

protecting our schools? Do you support doubling the number of cops in our schools so that our kids are safe? Do you support funding mental health counselors so our kids are safe?

This is an opportunity for every Senator to decide if they support doing something that actually fixes the problem or if they put a higher priority on partisan politics. On the merits, this vote should be 100 to 0. We will see what the vote is in reality.

## MOTION TO TABLE

Mr. President, accordingly, I move to table amendment No. 5100, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) would have voted "Yea."

The result was announced—yeas 39, nays 58, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 241 Leg.]

## YEAS—39

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

## NAYS—58

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

## NOT VOTING—3

Blunt	Cotton	Cramer
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The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

## KEEP KIDS FED ACT OF 2022

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Chair lay before the Senate the message from the House of Representatives to accompany S. 2089; that the motion to concur

in the House amendment to S. 2089 with amendment No. 5133 be considered made and agreed to; the title amendment from the House be considered and agreed to; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all without intervening action or debate.

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

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

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 2089) entitled "An Act to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that grants provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for State veterans' cemeteries do not restrict States from authorizing the interment of certain deceased members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces in such cemeteries, and for other purposes," do pass with amendments.

The motion was agreed to.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues for supporting this effort in this legislation which we have dubbed "Keep Kids Fed," because that is exactly what we are going to be able to do, to help our schools and churches and local providers provide meals for children this summer and help for the school year.

I want to thank my colleague and partner—true partner in this—Senator BOOZMAN for all of his efforts.

We know we are getting back to normal, but we are not there yet, and the folks who run our schools and summer meal programs need extra support through this coming year. And that is what we are doing right now.

So we just passed something fully paid for that will ensure that millions of children don't go hungry this summer and next school year, and I would just finally say this: You know, keeping kids fed is nothing new. We have been doing this on a bipartisan basis since the National School Lunch program was established 76 years ago. So we are just continuing a bipartisan tradition, and I want to thank colleagues for allowing us to be able to move forward on this bill.

And I would now yield to my friend Senator BOOZMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today for just a moment to discuss the Keep Kids Fed Act, which will help schools and summer providers operate as they return to normal, while facing supply chain problems and fighting food costs.

This bill is a result of a bicameral, bipartisan agreement that assists schools and students as they resume regular operations of the meal programs.

The waivers to provide higher reimbursement rates and universal free meals under these programs during COVID are no longer necessary.

However, schools still face unusual times with a 35 to 40 percent increase in food prices due to inflation and supply chain difficulties. This bill provides

targeted and temporary relief for the 2022–2023 school year to help schools with higher food costs and is fully offset.

We all want to ensure that children in this country receive healthful and affordable meals to help them focus on their education.

This bill will help schools provide those meals as they return to normal, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill. And, again, thank you so much, Senator STABENOW, to you and your staff, and to my staff and everyone that has worked so hard to come to an agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, tonight, the Senate is passing bipartisan legislation that will keep America's schoolkids fed for the summer.

A hungry child is a horrible thing to see, and because of the amazing, persistent work of a great team, a great bipartisan team—Senator STABENOW, chairman of the Agriculture Committee and Senator BOOZMAN, ranking member of the Agriculture Committee—that won't happen.

The worst of the pandemic is hopefully behind us, but schools across the country are still suffering from the challenges that COVID created—supply chain issues making it harder to provide students free meals they need to stay healthy over the summer.

It would have been just awful—awful—for the Senate to leave without taking action to make sure we provided the waivers necessary to make sure kids can get the free meals they need over the summer.

Kids deserve to be healthy. They deserve to be well fed. And by extending these nutrition waivers before they expire, we can make sure that no student will have to worry about where they are going to get their lunch during the summer.

There is no justification in the world for letting these waivers come to an end, and the good, persistent, steady hard work of Senators Stabenow and Boozman made sure that didn't happen.

JOSEPH WOODROW HATCHETT  
UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE  
AND FEDERAL BUILDING—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, in order to expedite matters and move on to the vote, I yield my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

S. 2938

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, tomorrow will mark 1 month since the tragic shooting in Uvalde, TX.

A high school dropout with a history of violence and mental health struggles purchased 2 AR-15s within days of turning 18, and he passed a background check.

He then shot his own grandmother because she wanted him to go back into the classroom rather than drop out of school, and then went to the Robb Elementary School through an unlocked door.

He then opened fire on two fourth-grade classrooms, killing 19 students and 2 teachers.

The American people were shocked, outraged, and devastated by this attack and collectively asked: How can we prevent this from happening again?

Well, the discussion surrounding this topic causes emotions to run high, and I understand why.

For too long, some politicians have tried to pit the right to live in a safe community against the constitutional right to keep and bear arms. They make it seem like our country can only have one or the other—either the Second Amendment or safe schools and churches and grocery stores. And, of course, this is a false choice.

Law-abiding gun owners are not the problem. Men and women who buy guns to protect themselves and their family to hunt or engage in sports—they are not a public safety problem.

Following the shooting, I promised to do everything in my power to try to answer that call to do something. I don't believe in doing nothing in the face of what we saw in Uvalde and we have seen in far too many communities. Doing nothing is an abdication of our responsibility as representatives of the American people here in the U.S. Senate.

At the same time, I reiterated my bottom line, which is: I would not support any provisions that infringed on the rights of law-abiding gun owners. Again, they are not the problem.

But I knew that this effort was about the art of the possible; looking at areas where we could agree and setting aside those areas where we could not.

I was fortunate to find partners who were thoughtful and realistic about how we could pass this bill.

I want to thank Senator MURPHY, Senator SINEMA, Senator TILLIS, as well as a larger group of Senators without whom this legislation would not be on the cusp of passage. Thank you. Thank you for not listening to the naysayers and the critics and those who would spew disinformation and outright lies about what we are doing here and for standing up to the responsibility that we all have as U.S. Senators to do our very best to make progress, to try to answer the call in the face of these tragedies, and try, in the end, to save lives, which is what this is all about.

Now, less than 1 month after the shooting in Uvalde, the Senate will vote soon on the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. This legislation will protect our schools, protect our communities, and safeguard the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens.

I have said it before, and I will say it again: No parent should ever fear for

the safety of their child at school, and no child should be afraid to go to school in fear of their safety.

This legislation responds to that in a positive and affirmative way. This bill includes targeted, commonsense measures to prevent violence and to save lives while respecting our Constitution.

(Ms. BALDWIN assumed the Chair.)

Madam President, the dirty little secret is America is experiencing a mental health crisis. Our mental health delivery system is a scandal. Too many people are not getting the sort of attention and care they need in order to manage their mental health challenges. And many of them can be saved from the fate of Salvador Ramos or Adam Lanza if they can get access to timely care and the medication that will help them manage their mental illness. So this bill will represent the single largest investment in community-based mental health care in American history.

That is huge. That is enormously important. And to me it may be the most important aspect of what we do here.

So police officers answering a 9-1-1 call from somebody in a mental health crisis, they don't have to take that person to jail where they won't get help. They can take them to a community-based mental health delivery system—to a clinic. And a person experiencing a mental health crisis, they don't have to go to the emergency room. They can go to a clinic and get the sort of care and help they need in order to manage their condition, whatever it may be.

This bill will also provide support and services for our schools. Our schools should be sanctuary—a sanctuary—for our children, not a place where they plan on what will happen during the next shooting and how they can hide under their desks or try to make their escape. Schools should be a sanctuary. And this bill will provide the kind of services that will help identify students in crisis and help intervene to provide them the assistance they need.

This bill also provides major investments in school safety and security. It includes physical safety measures. We probably can't eliminate human error like we saw in Uvalde, TX, but we can promulgate the best practices, which we have done in this bill, from the best minds based on evidence—what works and what does not—to make sure we keep unauthorized visitors out of the hallways and the classrooms as well as evaluate current protocols and, like I said, develop best practices.

Again, those who say we need to infringe on the rights of law-abiding citizens under the Constitution in order to make good policy are offering a false choice. Passing good public policy and supporting the Constitution are not mutually exclusive.

One of the ways we are providing assistance to the States is through crisis intervention grants which will provide the States with funding to implement programs to help those in crisis and

prevent them from committing self-harm or harm to others.

We have rejected the idea of a national red flag law, even though 19 States and the District of Columbia have chosen to do that themselves, and one of the ways we can help is to make sure that these funds assist State officials in training them on how to make sure that the due process rights of an individual are protected, as they should be.

This legislation also closes a gaping hole in the background check system which is the lack of juvenile records. This is a real challenge because most juvenile records are sealed or expunged. But we know that Salvador Ramos, who went in at 18-years-old and passed a background check—he was a ticking timebomb. Everybody knew he was struggling with his mental health challenges, and he was slowly circling the drain because he didn't get the help that might have prevented his self-harm, not to mention the harm to others.

But if a person's record includes a criminal conviction or mental health adjudication that prohibits them from purchasing a firearm as an adult, it shouldn't matter whether they were 17 or 18 at the time. That information should be available on the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and that is what this bill will encourage. Our bill incentivizes the States to upload this information to ensure that disqualifying criminal convictions or mental health adjudications are available.

Unless a person is convicted of a crime or adjudicated as mentally ill, their Second Amendment rights will not be impacted by this legislation, period.

Let me close by saying, I am grateful to Senator MURPHY, who has been a good-faith partner. He would like to do a lot of things in addition to what we have done here, but he was pragmatic and realistic enough to know that if we were actually going to be successful, we weren't going to be able to do everything that he wanted. Conversely, there were things that we did on our side that were outside of our comfort zone that, frankly, we are having to explain to people, but that is what a good-faith negotiation looks like. And again, I think, on balance, the good we are doing here and the potential we have to save lives is worth any sort of concession we might have had to make during the negotiation.

Let me also express my gratitude to Senator SINEMA, the Senator from Arizona, who has been a key partner in the negotiation as well as Senator TILLIS, the Senator from North Carolina. But the truth is, a lot of people were involved in this. And I want to thank all of our colleagues who helped us round out this legislation and make sure it delivers the benefits that we sought. We also worked with a variety of stakeholders from education to mental health groups, to law enforcement, as

well as gun rights groups. And I appreciate everybody who has helped us make this product better. And obviously we don't agree on a lot of things, but I am encouraged about how much common ground we were able to find.

Our bill has earned the endorsement of more than 100 mental health and education groups, including the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the National Association of School Psychologists. It has received the support of law enforcement organizations, including the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the National District Attorneys Association, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association. It has been backed by domestic violence groups such as the National Network to End Domestic Violence and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

I believe we have in the Gallery tonight people who have suffered unthinkable losses of loved ones in some of these mass shooting incidents. But I want to tell them that their advocacy has turned their pain into something positive. I believe the best antidote for the sort of unthinkable loss that they have suffered is the knowledge that something good will come out of their tragedies, something that will save lives.

This broad support for this legislation shows that it is a meaningful comprehensive response to the tragedies we have experienced. And I am proud of what we have been able to do together. And I am very optimistic about the impact it will have on our schools and communities across the country. So, thank you, colleagues, for working together in good faith in a bipartisan way.

I think in one way we have demonstrated to people that our institutions can work. Many have come to doubt whether we are capable of making our institutions work, including the world's greatest deliberative body, the U.S. Senate. And we have proved that we can, when sufficiently inspired by the people in the Gallery and others, when they say do something to come together and find common ground that will help keep our communities safer, protect our children, and save lives.

I look forward to voting yes and moving this bill one step closer to the President's desk for signature.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I want to thank my colleague and friend from Texas as well as the team that worked with him—Senators MURPHY, TILLIS, SINEMA, and all of us who worked with them. Where he is surely right is that we have shown that democracy works, at least that it can work, when people come together seeking common ground and responding to the overwhelming sense of urgency from the American people about solving a problem. And that democracy

working stands in stark juxtaposition to the tableau on the other side of Congress, the House Commission that is investigating the near-overthrow of that democracy. So for all who are doubting and all who may have doubts in the future, we are providing some reassurance that we can get things done and solve problems.

My mind goes back to watching that Gallery almost 10 years ago in the wake of the Newtown tragedy—the unthinkable murder of 20 beautiful children and 6 brave educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School. And when we failed to take action then on a very modest improving the background check system—we had 55 votes but not enough to reach 60—I will never forget the cry of “Shame, shame” that came from that Gallery.

I remember the Sandy Hook families were in that Gallery, and at least two of them are here today, Mark Barden and Nicole Hockley. And it is not only those families that are in the Gallery, it is the movement that those families, through their immeasurable grief and unthinkable trauma, created in the wake of that unimaginable murder. That movement is here, comprised of survivors and first responders, medical professionals, educators, advocates, and so many others. And today when the U.S. Senate passes the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, we won't hear cries of “Shame,” there will be cries of relief, finally.

I am proud to have been part of the team that negotiated this measure and to have worked with colleagues on the other side of the aisle like Senator CORNYN. This is not the measure I fought for. It is not the measure I would have written if I had been doing it alone, but it marks meaningful progress.

If you wait to get everything in the U.S. Senate, chances are you will get nothing. Progress is better than nothing. This measure will save lives—not all the lives that we want to save, but it will save lives, and I will be proud to vote for it today.

After 30 years, hundreds of thousands of gun deaths after Sandy Hook and dozens of failed legislative proposals, we are finally taking this step forward. The Sandy Hook victims, the Parkland victims, the Uvalde victims, and so many more deserve so much better, and they deserve more, but the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act is that significant step forward that responds to the Nation's sense of urgency to get something done.

One way the legislation will do so that I am particularly proud of is investing in crisis intervention programs. This bill will increase funding for these programs, including red flag laws and programs already in place in 21 jurisdictions like Connecticut, which was the first. These laws will keep firearms out of the hands of individuals who are dangerous to themselves or others. It is separating those guns from people who say they are going to kill

someone or themselves. More than half of all gun deaths are suicides. Red flag laws are practical and proven and they prevent not only suicides but school mass shootings and other violent crimes. Just last week, Connecticut probably saved tens of lives by separating an individual who told his parents that he was having those thoughts again about killing people, and he was separated from a firearm.

I have worked on the red flag issue for years with Senator GRAHAM and with Senator FEINSTEIN in the bipartisan negotiations that led to this bill. We worked collaboratively and closely to develop the funding framework that can support States that already have these laws and States that choose to enact these laws going forward. Implementation is so important, and the resources necessary for implementation are key to making them work effectively. In fact, very arguably, the failure of the New York red flag law to prevent the Buffalo massacre was due to a lack of resources commitment.

To alleviate concerns among some of my Republican colleagues and some gun owners, we reached a bipartisan agreement to include provisions that specify that, for States to be eligible to use funding under red flag programs, those programs have to include minimum due process protections. These protections are consistent with due process safeguards provided in the 21 jurisdictions that already have these laws, and several have already been upheld in the face of constitutional challenges.

The Constitution already applies to these laws. The due process guarantees would apply in any event, but we had no problem spelling it out. That explicit protection in the legislative text is added for reassurance. In so doing, our bipartisan group agreed that all 21 jurisdictions that already have red flag laws will all qualify for funding under this bill. So, too, we agreed that any future jurisdiction that enacts such a law must at least meet the same constitutional due process minimum to be eligible.

I spell out this legislative history because it is important to understand not only the context but also the intention of these provisions. Let no one doubt that States like Connecticut, which already have these laws, will receive funding.

I am also pleased that, among other measures, we have substantially shrunk, even if not eliminated, the boyfriend loophole. We made straw purchasing and trafficking illegal at the Federal level—a measure that I know, as a former U.S. attorney and chief Federal prosecutor in Connecticut, is enormously important. We are investing hundreds of millions of dollars in community violence intervention and in the STOP School Violence Program.

We have been meeting just this week and throughout these past years with community groups and educators and others who want to stop mental health

issues upstream before they create violence downstream. I know how enormously important these measures can be for Connecticut and other States.

Finally, let me say that I have come to the Senate floor too many times—too many times to count—to call on us to honor with action those incredibly strong, brave families from Sandy Hook and from all around the country who have created this movement that we have now. It is a movement that will go on. They are not stopping. Neither should we. We need to continue with the same sense of urgency and purpose—that movement—toward making America even safer.

This bill is a breakthrough that builds a foundation for the future. It opens the door. Hopefully, it will show colleagues who have, perhaps, been reluctant to stand up to the gun lobby in the past and have helped to maintain the vice-like grip of that gun lobby on the Congress that their power is done. They have not only waned in their impact, but their intimidation and threats will no longer hold sway here.

So we are saving lives. It is a proud moment for the U.S. Senate, and I thank all of my colleagues for supporting this breakthrough measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, let me begin by saying that I am proudly pro-Second Amendment. I believe in the God-given right for law-abiding Americans to keep and bear arms. The Second Amendment has given millions of Americans the right to defend their spouses, their families, their children, and their homes.

But if you consider yourself a supporter of the Second Amendment, you absolutely want to do something about Uvalde, to do something about the murders related to domestic violence, to do something about straw purchases, and to do something about teen suicide by gun. You cannot be pro-Second Amendment unless you care deeply about these issues.

That is why we have targeted legislation, the Safer Communities Act, that addresses the specific problems that have led to mass shootings. We do it by restricting the access of someone who should not have a weapon, by providing additional mental health resources, and by hardening schools. This legislation accomplishes these goals without infringing upon a law-abiding citizen's Second Amendment right.

Let me repeat that because there has been confusion in speeches from this floor. There has been the internet exploding. There are rumors afloat that somehow this infringes upon a law-abiding citizen's right to keep and bear arms. That is absolutely false, and if anyone says so, they are misleading the American people. This doesn't do any of that.

What this legislation says is that unless you are adjudicated—now, “adjudicated” is a \$5 word that means you go before a judge, and the judge looks

at the evidence. Under this bill, if a State puts this into law, then they have got to follow due process, which says that the person who may lose his Second Amendment right has the right to an attorney, a higher standard for the evidence that must be presented, and that the person has his day in court.

This was the gold standard that the National Rifle Association always advocated for, as if we were going to take Second Amendment rights from someone who should not have them, and this bill has that gold standard.

I had a couple of townhalls just to find out what folks back in Louisiana were thinking about as to all of this. Frankly, they are talking about inflation and the price at the pump as much as they are talking about this, but I got a message: They think that we can protect Second Amendment rights and do something about a tragedy such as Uvalde. Let me give you some of the comments because it shows you the confusion and it shows you the concerns and it shows you where the American people are.

Chris asked if, when he dies, he can pass his gun to his child if his child is law-abiding.

Absolutely. That is preserved. We don't touch that, and, by golly, Chris should be able to do so.

We were asked by Tyler if this raises the age of the ability to purchase a weapon from 18 to 21.

It does not. It doesn't touch that—although, apparently, Tyler had been told that that was the case.

I was asked by R.J. about keeping guns out of the hands of criminals.

I said: Man, we have got something in there, R.J., that actually addresses that.

I heard from two people who said we should forbid the purchase of so-called assault weapons. Then I heard from one guy who said: Man, I live in a tough section of town, and if somebody invades my house, I don't want it to be a fair fight.

So I have heard all sides of these arguments as to what, but the message I got was that we can address—we can protect—Second Amendment rights but still do something about Uvalde.

Now, it is not just Uvalde. There are other types of gun violence in our society. This bill addresses at least four. There is the domestic violence. There is the suicide by the child. There is the gangster buying a gun and shooting people up. Then there is the rampage shooting. Let's talk about each of those.

When it comes to the domestic violence—when a guy beats up his girlfriend and he comes back with a weapon and shoots her a month later—that happens too much. I have talked to my police chief, Murphy Paul, in Baton Rouge, and he tells me that domestic violence and domestic murder spiked under the pandemic. This bill does something about it.

I asked people who oppose this bill: What about domestic violence, man?

What about that woman who is threatened? Shouldn't we do something for her safety?

This bill does something for her safety and, quite likely, for her children's safety, and it quite likely prevents a suicide by the troubled man who goes there in the first place.

Let's talk about crime, gangsters, straw purchases.

A boyfriend has got a felony and can't buy a weapon. So the girlfriend buys one and slips it to him. It is against the law now, but it happens all the time.

R.J., if you are watching on C-SPAN, man, I am channeling you.

We took the provision R.J. said we should do, and we increased the penalties for that person who buys a weapon merely to pass it to another. They will, hopefully, throw her in prison for as much as 10 years if she contributes to a murder by buying a gun for someone who goes out and commits that murder.

We talk about rampage shootings. Do you know what is much more common? It is the teenager shooting himself. We stop that. Oh, they can still steal a weapon if they want to, but there is \$12 billion in some form or another for mental health services. We do our best to reach that child.

By the way, the rampage shooting is the worst. Then comes suicide. Then comes the addiction. I am a doctor. I have seen this stuff. After the addiction, it just becomes the person who is emotionally troubled.

We are putting in mental health services that can address it all with money for a 9-8-8 line so that if somebody is just like, “Oh, my gosh, I am desperate,” they have somebody to call.

Personally, I would like to have an app. I would like to have an “I am a troubled teenager” app, and “I need somebody to talk to.” They are doing this in Utah, and they tell me that the investment has been tremendous. I think they told me they prevent a suicide a week. That is off the top of my head. Call it a suicide every 2 weeks. That is a powerful intervention. This bill has that capability.

Lastly, there is the information regarding the rampage shooting—Uvalde. Somebody told me: You know, I searched on the internet, and I didn't see that this guy was troubled.

That is precisely the point. This man is troubled, but he is less than 18. Those records are sealed. You can't get to them. So, even though every indication was that this young, troubled man would have had a reason not to be able to purchase a weapon, it is sealed. When he turns 18, he is a clean guy, and he goes out and buys two assault weapons and starts planning his assault.

If you are pro-Second Amendment, by golly, you want to stop that. What this bill does is it allows the court to look into that and say: “Oh, he is clean; that is OK,” or “No, he is troubled, and we need a little extra time to look at this.”

By the way, that is a provision that has been distorted and twisted to imply that law-abiding 18-to-21-year-olds would not be able to purchase a weapon. If you are law-abiding, you can still purchase that weapon if you are 18, but if not or if there is another indication, then the background check has a chance to look at it. If you are pro-Second Amendment, by golly—I will say it one more time—you should applaud that provision.

Now, let's do a couple of other things.

Do you know that, right now, a Mexican cartel can smuggle weapons to Mexico to shoot people up? We make that illegal. You would think it already would be, but it is not. How can somebody be against that, criminalizing cartels for smuggling weapons to Mexico? But, somehow, we are infringing upon the Second Amendment rights of cartels. My gosh, I wish we would do worse to them.

We increase penalties for illegal gun traffickers and criminal-to-criminal gun transfers. We are doing something about criminals, but—have I said it yet?—we preserve the Second Amendment rights for the law-abiding.

Now, I am a gastroenterologist. So I don't know anything about due process except as a term, but in speaking to JOHN CORNYN, who has done a fantastic job, and the other attorneys, I have learned a little bit about due process.

By the way, whenever somebody calls me up and they say they have heard something on the internet, I say: Why don't you read the bill? It is 80 pages. Read the bill. On page 33, you are going to read about due process.

It says that any State red flag law—and we don't encourage those red flag laws, but if the State decides to do one and they want Federal dollars, they now have got to obey these rules. The rules say that it must include, at a minimum, due process rights that prevent any violation or infringement of the Constitution of the United States.

If you are pro-Second Amendment, you should like that. A State can actually have a red flag law right now and not have that in there, but under this bill, by golly, they had better. How can anyone object to that?

The bill also ensures that no State can sidestep due process. It strengthens the citizen's right to due process. It increases the evidentiary bar. It can't be hearsay. It can't be a social worker: Oh, I am a little nervous. It has to be before a judge, and it has to have evidence, and the person losing their right or may be losing their right has to have the ability to have an attorney with them.

Now, no offense to my people on the other side of the aisle, but if a liberal State puts forth a law that has poor due process, they won't get Federal dollars. That should be something we are proud of.

My State doesn't have a red flag law. This bill does not require, mandate, or incentivize that Louisiana develop a

red flag law. But, you know, my State does get money for drug courts, for enforcing restraint orders so the fellow who is not supposed to go near his wife because they are afraid he will beat her up again—the police have more resources in order to prevent that. Who can be against that? That is in this bill.

By the way, our legislation also hardens schools. There is money for the STOP School Violence school safety program, including school resource officers and school hardening. There is additional funding for mental health resources, drug and violence prevention, mentoring, crisis intervention, high-quality training for school personnel on suicide prevention, and human trafficking. How can someone be against that? This is a solution.

By the way, we have a serious problem in mental health. In my career, I have been privileged to work with Senator MURPHY and others on solutions for mental health. There are increased dollars for Medicaid, including telehealth services for schools that might be in a rural area otherwise without a mental professional around. It expands mental health services under Medicaid, school-based mental health services—all expanded. It reauthorizes the Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program. It gives pediatric providers extra training in mental health. I could go on.

Now, there is still a lot of misinformation out there, but I would say, if you don't know what is in the bill, it is online. Pick it up, and read it. But if you are pro-Second Amendment, you should be for this bill.

We can protect Second Amendment rights. We can make an impact on teen suicide, upon domestic abuse, upon straw purchases landing guns in the hands of criminals, and upon rampage shootings, and we could do that while protecting the Second Amendment. That is what I am hearing from the American people. That is what this bill does.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate is considering bipartisan legislation to help protect our kids and our communities from the scourge of gun violence.

This is a critical issue. And it is one we have spent a lot of time on in the Senate Judiciary Committee, which I chair.

We have held nine hearings in our committee in the 117th Congress to discuss ways to address our Nation's gun violence epidemic.

Four of those hearings were held in the Constitution Subcommittee, which is chaired by Senator BLUMENTHAL, and I want to commend him for the subcommittee's focus on important issues like red flag laws, ghost guns, safe storage, and gun violence by domestic abusers.

And we have held five hearings in the full Judiciary Committee, where we have heard testimony from witnesses on how to reduce violence.

I am pleased that the bipartisan bill before us includes a number of measures that witnesses before the Judiciary Committee urged the Senate to adopt.

Last December, the Judiciary Committee held a field hearing in Chicago to discuss the firearms trafficking that floods the city with illicit guns.

We heard testimony from David Brown, superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, who pointed out that 93 percent of murders in Chicago last year were committed by guns.

Superintendent Brown testified that we need strong Federal laws to crack down on gun trafficking and straw purchases, which fuel Chicago's gun violence. And the bill before us today provides those laws.

Straw purchases are not minor offenses. They have devastating consequences. Superintendent Brown talked about Chicago Police Officer Ella French, who was murdered last year with a straw purchased gun. I will never forget the outpouring of grief I saw in the city after we lost Officer French.

The bill before us would crack down on straw purchases that put guns in the hands of criminals and prohibited people. The Senate first voted on this issue in 2013 and fell short, so this step is long overdue.

We also held a hearing in March of last year where we heard testimony from Dr. Selwyn Rogers. He is a trauma surgeon and public health expert from the University of Chicago Medicine.

His emergency room is on the frontlines of the gun violence epidemic, stitching up bullet wounds to save lives. He called upon Congress to do more to help prevent gunshot victims from showing up in his hospital in the first place.

He described the way that trauma and witnessing violence harms the brain and development of a child, making it difficult to regulate emotions, form healthy relationships, and resolve conflicts.

Dr. Rogers implored us to address these emotional scars of trauma that fuel the cycle of violence. And so did Dr. Moira Szilagyi, the president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, who testified before our committee last week.

The bill we are considering today does just that. It provides billions of dollars in grants for school- and community-based mental health programs.

It includes more than \$28 million for a bipartisan program that I passed into law in 2018 with Senator CAPITO, Republican of West Virginia. This program would expand trauma-informed care for students by training more school personnel and bringing in more mental health professionals from the community.

The bill also provides \$40 million to a program I have supported for years, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, which is providing specialized

care to thousands of children in Chicago.

And it will help expand mental health treatment for students by enhancing the ability for schools to use Medicaid coverage for this care.

Helping children cope with traumatic experiences is a vital strategy to prevent and break the cycle of violence. The investments provided in this bill will make a dramatic difference in this effort.

At another of our hearings, which focused on the problem of armed carjackings, we heard testimony from Vaughn Bryant of the organization Metropolitan Family Services in Chicago.

He testified about the importance of community violence intervention, or CVI, programs to help steer those who are at risk of committing gun violence onto a better path.

These CVI programs have shown real promise in Chicago, as another of our hearing witnesses, Roseanna Ander of the University of Chicago, testified. But the programs do not have adequate funding to meet the need.

The bill before us would provide \$250 million over 5 years in Department of Justice grants for CVI programs. That is double the current annual funding for these programs, and it will make a big difference.

We also heard compelling testimony last week at our hearing about the impact of gun violence on children. It is a grim reality that gunfire is now the leading cause of death of American children and teens, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Every day, on average, we lose 12 kids in America to gun homicides, suicides, and accidents. In the year 2020 alone, we lost 4,368 American babies, children, and teens in firearm deaths—an increase of nearly 30 percent over the previous year.

At our hearing, we heard testimony from law enforcement and pediatrician witnesses about how the Senate needs to act to protect our kids. And we also heard moving testimony from 19-year-old Ernest Willingham, who grew up on the West Side of Chicago as the youngest of 11 kids in his family.

He has an incredible story. He is the first in his family to attend college and the first male in his family to graduate high school. He is currently in college in Boston and is well on his way to a career in the healthcare field. Ernest has been surrounded by gun violence his whole life. His father has been shot. His brother has been shot twice. His cousin has been shot. And a few years ago, his best friend was killed by a stray bullet. Ernest talked about the anguish of seeing loved ones around him get shot. And he described his constant fear that he, himself, would be shot too.

At the hearing Ernest called for gun law reforms, but he also talked about the importance of mental health. He urged us to make sure that communities that are hard hit by gun violence

have the counselors and mental health professionals they need to help kids who are traumatized by gun violence.

Ernest, help is on the way. This bill makes dramatic investments—billions of dollars—in mental health treatment and care in schools and in communities.

I was so impressed by this young man's testimony at our hearing and the way he has benefited from "a village" of supporters—family, friends, teachers, and mentors—to build the resilience to rise above trauma in his life to pursue his dreams in the medical field.

For the sake of the kids we have lost to the gun violence, and for the sake of kids like Ernest who shouldn't have to grow up surrounded by this violence, we need to act. The bill before us, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, is a compromise. It doesn't accomplish everything I want when it comes to gun violence, and it has provisions I would like to change or could do without.

It won't end gun violence in America. But it takes important steps toward making our Nation safer. It is a meaningful bipartisan package, negotiated in good faith by Senators from across the political spectrum.

I want to commend those Senators for their hard work, especially Senators MURPHY, CORNYN, SINEMA, and TILLIS.

We have heard so much in the Senate Judiciary Committee about the need to do something to reduce gun violence and about commonsense reforms and investments that would help. It heartens me that a number of those reforms and investments are included in this package, particularly when it comes to cracking down on straw purchases, treating trauma, supporting community violence intervention programs, and investing in mental health and counseling in schools and communities.

This bill doesn't have everything I want. But it is a good, meaningful bipartisan compromise, and I will support it. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I rise today to thank the National Sheriffs' Association for its tireless work on the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. I ask unanimous consent that their letter of support be printed in the RECORD.

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

NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION,  
Alexandria, VA, June 22, 2022.

Hon. CHARLES SCHUMER  
Majority Leader,  
U.S. Senate.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,  
Minority Leader,  
U.S. Senate.

DEAR LEADERS: On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association, representing over 3,000 Sheriffs across this great nation, we write to lend our support to "The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act." The Sheriffs do request that the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy (MIEP) be addressed in a colloquy as the bill

is debated. As you know, the federal law does not differentiate between a convicted inmate and a person incarcerated prior to conviction. This anomaly needs to be corrected.

Sheriffs see, up close, the daily carnage of gun violence carried out by criminals and individuals suffering from mental illness. We appreciate the authors coming together on a bill that can actually save lives, which is written in such a way that allows the States to craft their own unique answers to the questions raised by gun violence.

Important to Sheriffs and their communities:

Supporting better access to mental health services in schools is an important part of early screening for 40 million Medicaid students nationwide. Furthermore, in our discussions we have determined that school property hardening is a critical and necessary step in preventing mass school shootings.

Reviewing juvenile records improves current law and may help detect persons not eligible for firearm purchases while protecting their Constitutional rights.

Allowing flexibility in the administration of the new purpose Byrne JAG grant program will help States, and therefore counties, implement crisis intervention courts which may take many forms such as Veteran courts, drug courts and outpatient treatment.

We also find that the due process provisions for extreme risk protection, "red flag" orders, maintain the 5th and 14th amendments and provide the rights and tools necessary to defend oneself.

There are many other provisions of the legislation that are also important but too numerous to mention here. The Sheriffs are available to discuss this bill with any member of your Caucus/Conference who might have questions. Thank you for your work on this legislation.

Very respectfully,

JONATHAN THOMPSON,  
Executive Director and CEO,  
National Sheriffs' Association.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, 4 weeks ago, I was sitting where you are sitting, presiding over the Senate on a quiet Tuesday afternoon, when news broke that 19 children—all the same age as my youngest son—had been gunned down in their Texas elementary school.

As I scrolled through the early reports of the carnage, all I could think of were these two simple questions: What are we doing? Why are we here?

I sat up there obsessing over our willful decision as a body to ignore the slaughter that has become so regular that the news only seems to pay attention now when over a dozen die. Our collective decision year after year is to do nothing. What is the point of this job that we fought so hard to get if we just decide that saving children's lives is too hard or involves too inconvenient an amount of political risk?

Shooting after shooting, murder after murder, suicide after suicide—for 30 years, Congress stood in its political corners and did nothing. But not this time. Within 2 days of the Uvalde massacre, Senator CORNYN, Senator TILLIS, Senator SINEMA, and I, joined by other Members of this body, had started talking, not about our disagreements—we



have plenty of those—but instead about what could be possible if we sat together and refused to give up until we figured out the set of things that we could agree on—the things that could get 60 votes—to save lives.

I am so grateful in the bottom of my soul to JOHN, to THOM, to KYRSTEN, and the other Senators here who took part in these talks for what they did over these last 4 weeks.

I am grateful to Senator SCHUMER and Senator MCCONNELL for empowering these discussions and allowing us to have this debate this week.

I am equally proud of my team—Allison and Samir, Emily and Rebecca, Pete and Elizabeth—who worked 24/7 for the last 30 days straight to get this bill done.

But mostly I am proud of the regular people all across this country, many of whom were forced to become advocates after this epidemic took from them a son or a daughter, a mother or a father. Those citizens, many of whom are watching this debate right now, who protested or wrote letters or showed up at townhalls year after year, failure after failure, roadblock after roadblock, refusing to give up because the stakes—their children's safety—was so high that they couldn't afford to give up, that is who I am really proud of today, people who would not take no for an answer and knew that the righteousness of their cause had to eventually prevail.

This bill is a compromise. It doesn't do everything I want. But what we are doing will save thousands of lives without violating anyone's Second Amendment rights.

Through more effective red flag laws, by keeping guns away from domestic abusers, by being more careful about giving weapons to 18-year-olds, by getting more people access to treatment for their mental illness, this will become the most significant piece of anti-gun violence legislation Congress has passed in three decades.

As a result, this bill also has the chance to prove to a weary American public that democracy is not so broken that it is unable to rise to the moment when the need for action, like right now, in the wake of Uvalde and Buffalo, is most acute.

What are we doing? Why are we here? We are answering those questions today—not fully but with enough force that anxious moms and dads and kids all across this Nation will wake up tomorrow and be a little more confident that the adults who run this country actually care about their safety, because, you know what, people still believe in us. People still count on us.

Two months after his son was gunned down by a 19-year-old with an assault rifle in Sandy Hook, one of the dads came to Congress and gave this testimony: "Before he died," Neil Heslin told Congress, my son "Jesse and I used to talk about maybe coming to Washington someday. He wanted to go up to the Washington monument. When

we talked about it last year Jesse asked if we could [go] meet the President. Now I could be a little cynical about politicians. But Jesse, he believed in you. He learned about you in school and he believed in you. I want to believe in you, too. I know you can't give me Jesse back. Believe me, if I thought you could, I'd be asking you for that. But I want to believe that you will think about what happened to my son and what I've seen. I want to believe that you'll think about it and then you'll do something about it."

What are we doing? What are we here for if not to do something—something meaningful, something real, something together—to end this carnage.

Jesse believed in us. And, today, more so than at any time since I came to Congress 16 years ago, I believe in us too.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, let me thank Senator MURPHY for his amazing work and that powerful speech. He did a great, great job, as did many others.

Now, tonight, the U.S. Senate is doing something many believed was impossible even a few weeks ago: We are passing the first significant gun safety bill in nearly 30 years.

The gun safety bill we are passing tonight can be described with three adjectives: bipartisan, commonsense, life-saving.

As the author of the Brady bill in 1994—the last legislative effort to fight gun violence in Congress—I am pleased that this moment has finally come and that we are finally taking meaningful action to keep our communities safe. I hope it paves the way for future action on guns in Congress and at all levels of government.

As I said, this is not a cure-all for all the ways gun violence affects our Nation, but it is a long-overdue step in the right direction. Passing this gun safety bill is truly significant, and it is going to save lives. It was so, so significant that we let the process work instead of just having one vote, which would divide us and not accomplish anything. And I hope that portends doing it again on guns and on other issues as well.

I want to thank my colleagues for their incredible work. This was a great moment here on a very, very difficult issue. I want to thank Senators MURPHY and SINEMA; Senators CORNYN and TILLIS, who showed amazing courage; and all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working together to break this logjam. The American people have waited long enough. Let's finally take action to pass this life-saving gun safety bill.

AMENDMENT WITHDRAWN

Now, Madam President, I withdraw amendment No. 5100.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The amendment is withdrawn.

VOTE ON MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. SCHUMER. I know of no further debate on the motion to concur with an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 2938 with amendment No. 5099.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 33, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 242 Leg.]

YEAS—65

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

NAYS—33

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

NOT VOTING—2

Cotton  
Cramer

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Montana.

AMENDMENT NO. 5134

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that amendment No. 5134 to the title be considered and agreed to.

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

The amendment (No. 5134) was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: "An act to make our communities safer."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3967

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, 1 week ago, this body passed Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our

PACT Act. We passed that bill with 84 votes in favor of it, something that rarely happens around here.

This bill was supported by the President; it was supported by the VA Secretary; and it was the No. 1 priority for nearly every major veterans advocacy group in the Nation. In fact, I cannot think of one that this wasn't the No. 1 priority for.

Upon passage, it was transmitted to the House, and they indicated that they would move it within days to the President's desk. Unfortunately, after Senate passage, the bill ran into a procedural hurdle, as bills often do around here, but tonight we have a chance to get back on track. We have a chance to get it to the House without further delay. And I might add, what this bill does is it takes care of a decades-long issue with toxic exposure.

The ranking member, Senator MORAN, and I talked about this bill a week or two ago at length. This bill will help save veterans' lives who have been exposed to toxins and will help support their families after they passed. I would hope my colleagues will keep that in mind as they decide whether this is an appropriate time to play political games, to delay this bill's ability to become law, and obstruct for the sake of obstruction.

Everyone in this body knows that our veterans deserve more than that. They have waited long enough for the care and the benefits that are provided by this bill, and they shouldn't have to wait any longer because it did receive 84 votes in this body a week or so ago.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Secretary of the Senate be authorized to request the House of Representatives to return the papers on H.R. 3967; I further ask that notwithstanding the lack of receipt of the papers, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the Tester resolution that is at the desk to remove the blue-slip provision in the PACT Act; that the resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and let me be clear that the nature of my objection is not about the fact that this legislation authorizes about \$280 billion, I think, for healthcare for veterans that resulted from toxic exposure and it creates new categories of eligibility and it contemplates this and authorizes this \$280 billion of additional spending over 10 years.

What everybody should be aware of is that absent of this legislation, existing statute already obligates the Federal Government, through the VA, to spend about \$400 billion over the next 10 years on veterans' healthcare that results from veterans being exposed to toxic circumstances during their serv-

ice. So there is \$400 billion that preexisted this bill and \$280 billion of new spending.

Now, the \$400 billion that we were already going to spend—and we will spend—is put under the discretionary spending caps in that category of discretionary spending because, as you know, discretionary spending is limited. There is a cap every year on how much can be spent in this discretionary spending category. There is one other category of spending around here, and that is mandatory spending that is not subject to caps. That is just unlimited whatever is required.

The legislation puts the \$280 billion in new spending in the mandatory spending category, and we can argue about whether that is a good idea or not. I don't think it is a great idea, but that is not what really is outrageous about what is going on here. What is really outrageous is in this legislation, they take the \$400 billion that was going to be spent anyway that is already preexisting under existing statute—they take that out of discretionary spending and move it over to mandatory spending.

Why would they do a thing like that? Why would that be necessary to move \$400 billion that is already authorized to be spent under current law and move it out of discretionary and into the mandatory spending? The reason is because that way you create a big gaping hole in the discretionary spending category, which can be filled with another \$400 billion of totally unrelated spending. Who knows on what? That is why it had to be moved out of discretionary and into mandatory spending.

My objection isn't about the substance of this bill. It is about this budgetary gimmick that is designed to allow hundreds of billions of dollars of additional spending on totally unrelated, who-knows-what categories. We have inflation hitting a 40-year high. We have a government that has been spending trillions of dollars, too much money—printing the money to spend—and everybody sees it every day at the pump, at the grocery store, everywhere. And what this gimmick does is it makes it possible to spend yet another \$400 billion.

This is terrible policy. I am going to suggest the modification to the unanimous consent request from my friend—and he is my friend—from Montana. And it is very simple. It says nothing about the \$280 billion in new spending that is permitted under this legislation. It simply would keep the \$400 billion that we were going to spend anyway, keep it right in the category that it has always been in—keep it in the discretionary spending category so that it doesn't create this hole that gets filled with another \$400 billion on who knows what. That is what my amendment does.

My amendment wouldn't reduce spending on veterans' healthcare by a penny. It wouldn't, in any way, impede the ability of veterans to get the

healthcare that they need as a result of toxic exposures. It has nothing to do with that. It is only about preventing huge, excessive spending in other categories—who knows what—that would be permitted under this bill.

Mr. President, therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator modify his request to include my amendment to the Tester resolution; that the amendment be considered and agreed to; that the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modification?

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Reserving the right to object. I don't know where to start.

First of all, this amendment does nothing to fix the blue-slip issue that was the real problem here. That was a de minimis amount of money anyway. Nonetheless, it is a blue-slip issue, and we have to fix it.

I would wholeheartedly disagree with my friend, the Senator from Pennsylvania, in saying that what you are actually doing is stopping benefits from veterans with this amendment. We are a body here in the U.S. Senate. If you want to talk about the appropriations process, we can talk about the appropriations process. But in the process of those debates, you shouldn't be denying healthcare to veterans, which is exactly what the good Senator from Pennsylvania is doing today. For that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original Tester request?

Mr. TOOMEY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 599.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ashish S. Vazirani, of Maryland, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

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