek, Senator ERNST’s legislative director and general counsel; and Anna Dietderich, Senator MURKOWSKI’s legislative assistant.

On my Judiciary Committee staff, I would like to give thanks especially to Stephanie Trifone and Nicole McClain Walton and Chastidy Burns.

I want to thank the other members of the committees of jurisdiction and their staffs, along with Ranking Member MURKOWSKI and the minority staff on the Indian Affairs Committee,

chaired by BRIAN SCHATZ. They have done an extraordinarily good job, a bipartisan job, when it comes to Native Americans.

Chair MURRAY and the staff of the HELP Committee, Chair BROWN and the staff of the Banking Committee, Chair WYDEN and the staff of the Finance Committee were part of this victory.

As you can see, this was a multicommittee team effort on both sides of the aisle, and that is the only reason we can stand here today and say we will continue to give hope to those who are struggling with domestic violence and abuse.

I ask unanimous consent that Senators ERNST, MURKOWSKI, and FEINSTEIN be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each prior to the cloture vote on the Corely nomination.

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

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues Senator DURBIN, Senator FEINSTEIN, and Senator MURKOWSKI for joining me on the floor this morning to talk about a very important topic and one that we can finally celebrate, which is the passage and the signing of the Violence Against Women Act.

Nine years—it has been 9 years since the Violence Against Women Act was reauthorized, but, finally, the Senate reauthorized and modernized this very important bill.

Last week, the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 passed the House and the Senate, and yesterday, at long last, it was signed into law.

I have been a proud champion of this bill over the last 3 years. And while no bill is perfect, I am extremely grateful for the bipartisan work to get it over the finish line.

This bill is personal. Many of you know my story. I am the one out of three women who has experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner.

Similarly, one in four men have had the same experience. This means nearly 20 people per minute, more than 10 million women and men in the United States every single year have suffered this horrific personal abuse.

I am not a victim. I am a survivor. It took me a long time to say those words out loud. And my hope is that with this bill some women will never have to, and those who do will have the necessary support and resources in a moment of crisis to cope with and ultimately overcome their trauma.

The reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act is a bright light in our current troubling reality.

The bill includes so many critical resources, especially in our rural communities, that have been drastically overlooked.

Specifically, the bill doubles the support for both the rural domestic violence assistance program and the Rape

Prevention and Education Program, both of which are of great importance to my home State of Iowa.

And my sincere hope is that the resources contained in this new law will finally help truly move the needle on domestic violence around the country and that some of our Nation's most vulnerable will have access to the support that they so desperately need.

To my colleagues, thank you, especially to Senators FEINSTEIN, DURBIN, and MURKOWSKI for your diligent work on domestic violence-related issues over the years.

I also want to thank Republican Senators CORNYN, COLLINS, CAPITO, PORTMAN, CRAMER, TILLIS, MORAN, BURR, and BLUNT for supporting this vital bill at introduction.

The negotiations were, at times—my colleagues will recognize this—very tough, and there were several doubts along the way as to whether the bill would actually ever happen. But with a little bit of tenacity and good-faith negotiating, we got there.

To those who work every day around this great country to help domestic violence survivors, including our law enforcement officers who are answering those domestic violence calls, thank you.

While working at a victim's shelter answering the hotline in college, I heard the heartbreaking stories of abuse. I understand this is your daily reality. Please know your work is not going unnoticed and is making a difference in the lives of those around you.

To all of the advocates, I greatly appreciate and respect your passion for the causes you support. Your persistence made this bill possible, and it made this bill better.

While the end result isn't perfect, it modernizes the resources necessary to meet the evolving needs of our survivors.

This bill is proof that bipartisanship is not dead and Congress can tackle these tough issues.

Finally, for my fellow Americans who can say they are survivors, for those who have not come to terms with their abuse and for those who feel trapped in their situation and for those who have lost their battle, please know that you are not and will never be forgotten. The Violence Against Women Act is for you.

Today, I join my fellow survivors, my colleagues, and our strong and wonderful advocates across this country in celebrating VAWA's reauthorization and its modernization.

Thank you to my dear colleagues for their wonderful work in helping us get this over the finish line.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I so appreciate the leadership, the heart of Senator ERNST and the ability to work with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—Senator DURBIN, Senator

FEINSTEIN—in this effort towards reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.

Thanks to the very open, very inclusive, and, really, a very transparent process that we followed, the bipartisan support that was built with this, we were able to include the VAWA reauthorization in the Omnibus appropriations bill that passed the Senate last week with 68 votes.

That wasn't necessarily the path that we had set on. But we had work to do, again, with extraordinary leadership from Senator ERNST, Senator DURBIN, Senator FEINSTEIN, myself, who have been working on this for years, but trying to build that collaborative effort, that negotiated effort that would result in not a partisan bill but a bill that is designed to help those survivors, designed to help the most vulnerable at their time of need.

So there is great thanks that is due this afternoon as we recognize the dedication, the leadership of, again, the cosponsors, the Members that led this, but we all know we are backed by incredible men and women who work very hard to get these initiatives built and across the finish line.

Senator DURBIN has named many of the staffs and general counsels, our legislative assistants that made this happen.

I also want to recognize all those who were named, in addition to those who are working on the Senate Indian Affairs Committee to help us with that Tribal title. It was a collaborative effort that was really, really tireless.

And I want to acknowledge Senator ERNST particularly. She worked tirelessly over these last 3 years, working to ensure that women and their safety—and, really, all those who are most vulnerable—their safety is put first.

But to Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator DURBIN—invaluable partners putting the politics aside, saying: We have to figure out how we are going to make this happen, and they did so.

But we and our staff can't do near the job that needs to be done without the advocacy and, again, this passionate grassroots advocacy that we have all felt.

I want to recognize women like Tami Jerue from the Alaskan Native Women's Resource Center; Michelle Demmert, Brenda Stanfield from the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence. There were so many who urged us along—in fact, so many who have flown 4,000 miles to come from Alaska to be at a ceremony at the White House in recognition of this.

So Senator ERNST has said how personal this issue of domestic violence is, and it is for so many. Half the women—half the women—in the State of Alaska have experienced intimate partner, sexual violence, or both.

The advocates know, I know, we know how imperative it is for Congress to take action to reauthorize and to modernize this almost three-decades-old law.

Again, we don't want to talk about statistics because these are people—these are friends, these are mothers, daughters—but the statistics are just so in your face.

Alaska Native women suffer the highest rate of forcible sexual assault and have reported rates of domestic violence up to 10 times higher than the national average.

In so many of the Native villages in my State in rural Alaska, they have no law enforcement presence; so trying to prevent violence, trying to protect or ensure justice for survivors is hard.

And so I really am very, very thankful for the work that Senator SCHATZ committed to within the Senate Indian Affairs Committee to put together a strong Tribal title in VAWA that would continue to empower Tribal courts to help combat this major public safety issue affecting Native people and children.

We have got a pretty complex jurisdictional landscape as the result of our Native Claims Settlement Act, and the last time that VAWA was reauthorized in 2013, Alaska was effectively left out. But today, we have an Alaska solution to this jurisdictional maze. We call it the Alaska Public Safety Empowerment pilot project that was included in the Tribal title, and it is the product of years of work with Tribal advocates, with the Department of Justice—some pretty smart lawyers out there—and then good, strong work in the committee.

And what this pilot program will do is supplement the work that the State of Alaska is doing with regard to public safety. It doesn't create Indian Country in the State, it doesn't take away any jurisdiction, but it will empower a limited number of Alaska Tribes to exercise this special criminal jurisdiction over defendants who commit certain crimes that we outline in the law that occur in Native villages in the State.

Tribes selected to participate are going to have to meet specific criteria that are set by the Department of Justice. They will have to include a Tribal justice system that can adequately safeguard the right of all defendants.

So I am optimistic. I believe that our Alaska Tribes are up to this job. They are going to be good partners with the State, and they will make a difference. They will make a difference, and they will provide hope to so many in these communities that have felt without hope.

We are celebrating, again, passage of this law—the reauthorization, the modernization. But for so many who have shown the bravery, the strength, the resilience in the wake of unspeakable trauma—we know that so many, again, of our friends have endured domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking. Many have survived, but so many have not.

These women have endured physical, mental, emotional abuse. The impacts don't necessarily fade away because the calendar moves on; but on their

journeys to recovery and healing, many have developed an extraordinary inner strength to stand up and be advocates for themselves and others, and they have spoken about their abuse, they have sought the changes to VAWA to prevent the future tragedies and hold perpetrators accountable, and we have heard them and their pleas to improve access to essential support services, whether healthcare, safe housing for victims—but we have also heard the cries of parents and loved ones who lost those that they love so very much.

I am thinking of Butch and Cindy Moore right now. Butch and Cindy are from Wasilla. They have spent—I swear, they have spent every moment of their lives since they lost their beautiful daughter Bree, 20 years old. They have been advocating for prevention efforts to ensure that no parent experiences the loss of their child to teen dating violence.

Butch and Cindy have said:

As parents who have experienced the devastation of losing our daughter, Bree Moore, to dating violence, we know prevention is the key to keeping future generations safe from interpersonal violence.

I know that Butch and Cindy are looking at this day and feeling that, again, there is some hope. There is some hope.

This is a legislative win, but I think it is also a victory—a victory for women everywhere—and we mark its passage in memory of both those that we have lost and those that have survived.

This is the day where we recognize that this Congress can act in a bipartisan manner to address the crisis of violence in our communities by passing this reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which is now law, now helping to protect women in Alaska and across the country, and we thank all who helped us get here.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today also in recognition of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2022.

I am delighted President Biden signed it into law yesterday as part of the omnibus spending bill.

It is important to know that this bill reauthorizes critical programs that help respond to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. It is long overdue, but today, this bill will become law.

Last month, I introduced this reauthorization bill alongside Senators ERNST, DURBIN—both of whom are on the floor today—MURKOWSKI, who is also here today, and additional cosponsors.

A number of advocates joined us, including Angelina Jolie, to speak about the importance of the legislation.

The bill we introduced and the bill we are passing today has really strong bipartisan support, including that of 11 Republican cosponsors.

In addition to reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act through 2027, the law includes bringing it up to date, and that is important. It means that existing programs will be able to do an even better job protecting and supporting survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

It is the result of a truly bipartisan effort, and I want to thank Senators ERNST, DURBIN—both are on the floor—particularly Senator MURKOWSKI, for working with me to prepare this important piece of legislation. I am very appreciative of the partnership because the law will become a reality. We also had help from a number of our Senate colleagues on both side of the aisle who made important contributions to the effort.

This act plays a critical role supporting law enforcement in their efforts to stop these perpetrators before it is too late. It reauthorizes important programs and provides the necessary updates to strengthen them.

So what does it do?

First, it enhances and expands services for survivors, including survivors in rural communities, LGBT survivors, survivors with disabilities, and survivors who experience abuse later in life. Older people get a lot of violence.

It strengthens the criminal justice response to domestic violence, including by improving the Justice Department's STOP grant program and strengthening the ability of Tribal courts to address instances of domestic violence on Tribal lands.

It also establishes a pilot program that focuses on addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking through community-based, victim-initiated efforts to seek accountability.

And the law invests in prevention education efforts that will improve the healthcare system's response to sexual violence—we hope.

And these changes can have a real impact. Here is one example: The International Association of Forensic Nurses reports that only one in four U.S. hospitals has a sexual assault forensic nurse on duty—not a special place but even one nurse on duty. Our bipartisan law remedies this problem by providing additional funding and training to increase access to forensic nurses, particularly in rural areas, where, strangely enough, a lot of this violence takes place.

Through this bipartisan law, we will make significant improvements to our Nation's response to domestic violence, but I want to caution everybody, it isn't perfect.

I really regret that certain provisions were unable to be included in this bill. In particular, I had hoped we could include a provision to close the boyfriend loophole. Most people don't know that while individuals convicted of domestic violence against a spouse are prevented from purchasing a firearm, that is not the case for those convicted of domestic violence against a dating partner.

We tried to get that part passed, and it is very disappointing that there was not sufficient bipartisan support for this provision to close what will remain a dangerous loophole.

So, clearly, we still have work to do. There are those of us who follow these assaults carefully and make a determination where this bill works and where it might need improvement, and I have just suggested one. So we will watch those figures carefully.

I would like to thank the many advocates who provided valuable input and support. This bill was written in close consultation with the people who are on the frontlines helping survivors of domestic violence every day.

For nearly 30 years, the Violence Against Women Act has played a vital role in the Federal response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. As Katie Ray-Jones, the CEO of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, noted, the Violence Against Women Act provides services with “a variety of options to meet their evolving and complex needs for services and support.” For example, according to the National Network to End Domestic Violence, in a single day in 2020, there were 76,525 survivors, in 1 day 75,000 women were affected by domestic violence who received assistance thanks to programs funded and supported by the Violence Against Women Act.

So despite the progress made over the last three decades, sexual, emotional, and physical abuse are still painful realities for far too many Americans. We need to say this over and over again. We need to change minds and change actions.

More than one in three women and more than one in four men will experience rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence in my home State of California, approximately 35 percent of California women and 31 percent of California men will experience violence from intimate partners in their lifetimes. That is an amazing figure, if you think about it.

In conclusion, let me end with this: All too often, these instances of domestic violence have fatal consequences. Every day, people are killed by a current or former intimate partner. This law is long overdue.

And I want to thank the Members who have spoken on the floor and all those who voted for this law. We are glad to get it signed into law and hope to put an end to some of this.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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 nomi-

nation of Executive Calendar No. 656, Jacqueline Scott Corley, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

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

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jacqueline Scott Corley, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 63, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 82 Ex.]

YEAS—63

Baldwin	Hassan	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Romney
Booker	Hirono	Rosen
Brown	Kaine	Rounds
Burr	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Capito	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lee	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Tillis
Cornyn	McConnell	Toomey
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Peters	Young

NAYS—35

Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Cramer	Kennedy	Sullivan
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Daines	Marshall	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	

NOT VOTING—2

Menendez Shaheen

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). On this vote, the yeas are 63, the nays are 35.

The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 738, Fred W. Slaughter, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Fred W. Slaughter, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted “aye.”

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 83 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Rounds
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	Kelly	Schatz
Capito	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sinema
Carper	Leahy	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Peters	

NAYS—41

Barrasso	Hagerty	Portman
Blackburn	Hawley	Risch
Blunt	Hoeven	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Braun	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Burr	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Toomey
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Cornyn Menendez Shaheen

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 56, the nays are 41.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Fred W. Slaughter, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

BOLIVAR ACT

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, as the Federal Government rightfully continues to levy devastating sanctions on Russia and punish Putin and his thugs for their horrific and unlawful invasion of Ukraine, we cannot, as the Biden administration has signaled it will, choose to empower one dictator so we can punish another.

Nicoles Maduro is the illegitimate, ruthless dictator in Venezuela. I traveled to the Colombia-Venezuela border and saw the suffering of the Venezuelan people at the hand of Maduro's regime. I met with Venezuelan refugees and got updates from Colombian officials on just how bad Venezuelans were being treated by Maduro's tyranny.

Venezuelan children walk for hours through dense forests, across rivers, and over terrorist-controlled territory just to get to a school in Colombia for an education and a meal. Mothers with young children came to Cucuta to get the only meal they would eat for 3 days. I met a pregnant woman who was forced to sleep on the streets of Venezuela because she was homeless. Think about that. I am a father and a grandfather. Imagine having to look at your 3-year-old child or grandchild in the eyes and tell them that they are not going to eat today because there is no food.

The pain, the hunger, the devastation—I cannot believe any human being would do this to young children. It was heartbreaking, and it was evil. And there is one man responsible for it: Nicoles Maduro.

Since my visit, things have only gotten worse. In what is one of the worst humanitarian crises in Latin American history, more than 6 million Venezuelans have fled Maduro's oppression in Venezuela since 2014.

In 2020, a factfinding mission for the United Nations determined that Maduro's regime has engaged in crimes against humanity, including unlawful executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and torture. The regime has imprisoned hundreds of its political opponents and forced countless more into exile. They have used the guise of the COVID-19 pandemic to further crack down on journalists and dissenters.

We know that what has been happening at the direction of Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela is horrific. That is why, in 2019, the previous administration signed an Executive order issuing a complete economic embargo on Venezuela.

We can all agree that the United States should not be bolstering such a disgusting socialist regime, and we cannot forget that any lifting of sanctions or show of appeasement toward Maduro's Venezuela will only further the suffering there and help its evil allies, like Russia, Cuba, communist China, and Iran, which actively support Maduro's abuses. So I and many others were deeply disturbed last week when we learned that President Biden secretly sent a team to Venezuela—secretly sent a team to Venezuela—and began negotiations on the potential purchase of Venezuelan oil and the easing of sanctions.

High gas prices caused by President Biden's war on American energy and Putin's invasion of Ukraine doesn't mean we can turn a blind eye to Maduro's genocide and oppression. We know that funds going to Maduro are used for terrorism in our hemisphere, and we know that Venezuela and Russia are aligned. If we support one, we support the other. That is why, just days after the American team left, the Russian Foreign Minister traveled to meet with the Venezuelan Vice President.

Now, I am glad the administration finally made the decision to stop buying Russian oil—I think it came too late—but I am glad the Biden administration reluctantly agreed not to purchase oil from Venezuela. We shouldn't be supporting Maduro or Putin. It would be foolish if we made the mistake of supporting one dictator so we could punish another dictator. Maduro has decided to be our enemy, and so is Putin. Neither of them deserves our money.

The Biden administration needs to realize that our enemies are not the world's only source of oil and natural gas. America has huge supplies of oil and natural gas, and we would have access to those resources right now if the Biden administration hadn't spent the past year relentlessly trying to destroy the U.S. oil industry.

On day 1, Biden killed the Keystone Pipeline, and 10,000—10,000—jobs alongside it were lost. Then he cut off new drilling contracts on public lands. The Biden EPA has added one ridiculous regulation after another to make it more expensive and harder for American oil manufacturers to do business. We went from being nearly energy independent and a net exporter in 2019 to begging cartels and ruthless dictators for oil. This is not American leadership, and it is not American independence.

It is long past time for the administration to admit that its ridiculous Green New Deal policies put our security at risk and hurt American families. Prices at the pump are at an all-time high across the Nation.

We should be solving this problem with our own resources and with our own workers, not with Maduro and his thugs. That is why I have introduced the Banning Operations and Leases with the Illegitimate Venezuelan Au-

thoritarian Regime Act, or the BOLIVAR Act. This bill would prohibit Federal Agencies from doing business with the oppressive Maduro regime. We can't stand by and let Maduro continue to commit genocide against his people, and we have to do everything possible to restrict the money Maduro uses to hold on to power and destabilize the region.

When I was Governor of Florida, I signed a bill that prevented State agencies from investing in companies doing business with the Government of Venezuela.

In 2019, my amendment to cut off funds to the Maduro regime was included in the National Defense Authorization Act.

In March of last year, my colleagues on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee agreed with me, and we unanimously passed the BOLIVAR Act through our committee.

I am thankful for Senators JACKY ROSEN, MARCO RUBIO, and THOM TILLIS, who have cosponsored this legislation and helped bring this legislation this far. I also want to thank Congressman MICHAEL WALTZ for introducing the companion bipartisan bill in the House of Representatives.

But we didn't introduce the bill only to have the Biden administration begin working with Maduro's thugs and bolstering the corrupt Venezuelan oil industry. We are trying to stop that, and no one should want to be on the side of Maduro's genocide.

I am grateful for the bipartisan support this bill has received, and I hope that the entire Senate will take a stand to support the fight for freedom and the people of Venezuela.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

SUPREME COURT NOMINATION

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise to speak on behalf of a few Federal judge nominees from the State of California.

In recognizing that, right now, many Americans are certainly following the news and the potential news of the Federal judiciary and are focusing on a nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court. As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I certainly look forward to hearing more from Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson next week as we conduct her confirmation hearing.

The choices for the Supreme Court are certainly critical for the future of our democracy, but the fact of the matter is—and the Presiding Officer knows I like numbers and knows I like data. So the important data point here is that it is only a tiny percentage of cases in our Federal court system that actually reach the U.S. Supreme Court. In fact, more than 90 percent of the Federal cases are decided at the district court level. That means the vast majority of people who interface with the Federal judiciary will only ever meet a district court judge, sitting on the other side of the bench, whether

they are witnesses to a crime, whether they are parties to a lawsuit or defendants in a criminal case.

That is one of the primary reasons I have worked so closely with the Biden administration in helping to identify and recommend and support talented nominees for California's district courts.

Today, I rise to highlight three nominees to serve as Federal judges whose confirmation processes we are beginning today.

NOMINATION OF RUTH BERMUDEZ MONTENEGRO

Mr. President, Judge Ruth Montenegro is nominated to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California.

She is a proud daughter of Mexican immigrants who came to this country with only elementary school educations—just like my parents. Judge Montenegro understood early on—because of her parents' experience and their journey—the value of getting a good education and of public service, starting at a very young age. She was born and raised in the Imperial Valley, where she returned after graduating from UCLA Law School.

Like so many of us, you are trying to fulfill your parents' dreams, so you go on to college and get a good education. You graduate and have options all over and choose to come home to make a difference.

Judge Montenegro built a career in representing public agencies. She could have made a lot of money in the private sector. She chose to represent public agencies, ranging from the Imperial Valley Housing Authority to the El Centro Elementary School District. She has served for nearly 10 years now as a State superior court and Federal magistrate judge.

Judge Montenegro's extensive judicial experience and lifelong dedication to her community, I have no doubt, will strengthen the Southern District's bench.

NOMINATION OF FRED W. SLAUGHTER

Mr. President, next, I would like to highlight Judge Fred Slaughter, who is nominated to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

Judge Slaughter received his undergraduate and his law degree from UCLA, going on to a distinguished career as a prosecutor. For more than a decade, he served as an assistant U.S. attorney in Arizona, Oregon, and California, where he oversaw and tried hundreds of cases, including cases involving human trafficking, bank robberies, and the prosecuting of members of White supremacist groups.

Judge Slaughter has spent the past 8 years serving in the Orange County Superior Court. There, he is known for his compassion and leadership in juvenile justice. Judge Slaughter's long career demonstrates his legal excellence as well as his commitment to providing justice for all.

NOMINATION OF JACQUELINE SCOTT CORLEY

Mr. President, finally, Judge Jacqueline Corley is nominated to serve for the Northern District of California.

She is a native of Long Beach. She earned her bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and her J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Judge Corley's nontraditional path to the bench displays her commitment to public service. After spending some time in private practice, she spent more than 10 years as a career law clerk for the Northern District of California. Based on her outstanding work in that role and the expertise that she built in private practice prior, Judge Corley was selected to serve as a magistrate judge for the Northern District. She has served there for the past decade and is known for her mentorship of current law clerks.

I celebrate each of these highly qualified nominees who will help Californians access justice throughout our State. When people enter a Federal court, they should feel confident in the promise of equal justice—equal justice that I know these three nominees will help deliver. The oversight and judgment of a thoughtful and fair judge is paramount.

Our democracy depends on the public's faith in the judiciary. That is why I am committed to building a bench of judges who will better reflect and understand the districts, the States, and the country that they serve. I am proud to take another step toward that goal by supporting the confirmations of these three judges, and I urge all of our colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF GEORGIA SHOOTINGS

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I rise today to reflect on a dark day in Georgia's recent history.

One year ago today, a hateful act of violence shook Metropolitan Atlanta and reverberated across our State, our country, and indeed the world. In the span of just a few hours, our sense of safety and sanctuary was pierced by bullets of hate and fear. Eight precious people lost their lives—eight people who were loved by their families, their friends, their children; eight people with their own successes and struggles, hopes, and dreams.

We speak their names: Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Suncha Kim, Yong Ae Yue, Delaina Ashley Yaun Gonzalez, Paul Andre Michels, Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng.

My heart aches for these Georgians and their families for whom I am sure the wounds are still fresh. They were the victims of unconscionable, senseless hate.

As a pastor, I believe in the sacred worth of every human being—that we are a strange admixture of dust and divinity, of sod and sky, of beauty and possibility.

So I will ask now for all of my colleagues and everyone who can to join me in taking a moment of silence to remember these eight Georgians and to pray, each in our own way, for their families.

(Moment of silence.)

Thank you.

VIOLENCE AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS

Mr. President, importantly, I must mention that this unspeakable violence was visited largely upon Georgia's Asian-American community and especially on women of Asian descent. Unfortunately, this hateful act that horrified Atlanta is not isolated; it is part of a larger trend.

Last year, anti-Asian hate crimes increased 339 percent. Think about that—in 1 year, a 339-percent increase in anti-Asian hate crimes. It is a sobering statistic, and it should remind all of us of our shared duty in our democracy to stay committed to peace, an active peace, that recognizes that we are in this together.

It was Martin Niemoller, the pastor during Hitler's Third Reich, who said:

First they came for the Communists, and I did not speak . . . because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak . . . because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak . . . because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak . . . because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak. . . .

So this is a tragedy, in a real sense, visited upon all of us.

As a student of history and a voice for our State and the Senate, I know Georgians understand all too well how hate and misplaced anger can hurt our communities and how certain parts of our community are so easily scapegoated and lose their sense of sanctuary. And then when that happens, all of us lose a piece of ourselves. So I want to say to my AAPI sisters, brothers, and neighbors that I see you, and, more importantly, I will continue to stand with you against hate and violence wherever it rears its ugly head.

That is why I cosponsored and fought to pass the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act and to get it signed into law, directing more resources to ensure our communities have what they need to seek justice whenever and wherever hate and crime rear their ugly heads.

I am especially proud that my colleagues worked with me to include a provision in this legislation that names and acknowledges the pain and experiences of Georgia's AAPI community specifically and makes sure we never forget the names attached to the lives and the families we lost in the horrific shootings in Atlanta 1 year ago today.

And that is why I am pushing here in the Senate to confirm a U.S. attorney for the northern district of our State, a post that is integral to helping Georgians stop crime and pursue justice.

The terrible act of violence and hate we witnessed on March 16, 2021, ought

to remind us all that we all have a stake in each other's well-being.

Georgia's greatest son, that great American, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said it best: We are tied in a single garment of destiny, caught up in "an inescapable network of mutuality." "Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." "I cannot be all that I ought to be, and you cannot be all that you ought to be until I am all that I ought to be."

And so let us continue working together to stop Asian hate, to stop the scapegoating, and to create what Dr. King called the beloved community—a community where everybody, no matter their skin color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religious background, can live a life of fulfillment and joy without fear of facing hate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, there are a lot of things going on in the world right now—a lot. What is happening in Ukraine; Russian aggression; continuing talk about the continual challenges of communist China; dealing with COVID-19 and its effects still worldwide, still here in the United States; still lots of people very frustrated on transportation mandates—on the masks, I should say; other vaccine mandates that are still out there; we have a 7—almost 8—percent now inflation rate that is in the country; cost of living is going up; all the energy issues—there are so many things that we are dealing with around this body of late.

I want to bring something to the middle of this conversation that I don't want us to forget about because the media seemed to have pushed it all to the back burner. And I have even had people recently catch me and say, Apparently, things are going much better on our southern border because I don't hear about it anymore. Well, it has not gotten better. And I want to bring a couple of issues and one in particular that I am very concerned about of where things are going right now, on our enforcement on the southern border.

This chart walks through the last 10 years of illegal crossings that had been actually apprehended, engaged—the new term is "encountered" that the Biden administration is using. This is over the last 10 years, and this is quarter by quarter of what has actually occurred.

You will see the rise and fall over multiple times. You will see spikes that have happened. But right there, that spot, is when President Biden was elected. That is that date. His election is there, and this is what has occurred since that time period.

Instead of seeing a big dropoff just in the last couple of months, we have only seen it go down, but not even close to the highest peaks in the past.

To give you a point of reference on that, since January of 2021, we have had 2,355,000 people whom we have "encountered" on the southwest border—folks who have illegally crossed our border. These are not just record numbers; these are alltime high numbers—nothing even close to the number of people who are illegally crossing the border.

Now, this is on the southern border. And there are two facts I want to be able to add to this, the first of which is what is happening inside the country: That would be ICE removals.

This is since 2015, the ICE removals that have been done every year during the Obama administration, during the Trump administration, and then during the first year of the Biden administration. So not only do we have 2.3 million people who have illegally come to our border and crossed it that we have encountered, but it is an alltime low of actual deportations that are happening right now as well.

So not only on our southern border are we seeing record numbers of high coming in inside the country, it is record-low numbers actually being deported out.

This is by design. This is not accidental. The policies that have been put in place on our southern border were put in place to encourage people, quite frankly, to be able to cross the border, knowing full well that when you get inside, you won't actually be deported.

There is only one policy that is set out there that has been in the middle of this that has changed the dynamic at all, and it is a policy most Americans never even heard of. It is called title 42 expulsions. Quite frankly, probably most of the folks in this room have never heard of title 42 expulsions. It is a new term, so I want to be able to walk through it a little bit.

Starting in March of 2020—just 2 years ago—when COVID started to accelerate worldwide, the Surgeon General made a recommendation through the CDC, through HHS, to the President to be able to say we have a worldwide pandemic that is occurring. Here is title 42 of the Public Health Service Act. It says:

Whenever the Surgeon General determines that by reason of the existence of any communicable disease in a foreign country, there is serious danger of the introduction of such disease into the United States, and that . . . danger is so increased by the introduction of persons or property from [that] country that a suspension of the right to introduce such persons and property is required in the interest of the public health, the Surgeon General, in accordance with regulations approved by the President, shall have the power to prohibit . . . the introduction of persons and property from such countries or places [that they] shall designate . . . to [avoid] such danger.

In March of 2020, the Trump administration said: We have got a concern dealing with individuals crossing our border illegally. They are coming from all over the world. There is COVID all over the world. There are some au-

thorities that you go through that you can actually say some of these folks can be turned around immediately.

The Surgeon General, HHS, and the President agreed that we are going to turn people around at the border immediately. So the Trump administration did that.

And, by the way, right there is President Biden's inauguration. His HHS also agreed with this same policy of title 42 to say: We have a serious risk from COVID, so we should also turn people around in numbers at the border and send them back home.

This is the number under the Biden administration of individuals who have been turned around.

Let me give you a perspective. Of the 2.3 million people who have been encountered at our border since the beginning of the Biden administration, 56 percent of those folks have been literally turned around at the border and told, You cannot enter under title 42 authority—56 percent of the people. So 44 percent of the people have been allowed to be able to come into our country.

Let me set this in context because I am throwing a lot of numbers out at everybody. I want you to remember all the news reports from last year, all of the overcrowding in the Donna, TX, facility that we saw, all of the people crammed underneath the bridge in the Rio Grande Valley, all of those folks who piled across the border in massive numbers that we saw coming into the United States—that represented only 44 percent of the people illegally crossing our border because they were allowed in.

I bring this up because as of right now, we have heard that DHS, the President, and HHS are considering canceling title 42. If that occurs, we won't have 1 million people illegally crossing our border and released into the United States; within months, we will have 2 million. And all that you saw last summer of the flood of people—that 44 percent—imagine what that looks like more than doubled this summer.

The conversation is we are getting toward the backside of COVID. Ironically enough, while the President just extended the transportation requirement for masks—again—while the President just asked for billions of dollars of additional money because we need vaccines worldwide to be able to distribute more vaccines worldwide to be able to fight COVID, while we are still dealing with all the additional surge rise and falls in other countries—in fact, just within the last couple of days, China has gone back into lockdown based on new COVID cases in China—while all of that is occurring worldwide, apparently, the President is looking to cancel title 42.

And when I have asked what will replace that policy, the answer has come back to me: We are not sure yet. That tells me nothing is actually the plan to replace this. That is a problem.

What happens when title 42 goes away? An extra million people come into the country illegally, remembering that when all of those folks come into the country, apparently, the Biden administration also has no plan to deport them.

Where are we right now with the number of people that have illegally crossed our border, and where are they from? Let me give you a quick map.

This is a map of all the countries in the past year—just in the past year—who have illegally crossed our border. In the white there is the United States. In the red are the countries that we have seen people illegally cross our border. If you want to squint at that map, let me just give you shorthand for it. It is every country in the world.

Last year, we had individuals from literally every country in the world illegally cross our southern border. Yes, that includes China; that includes North Korea; that includes Iran. It includes them all.

Interestingly enough, just in the last—well, not the last 3 months but the last 4 months that we have had records on it—that would be October, November, December, and January—just in those last 4 months that we have those records, we have 6,400 Russian citizens who illegally crossed our southern border. Just in the last 4 months we have records, there were 6,400 Russian citizens.

We have people from all over the world who are illegally crossing our southern border because people know, if you get across the border, you are in. When title 42 goes away, this accelerates even more. It is an open invitation because 56 percent of the people were turned around, 44 percent of the people were released into the country—by the way, that is over a million so far—that goes away. Then they all get in.

What happens at that point? Those individuals are told that they can make a request for asylum, even though our statistics show 91 percent of the people who request asylum are actually coming for economic reasons, not actually true asylum—91 percent.

Those individuals are released into the country. They are told to be able to sign up for a hearing date, and they can do their hearing anywhere they want in the United States. They are given a hearing date, currently, 6 years in the future—6 years. So they will be traveling in our country anywhere they want to go for the next 6 years waiting on their hearing.

By the way, if they don't show up for their hearing, apparently there is no plan to be able to actually go get them, if they don't show up for their hearing, because, right now, ICE is not removing people. So they are just released, and when they are released into the country, they can immediately text friends back home and say: I am in. Here is what I said. Here is where I crossed. Here is the cartel member whom I paid on the southern border to be able to get me through. I am in. Fol-

low my same path; you will have the same result.

What can be done about this? Well, let me just highlight a couple of things, and then I want to talk about this more.

First things first—don't end title 42. We still have a worldwide pandemic. Until there is a plan of what is actually going to occur next on our southern border, don't end title 42.

This is the time for the President and Ali Mayorkas and all the leadership to put up a pause and to say: The chaos that happened last year was only 44 percent of the people crossing our southern border. We do not have, physically, the capability to be able to handle that many people. Do not cancel title 42.

The second thing is the "Remain in Mexico" policy. The "Remain in Mexico" policy that actually started under President Trump, President Biden set aside, and Federal courts stepped back in and told this administration: You have to put back in place the "Remain in Mexico" policy. So they chose to do it.

I have talked to this body before about what they did. The Biden administration said: OK. We will follow the court order. We will reinstate the "Remain in Mexico" policy.

They have reinstated that policy the last 3 months. They have put up three different facilities. Actually, now there are four total facilities. I visited one of them in Brownsville, TX. That facility has six courtrooms. Each courtroom is set up to handle 22 people at a time, plus their attorneys, plus all the ancillary services. Six of those they have got set up. They have individual meeting spaces set up for 120 people to meet individually with their attorney. So 120 rooms, 6 courtrooms that are all set up, and all the ancillary everything around it as well, and we have now got 4 different locations for that.

Of the half a million people who have illegally crossed our border in the time that they have set up the new MPP courtrooms—of the half a million people who have crossed illegally during that time period, so far, the Biden administration has pulled out 1,569 of them to evaluate if they would go into the "Remain in Mexico" policy. Of those, 893 they actually put in the system. Of those, they have actually had 494 of those who at some point came back and said: We have changed our mind. We talked to attorneys. We have a new way to be able to get out of it.

We are trying to get the actual number of people who have actually gone through the "Remain in Mexico" policy and who have actually qualified for it, while we have 4 different locations, each of them with 6 courtrooms, 120 meeting spaces. But what we are finding is, really, a handful of people actually have "qualified" for the "Remain in Mexico" policy out of half a million people during that time period.

The simple answer is that the Biden administration is spending millions

and millions of taxpayer dollars setting up the MPP Program that the court has required them to do, but they have made so many exceptions to it, no one actually qualifies. So they are trying to please the court by saying "We are following your order," waste American tax dollars, while we continue to see record numbers of people crossing the border. That is a waste.

If we are going to stop this, keep title 42 in place until you have a response to what you are going to do instead. Actually run the MPP Program as the court has instructed you to do rather than playing games with American tax dollars and with the system here.

I would also encourage you to put the "Safe Third Country" policy back in place. The previous administration had actually created a relationship with multiple other countries so that as individuals traveled through other countries to get to the United States, they could make asylum requests in those locations, because we understand—because we know the law in this body—the law is very clear on the international standards on this.

If you are going to request asylum, you go to the next safe country, and you request asylum. If they are traveling through five countries or they are traveling literally across the globe to get to the United States from everywhere else so they can request asylum, that is not asylum; that is economic opportunity.

By the way, don't blame them for coming to the greatest country in the world to get economic opportunity—except that is not asylum, and we all know it. So why don't we actually treat it exactly as we all see it?

If you would like to come to the greatest country in the world, wonderful. Go through the legal process of that. We allow a million people a year to legally become citizens of the United States, going through the legal process. Do that. But for the billions of people who wake up every day wishing they were in the United States, I don't blame you. But we welcome people when they come through legally in this process, and we do with open arms welcome people who come through legally.

There are ways to be able to address this, but my first concern today is to be able to speak to this administration and to be able to say: The title 42 piece is essential to maintain. Do not let go of this until you have a solution to what is happening at the border, or the chaos at the border will be even worse this summer than it was last summer, and it is on you for not enforcing the border.

I want to keep this conversation going in the days ahead, but as of now, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

SUNSHINE WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor today to celebrate what we say annually is Sunshine

Week, a very important week in our system of self-government. For the last 17 years, advocacy groups, good-government watchdogs, media organizations, and many Members of this body have joined forces to observe the importance of transparency in government and freedom of information. As a longtime champion for open, accessible government, I speak today in support of what we all ought to consider enduring principles.

Sunshine Week coincides each year with March 16. That is the day one of our Nation's Founding Fathers and fourth President of the United States James Madison was born. Madison is widely known as the father of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. From his writings, particularly in the *Federalist Papers*, you might say he was the architect who framed our system of checks and balances. Madison believed all powers of the government are derived of, by, and for the people, and that is what brings me to the floor today.

The public has a right to know what their government is doing and how it is spending tax dollars. There are very few things in government that should be kept secret: national security, so we don't tell our enemies what we are going to do; the privacy of American citizens; and some intelligence-gathering information. I will bet that is 1 percent of everything the government is involved in. Yet there are some people who think that a lot more ought to be classified or secret, *et cetera*, *et cetera*.

So we have the Freedom of Information Act that is to protect the public's right to know. Through Freedom of Information Act requests, everyday Americans can ask a Federal Agency for information. Unfortunately, now—and it is a growing problem—Federal Agencies seem to have the unstated goal of releasing as little information as possible to the public.

Agencies rely on exemptions to FOIA, the Freedom of Information Act, to withhold information. A 2021 Government Accountability Office study found this: that Federal Agencies use FOIA exemptions to avoid disclosing documents. That problem has doubled between 2012 and 2019.

Most Americans may not be familiar with the section of the code that we call the (b)(3) FOIA exemption, and, of course, they don't have to be aware of this, but they should know that it is the most used justification by the Federal Government to withhold information from the public.

The increase in the use of this FOIA exemption to withhold information from the public is unacceptable to me, and it ought to be unacceptable to anybody who believes that we should not have secrecy in government.

In another recent report, the Government Accountability Office found that FOIA request backlogs increased by nearly 20 percent in just the 1 year of 2019 to 2020. In fact, backlogged FOIA

requests are up 97 percent since 2012. Sixteen Federal Agencies had more than 1,000 backlogged FOIA requests. They account for 94 percent of backlogged requests across the entire government.

Federal Agencies ought to do better—must do better—and we must all work to ensure that they are responding appropriately and within a reasonable time for FOIA requests.

Congressional oversight is part of our constitutional assignment: to protect the power of the purse and ensure laws are faithfully enforced.

Finally, we must acknowledge the important role that citizens play who bravely come forward, often at great professional risk, to report wrongdoing in our efforts to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. I have often said that whistleblowers are the best line of defense against government waste. No one shines a brighter light on waste, fraud, and abuse than whistleblowers. And why might that be? Because they are down in the bowels of the government where maybe the heads of the Agencies don't know something wrong is going on, and they are able to point it out—the whistleblowers are.

That is why I introduced legislation this Congress to strengthen the False Claims Act. I got the False Claims Act passed in 1986. Since then, that act has helped government recover \$70 billion in fraud.

Last year, I asked the Department of Veterans Affairs about allegations that VA employees leaked potentially market-sensitive information, and then do you know what they did? They retaliated against these whistleblowers. Nearly 1 year later, I haven't received any answers, and I assume I am not going to receive any answers because it is an embarrassment to the VA.

As a cofounder and cochairman of the Whistleblower Protection Caucus, I lead efforts from Capitol Hill to strengthen protections and raise awareness for what often is an uphill battle for whistleblowers.

I want you to know how I feel whistleblowers are treated by their very own government, how they are treated just because they want the government to do what the government is supposed to be doing under the laws, and they want the money spent the way Congress intends for the money to be spent. These whistleblowers who point out that wrongdoing are treated by the bureaucracy like skunks at a picnic.

This U.S. Senator will continue shining spotlight on waste, fraud, and abuse at the Pentagon, and I am going to do it elsewhere, as well. I will continue advocating for whistleblowers with every tool at my disposal.

And as an Iowa farmer, I know why farmers make hay when the sun shines, and that is a good lesson for good government. Sunshine helps hold government accountable to the people.

Let me repeat that again: Transparency brings accountability.

EB-5 REFORM AND INTEGRITY ACT OF 2022

Madam President, I have another point I would like to make. We were able to pass something with the Omnibus appropriations bill that I have been working on in a bipartisan way for years. It was a program that was abused, and we finally got together—Senator LEAHY and I—to finally win what we have been trying to do for years.

So I am here to speak about reforms to the EB-5 investor visa program that were included in last week's Omnibus bill. I also addressed this issue before the vote, but I would like to follow up on that statement with some brief remarks about how important this is after years of fighting to get it done.

First, this wouldn't have been done without working with my friend and colleague Senator LEAHY. So I thank him. He worked with me for several years on reforming this EB-5 program. Senator LEAHY, as well as his staff, have put in a great deal of time and work on a number of legislative efforts to reform the EB-5 program. I appreciate the partnership that we had on this issue for those many years.

As I mentioned in my previous statement on the day the bill passed, Congress originally authorized the EB-5 Regional Center Program in 1992 as a pilot program and as an outgrowth of the EB-5 investor visa that was created by Congress 2 years before that, in 1990.

When the EB-5 visa and regional center programs were established, Congress intended for them to spur investment in, No. 1, rural areas, and, No. 2, in economically depressed areas. I emphasize rural and economically depressed areas because this whole program, over a period of the next 20 years, evolved into a program far removed from the original goals. Senator LEAHY and I recognized that 5 or 6 years ago. But to get around all of the interest groups that have something to do with the EB-5 program, and particularly those who are enriching themselves from it, it is hard to get changes made here in the Congress of the United States.

Thank God we were fortunate not to get the EB-5 program extended from year to year because that is what happened for 4 or 5 years as we were working on these reforms. You just extended it and let the fraud and abuse of the law go on. But, finally, about a year ago, we kept that program from being extended year to year and forced people to sit down and talk to us in a responsible way to get to where we are today.

It is unfortunate that the EB-5 Regional Center Program, in particular, has been plagued with all this fraud and abuse. Rampant and abusive gerrymandering of the EB-5 program's targeted employment areas also undermined congressional intent that lower investment thresholds be a tool for channeling investment into areas that truly need it. Those are the rural areas and the economically depressed areas

of our country. Gerrymandering undermined the whole purpose of the program.

Another problem that the reforms addressed was that EB-5 investment levels had not been adjusted by Congress since 1990, and they should have been adjusted for the inflation that has taken place since then, and our act does make some adjustment in that area. It doesn't quite make up for all the inflation we have had since 1990, but it is still better than if we had gone with those 1990 figures.

The EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act of 2022, which was included in the Omnibus bill, will address a number of these issues. The bill, which Senator LEAHY and I primarily authored, formally repeals the pilot program created by Congress in 1992 and codifies in its place a new Regional Center Program reflecting a number of reforms that we pursued for many years. These reforms will help to crack down on fraud and abuse that have plagued the program for far too many years.

As I said in my previous statement, all EB-5 regional centers that had operated under the lapsed and repealed pilot program will be expected to seek a new regional center designation. In that process, they will have to certify compliance with all the relevant requirements and reforms laid out in our bill, now law, in order to receive such a designation.

Additionally, for the first time since 1990, the bill statutorily raises EB-5 investment levels and mandates that they be adjusted for inflation every 5 years so we don't have what has happened in the last 30 years using 1990 figures for investment.

The legislation also codifies certain aspects of the 2019 EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program modernization rule. Specifically, the bill codifies the 2019 rule's definition of a "high unemployment" targeted employment area and allows only the Department of Homeland Security to make such a designation.

The so-called "doughnut" targeted employment area model from the 2019 rule will significantly limit the number of census tracts that may be used to seek designation as a high unemployment area.

This targeted employment area model, combined with exclusive authority of the Department of Homeland Security to make "high unemployment" targeted employment area designations, should then crack down on the targeted employment area gerrymandering, which gerrymandering has long deprived the rural and the economically distressed areas of the investment that Congress intended when Congress passed that legislation—now, I guess, 30 years ago.

Listen to this next point. I want the Department of Homeland Security to pay attention to this. It is also my belief and expectation that the Department of Homeland Security should reserve "high unemployment" targeted

employment area designations for census tracts that have experienced persistently high unemployment for a number of years rather than just brief spikes in unemployment due to temporary and extraordinary circumstances, such as what you could have because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as just one example.

Finally, the legislation puts in place specific visa set-asides for rural area projects, high unemployment area projects, and infrastructure projects. The visa set-aside for infrastructure projects is limited to true public infrastructure projects; that is, in further explanation, those that benefit the public and the American people, not public-private partnerships or projects for private businesses.

I will continue to monitor the implementation of this bill, as well as developments in the EB-5 program over coming months and years.

This bill was titled the EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act of 2022. It is the result of years of hard work, and I hope it brings real reform to a program badly in need of that reform. I am grateful that it was included in the Omnibus bill and was happy, after all of these years, to see meaningful reform of the EB-5 program finally signed into law.

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. THUNE. Madam 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. Madam President, on Thursday, the February inflation numbers were released, and the news wasn't pretty. Inflation for February was 7.9 percent, the highest inflation since January of 1982—January of 1982, 40 years ago. We are in the grip of the worst inflation in 40 years.

American families have been hit hard by this crisis as the price of everyday necessities has soared, and energy prices, particularly gas prices, are one of the top challenges facing Americans. Energy prices are up 25 percent on average from a year ago. Electricity is up 9 percent. Propane, kerosene, and fire wood are up 19 percent. Utility gas services are up 23 percent, and prices at the pump for gasoline are up 38 percent.

The national average for a gallon of gas was \$4.31 on Tuesday, up from \$2.86 a year ago. That is \$1.45 more per gallon. That is a big problem for American families. That is a big problem for our entire economy.

High energy prices don't just have an impact when Americans fill up their cars; they affect prices across the economy. High energy prices drive up the cost of operating a factory. They drive up the cost of raw materials, and they

drive up the cost of getting goods to customers.

President Biden would like to blame the inflation situation, particularly high energy prices, on Vladimir Putin. I don't need to tell anyone how ludicrous that is. Our inflation crisis has been going on for a year. Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine 3 weeks ago. I am afraid passing the buck to Putin doesn't hold water.

Now, it is true that the uncertainty surrounding Putin's war and corresponding sanctions on Russia are partly to blame for the most recent spike in gas prices. But had gas prices been lower to start with, Americans wouldn't be feeling the sanctions-triggered bump to the extent that they are.

Democrats' American Rescue Plan spending spree helped create our inflation crisis. Americans need to look no further than the White House when wondering how the United States, a recent net exporter of energy, is not on stronger footing to weather these tumultuous times.

The President has pursued an energy agenda that has done next to nothing to help drive energy prices down and is, in fact, almost guaranteed to increase energy prices long term and increase our reliance on foreign sources of oil.

From the moment he took office, the President sent a negative signal to energy producers by making it clear that his administration was not going to be embracing conventional energy production.

He set the tone for his administration on day 1 by canceling the Keystone XL Pipeline—an environmentally responsible pipeline project that was already underway and that was to be paired with \$1.7 billion in private investment and renewable energy to fully offset its operating emissions.

He also almost immediately froze new oil and gas leases on Federal lands, sending a clear signal to oil and gas producers that his administration would be reluctant to work with them to increase American energy production.

Now, President Biden has recently been touting the number of available permits for oil and gas development, which is positive as far as it goes, but new permits have dropped precipitously this year. And issuing permits alone isn't enough to get development going.

The Biden administration has thrown up roadblock after roadblock to actual energy development. Companies are struggling to break through regulatory redtape to actually get oil and gas development up and running. For example, they have struggled to obtain right of way to build essential development infrastructure, like access roads to oil rig sites. They are also struggling to get timely pipeline permits to transport the oil and gas that they extract.

Unfortunately, they know exactly how this administration feels about building pipelines. And the Biden administration is fully responsible for

these problems. The administration has the ability to immediately take action to expedite American oil and gas development by clearing away the red-tape that companies are facing.

It is refusing to do so. Instead, President Biden seems ready to increase our reliance on energy imports from despotic governments in volatile areas of the world. That is not acceptable. Energy independence, relying on home-grown production instead of foreign energy sources, is key for a number of reasons.

For starters, energy security is national security. The more we rely on imports from other countries, the more that we are dependent on those countries. We have seen that during the current conflict in Ukraine. European companies like Germany have been unable to divest from Russian energy because they rely on that production.

Without Russian energy, more than one country in Europe would face a dire energy shortage—as Putin is well aware. We don't want to give another country that much power over us.

Energy independence, and the robust energy production that comes with it, also reduces the risk to Americans from price hikes in the global market. The more oil and gas the United States produces as a share of the global market, the more we are able to influence global supply, which is the leading driver of cost.

The Biden administration has not been good for American energy independence. We have increased our reliance on foreign sources of energy during this administration, including our reliance on Russian energy production.

And now that we have banned Russian energy imports, President Biden seems ready to replace Russian energy, not with increased American production but with oil and gas from human rights-challenged countries like Venezuela.

I realize that President Biden and many Democrats would like to see the United States focus solely on alternative energy production, but the fact of the matter is that we are a long way from being able to rely exclusively on alternative energy technologies. Whether Democrats like it or not, our country is going to need oil and natural gas for quite a while yet, and all of Democrats' wishful thinking isn't going to change that.

The answer is not to get that oil and natural gas from despots in volatile areas of the world but to get it from American energy production.

President Biden and his administration may not be solely to blame for high gas prices, but they have the power. They have the power to help lower energy prices by unleashing American energy production—all of it, both alternative and conventional—and they are responsible for their failure to do so.

We need an “all of the above” energy policy that embraces everything from oil and gas to hydroelectric and nu-

clear, to solar and wind. And when it comes to alternative energy production, we need to invest in all proven clean energy technologies, not just the administration's preferred technologies like electric vehicles. The administration has neglected important clean energy technologies like biofuels, which have demonstrated significant emissions reductions versus conventional gasoline.

As a resident of a rural state, I would like to see the administration get serious about leveraging agriculture as an energy solution and work to expand biofuel production and consumption. This means not only setting robust blending targets and rejecting specious small refinery exemptions but approving advanced fuels from corn kernel fiber and restoring the year-round sale of E15.

Last week, I led a letter to the President with the Democratic whip and colleagues from both parties urging the President to enable E15 to be sold during the upcoming travel season to provide Americans with a lower cost fuel that would help displace Russian oil.

Yesterday, the President's Press Secretary said that “E15 was on the menu.” Well, it deserves real consideration. American drivers can't afford for the President not to take action. The President could get us on a path to lower energy prices today—today—by announcing that his administration will get serious about expediting American production of oil and natural gas. If he fails to do so, then he really will be responsible for the prices that Americans are facing at the pump and for the hit that our national security will take from our increasing reliance on foreign sources of energy.

I hope the President will decide to unleash American production and put our Nation on a path to long-term energy independence.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 682, Ruth Bermudez Montenegro, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Ruth Bermudez Montenegro, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 84 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Rounds
Brown	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Lujan	Smith
Collins	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Tillis
Duckworth	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Murkowski	Warnock
Gillibrand	Murphy	Warren
Graham	Murray	Whitehouse
Grassley	Ossoff	Wyden
Hassan	Padilla	Young

NAYS—42

Barrasso	Ernst	Paul
Blackburn	Fischer	Portman
Blunt	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Toomey
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker

NOT VOTING—1

Shaheen

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 57, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Ruth Bermudez Montenegro, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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 nomination of Executive Calendar No. 678, Victoria Marie Calvert, of Georgia, to be United

States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

Charles E. Schumer, Brian Schatz, Jack Reed, Angus S. King, Jr., Elizabeth Warren, Chris Van Hollen, Raphael G. Warnock, Jacky Rosen, Tim Kaine, Patty Murray, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tammy Duckworth, Alex Padilla, Tammy Baldwin, Mazie Hirono, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Victoria Marie Calvert, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 85 Ex.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Grassley	Romney
Blackburn	Hagerty	Rounds
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shelby
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Lummis	Toomey
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Risch	

NOT VOTING—2

Portman
Shaheen

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Victoria Marie Calvert, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 6:30 p.m. tonight, the Senate vote on the cloture motions with respect to Executive Calendar Nos. 683, 737, 679, 680, 681, 684, 685 and 662; that at 11:45 a.m. tomorrow, March 17, the Senate vote on confirmation of Executive Calendar Nos. 656 and 738; that at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow, the Senate vote on the cloture motion with respect to Executive Calendar No. 677; finally, that if cloture is invoked on any of the nominations, all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nominations at a time to be determined by the majority leader or his designee following consultation with the Republican leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to seek unanimous consent to confirm four nominees to posts that are critical—critical—to our response to Putin's war against Ukraine.

Through smoke and rubble and artillery fire, Ukrainians are leaving their homes with nothing more than a backpack, nothing more than their children in their hands.

Over the past 20 days, Vladimir Putin's illegal and horrific assault on Ukraine has led more than 3 million refugees to flee into neighboring countries. Those who remain are suffering from a dire and deteriorating humanitarian situation.

With Putin's army blocking aid convoys, millions of Ukrainians are facing lack of water, food, and heat. Meanwhile, Putin orders unprovoked, unjustified attacks on civilians—shelling apartment buildings, bombing maternity hospitals, and destroying kindergartens, committing atrocities throughout the country.

The United States and the world have a duty to exact costs on Putin, to demand accountability for war crimes, and to provide aid for the millions of innocent Ukrainians who are suffering. If we want to rise to this challenge, if we want to respond to the mounting human suffering, one thing is clear: We need to have the people in place—the people the President has selected—to lead and carry out this work. Their leadership is critical in our response to the growing crisis in Ukraine and the looming refugee crisis across Eastern Europe. They will fight to defend human rights when they are violated. They will fight to defend democracy when it is attacked. They will make sure we maximize the pain and the price Putin pays for this heinous war.

NOMINATION OF JAMES C. O'BRIEN

Mr. President, that is why we must confirm Jim O'Brien. He is the Presi-

dent's nominee for Coordinator for Sanctions. This is our most significant tool against Putin and his regime—sanctions. He is the President's nominee for Coordinator for Sanctions. Once confirmed, he will enhance the Biden administration's efforts with our allies and partners to impose devastating costs on Russia.

To date, more than 30 nations have joined this cause. Countries have stepped up that we never would have expected. But the fight is not over. We have to keep up the pressure. We must keep up coordination. And we must ensure that we are implementing and enforcing sanctions in concert with dozens of countries around the globe.

Now, I know my Republican colleagues agree that this must be a top priority. I have heard it on the Foreign Relations Committee: We need to do more sanctions. I have heard it on the Senate floor. I have heard it in the conversations with my colleagues: We need to do even more. I know they want our sanctions to be as effective as possible, so to them, I say: Confirm Jim O'Brien today.

NOMINATION OF JULIETA VALLS NOYES

Mr. President, now I can also give you 3 million reasons why we must confirm Julieta Valls Noyes, the nominee to be the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration—because 3 million people have already fled their homes in Ukraine; 3 million people have left a war-torn country with their dreams shattered, their children traumatized—3 million people who have no idea what the future holds. Even as I speak, that number has surely been surpassed.

There is a reason we have the Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau. There is a reason the President selects a qualified nominee to lead it. Ms. Noyes is that person. It is a travesty that Ms. Noyes's nomination has been languishing on the Senate floor for 148 days because of Republican holds.

We need a Senate-confirmed leader in place to take charge of the U.S. response to the refugee crisis forming in Europe, as well as the crises that already exist around the world. We need someone to work alongside our European allies as they face the fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. We need her confirmed today—not tomorrow, not next week, today.

NOMINATION OF ERIN ELIZABETH MCKEE

Mr. President, the humanitarian crisis inside Ukraine is worsening every day. We can all see it for ourselves. You can see the images of Mariupol, where more than 200,000 civilians remain under siege, cut off from food, fighting for their lives. You can see the frightened faces of children crossing the border into Poland, carrying only a teddy bear and a change of clothes. This is a trauma they will struggle with for the rest of their lives.

So it baffles me that we would wait another hour, let alone another day, to

even think about confirming Ambassador Erin McKee as the Assistant Secretary for Europe and Eurasia at USAID. The minute she gets in the door, the minute we send her to USAID, she will get to work on behalf of the millions of Ukrainians who are suffering. She will make sure that we are meeting basic needs and that we are helping Ukraine's neighbors shoulder the burden of the crisis. Let her get to work. Let her help the people of Ukraine today.

NOMINATION OF C.S. ELIOT KANG

Mr. President, finally, there is a danger that Putin will unleash a chemical weapons attack against Ukraine. The Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation has a crucial role to play here, not just to prevent the spread of chemical weapons but to help safeguard all nuclear materials and facilities in Ukraine. To do this, the nominee to be Assistant Secretary for that Bureau—International Security and Nonproliferation—Dr. Eliot Kang, would work with the Ukrainian Government, our allies, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. But because of Republican delays, he has not yet been confirmed, despite the fact that he was nominated 328 days ago—328 days ago. Think about that. That was almost a year ago, and he has not yet been confirmed.

Because we cannot wait, because the people of Ukraine cannot wait, I rise to seek unanimous consent for the confirmation of these four nominees. Each of them moved through the Foreign Relations Committee with bipartisan support. There is no reason for Republicans to block their confirmation. The situation in Ukraine is dire, and our national security demands it.

Because of that, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 462, 783, and 784; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the Biden administration has failed to properly oversee the Pan American Health Organization, or PAHO. President Biden and Secretary Blinken know that PAHO has cooperated with the communist regime in Cuba to traffic doctors overseas, and they know that there are Cuban doctors who are trying to sue PAHO and hold their traffickers accountable.

Here are the facts: In July 2013, the Cuban Ministry of Health signed an agreement with the Brazilian Ministry of Health to formalize an arrangement for Cuban doctors to provide medical

services in Brazil. That agreement required the administration of former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff to transmit a monthly payment through PAHO to the Cuban Ministry of Health for the medical services provided by each Cuban doctor serving in Brazil. It also prevented Cuban doctors from seeking employment in Brazil outside of the formal structure of the agreement.

More than 20,000 Cuban medical professionals serving in Brazil under the Mais Médicos Program had their wages stolen by the Cuban Government and received only a small fraction of what they earned. Their family members were prohibited from accompanying them, and many had their passports confiscated.

Cuban doctors were the only medical professionals participating in the Mais Médicos Program who had their salaries directly garnished by their government. Meanwhile, doctors from other countries serving in Brazil received the full wages for their medical services.

Other Cuban doctors suffered similar abuses in Angola, Guatemala, Mexico, Qatar, and Venezuela. For example, in 2019, a group of Cuban doctors reported that they had been directed and often coerced to use their medical services to influence votes in favor of the Maduro regime, including by denying medical treatment to opposition supporters and by giving precise voting instructions to elderly patients.

This gross program is a huge money-maker for the communist ruling thugs in Cuba. In 2018 alone, they deposited more than \$6.3 billion from exporting Cuban professionals to work overseas, and medical missions by Cuban doctors represent a majority of those profits.

Since I came to the Senate in 2019, I have been fighting for these Cuban doctors and against human trafficking. I know my colleague from New Jersey has also voiced concerns about this issue in the past, but nothing has been done to hold PAHO accountable. PAHO is hiding behind legal immunity. President Biden has the power to lift their immunity, and I have requested this administration to do so multiple times, but they have shamefully declined.

It is wrong. Victims of trafficking deserve to see their alleged abusers in court, and PAHO should never be able to hide behind claims of immunity to avoid accountability for their role in facilitating those abuses.

I have informed Secretary Blinken that until substantial steps toward fulfilling this request are made, I will be blocking all relevant State Department nominees.

Americans deserve qualified and competent people in positions of power who put American interests first. If this administration wants to appease dictators, like they have with the Castro and Diaz-Canal regimes, I am going to hold them accountable.

Therefore, Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I would like to ask the Senator from Florida, through the Chair, does the Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia at USAID have anything to do with PAHO?

Does the Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation have anything to do with PAHO?

I guess the Senator doesn't want to engage in a colloquy.

Madam President, it is amazing to me. My colleagues who get up and applaud Zelenskyy, my colleagues who come to the Senate floor and talk about both the need to help Ukraine and the humanitarian realities that are compounding every day—and yet here we are with four pertinent, key positions that could help in regard to each and every one of those elements, and on some unrelated issue, not Ukraine, not even Europe, not about proliferation, not about humanitarian response, no, there is a wholesale objection.

Now, if you wanted to pick your objection and target it, that might make sense, but I am deeply troubled that the junior Senator from Florida is once again obstructing the Senate's responsibility to provide advice and consent on Presidential nominations, not only preventing us from fulfilling our constitutional duties, but in this case, moreover, he is singlehandedly undermining the ability of the U.S. Government to respond fully to Russia's brutal invasion. In doing so, he seeks to singlehandedly damage our ability to ensure a coordinated international effort to sanction Putin, his cronies, sectors of the Russian Government.

He is undercutting the U.S. Government's ability to support the Ukrainian people and our allies. He is undercutting our ability to provide and coordinate the humanitarian assistance for 3 million Ukrainians who have left and millions more who are inside the country and need help. It is mind-boggling—mind boggling. Get up, (applauds) and then come to the floor and object to the very things that can make it happen. Mind-boggling.

Now, let me address the issue that the junior Senator from Florida has raised here today—the Cuban regime's trafficking of doctors and medical personnel. Simply put, the Diaz-Canel regime, like the Castro regime before it, does subject Cuban doctors to forced labor schemes abroad while pocketing the doctors' wages in profit-making schemes that generate billions of dollars annually.

Now, I have been working on this issue since before my colleague ever held public office. I have engaged multiple administrations on this issue. I have actually authored legislation and resolutions on the subject. So my track record for standing up for Cuban doctors who are trafficked by the Cuban regime eclipses that of any other Member of Congress, period. But, my God, as passionate as I am about that issue—no one would be more passionate

than me—it is not right to hold up everything we are trying to do on Ukraine.

This is a global emergency. The fate of not only Ukraine but of democracy and its ability to achieve victory is under threat. And here we have objections to critical positions that can help us make sure that we win in that battle.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE
CALENDAR

Madam President, let me try one other thing. I want to make in order the same request that I previously made with respect to Calendar No. 788, Erin Elizabeth McKee, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, so here we go. The person who would be responsible for helping the humanitarian challenge in Ukraine and in the surrounding countries where 3 million people have fled to, we can't get her in position—can't get her into a position to do the job to help millions of Ukrainians who are fleeing.

I don't understand how the party of Reagan, the party of freedom and democracy, the party of standing up to these people can actually create a set of circumstances where this is like helping Putin at the end of the day. It is like helping Putin at the end of the day.

Now, while Senator MARSHALL didn't speak to it, I understand his concerns are about COVID origins. Well, there is nothing wrong with that. It has been a lively topic of discussion in many forums, including the Senate. But these things have nothing to do with what Ambassador McKee is nominated for: Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia.

All of us, including Senator MARSHALL, know that we need to do everything possible to support Ukrainians in their time of need. Blocking Ambassador McKee is self-defeating.

It is also not clear to me what more USAID can do to satisfy Senator MARSHALL. I have inquired because I heard this was the issue. USAID has been engaged at the most senior levels in trying to be helpful and responsive to Senator MARSHALL. They offered him and his team briefings, and I understand that none of those offers have been accepted. They have also pointed Senator MARSHALL's office to a wealth of information on specific USAID projects of interest.

So I would urge the Senator, instead of blocking nominees, to act on USAID's multiple briefing offers and engage them meaningfully. That would be more helpful to his ultimate goal—but not to be helping Putin, at the end of the day, by not being able to take

care of the humanitarian needs of the Ukrainians.

I have seen a lot over my course of 40 years in public service and 30 years in the Congress. I just—this is mind-boggling. But more than that, it really undermines our national security. It really undermines our help with the Ukrainian people. And so I hope that some saner minds will prevail in the days ahead when I come back to the floor to try this once again.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

UKRAINE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am joined on the floor today by my friend and colleague Senator GRAHAM. We have the honor of coleading the U.S. congressional delegation to the Munich Security Conference, which for a great number of reasons, all well-deserved, is still called CODEL McCain. It is the only code that is named for a Senator who is no longer with us, and it is out of respect for Senator McCain's long tradition of support for that conference, NATO, and the Atlantic alliance, more generally.

This year, obviously things were very different. The Russians were on the border of Ukraine, and two things came out of this conference that I thought were important. One was an early flicker of hope within the delegation that the Ukrainians might actually pull this off. That was supported by none of our briefings. The entire national security establishment had presumed that it was only a matter of time until Ukraine fell. But Senator GRAHAM and I and others were questioning each other during that trip: Is there really no chance?

And the other thing was going after the kleptocrats and the oligarchs around Putin and making their lives miserable. And there was just a wonderful explosion of bipartisan support for that that has now manifested in funds, in laws, in pending bills, in lots of bipartisanship—and Senator GRAHAM and I are going to have a bit of a colloquy about that with the Chair's permission.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I will say one thing, and then I will hand it over to Senator GRAHAM.

On March 8, I sent out over social media this sentiment:

Keep alive in your heart the possibility that Ukraine could actually win: columns stalled, defense fierce, casualties high, morale low, deserters surrendering, food and fuel snafu, population uncowed.

Since then, we are hearing more and more. I will read four quotes, and the first is from the man we heard from this morning, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who, in his speech to the people of Ukraine on March 14, didn't just talk about peace for Ukraine—although, he did talk about peace for Ukraine, but he also talked about “our victory.” Victory. It is an important word to keep in mind.

He is not alone.

GEN Wesley Clark, also on March 14, said:

The battle for Ukraine is hanging in the balance. . . . If we can get enough in there, they'll push the Russians out.

Victory.

It would be a tremendous win for the West.

Anne Applebaum knows probably about as much about this area as anyone. She joined us on the Munich security delegation, and she also spoke afterward on the 15th of March about it. She said:

[V]ictory in this conflict—

Victory—

[V]ictory . . . would provide an enormous, transformational boost in confidence to the entire democratic world.

Michael Kofman, the director of Russian studies at the Center for Naval Analyses has said the same thing: “Are [the Ukrainians] in a position to win the war? Yes,” he said.

I will close with Francis Fukuyama. On the 10th of March, the author of “The Origins of Political Order” said the following things. I am quoting from a longer piece selectively.

1. Russia is heading for outright defeat in Ukraine.

2. The collapse of their position could be sudden and catastrophic, rather than happening slowly through a war of attrition. The army in the field will reach a point where it can neither be supplied nor withdrawn, and morale will vaporize.

5. The Biden administration's decisions not to declare a no-fly zone or help transfer Polish MiGs were both good ones; they've kept their heads during a very emotional time. It is much better to have the Ukrainians defeat the Russians on their own, depriving Moscow of the excuse that NATO attacked them.

Finally, he said:

A Russian defeat will make possible a “new birth of freedom,” and get us out of our funk about the declining state of global democracy. The spirit of 1989 will live on, thanks to . . . brave Ukrainians.

We are here together on the floor in bipartisan fashion to urge that in the press coverage and in our national security conversations about this, we keep open in our hearts and in our planning the possibility of victory for Ukraine.

Senator GRAHAM.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Well, thank you. All I can say is, SHELDON, thank you.

John is no longer with us, but I think he is here in spirit at this moment. If Senator McCain were here, there would be 27 MiGs they would want to transfer because he would probably be in one, headed for Ukraine.

The bottom line is, 20 days into this fight, we are all amazed at how bad the Russians are doing and how well the Ukrainians are doing. And I think what Senator WHITEHOUSE is trying to remind us all of is that the outcome of Ukraine really does matter to the world at large.

Senator McCain was known for his support of the transatlantic alliance, a

rules-based society, a values-based world, and Putin has put that in jeopardy.

So let's look at it this way. If Putin wins, SHELDON, then the largest war criminal in the 21st century survives the dismemberment of a neighboring democracy, slaughter of the innocents on a mass scale. If he is still standing, I think China understands what to do with Taiwan more clearly; the Iranians are more bold when it comes to their nuclear ambitions; and the ripple effect in Asia and the Middle East will be felt if Putin wins.

Now, if Putin loses and Ukraine wins—victory for Ukraine—I think it would be the biggest change for the good since World War II. What would it mean? It would mean that a murderous war criminal who tried to use force of arms to impose his will on his neighbor lost. It would mean that the good guys won and the bad guys lost, and China would have to think twice about Taiwan.

How do we make sure victory for Ukraine is maximized? Only God knows how this ends, but here is what I think we can do in working together, with three lines of effort:

Economic and military aid. We have had a very robust package leave the Congress. The President announced \$800 million more in military aid today. We have a difference about the MiGs, but otherwise we are pretty much on the same sheet of music.

Sanctions against Russia. The war is not against the Russian people. They are in many ways victims of Putin as much as anybody. Unfortunately, the only way we can bring this to a conclusion and have victory for Ukraine is to crush the Russian economy, so secondary sanctions need to be on the table. Then, if China comes to Putin's aid, they need to understand the consequences of that decision.

So we are all in on sanctions, and secondary sanctions are now in play. The Ukrainian Ambassador asked me yesterday to broaden the sanctions to Russian officials in different regions that are part of Putin's war machine. President Zelenskyy asked for that today, too.

My good friend SHELDON WHITEHOUSE has been speaking about victory when nobody else hardly will, and I am here to say that victory for Ukraine is victory for America; it is victory for the rule of law; and it is victory for the post-World War II order that has led to historic prosperity.

Three lines of effort: military assistance, including MiGs; economic aid—fuel, food, humanitarian airlift if that is feasible; crushing sanctions; labeling Putin the war criminal that he is; and letting every Russian military commander know that, if you pick his side and you carry out these war crimes against the Ukrainian people, we are coming after you.

Senator WHITEHOUSE and myself met with the British Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to create a joint effort, an

intel cell, to collect information about Russian units engaged in war crimes in Ukraine and start putting the commander's name out for the world to understand so they will know that we are watching them.

How does this end? The Russian people end the reign of terror in Putin. It is in their hands. I encourage them to do it.

Finally, if there has been one voice on kleptocracy, it is SHELDON's. He has got it on climate change. He is determined to see that issue through to the end, but Senator WHITEHOUSE was talking about kleptocracy long before the invasion. So we are introducing together the Asset Seizure for Ukraine Reconstruction Act, which is an effort by our government, joining with international partners, to get every yacht we can get, raid every bank account we can find, take the money away from the thieves, and give it back to the Ukrainian people and eventually to the Russian people.

What Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are trying to do in a bipartisan fashion is to make the war real to the oligarchs. Without the oligarchs, there is no Putin. It is time for them to enjoy the experience of having their assets that they stole taken away from them. "Enjoy" is maybe not the right word. It is time for us to enjoy the sight of Russian oligarchs having their property taken that they achieved through thievery. It is time for us to start putting people in jail who engaged in the mass theft of the Russian people.

Victory for Ukraine is possible, I think, if we are all in on sanctions, if we are all in on labeling, naming, and shaming people around Putin as war criminals in order to break their will, and if we begin to pour it on when it comes to regaining control of the skies.

I am not for a NATO no-fly zone because I think that would put us in a situation with NATO and Russia that I am not comfortable with right now, but I am for Ukraine controlling their skies, a no-fly zone enforced by the Ukrainian military. That is why I want more anti-aircraft systems and the MiGs.

The bottom line here is that victory for Ukraine is possible because I think the Russian people and the Russian military are really not into this. I think the world is coalescing around the idea that if Putin wins, it is bad for us all. Now is the time. This is the most historically significant moment since the end of World War II for the continent of Europe and for freedom itself and for the rule of law.

If we can pull this off, then those who come after us will be very pleased with our efforts. If we fail, future generations will wonder "What the hell were you doing?" just like we all wonder how Hitler could have gotten so strong and nobody stopped him when they could have.

Let it be said in this moment of history that Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator GRAHAM, and many others, par-

ticularly the Ukrainian people, believe not only is victory for Ukraine possible, it is absolutely necessary.

With that, I turn it back over to my colleague.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, in conclusion, let me just thank Senator GRAHAM. He has been an extraordinary leader on the Munich Security delegation year after year, and I think he has a "McCainian" view of our foreign policy needs.

I would close by saying, if there is a lesson from Ukraine, it is that oligarchs can throw out a dictator if you put pressure on them. So the kleptocracy initiative is important strategically in Ukraine, and it also puts in motion forces that can diminish kleptocracy and corruption around the world in a way that enhances our rule of law and national security.

The press has tended to buy into the narrative of defeat but not entirely.

Sudarsan Raghavan went to the front for the Washington Post, and he reported back this:

To be sure, most military analysts and Western officials still predict that Russian forces will eventually encircle Kyiv and push into the capital, possibly aided by airstrikes. While this could prove true, it's far from clear whether Russia will prevail.

That leaves open the important planning option of victory for Ukraine.

Then, when bad news comes, sometimes it is just not the whole story. The BBC reported the bad news that Russian forces were already inside the city of Irpin. Well, there is a little bit more to the story than that.

A Ukrainian army officer said that Ukrainian forces were waiting for civilians to evacuate Irpin before "we start to clear the city of Russians."

They don't have enough provisions—food, water. They don't have a lot of gasoline. They will get tired, and then we will go and drive them out.

Well, it appears that that counter-offensive is underway right now, as we speak.

As I close, I think all of our hearts and prayers go to the Ukrainian troops, who are trying to drive those Russians out of Irpin and out of Ukraine.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

REMEMBERING BRENT RENAUD, PIERRE ZAKRZEWSKI, AND OLEKSANDRA KUVSHYNOVA

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, over the course of just 3 days, the world lost three talented, tenacious journalists to Vladimir Putin's war crimes and brutal invasion of Ukraine.

Brent Renaud was a Peabody Award-winning documentary filmmaker who was working to tell the stories of Putin's war when he was fatally shot in the Kyiv suburb of Irpin on Sunday.

Then, on Monday, two more journalists with FOX News lost their lives when their vehicle came under fire just outside of Kyiv. A cameraman and veteran war reporter, Pierre Zakrzewski, was killed. He had been reporting in Ukraine since February.

We also lost Ukrainian journalist Oleksandra “Sasha” Kuvshynova, who was serving as a consultant for FOX’s team in Ukraine. She was just 24 years old.

Their colleague, correspondent Benjamin Hall, was also injured, and he remains in the hospital.

Journalists know they face danger when they report from war zones. They put themselves in harm’s way to tell the world the true stories that we need to hear.

Today, the Presiding Officer from Minnesota joined me and dozens and dozens of others to see the video, the pictures, and the photos of the war in Ukraine, which were shown to us by President Zelenskyy. Those pictures—many of them—were taken by very courageous journalists who risked their own lives. They bring us the unvarnished truth, unfiltered by government propaganda, at the times when we need it most. They are committed to basic ideals of truth, accuracy, and transparency—so committed that they put their lives on the line to make sure the world knows what is happening. Their commitment to these ideals only makes their deaths that much more tragic.

Today, three families and so many colleagues are grieving for these three journalists, grieving losses that cannot be replaced. They shouldn’t have to.

This war was started by a man with no regard for the freedom of the press or basic human rights; a man who is a former KGB agent and has open contempt and hostility toward real reporters, toward real journalism, toward free speech; a man who presides over a regime wherein journalists are killed with impunity.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 28 journalists have been killed in Russia since Putin came to power 20 years ago, and 10 are currently in prison simply for telling the truth, for doing their jobs. According to Reporters Without Borders, Russia ranks 150 out of 199 countries for press freedom. They are actually behind Afghanistan and South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Last October, the United States and 18 other countries issued a statement, warning of “the Russian government’s intensifying harassment of independent journalists and media outlets in Russia.”

In 2020, the Russian Government began labeling many outside journalists as “media foreign agents”—a term reminiscent of the worst of the Cold War.

It is not just foreign journalists; Putin’s government has applied the “media foreign agent” label to independent Russian outlets in the country or to those operating near the country’s border—Russian reporters themselves. It goes against all of our values. It is the kind of authoritarianism that the Ukrainian people bravely fight every day now. They don’t want their country to turn into a place where re-

porters fear for their lives, where journalists can’t tell the public the truth. Journalists’ entire job is to ask questions, to challenge powerful interests, to—shall we say—afflict the comfortable.

Reporters put their safety and—as we saw with these three brave journalists in Ukraine—their lives on the line, whether it is covering floods and hurricanes in the United States or traveling the globe to bring us the stories of war zones.

We depend on reporters in my State and around the world to bring us the stories that impact our day-to-day lives and tell the stories that might not otherwise be told. They are too often under attack overseas increasingly. We recently had a President of the United States who attacked journalists in almost every stop.

As we all stand with the people of Ukraine, let’s recommit ourselves to fighting just as hard as they are for our values, for freedom of the press, for free speech. These three journalists made the ultimate sacrifice to show the world the heroism of the Ukrainian people. We pray that they are the last who have to do that.

We recognize that President Putin has been shocked by two things: shocked by the heroism of the Ukrainian people—those fighting back, those brave journalists, those freedom fighters, those mothers and fathers and children who have so courageously stood up against Russia; he is also shocked by the way President Biden so effectively has put together an international coalition, not just for the countries you would expect, but Germany, and Finland, and Sweden, and Switzerland—countries that have rarely chosen sides and stepped up the way that all of our countries have.

And while doing this, we send our sympathy and our gratitude to the families of Brent Renaud, to Pierre Zakrzewski, to Oleksandra Kuvshynova. They died doing the vital heroic work they love. We have a better understanding of this invasion, of the war crimes being committed, of how it is affecting people’s lives. We have a better understanding because of journalists like them, and we thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

REMEMBERING FRED ABDALLA

Madam President, I would like to remember an Ohio public servant whom we lost this year, longtime friend of mine, Jefferson County Sheriff—Eastern Ohio, along the Pennsylvania-West Virginia line, along the Ohio River—Jefferson County Sheriff Fred Abdalla.

He took office in January 1985. He served his community ever since for nearly four decades, in his sheriff’s car, going up and down the river, going to Mingo Junction and Tiltonsville to Steubenville, to Wintersville—all over Jefferson County. He served that community.

His colleagues and his neighbors called him tough but big-hearted. He was particularly passionate about solv-

ing crimes against children and seniors.

His chief deputy, Susan Bell, worked with Sheriff Abdalla for 32 years. She said:

He and I had a lot of cases together. He laughed a lot. . . . We cried a lot. . . . We worked as a team.

His colleagues at the department posted a moving remembrance of Jefferson County Sheriff Fred Abdalla. They wrote:

Although we miss you dearly, we will carry on as you’ve taught us to do in the face of adversity. One of the last “working sheriffs,” you were always involved and answered calls with your staff. You led by example. [You] never ordered a deputy to do something you would not do yourself.

Our thoughts are with his family, with the people of Jefferson County. His passing is a real loss for my State, for all who knew him. His dedication to his community will not be forgotten.

Rest in peace, Fred Abdalla.

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. CANTWELL. 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 JOHN H. CHUN

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I come to the floor this evening to support the nomination of John Chun, who is to serve as judge for the U.S. District Court of Western Washington, and I know that we will be voting later tonight on that nomination.

I was proud to recommend to President Biden Judge Chun, who then was nominated by the President. My colleague Senator MURRAY and I know what a qualified individual he is to serve our country.

He has spent his entire legal career practicing law in the Western District of Washington, making him deeply knowledgeable of the district that he will serve. He is well-prepared for the Western District and offers a unique perspective to the bench, having served as a superior court judge for 4 years before joining the court of appeals in 2018, as well as his tenure in private practice.

Through his extensive courtroom experience as a former trial judge and current appellate judge, he has had much time as a trial litigator. He will be ready on day one to serve effectively on the Federal district court bench.

Judge Chun has received profound support for his nomination to the U.S. district court. Not only did his nomination receive bipartisan support from the Senate Judiciary Committee; it also received support from the American Bar Association, which unanimously rated him “well qualified” to serve in this position.

In addition to the endorsement from the National Asian Pacific American

Bar Association, Judge Chun's nomination has received praise from many organizations in our State, including the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, the Vietnamese American Bar Association of Washington, the South Asian Bar Association of Washington, the Asian Bar Association of Washington, and the Korean American Coalition of Washington.

As I am sure my colleagues can see, Judge Chun is immensely qualified to serve on this court. I urge them to join me and my colleague Senator MURRAY in supporting his nomination to serve as judge for the U.S. District Court of the Western District of the State of Washington.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I would ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

UKRAINE

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I rise, as so many of us have of late, to talk about the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. This invasion, as we know, started on February 24, and it is now, I guess, in its 21st or 22nd day.

At the time of the invasion—I think it was the day after or 2 days after—I was reading in a newspaper the reference to one resident of Ukraine who said the following about the onset of the hostilities by Vladimir Putin and Russia:

It was the worst sunrise in my life.

I can't even begin to imagine what that individual in Ukraine or tens of thousands of families were feeling on that day, and hundreds of thousands throughout the country—millions, even.

This attack, which is ongoing, was both unprovoked and unjustified. It is an attack on a sovereign nation by a murderous dictator who has no regard for human life and no regard for the rules-based international order. I think a lot of people knew that before the invasion, but now it is abundantly clear to the world what Vladimir Putin's intentions are and what his practices are when it comes to attacking a sovereign nation.

The New York Times told us last Friday, March 11, about Putin. I am quoting here from the New York Times, and they made reference in this story to his actions in Syria, as well as Chechnya:

[H]e has demonstrated in [the] past . . . a willingness not only to bomb heavily populated areas indiscriminately but also to use civilian casualties as leverage against his enemies.

“[U]se civilian casualties as leverage”—that is the dictator that the people of Ukraine are dealing with right now. And I think it is clear from the reporting, and so many Americans have read the stories and have seen the coverage of the bombings. It is clear that he is bombing indiscriminately. It

is clear that he and his army, his military, are targeting civilians.

All you have to do is look at the list of locations. And the list would be hundreds if we read all of them, but here are just a couple examples. Maybe the most graphic in the last couple of days was the bombing of a maternity ward and that footage of a stretcher coming out of that rubble with a pregnant woman, who has since died, as did her child. That is an example of that kind of indiscriminate bombing.

But in addition to a maternity ward, he has bombed a shoe factory, a psychiatric hospital, apartment buildings, cafes, homes, parking lots near a shopping center, bombing near a kindergarten, bombing of a mosque, bombing—we are told, the most recent number—34 medical facilities, damaged in Ukraine. And that number, of course, will grow. Most recently, just in the last day or so, a supermarket, and, I think, at least a 12-story residential tower.

And then, just today, another reference to just one example of the brutality of Putin: 10 people killed waiting in line for bread in Ukraine. The adviser to the mayor of one of the most besieged cities, Mariupol, said the following. This adviser said:

Humanity has not yet invented a word to describe what Russia is doing to us.

I think that says it all. There is no way to describe what is happening. The world has never seen this, in recent history. Maybe the closest example would be what happened in Syria, which, of course, was also paid for and led by the Russian military, Mr. Putin.

Despite all that horror and all that bloodshed and all that is to follow, despite all of that grim reminder of the brutality of Mr. Putin, the Ukrainian people have inspired so many of us. When I say “us,” I don't mean just voting Members of Congress or people throughout the country. They have inspired people the world over. I have never seen anything in my lifetime that equates to the inspiration that they have generated; their courage—the raw physical courage of the people, of the military, and all the contributions they are making to their country—their resolute determination to protect their freedom, to protect their families, to protect their nation, and, really, when you think about it in a larger sense, to protect democracy itself, because that is really very much on the line in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian people's stubborn refusal to be intimidated by a ruthless autocrat and his military has inspired so many people every single day. I just saw another example this morning. Women who have left Ukraine with their children, to bring their children to safety, coming back into Ukraine to join the fight or, in some cases, I guess, to rejoin the fight—women putting their lives at risk for their country.

This morning the Presiding Officer and all of us, the Members of Congress, had the honor to listen to President

Zelenskyy's address to the Congress, and I know the Nation saw it as well. His address this morning was also inspiring, every bit as inspiring as that engendered by his people. But his address was also a call to action for us to do more. We have got to do more. And we have got to provide additional support.

President Zelenskyy thanked our President, President Biden, and the American people for all the support that we have provided, especially in the last couple of weeks since the invasion began but also before that.

And President Biden responded just 2 or 3 hours later when he announced even more military assistance or security assistance, which, if you add up just that part of the support, just since he took office, is now at about \$2 billion. That doesn't include other support like humanitarian support.

But here is just a quick list of what that security assistance is. I will just itemize a few. This isn't exhaustive, but it is just some examples: Stinger anti-aircraft systems—we provided many hundreds of them, and now we are providing a lot more than that—the Javelin anti-armor systems that have had such success against the Russian military, Russian tanks; helicopters; patrol boats; grenade launchers; guns and ammunition; grenades; mortar and artillery rounds; secure communications; military medical equipment; on and on and on.

And, as I mentioned, the President responded specifically today by announcing that the United States will add \$800 million just on security assistance, bringing that total, as I said, to \$2 billion since he began his administration. It was noteworthy that two of the component parts of that—the Stinger systems and the Javelins—both are being used with great skill by the Ukrainian fighters. The increase in those numbers is not just a few hundred. In both cases it is either doubling or tripling what we have already done. And we will do more. We will continue to do more.

Congress has passed a spending bill just a couple of days ago, at the end of last week, and the President signed it this week, which allowed that \$800 million to be available.

So that is the good news: more money for weapons and other security assistance, more money for humanitarian support. That number is growing all the time because of the need that the Ukrainian people have.

The sanctions—the crushing, unprecedented sanctions—that already are having effect. I had a briefing today just on that topic of the impact of the sanctions, and it is substantial, and it will only grow as time goes by. We will have more time later to talk about that. And, of course, the contribution, as well—all of these are contributions of not just our government but our people. The American people made these contributions of military assistance and humanitarian support and our

ability to impose sanctions with our allies, with our NATO partners.

But at the same time, what gets lost sometimes in the discussion about Ukraine is the intelligence support we have provided—all kinds of offices throughout our intelligence community providing actionable intelligence or intelligence that the Ukrainians can use if they fight the battle, fight the war. That is probably incalculable in terms of the advantages given on the battlefield and beyond. So that bears emphasis as well.

I think one area of positive development in the last couple of months is the unity, not just the unity of NATO, which has never been stronger, probably never stronger since the 1960s or even more so, but the unity here at home—unity in the Senate, unity in the House, unity throughout the country to support the people of Ukraine—the people but also to support the military.

I have to say, though, as much as we have that unity with our NATO partners and here in the Congress, there are voices here in Washington and around the country that are not as unified. We know the voice of our former President and his continued approval of Putin's "genius."

Why would you ever say that about a murderous dictator? He is not a genius. He is, I believe, a war criminal, but that kind of language and that kind of support for Putin, at least by way of laudatory words, has tarnished that unity, has undermined that unity here at home and around the world. But it is not enough to break that unity.

I just hope that Republican Members of Congress, when someone in their party, especially a leader of their party or a Member of Congress or any other Republican official—I hope that when they say things about Vladimir Putin that are positive or in any way supportive that they would call it out and condemn it.

When you are supporting the people of Ukraine at a time of war, you have to use every tool in your toolbox: military assistance, diplomacy, sanctions, humanitarian support, but also your words as leaders. And we should be condemning any American leader who supports or says positive things about Mr. Putin.

I hope the Republican Members of Congress who have stood up and been very supportive of the Ukrainian people in this fight would also call out Members of their party and condemn such statements because that didn't happen in July of 2018, when the former President—in my judgment, this is my view of it—was genuflecting before Vladimir Putin on the world stage in Helsinki, Finland, in probably what I believe is maybe the worst day for an American President on the world stage ever when he took the side of Mr. Putin, a murderous dictator, over the determinations made by our intelligence community about the previous election. That was a low moment for

America, for our democracy, and for our country.

We now have, I think, very clearly a choice. It is not a choice of three or four options or five options. There are only two options here: You can choose Mr. Putin or choose Mr. Zelenskyy. You can choose a dictator who has no regard for human life and all of the enablers around him, or you can choose the President who is standing up for freedom, Mr. Zelenskyy, the President of Ukraine.

It is really a simple choice. It is a choice between the incarnation of evil and the personification of freedom. That is the choice. There is not a third option here. Every American has to make this choice, but especially Members of Congress, elected officials. That is part of our job. You have to make a choice, and it is very simple.

The good news is Republicans, Democrats, and Independents—House and Senate, the two branches of government—have made a choice, and the American people have made a choice. They made a choice for freedom to support that personification of freedom by supporting Mr. Zelenskyy and his government in this war, by supporting the Ukrainian people, who are literally putting their lives on the line for freedom itself.

I will conclude with these thoughts. Like our Constitution that we turn to for both—not just guidance and inspiration, but we turn to, to remind ourselves of our duty, so, too, are the people of Ukraine turning to their Constitution for that guidance and that inspiration and that call to action.

Here is what that Constitution says in pertinent part, and it sounds very familiar:

The people are the bearers of sovereignty and the only sources of power in Ukraine . . . To affirm and ensure human rights and freedoms is the main duty of the State.

That is what the Ukrainian Constitution says, a mandate that freedom must be the goal and the work of the State. Wow, are they doing that now. President Zelenskyy and his government and the people of Ukraine are standing up for freedom.

When we are at our best here at home, we do the same. We have a great anthem for our Nation: "O beautiful"—and you know the rest of that great anthem. One of the verses of that great anthem says:

O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years.

The dream of a patriot isn't just to stand up in the moment and fight, but that patriot is standing up for freedom, fighting and willing to put their lives on the line—or his or her life on the line—for freedom because they are seeing beyond the years. They are standing up for freedom, not just for themselves and their families and their nation, but for the future—for the future of that nation. That is what the people of Ukraine are doing right now, and that is why we have to continue to support them in that great fight.

I think most Americans have already made the choice. We just have to back them up and stand for freedom—not to stand for the incarnation of evil, Mr. Putin and his government right now, but to stand for the personification of freedom. We saw that this morning with President Zelenskyy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Washington.

TRANSGENDER YOUTH

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak out against the recent wave of hate attacks on transgender youth happening across our country.

Over the last few months, we have seen extreme Republican lawmakers take unprecedented steps to go after trans children and their families. Not only are they spewing hateful rhetoric around gender identity—making something personal and something a lot of Americans probably don't think about every day into a cruel political cudgel—but they are also using their political power and legal authority to target trans people, and trans kids, in particular.

Last month, Texas Governor Greg Abbott made the decision to actively investigate and target parents of transgender kids and providers, making the totally false claim that gender-affirming care is child abuse. In Idaho, just across the border from my home State of Washington, lawmakers got dangerously close to passing legislation that would criminalize providers for giving kids the gender-affirming care they need. In Florida, there is a bill headed to the Governor's desk which aims to erase gay and trans kids, parents, and teachers from our schools by banning any discussion about gender identity or sexual orientation.

While Democrats have been focused on getting our schools back open and helping students catch up after 2 really tough years, Republicans are targeting trans kids and gay students and taking incredibly important and personal decisions away from parents and families.

Right now, it feels like far-right lawmakers are in a race to legislate the most extreme, most hateful bill they can think of, at the expense of trans kids. We all have a responsibility to stand up and make clear this is not right. Trans people are our friends; they are our neighbors; they are our families. Trans kids deserve to be just kids—to play sports, to go to school, to see a doctor, or to get healthcare. They should be able to get the same opportunities as any other child, to learn and grow and play and thrive free from fear and discrimination. And parents deserve to be able to make their own parenting decisions with their medical providers to do what is best for their kids' health. They should not have to worry about what a rightwing politician thinks is best for their kids. And they definitely shouldn't live in fear

that a State legislature is going to intervene in their parenting decisions and hurt their child.

So we have to push back against these attacks on trans kids in every way that we can—in the courts, with legislation, through Executive action, and by speaking out and speaking up because I can tell you, having just talked to my constituents in Washington State, the hurt and fear the Governor of Texas has caused is not staying in Texas. What Greg Abbott said about trans kids has an effect on many States. I wish it didn't, but the truth is: All of those measures are not only really scary for trans families across the country, but they also embolden more hateful rhetoric and even violence against trans people; and it is harming trans kids' mental health no matter where they live.

We have to be louder than Greg Abbott or whoever is taking aim at trans kids. We have to push for legislation like the Equality Act that would send a powerful message of support and fairness for trans and gay Americans. And we have to stand up for a future without this hateful hate, harm, and division that we are seeing and with a lot more compassion for each other. It is not too much to ask.

NOMINATION OF JOHN H. CHUN

Mr. President, I also rise today to urge my colleagues to join me this evening in voting to confirm Judge John Chun for a Federal district court judgeship in the Western District of Washington State.

Judge Chun is a Pacific Northwest native. He is a father. He is the son of South Korean immigrants. He would be the first Asian-American man to serve on Washington State's Federal bench.

He is patient and thoughtful, someone the people of Washington State can really count on to faithfully uphold the rule of law and treat litigants and all parties before him with grace and respect. Judge Chun's qualifications are superb, having served for 7 years now as a State court judge. His temperament and record of service demonstrate a real commitment to fairness and impartiality, whether through his service as a board member for the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance or his many pro bono commitments over the course of a very long career as both an attorney and a judge.

For all these reasons and more, Judge Chun's service as Federal district court judge in my home State of Washington would surely help rebuild faith in our judicial system. I respectfully am here today to urge my colleagues to confirm Judge Chun.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 493

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I come today to the floor with a very simple unanimous consent request.

This is a resolution. It doesn't allocate any dollars, doesn't change any policy. It is just a statement of belief

from the U.S. Senate. It is a statement to be able to say we hold certain things very important.

I will talk through some of the resolution part of it—the resolve at the beginning of it—but it ends with a very simple statement. It ends with:

Resolved, That the Senate—(1) recognizes and promotes the importance of parental involvement in their child's education; and (2) recognizes the necessity of school choices as a tool to empower all parents with the freedom to choose the best educational environment for their children and to reject destructive ideologies promoted by many public schools, such as Critical Race Theory.

This comes from a basic conversation that happens in my State and, quite frankly, in States all around the country. Parents should be the primary decision-makers for their children—not only where they are educated so that they don't live in a certain neighborhood and they say, I am sorry, you live there so you have to go here.

This is so the parents have the maximum amount of flexibility knowing one child may be a great fit for one school, and the younger child may be a better fit for a different school, whether that be a public school that allows flexibility within a district to be able to move place to place or, as it happens in my State, where you can even change district to district within public schools.

If a parent maybe works in one area—one school district—but lives in another, that parent can choose to be able to have their child go into a different district. Though it is a public school setting, it gives them the flexibility and the choice to do that. Why? Because not every kid is the same and not every educational environment is the same.

I would say in my State—and I would assume in other States as well—not every school district is the same. It is important to us in our State that every school district is successful. There is no place that we don't want any child to be able to be successful.

But we should all admit the facts: Not every school district is thriving. As we invest dollars and time and encourage great teaching in that district, that child who is in that district that is not being successful is trapped in a location that is currently not successful. Maybe they can be successful in 5 years from now when they work through the different issues they have, but that child doesn't have a second shot.

If that child has no other opportunity to be able to choose and their parents are locked into that spot, we basically say, We will fix everything in this district in a few years, and that child is just not allowed to get an option out. I don't think that is helpful for that child and that parent at that time.

Giving parents the ability to be able to make choices—whether public schools, charter schools, private schools—whatever may work best for their school and for their State and the policies their State has created seems like a smart thing to be able to do.

Any kind of teaching that is within a school that actually promotes one kid as the oppressor and the other kid as the oppressed simply because of the color of their skin should not be taught in our schools. Why don't we teach every child is equal? Why don't we teach every child should have opportunity? Why don't we teach every family has the opportunity in this great country of ours; and where we have weaknesses, we work on our weaknesses? But we don't label a child as an oppressor or as oppressed based on the color of their skin—at least we used to not in America.

But that is what is rising up with this critical race theory as it rises up from place to place. I have had many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle saying: That is not true. That is not being taught.

Great. Let's make the resolution. Let's say that we as a Senate don't believe that this should be taught. Let's teach every child. Let's love every child.

This resolution also affirms the rights of parents to be able to speak out—not in a violent way, not in a destructive way, but for parents to be able to speak out.

Why is it that several months ago, the Department of Justice in our Nation starts a whole investigation on parents to be able to say: Are there parents who are actually maybe closet terrorists who are showing up at school board meetings, complaining about what is being taught, complaining about a mask mandate in their school, complaining about a vaccine mandate, complaining about critical race theory, or just saying "I don't like this particular curriculum"?

That used to be the rights of parents, to engage, and now we hear: Really, parents don't know enough about these difficult things. Parents need to just sit down over there. We will take care of this as professionals.

So, again, this resolution doesn't add additional funding. It doesn't change the structure of our schools. But it does say: We as the Senate believe in the power of the parent to be able to make the right choice for their children.

So, with that, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to my resolution, S. Res. 493. I further 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. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I got my start in national politics as a parent advocating for my kids' preschool program. I am a former preschool teacher. I am a former school board member. I

am now chair of the Senate Education Committee. I have worked across the aisle on fixing No Child Left Behind. I have also fought against efforts—many during the former administration with Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education—because I felt they took us further from the goal of making sure that every student in our country, no matter who they are or where they live or how much money their parents make, can get an excellent public education and all the opportunity that comes with it.

All this is to say that I could not care more deeply about making sure every child gets the chance to learn and succeed in life, and my belief that parents should be as involved as possible in their kids' education could not be more firmly or personally held. In fact, I can remember the times when, as a U.S. Senator with young kids at home myself, I would try to read all my memos at night and help with their homework. I wanted my own kids to have that support from me, just like I want every parent to be able to be on top of what is going on in their kids' school.

I also know from talking to my own family and so many students and families across Washington State that these last two years have been some of the toughest, most overwhelming times for parents and kids that many of us can remember.

Here in the Senate, our job is to recognize that and do everything we can to get things back on track, which is why Democrats acted quickly to pass the American Rescue Plan and give schools the resources they need so they could reopen and stay open safely.

We also recognized that after 2 really disruptive years, many students would need extra help, so the American Rescue Plan is, as we speak right now, paying for afterschool programs and tutors and summer learning so students all across the country can catch up.

I will remind you that this bill to help reopen schools safely and keep them open passed with zero Republican votes—not one. Not only that, Senate Republicans have come to the floor twice last month alone with ideas about snatching Federal funding away from our schools, and Republican leaders even rolled out a plan that would eliminate the Department of Education altogether. Could there be a clearer message about their priorities?

At all times but especially after the last 2 years, there is no excuse for anything short of an all-hands-on-deck national effort to put students' education first, but, unfortunately, here is what we have got happening: Democrats acted to reopen our schools safely and keep them open. Congressional Republicans, down to the last one, voted no.

Democrats believe that quality public education for every student is a good investment. The Republican Party keeps putting forward ideas to gut public education. Democrats want

to lower student debt and the cost of tuition. Republicans are virtually nowhere to be seen on those issues. Democrats want students to learn. Republican legislatures across the country want to ban books.

To sum it up, Democrats want every student to have the ability to get a great education. We are focused on that. We are serious about it, and we are working on it. Meanwhile, Republicans at all levels—and the resolution we are debating today is a case in point—want to use students and parents and schools as political pawns rather than focusing on making sure every single student in our country can get a high-quality education and be able to succeed.

In fact, I just spoke this afternoon with trans kids and parents about what is going on in Texas and other parts of the country. These kids are brave, but they are scared. Their parents are worried about being investigated by the State just because a politician has decided he doesn't like how they are raising their kids.

How are kids supposed to focus on learning when their safety is in question? How are their friends supposed to focus on learning when their classmates are dealing with something like this? Why are parents having to worry about whether they will get investigated for raising their kids according to their beliefs, their doctor's advice, and their kids' needs?

When and if Senate Republicans are truly serious about focusing on getting American students the great education they need and deserve, we will know because Republicans and Democrats might be able to come together again and put students and parents and schools first. I know that is possible because I have worked with Republicans to make this happen.

So today I would like to give my colleague an opportunity to take the first step in the right direction. In a moment, I will ask consent to pass a bill that would help our students.

If we agree we want parents involved in their kids' education and if we agree that this is a moment when students, like so many Americans, are stressed and need us to have their backs, which I really hope we do, then let's send more counselors and nurses to our Nation's schools. Let's prioritize STEM education and advanced coursework and make them available to more of our K-12 students. Let's make students' mental health a top priority so they can focus on learning.

So I will be asking unanimous consent on legislation that would help us all do this—importantly, in a way that seeks parents' input directly on what will matter most to their kids and their communities.

If you are trying to get our schools back on track, this should be an easy yes vote because it will be a vote for students' education, parents' peace of mind, and actually doing something real about the tough challenges students and parents are facing.

I hope my friend from Oklahoma will support it and that moving forward, Republicans will take education as seriously as they claim to and reverse course and join us in working to meet this moment for students' and parents' sake.

At this time, I object to the Senator from Oklahoma's unanimous consent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mrs. MURRAY. As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the Murray bill, which is at the desk, a bill to appropriate funds for students' academic and mental health needs. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I appreciate the dialogue on education. A degree is an education. My mom is a lifelong educator. I spent my summers growing up in the school library, putting books in the Dewey Decimal System, putting the new piece of tape on the outside of it, and actually, back in the old days, filing a new card in the card catalog, which half the people listening to me right now have no idea what that is.

I am passionate about education. I have two daughters, and I stay very engaged in the issue of education. So it is always interesting to me when my Democratic colleagues say: When Republicans get serious about education.

It is always interesting. We will pass a bill, like what happened in the omnibus or what happened in any Education bill before, and there will be billions and billions of dollars in education, but the comment will always be "Well, if you really loved kids, you would do just \$1 billion more, but because you don't love kids, you did \$1 billion less." It is never enough on it.

This resolution that I brought today was not about an extra \$1.3 billion in education to be able to hire more people; it was just about empowering parents.

It is an interesting side by side to say what families need more is more employees at school, and what I am seeing is that we need more empowerment of parents.

One costs \$1.3 billion; the other one is just free. One says: Let's have folks at school know how to be able to take care of your kids best. The other one says: Well, let's make sure there are certain things, like critical race theory, that we don't teach at school to make sure every child is taught the same. And if that parent wants to teach that at home, they are welcome to teach that at home, but let's not impose that on every child. Let's not call some children oppressors because of the color of their skin.

Why don't we do that?

So the resolution I brought is not about a billion dollars; it is just a statement of support of parents, a statement of support of what parents want to be able to teach. It is not about more school employees; it is about stronger parents. That is what I think that we ought to continue to be able to address.

This is not about who loves education more. Quite frankly, I know my colleague from Washington is passionate about kids and about education. She has lived it as a mom, as a leader in the Senate, and as someone I watched negotiate with Lamar Alexander some of the toughest education policy conversations. She is a remarkable legislator and is passionate about this.

We have some disagreements on some of these issues. I am just passionate about doing whatever we can to be able to honor parents as often as we can and to tell them: No, you are not going to be investigated.

She mentioned parents in Texas being worried about being investigated. I will tell you, parents in Oklahoma have said to me: I no longer go to school board meetings because I am afraid the FBI is going to be there and they are going to open a case on me. I have heard that the Attorney General is looking for parents who are problems across the country, and so I don't feel comfortable going to a school board meeting anymore because the U.S. Attorney General may open a file on me.

Now, that is a real conversation with a parent at home.

So let's find a way to be able to empower parents and do whatever we can. So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. First, I would ask consent that I be able to complete my brief remarks before the vote starts.

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

NOMINATION OF JULIE REBECCA RUBIN

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the confirmation of Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Julie Rubin to be a U.S. district judge for the District of Maryland. I recommended Judge Rubin, along with Senator VAN HOLLEN, to President Biden, and we strongly support her nomination.

Judge Rubin has been nominated to fill the vacancy created when Judge Ellen Hollander, appointed by President Obama in 2011, announced her intentions to take senior status.

President Biden nominated Judge Rubin for this position on December 3 of last year, and the Judiciary Committee held her confirmation hearing on December 15. Judge Rubin was favorably reported by the Judiciary Committee on January 20 of this year by a bipartisan vote.

She received a unanimous "well qualified" rating from the American Bar Association Standing Committee

on the Federal Judiciary, which is the organization's highest rating. The ABA assesses the nominee's professional competency, integrity, and judicial temperament.

Shortly after the November 2020 Presidential elections, I worked with Senator VAN HOLLEN to establish the judicial selection committee in Maryland. We used an open application process with public advertisement and communicated closely with State, local, and specialty bar associations in Maryland. In particular, we sought out highly qualified and diverse applicants. Our committee interviewed everyone who submitted an application, which involved several dozen interviews. Senator VAN HOLLEN and I personally interviewed several finalists before recommending names to the White House.

Born in Baltimore, Judge Rubin received her B.A. cum laude from Mount Holyoke College in 1995 and her J.D. from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1998.

She worked at Astrachan Gunst, handling intellectual property and employment law matters in both Federal and State court.

Judge Rubin was appointed by the Governor of Maryland in 2012 as a Baltimore City circuit judge and was elected in 2014 by the people of Baltimore to a 15-year term.

The circuit court is the State trial court of general jurisdiction in Maryland, covering both civil and criminal cases, and is the exclusive court for jury trials, including felony trials—similar jurisdiction to what the Federal district court handles. So she has that experience.

Judge Rubin brings tremendous experience to the courtroom as a sitting Baltimore City circuit judge for nearly a decade. She has handled a substantial and diverse caseload in our State court in Baltimore, having served in the civil, family, criminal, and general trial divisions, as well as serving on special assignments to the asbestos docket. She previously served as a supervisory judge of alternative dispute resolutions. She estimates that she has presided over about 1,000 criminal and civil cases that have gone to verdict or judgment, including both bench and jury trials.

Judge Rubin is known as a judge's judge, in terms of her excellent temperament, work ethic, and congeniality with lawyers and litigants. She is known to be fair in judgment to all litigants. She was selected to serve as a faculty member of the Judicial College and tasked with instructing newly appointed Maryland trial judges on judicial ethics and best courtroom practices.

Judge Rubin has continued to give back to the community as an adjunct legal professor at the Maryland Law School. She cochaired the Bench Bar Committee of the Bar Association of Baltimore City, served on the board of the Baltimore Metropolitan Chapter of the Simon E. Sobeloff Law Society,

and assisted the CollegeBound Foundation and the Baltimore Education Scholarship Trust to help underprivileged or at-risk youth. She has served as chair of the board of trustees for the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore. She has given back to our community and understands the challenges in our community.

As a fellow graduate of the University of Maryland Francis King Carey Law School, I am confident that Judge Rubin will meet the highest standards of integrity, competence, and temperament. I know she will uphold the rule of law for all Marylanders for this lifetime appointment.

Finally, let me say that I know that public service is a sacrifice, not only for the nominee but for their family. So I want to thank Judge Rubin's husband James and her entire family for sharing Judge Rubin with the people of Maryland.

Judge Rubin's confirmation will build on the quality and diversity of the Maryland District Court bench. All 10 of the confirmed judges have been recommended by me to the President for appointment as a Senator from Maryland. I am proud of their qualifications and diversity.

In Maryland, our Federal bench is 50 percent women, 50 percent men, 40 percent people of color. We appointed the first African-American woman, the first person of Palestinian descent. We have a diversified, quality bench representing the people of Maryland and providing the justice the people of Maryland deserve.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the confirmation of Judge Julie Rubin to be a U.S. district judge for the District of Maryland.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 683, Julie Rebecca Rubin, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Julie Rebecca Rubin, of Maryland,

to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 86 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Tillis
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Wyden
Graham	Padilla	
Hassan	Peters	

NAYS—45

Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeben	Rounds
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Young

NOT VOTING—3

Blunt	Leahy	Shaheen
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this vote took a long time. If the others take that amount of time, we are going to be here until very late because we are going to get this done. So I hope everyone will—now that we are on the second vote—hang close.

I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes tonight be 10-minute votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Let me reiterate.

Members, please stay on or near the floor during the votes so we can get this done quickly.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Julie Rebecca Rubin, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 737, Hector Gonzalez, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Michael F. Bennett, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Hector Gonzalez, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 87 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Tillis
Coons	McConnell	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Murkowski	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Graham	Ossoff	
Hassan	Padilla	

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Cornyn	Fischer
Blackburn	Cotton	Grassley
Boozman	Cramer	Hagerty
Braun	Crapo	Hawley
Burr	Cruz	Hoeben
Capito	Daines	Hyde-Smith
Cassidy	Ernst	Inhofe

Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
Moran
Paul

Portman
Risch
Romney
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)

Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Toomey
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

NOT VOTING—4

Blunt
Leahy

Sanders
Shaheen

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Hector Gonzalez, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 679, John H. Chun, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

Charles E. Schumer, Tina Smith, Cory A. Booker, Brian Schatz, Angus S. King, Jr., Jon Ossoff, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Raphael G. Warnock, Jack Reed, Tammy Baldwin, Ron Wyden, Sheldon Whitehouse, Gary C. Peters, Mazie Hirono, Patrick J. Leahy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, that vote took too long. Will Members please stay around so we can get these done quickly. We have many more votes to go.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of John H. Chun, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 88 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—5

Blunt	Sanders	Toomey
Leahy	Shaheen	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, and the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John H. Chun, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 680, Sarah Elisabeth Geraghty, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

Charles E. Schumer, Tina Smith, Cory A. Booker, Brian Schatz, Angus S. King, Jr., Jon Ossoff, Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Raphael G. Warnock, Jack Reed, Tammy Baldwin, Ron Wyden, Sheldon Whitehouse, Gary C. Peters, Mazie Hirono, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Sarah Elisabeth Geraghty, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 89 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Hassan	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Sinema
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Lujan	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Van Hollen
Coons	Markey	Warner
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warnock
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Ossoff	
Graham	Padilla	

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—5

Blunt	Sanders	Toomey
Leahy	Shaheen	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sarah Elisabeth Geraghty, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 681, Georgette Castner, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Georgette Castner, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 90 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Hassan	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Sinema
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Lujan	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Van Hollen
Coons	Markey	Warner
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warnock
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Ossoff	
Graham	Padilla	

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—5

Blunt	Sanders	Toomey
Leahy	Shaheen	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Georgette Castner, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 684, Cristina D. Silva, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Cristina D. Silva, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 91 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Portman
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Rosen
Brown	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Lujan	Smith
Collins	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Graham	Ossoff	Wyden
Hassan	Padilla	

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Boozman	Burr
Blackburn	Braun	Capito

Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cornyn	Inhofe	Rubio
Cotton	Johnson	Sasse
Cramer	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Crapo	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cruz	Lee	Shelby
Daines	Lummis	Sullivan
Ernst	Marshall	Thune
Fischer	McConnell	Tillis
Grassley	Moran	Tuberville
Hagerty	Paul	Wicker
Hawley	Risch	Young
Hoeven	Romney	

NOT VOTING—3

Blunt	Shaheen	Toomey
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Cristina D. Silva, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 685, Anne Rachel Traum, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Anne Rachel Traum, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 92 Ex.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—3

Blunt	Shaheen	Toomey
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Anne Rachel Traum, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 662, Andrew M. Luger, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota for the term of four years.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Edward J. Markey, Ben Ray Lujan, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Jacky Rosen, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Mazie Hirono, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Patrick J. Leahy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Andrew M. Luger, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota for the term of four years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 61, nays 36, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 93 Ex.]

YEAS—61

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Rounds
Brown	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	Kennedy	Schatz
Cardin	King	Schumer
Carpenter	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Leahy	Smith
Collins	Lujan	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Sullivan
Cornyn	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Tillis
Duckworth	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Ernst	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Peters	
Hassan	Portman	

NAYS—36

Barrasso	Fischer	Moran
Blackburn	Hagerty	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Risch
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young

NOT VOTING—3

Blunt	Shaheen	Toomey
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 61, the nays are 36.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Andrew M. Luger, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota for the term of four years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

CONFIRMATION OF SHALANDA D. YOUNG

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I am pleased to acknowledge the confirmation of Shalanda Young to be the Director of the Office of Management and Budget with a bipartisan vote of 61 to 36.

Director Young has a depth of experience that cannot be matched to lead the Office of Management and Budget. A staff member on the House Appropriations Committee for 15 years—serving 4 of these years as the committee's staff director—Director Young has years of experience in crafting the budgets of the Federal agencies that the American people rely on.

In 2019, Director Young was one of the few staff present in the room while then Chairman SHELBY, Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member GRANGER, and I negotiated the end to the longest Federal Government shutdown in U.S. history. Her knowledge of Federal programs, understanding of the political process, and years of critical insight into the operations of the federal government were invaluable in our negotiations to reach a deal.

I was glad to strongly support Director Young's nomination to be Deputy Director of OMB. After she was confirmed to that position, she began to serve as its Acting Director. It was in this role that she guided the Biden administration's budget priorities through the COVID pandemic, devastating natural disasters, a long sought after bipartisan infrastructure law, and now the response to President Putin's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

As if she did not have enough on her plate, on October 31, 2021, she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Charlie. If juggling all of that did not prove she is more than qualified for the job, I am not sure what would.

As the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I look forward to working with her and her team at OMB on the fiscal year 2023 appropriations process. Director Young understands how to work across the aisle to get a deal done. I cannot think of someone I would rather work with in putting the appropriations process to work on behalf of the American people.

REPUBLICAN MEMBERS OF THE SENATE NATO OBSERVED GROUP

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in 2018, we reestablished the Senate NATO Observer Group. I ask for the following Republican Senators to participate in the group: TILLIS (cochair), BARRASSO, ERNST, ROUNDS, RUBIO, and HAGERTY.

EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAM

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have long been a supporter of the EB-5 program, which has been a significant economic driver in Texas. This merit-based immigration program has cre-

ated thousands of American jobs and brought billions of dollars in investment to urban and rural areas across Texas and the U.S.

While it was unfortunate that the authorization for the EB-5 Regional Center program was allowed to lapse on June 30, 2021, I am pleased to have worked with my colleagues, Senators CHUCK GRASSLEY and PATRICK LEAHY, on the EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act, which was included as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022.

The EB-5 Reform and Integrity Act reauthorizes the regional center program through September 30, 2027, and implements meaningful reforms and integrity measures that will ensure the viability and security of the program for the coming years.

This legislation provides the first multiyear authorization for the regional center program since 2015, so that regional centers, which have been in limbo for nearly 9 months, will have much-needed stability going forward. There is also a 60-day implementation period to allow USCIS to begin processing EB-5 petitions and applications that have been on hold since the lapse. Following that initial period, existing regional centers will be able to immediately get back to work driving investment into the U.S. and facilitating the creation of jobs across the country.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

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

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

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

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

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 22-09, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Spain for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$950 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to

issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JEDIDIAH P. ROYAL,
(For James A. Hursch, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 22-09

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

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Spain.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment * \$425 million.
Other \$525 million.
Total \$950 million.

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

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):
Eight (8) MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopters.

Twenty (20) T-700-GE-401C Engines (16 installed, 4 spares).

Thirty-two (32) AGM-114R(N) Hellfire Missiles, All Up Rounds.

Two (2) Hellfire II Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM).

One hundred (100) WGU-59/B Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) II Guidance Sections, All Up Rounds.

Eight (8) Link 16 Multifunctional Information Distribution Systems Joint Tactical Radio Systems (MIDS JTRS) (8 installed).

Four (4) Airborne Low Frequency Sonars (ALFS) (4 installed on 4 aircraft).

Non-MDE: Also included are M514 impulse cartridge/cartridge actuated devices; MJ20 cartridge actuated thruster/cartridge actuated devices; WB53 fire extinguisher cartridge/cartridge actuated devices; CCU-136A/A impulse cartridges; M299 Hellfire missile launchers; GAU-21 crew served guns (including pintle and laser pointer); LAU-61 digital rocket launchers; M152 High Explosive warheads for airborne 2.75 rockets; MK66 MOD 4, 2.75-inch rocket motors; rocket motors, 2.75-inch, MK-66-4 inert; WTU-1B inert warheads (HA23); AN/ARC-210 RT-2036 radios with Communications Security (COMSEC); AN/AAR-47 missile warning systems; AN/SSQ-62F sonobuoys; AN/SSQ-53G sonobuoys; AN/SSQ-36B sonobuoys; SRQ-4 Hawklink radio terminals with Hawklink Crypto Control Modules; AN/APX-123 Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) transponders; AN/ALE-47 dispenser, Electronic Countermeasures; Advanced Data Transfer Systems (ADTS); AN/AAS-44C(V) Multi-Spectral Targeting Systems; Identification Friend or Foe Mode 4/5 Cryptographic Applique, KIV-78; Joint Mission Planning Systems (JMPS); Embedded Global Positioning System/Precise Positioning Service (GPS/PPS)/Inertial Navigation Systems (EGI) with Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM); Airborne Low Frequency Sonars (ALFS) (aircraft provisions only for 4 aircraft); AN/ARQ-59 Hawklink radio terminals; Training Simulators/Operational Machine Interface Assistants (ATS/OMIA); tactical operational flight trainer; AN/ALQ-210 Electronic Support Measures (ESM) systems; APS-153(V) multi-mode radars; spare engine containers; spare and repair parts; support and test equipment; communications equipment; ferry support; publications and technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; United States (U.S.) Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; obsolescence engineering, integration, and test activities required to ensure readiness for the production of the Spanish MH-60R helicopters; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (SP-P-SDE).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: SP-P-SCY, SP-P-SDB, SP-P-GOJ.

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

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

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: March 15, 2022.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Spain—MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopters with Support

The Government of Spain has requested to buy eight (8) MH-60R Multi-Mission helicopters; twenty (20) T-700-GE-401C engines (16 installed, 4 spares); thirty-two (32) AGM-114R(N) Hellfire missiles, all up rounds; two (2) Hellfire II Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM); one hundred (100) WGU-59/B Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) II Guidance Sections, all up rounds; eight (8) Link 16 Multifunctional Information Distribution Systems Joint Tactical Radio Systems (MIDS JTRS) (8 installed); and four (4) Airborne Low Frequency Sonars (ALFS) (4 installed on 4 aircraft). Also included are M514 impulse cartridge/cartridge actuated devices; MJ20 cartridge actuated thruster/cartridge actuated devices; WB53 fire extinguisher cartridge/cartridge actuated devices; CCU-136A/A impulse cartridges; M299 Hellfire missile launchers; GAU-21 crew served guns (including pintle and laser pointer); LAU-61 digital rocket launchers; M152 High Explosive warheads for airborne 2.75 rockets; MK66 MOD 4, 2.75-inch rocket motors; rocket motors, 2.75-inch, MK-66-4 inert; WTU-1B inert warheads (HA23); AN/ARC-210 RT-2036 radios with Communications Security (COMSEC); AN/AAR-47 missile warning systems; AN/SSQ-62F sonobuoys; AN/SSQ-53G sonobuoys; AN/SSQ-36B sonobuoys; SRQ-4 Hawklink radio terminals with Hawklink Crypto Control Modules; AN/APX-123 Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) transponders; AN/ALE-47 dispenser, Electronic Countermeasures; Advanced Data Transfer Systems (ADTS); AN/AAS-44C(V) Multi-Spectral Targeting Systems; Identification Friend or Foe Mode 4/5 Cryptographic Applique, KIV-78; Joint Mission Planning Systems (JMPS); Embedded Global Positioning System/Precise Positioning Service (GPS/PPS)/Inertial Navigation Systems (EGI) with Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM); Airborne Low Frequency Sonars (ALFS) (aircraft provisions only for 4 aircraft); AN/ARQ-59 Hawklink radio terminals; Training Simulators/Operational Machine Interface Assistants (ATS/OMIA); tactical operational flight trainer; AN/ALQ-210 Electronic Support Measures (ESM) systems; APS-153(V) multi-mode radars; spare engine containers; spare and repair parts; support and test equipment; communications equipment; ferry support; publications and technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; United States (U.S.) Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; obsolescence engineering, integration, and test activities required to ensure readiness for the production of the Spanish MH-60R helicopters; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The total estimated program cost is \$950 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a NATO ally which is an important force for political stability and economic progress in Europe.

The proposed sale will improve Spain's capability to meet current and future threats.

The MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopter will provide the capability to perform anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare missions along with the ability to perform secondary missions including vertical replenishment, search and rescue, and communications relay and will bolster the Spanish Navy's ability to support NATO and remain interoperable with the U.S. and the NATO alliance. Spain will have no difficulty absorbing these helicopters into its armed forces.

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

The principal contractor will be Lockheed Martin Rotary and Mission Systems, Owego, NY. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale may require the assignment of two (2) contractor representatives to Spain.

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

TRANSMITTAL NO. 22-09

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

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopter focuses primarily on anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare missions. The MH-60R carries several sensors and data links to enhance its ability to work in a network-centric battle group and as an extension of its home ship/main operating base. The mission equipment subsystem consists of the following sensors and subsystems: an acoustics systems consisting of a dipping sonar and sonobuoys, Multi-Mode Radar (MMR) with integral Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) interrogator, Radios with COMSEC, Electronic Support Measures (ESM), Integrated Self-Defense (ISD), and Multi-Spectral Targeting System (MTS). The aircraft processes sensor data onboard, and transmits data via Common Data Link (CDL) (also referred to as Hawklink). The aircraft is night vision compatible. It can carry AGM-114A/B/K/N Hellfire missiles to engage surface and sub-surface targets.

a. The AGM-114 Hellfire missile is an air-to-surface missile with a multi-mission, multi-target, precision strike capability. The Hellfire can be launched from multiple air platforms and is the primary precision weapon for the United States Army.

b. Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) laser guided rocket to counter the fast attack craft and fast inshore attack craft threat.

c. Communications security (COMSEC) devices contain sensitive encryption algorithms and keying material.

d. Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) (KIV-78) contains embedded security devices containing sensitive encryption algorithms and keying material.

e. GPS/PPS/SAASM—Global Positioning System (GPS) provides a space-based Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) that has reliable location and time information in all weather and at all times and anywhere on or near the earth when and where there is an unobstructed line of sight to four or more GPS satellites. Selective Availability/Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM) (AN/PSN-11) is used by military GPS receivers to allow decryption of precision GPS coordinates. In addition, the GPS Antenna System (GAS-1) provides protection from enemy manipulation of the GPS system.

f. Acoustics algorithms are used to process dipping sonar and sonobuoy data for target tracking and for the Acoustics Mission Planner (AMP), which is a tactical aid employed

to optimize the deployment of sonobuoys and the dipping sonar.

g. The AN/APS-153 multi-mode radar with an integrated IFF and Inverse Synthetic Aperture (ISAR) provides target surveillance/detection capability.

h. The AN/ALQ-210 (ESM) system identifies the location of an emitter.

i. The AN/AAS-44C(V) Multi-Spectral Targeting System (MTS) operates in day/night and adverse weather conditions. Imagery is provided by a Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) sensor, a color/monochrome day television (DTV) camera, and a Low-Light TV (LLTV).

j. Ultra High Frequency/Very High Frequency (UHF/VHF) Radios (ARC-210) contain embedded sensitive encryption algorithms and keying material.

k. Advanced Data Transfer System (ADTS) with Type 1 encryption for data at rest.

1. Satellite Communications Demand Assigned Multiple Access (SATCOM DAMA), which provides increased, interoperable communications capabilities with U.S. forces.

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

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

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

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

NOTICE OF A TIE VOTE UNDER S. RES. 27

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the following letter in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE, COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS,

Washington, DC, March 16, 2022.

To the Secretary of the Senate:

PN1679, the nomination of Lisa DeNell Cook, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, having been referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

1. On the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed 12 ayes to 12 noes; and

In accordance with Section 3 paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the Resolution.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, had there been a recorded vote, I would

have voted no on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 472, Rachel Jacobson, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army.

UKRAINE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to bring attention to the need to support the Ukrainian people in the face of Russia's invasion. Over the weekend, I took part in a Senate delegation to Poland alongside my colleagues Senator ROB PORTMAN, Senator RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, and Senator ROGER WICKER. We met with Ukrainian refugees—women, children, grandparents—some who were carrying their whole lives on their backs.

Three weeks ago, Ukrainians were thinking about their jobs, their plans, and their dreams. Now, so much of that is in shambles. Women have been figuring out how to get their older parents and young children to safety across the border while their brothers and husbands take up arms. The most heartbreaking conversations I had were with children who didn't know if they had a future.

Seeing the cost of this invasion up close has only strengthened my resolve to stand with Ukraine, both with humanitarian aid for refugees and military support. With advanced weapons from the United States and allies, Ukraine's Territorial Defense has been more effective in stifling Russia's invasion than most imagined. Vladimir Putin thought he would be greeted with rose petals—instead it was Molotov cocktails. And 21 days later, Kyiv still stands.

I was proud to join the bipartisan Senate majority in allocating \$13.6 billion for aid to Ukraine, but more support is needed. Over the past few weeks, Russian aircraft have been behind brutal assaults on residential neighborhoods, religious institutions, and hospitals in Ukraine. Ukraine needs more air defense support. Drones, Stingers, and Javelins have proven to be highly effective in taking down Russian aircraft and tanks, so we must continue to provide that critical weaponry and more.

In the face of this devastation, Poland has shown that it is a country with a big heart, taking in more than 1.7 million Ukrainian refugees. For perspective, Poland is a country of 38 million. Since they have opened their doors, the country's population has grown by over 4 percent. In Warsaw alone, the population has increased by 11 percent. Poles are meeting refugees at the border and welcoming them into their communities—even into their own homes.

The Polish people don't have to imagine what it is like to live through a full-scale invasion. Their history is marked by invasions by Prussia, the Habsburgs, the Nazis, and yes, Russia. Poland is also well aware of its 332-mile border with Ukraine. Last week, Rus-

sian missiles struck 15 miles from Poland's border. The Polish border guards I spoke with said they could literally feel the earth shake. As Putin's war inches westward, we must affirm our commitment to our NATO ally from a military and humanitarian standpoint.

During our trip, Senator PORTMAN, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator WICKER, and I had the honor of meeting with the 82nd Airborne. They briefed us on everything that is being done to help Ukrainian refugees, as well as fighters on the front lines. I also met with Minnesota troops, and I was inspired by their character and determination. It was clear that they understood the patriotic value of their service. I pray for their safety as they continue their mission in the region.

Across the Atlantic in Ukraine, we are all seeing how precious democracy truly is. Putin has shown his true colors. But you know what else? The people of Ukraine have shown their true colors—in bright blue and yellow—they are showing the world what true courage is all about. We must continue to stand with them in their fight.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF KING SOOPERS SHOOTING

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, on March 22, 2021, we suffered another horrific mass shooting in our State at the King Soopers grocery store in Boulder, CO. As we approach its 1-year anniversary, we honor the 10 Coloradans whose lives were cut tragically short in this senseless act of gun violence. They leave behind children, spouses, parents, friends, and a Boulder community that will always carry the grief of their loss.

They will never forget the 10 victims and neither should America. So today, we read their names into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Denny Stong was 20 years old and a graduate of Fairview High School. He was an introverted, smart kid who loved history and model airplanes. He had been covering shifts at the King Soopers and took enormous pride in his role as an essential worker during the pandemic. He once posted on Facebook: "I can't stay home . . . I am a grocery store worker."

Neven Stanisic was 23 years old. His dad said he was "a really good boy, a good kid . . . a hard-working boy." His parents are refugees from Bosnia who left in the 1990s to escape the war. The reverend at their local church said, "His family fled the war . . . They left everything to save their lives, and came here to have a new start."

Rikki Olds was 25 years old. She had been working as a manager at King Soopers for 6 years. Her family described her as a "firecracker" who lit up a room with her infectious giggle. Her aunt Lori said, "She had a beautiful way of just being her . . . When you're down, she just wanted to cheer you up, just by being around."

Tralona Bartkowiak was 49 years old. She co-owned a clothing and accessories store with her sister and was a

frequent presence in the Boulder arts and music scene. She had a deep curiosity about the world that took her on travels from Nepal to Costa Rica. Her younger brother remembers her as “a beam of light.”

Teri Leiker was 51 years old. She was a huge fan of the Buffaloes at CU and was a regular face at the Pearl Street Stampede. A friend called Teri “the most selfless, innocent, amazing person I have had the honor of meeting.”

Suzanne Fountain was 59 years old. She worked for 15 years at Boulder Community Health. She loved gardening and was passionate about music and theater. A friend described her as “the cream of the crop and a good person, a good soul.”

Kevin Mahoney was 61 years old. He had worked in the hotel business but retired early to spend more time traveling, skiing, and visiting his daughter, Erika. After learning of her father's death, Erika wrote, “My dad represents all things Love. I'm so thankful he could walk me down the aisle last summer.”

Lynn Murray was 62 years old, a mother of two, and a retired photo director for prominent national magazines. Her husband John said, “I just want her to be remembered as this amazing, amazing comet spending 62 years flying across the sky.”

Jody Waters was 65 years old. She used to own a boutique clothing store named Applause on the Pearl Street Mall, where she remembered all her customers and their favorite brands. She was a mother of two and a grandmother who loved horses and hiking. A friend said when Jody walked into the room, “She was a breath of fresh air, a light.”

Finally, we honor Officer Eric Talley. He was 51 years old, a man of deep faith, and a devoted father of seven. After losing a close friend to a DUI, he joined the police academy at age 40 to give back to the community. In 2013, he made headlines when he helped rescue 11 ducklings from a drainage ditch. Eric's father said he “loved his kids and family more than anything.” For their sake, he was hoping to stay off the frontlines by learning to become a drone operator. But when the bullets rang out, he rushed into action, saving countless lives at the cost of his own. Colorado owes Officer Talley a debt we will never be able to repay. He and the nine other victims represent the best of our State.

As we honor the victims' lives, we stand with all who continue to grieve and the community as it continues to heal. We condemn the senseless gun violence, not only in Boulder last year, but in far too many American cities and towns every day. Until no American has to live in reasonable fear of being gunned down in a school, or a movie theater, or a grocery store, we have more work to do.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:51 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 268. An act to provide for the boundary of the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Park to be adjusted, to authorize the donation of land to the United States for addition to that historic park, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1908. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land as the Ka'ena Point National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1931. An act to provide competitive grants for the promotion of Japanese American confinement education as a means to understand the importance of democratic principles, use and abuse of power, and to raise awareness about the importance of cultural tolerance toward Japanese Americans, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2899. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating areas within the island of Guam as a National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3113. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works to digitize and make publicly available geographic information system mapping data relating to public access to Federal land and waters for outdoor recreation, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5001. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to continue to implement endangered fish recovery programs for the Upper Colorado and San Juan River Basins, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2062, and the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Speaker appoints the following individuals and Member to the Advisory Board for the House of Representatives Child Care Center: Ms. Brooke Scannell of Arlington, Virginia, Ms. Stacey Leavandosky of Washington, D.C., Mr. Collin Davenport of Alexandria, Virginia, Ms. Lora Snyder of Washington, D.C., Mr. Matthew Dwyer of Alexandria, Virginia, Ms. Natalie Joyce of Arlington, Virginia, Mr. Cyrus Artz of Washington, D.C., Ms. Alyene Mlinar of Washington, D.C., Ms. Cari Fike of Cheverly, Maryland, Mr. Robbie Minnich of Arlington, Virginia, Ms. Jennifer Belair of Washington, D.C., and Mr. Hudson of North Carolina.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 3:25 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 55. An act to amend section 249 of title 18, United States Code, to specify lynching as a hate crime act.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 268. An act to provide for the boundary of the Palo Alto Battlefield National

Historic Park to be adjusted, to authorize the donation of land to the United States for addition to that historic park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1908. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land as the Ka'ena Point National Heritage Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1931. An act to provide competitive grants for the promotion of Japanese American confinement education as a means to understand the importance of democratic principles, use and abuse of power, and to raise awareness about the importance of cultural tolerance toward Japanese Americans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2899. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating areas within the island of Guam as a National Heritage Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 5001. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to continue to implement endangered fish recovery programs for the Upper Colorado and San Juan River Basins, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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-3406. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the drug-free workplace plans of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) and the Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery (SIGPR); to the Committees on Appropriations; Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; and Foreign Relations.

EC-3407. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13664 with respect to South Sudan; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3408. A communication from the Sanctions Regulations Advisor, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferators Sanctions Regulations” (31 CFR Part 544) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3409. A communication from the Sanctions Regulations Advisor, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Transnational Criminal Organizations Sanctions Regulations” (31 CFR Part 590) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3410. A communication from the Congressional Assistant, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans Exemption Threshold” ((RIN7100-AG21) (Docket No. R-1758)) received in the

Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3411. A communication from the Congressional Assistant, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Consumer Leasing (Regulation M)” ((RIN1700-AG19) (Docket No. R-1756)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3412. A communication from the Congressional Assistant, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Truth in Lending (Regulation Z)” ((RIN1700-AG20) (Docket No. R-1757)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3413. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Branch of Delisting and Foreign Species, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reclassification of Stephens’ Kangaroo Rat From Endangered to Threatened With a Section 4(d) Rule” (RIN1018-BE64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3414. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Guide (RG) 2.8 Rev 0, Guidance for Implementation of 10 CFR 50.59, ‘Changes, Tests, and Experiments,’ At Non-Power Production or Utilization Facilities” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3415. A communication from the Chief of the Division of Bird Conservation, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Migratory Bird Permits; Administrative Updates to 50 CFR Parts 21 and 22” (RIN1018-BF59) received on March 9, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3416. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Connecticut; Regulations to Limit Premises-Wide Actual and Potential Emissions from Major Stationary Sources of Air Pollution” (FRL No. 9530-01-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3417. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Oregon: Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions” (FRL No. 8853-02-R10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3418. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; New Hampshire; Conformity” (FRL No. 9487-02-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3419. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency,

transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Stationary Combustion Turbines; Amendments” ((RIN2060-AV03) (FRL No. 5909.1-02-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3420. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulation of Persistent, Bioaccumulative, and Toxic Chemicals Under TSCA Section 6(h); Phenol, Isopropylated Phosphate (3:1); Further Compliance Date Extension” (FRL No. 6015.6-02-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3421. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval of Arizona Air Plan Revisions, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and Maricopa County Air Quality Department” (FRL No. 9572-01-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3422. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Georgia; Atlanta Area Emissions Inventory and Emissions Statements Requirements for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard” (FRL No. 9274-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3423. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; New Mexico; Clean Air Act Requirements for Emissions Inventory and Emissions Statement for Nonattainment Area for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards” (FRL No. 9898-02-R6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3424. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Kentucky; Jefferson County Emissions Statements Requirements for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard Nonattainment Area” (FRL No. 9398-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3425. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Removal of Transportation Facilities Rules for Mecklenburg County” (FRL No. 9175-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3426. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; California; Los Angeles-South Coast Air Basin” (FRL No. 9386-01-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3427. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Missouri; Redesignation Request and Associated Maintenance Plan for the Jackson County 2010 SO₂ 1-Hour NAAQS Nonattainment Area” (FRL No. 9105-02-R7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3428. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Finding of Failure to Attain the 2008 Lead and 2010 Sulfur Dioxide Standards; Arizona; Hayden and Miami Nonattainment Areas” (FRL No. 8726-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3429. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Partial Approval and Partial Disapproval of Air Quality Implementation Plans and Determination of Attainment by the Attainment Date; California; San Joaquin Valley Serious Area and Section 189(d) Plan for Attainment of the 1997 24-hour PM_{2.5} NAAQS” (FRL No. 8969-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3430. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Missouri; Redesignation Request and Associated Maintenance Plan for the Jefferson County 2010 SO₂ 1-Hour NAAQS Nonattainment Area” (FRL No. 8693-02-R7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3431. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) Program: Extension of Compliance and Attest Engagement Reporting Deadlines” ((RIN2060-AV57) (FRL No. 8521.1-01-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3432. A communication from the Director of the Regulations and Disclosure Law Division, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Emergency Import Restrictions Imposed on Archaeological and Ethnological Material of Afghanistan” (RIN1515-AE70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3433. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13694 with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3434. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Notification of the Emergency Third Party Transfer Authorization from the Netherlands to Ukraine”; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3435. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to

law, the report of a rule entitled "Passports: Option for Passport Applicants Eligible To Apply by Mail for Renewal of Passports To Apply On-Line" (RIN1400-AE68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 8, 2022; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3436. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the intent to exercise the authorities under section 506(a)(1) of the FAA and 614(a)(1) of the FAA to provide military assistance to Ukraine, including for self-defense and border security operations; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3437. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Notification of the Emergency Third Party Transfer Authorizations from Turkey to Ukraine and from Germany to Ukraine"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3438. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of intent to program fiscal year 2016 and fiscal year 2020 funds to provide support to Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 664. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to review certain legislation in order to identify potential risks of duplication of and overlap with existing Federal programs, offices, and initiatives (Rept. No. 117-94).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BROWN for the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*Sandra L. Thompson, of Maryland, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency for a term of five years.

*Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of four years.

*Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, to be Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of four years.

*Philip Nathan Jefferson, of North Carolina, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of fourteen years from February 1, 2022.

*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.

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. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MORAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE,

Mr. TILLIS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 3846. A bill to reauthorize the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 3847. A bill to prohibit certain anti-competitive mergers, to amend the Clayton Act to permit the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice to reject proposed acquisitions, to implement procedures for retrospective reviews and breaking up anticompetitive consummated acquisitions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

S. 3848. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to fund additional school-based mental health providers to help reduce psychological harm, and assist with the return to adaptive coping in schools following a violent or traumatic crisis, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 3849. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to expand the Magnet Schools Assistance Program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 3850. A bill to increase the number of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Customs and Border Protection officers and support staff and to require reports that identify staffing, infrastructure, and equipment needed to enhance security at ports of entry; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

S. 3851. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to furnish hospital care and medical services to veterans and dependents who were stationed at military installations at which those veterans and dependents were exposed to perfluorooctanoic acid or other perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, to provide for a presumption of service connection for certain veterans who were stationed at military installations at which those veterans were exposed to such substances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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

S. 3852. A bill to reauthorize the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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

S. 3853. A bill to reauthorize the Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 3854. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve certain programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs for home and community based services for veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LUJÁN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 3855. A bill to amend section 7014 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of

1965 to advance toward full Federal funding for impact aid, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 3856. A bill to prohibit the importation of uranium from the Russian Federation; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. ERNST, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. TILLIS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HAGERTY, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 3857. A bill to terminate certain waivers of sanctions with respect to Iran issued in connection with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 3858. A bill to require the publication of opinions issued by the Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. ERNST, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. HAWLEY, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mrs. HYDESMITH, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. COTTON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LEE, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S.J. Res. 41. 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 "Ensuring Access to Equitable, Affordable, Client-Centered, Quality Family Planning Services"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. Res. 548. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on ending the access of Russian financial institutions to specialized financial messaging services; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Ms. ERNST, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. Res. 549. A resolution supporting the transfer of aircraft and air defense systems to the Armed Forces of Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 306

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 306, a bill to provide a

process for granting lawful permanent resident status to aliens from certain countries who meet specified eligibility requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 618

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 618, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify and extend the deduction for charitable contributions for individuals not itemizing deductions.

S. 1116

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1116, a bill to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to create a presumption that a disability or death of a Federal employee in fire protection activities caused by any of certain diseases is the result of the performance of such employees duty, and for other purposes.

S. 1405

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1405, a bill to authorize the imposition of sanctions with respect to significant actions that exacerbate climate change, to reinforce comprehensive efforts to limit global average temperature rise, and for other purposes.

S. 2550

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2550, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide students with disabilities and their families with access to critical information needed to select the right college and succeed once enrolled.

S. 2607

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 2607, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the former hostages of the Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979–1981, highlighting their resilience throughout the unprecedented ordeal that they lived through and the national unity it produced, marking 4 decades since their 444 days in captivity, and recognizing their sacrifice to the United States.

S. 2992

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2992, a bill to provide that certain discriminatory conduct by covered platforms shall be unlawful, and for other purposes.

S. 3360

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr.

LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3360, a bill to reauthorize title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 3522

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3522, a bill to provide enhanced authority for the President to enter into agreements with the Government of Ukraine to lend or lease defense articles to that Government to protect civilian populations in Ukraine from Russian military invasion, and for other purposes.

S. 3526

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3526, a bill to require the imposition of sanctions with respect to the People's Republic of China if the People's Liberation Army initiates a military invasion of Taiwan, and for other purposes.

S. 3546

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3546, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the amendments made to reporting of third party network transactions by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

S. 3726

At the request of Mr. Kaine, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3726, a bill to address research on, and improve access to, supportive services for individuals with long COVID.

S. 3770

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3770, a bill to establish a point of order against legislation that would cause a net increase in outlays unless the Director of the Congressional Budget Office certifies that inflation is below 3 percent.

S. 3771

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) were added as cosponsors of S. 3771, a bill to prohibit United States persons from engaging in transactions with foreign persons that purchase or transact in gold from the Russian Federation.

S. 3778

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3778, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to make premium and cost-sharing subsidies available to low-income Medicare part D beneficiaries who reside in Puerto Rico or another territory of the United States.

S. 3802

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Michigan

(Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3802, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose a windfall profits excise tax on crude oil and to rebate the tax collected back to individual taxpayers, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 546

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 546, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate condemning the Russian Federation, President Vladimir Putin, members of the Russian Security Council, the Russian Armed Forces, and Russian military commanders for committing atrocities, including alleged war crimes, against the people of Ukraine and others.

S. RES. 547

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 547, a resolution recognizing the 201st anniversary of Greek Independence and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 548—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON ENDING THE ACCESS OF RUSSIAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO SPECIALIZED FINANCIAL MESSAGING SERVICES

Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

S. RES. 548

Whereas providers of specialized financial messaging services are a critical link to the international financial system;

Whereas the European Union, Japan, Canada, and other partners of the United States are to be commended for strengthening the multilateral sanctions regime against the Russian Federation;

Whereas, while the expulsion of selected Russian financial institutions from specialized financial messaging services is a first step, that expulsion alone is not sufficient to address the scope and scale at which the Government of the Russian Federation is waging war against Ukraine; and

Whereas, once achieved, the complete loss of access by Russian financial institutions to specialized financial messaging services must be maintained: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate urges the President, in the strongest possible terms, to immediately take all measures necessary to remove all Russian financial institutions from access to specialized financial messaging services, including by working with allies and partners

of the United States to execute that removal multilaterally;

(2) it is the sense of the Senate that the Russian financial institutions covered by paragraph (1) include—

- (A) Sberbank;
- (B) VTB;
- (C) Gazprombank.
- (D) VEB.RF;
- (E) The Russian Direct Investment Fund;
- (F) Credit Bank of Moscow;
- (G) Alfa Bank;
- (H) Rosselkhozbank;
- (I) FC Bank Otkritie;
- (J) Promsvyazbank;
- (K) Sovcombank;
- (L) Transkapitalbank;
- (M) Tinkoff Bank; and
- (N) any financial institution that is owned or controlled by, or is a successor to, a financial institution specified in any of subparagraphs (A) through (M); and

(3) it is the sense of the Senate that any package of sanctions imposed with respect to the Russian Federation is strengthened by working in concert with allies and partners of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 549—SUPPORTING THE TRANSFER OF AIRCRAFT AND AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS TO THE ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Ms. ERNST, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 549

Whereas the people of Ukraine have shown great resolve in combating the blind aggression of the Russian Federation following the further invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022;

Whereas the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation continue to assault the people of Ukraine through indiscriminate aerial attacks;

Whereas the United States Department of Defense has stated that the Russian Federation flies “on average 200 sorties per day” in their campaign against Ukraine;

Whereas Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has continued to request that members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other countries around the globe support the transfer of military aircraft and air defense systems to the Armed Forces of Ukraine in order to protect the people of Ukraine;

Whereas the MiG-29 is the main fixed-wing aircraft in the inventory of the Ukrainian Air Force, and it is critical that the Ukrainian Air Force receive aircraft that mirror the capability and operating standard of the MiG-29;

Whereas additional MiG-29s are essential for the Ukrainian Air Force to remain capable of contesting aircraft of the Russian Federation;

Whereas, on March 5, 2022, it was reported that the Government of Poland would transfer MiG-29s to Ukraine in exchange for aircraft from the United States;

Whereas, on March 6, 2022, Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that the transfer of Polish MiG-29s to Ukraine “gets a green light [and that] we’re talking with our Polish friends right now about what we might be able to do to backfill their needs. . .”;

Whereas, on March 8, 2022, the Government of Poland stated that Poland would “de-

ploy—immediately and free of charge—all of their MiG-29 jets. . . and place them at the disposal of the Government of the United States” and further stated that “other NATO Allies—owners of MiG-29 jets—[should] act in the same vein”;

Whereas, on March 9, 2022, the Pentagon stated that the United States does “not support the transfer of additional fighter aircraft to the Ukrainian Air Force at this time, and therefore have no desire to see them in our custody, either” and further stated that “the transfer of combat aircraft right now could be mistaken, by Mr. Putin and the Russians as an escalatory step”;

Whereas a failure to provide aircraft, such as MiG-29s, and air defense systems to the Armed Forces of Ukraine would embolden the Russian Federation and further endanger the people of Ukraine;

Whereas the Biden Administration should support the transfer of aircraft, such as MiG-29s, and air defense systems, including Stinger missiles and more advanced surface-to-air missile systems, to Ukraine; and

Whereas Congress urges the Biden Administration to meet the air defense needs requested by President Zelensky, including the transfer of aircraft, such as MiG-29s, and other air defense systems: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) encourages the President of the United States to support the transfer of aircraft, such as MiG-29s, and air defense systems to Ukraine;

(2) supports continued efforts by members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other countries around the globe to identify additional aviation and air defense capabilities to transfer to the Armed Forces of Ukraine; and

(3) stands with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and the people of Ukraine in their struggle against Russian aggression.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I have eight 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 BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is au-

thorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 4 p.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 Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 2 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 117-81, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States: The Honorable Madelyn R. Creedon of Virginia and General (Ret.) John E. Hyten of Colorado.

The Chair, on behalf of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 117-81, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology: The Honorable Dov S. Zakheim of Maryland and The Honorable ALEX PADILLA of California.

The Chair, pursuant to Public Law 117-81, on behalf of the Republican Leader, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Commission on Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution Reform: Diem Salmon of Maryland.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94-304, as amended by Public Law 99-7, appoints the following Senators as members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki) during the 117th Congress: The Honorable TIM SCOTT of South Carolina, vice The Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, March 17; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be

deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Nathan nomination; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday'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.

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of Senators, there will be two rollcall votes at 11:45 and one at 1:45.

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 9:29 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 17, 2022, at 10 a.m.