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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. GREENE of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 8, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2023, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JACK VANIER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANN. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of a great Kansan, Jack Vanier, who died at the age of 94 last month, as well as his late wife, Donna.

Jack was born in Salina, where he was raised to love agriculture and the conservative Kansas values of faith, hard work, freedom, integrity, family, and personal responsibility. These are the values that make our State so special, and Jack embodied them. He was an unassuming and humble servant leader with a long list of accomplishments, but he didn't make his life about himself; he made his life about others.

Jack had a larger-than-life personality, but he didn't want the spotlight. He wanted to make a difference in his community, his alma mater K-State, and the lives of the people around him.

Jack was a hero of Kansas agriculture. He painstakingly operated the CK Ranch in Brookville, Kansas, once the largest producer of purebred Hereford cattle in the United States. He brought commonsense leadership to the American Hereford Association, Kansas Livestock Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and Archer-Daniels-Midland.

He was a generous, philanthropic visionary for Kansas State University.

Most importantly, alongside his late wife, Donna, he raised his family on faith.

Jack's wife, Donna, who passed away on May 23, 2020, was larger than life in her own right. Donna was a generous and hardworking philanthropist who always put her family first. She was the driving force behind the Donna L. Vanier Children's Center in Salina, which has now been open for 11 years, and she was a proud K-State supporter who built deep, long-lasting relationships with athletic directors and students alike.

Donna and Jack were servant leaders through and through, and they were recognized together as a couple as the Kansan Humanitarians of the Year in 2018.

What a legacy this great couple leaves behind for their children and grandchildren to emulate and remember them by, and what a blessing for Jack to join his wife, Donna, to rest with our Lord.

To Mary, Marty, John, and their children, and to all of Jack and Donna's family who were blessed by the love of this great couple, my thoughts and prayers are with you all.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MARK FOWLER

Mr. MANN. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of a great Kansan, Mark Fowler, and to mourn his untimely passing at the age of 52 at his home in Manhattan on February 20.

Mark grew up on his family's farm near Emporia, Kansas. He earned a bachelor's degree in Milling Science and Management from Kansas State University, and later returned to complete a master's degree in agricultural economics. He began his career as a flour miller, first for Cargill, and then Seaboard.

In those roles, Mark ran flour mills, which worked on projects in several developing countries, including Ecuador, Guyana, and Haiti, and worked as a technical director of the African Division within Seaboard's Overseas Group in Durban, South Africa.

Mark was the president and CEO of Farmer Direct Foods, a farmer-owned, flour milling company in New Cambria, Kansas, after which he moved into his most recent role at U.S. Wheat, where he originally served as vice president of overseas operations.

Mark once said that he wanted to advance the U.S. wheat export market development mission because, through his work overseas, he experienced the global impact of wheat milling.

Mark's dedicated service helped hungry people all over the world, and he will be sorely missed.

To his colleagues and friends, his widow, Courtney, his daughters Piper and Paige, his mother Ruth Fowler, and his sisters Rhonda and Amy, you are in my thoughts and prayers as you mourn Mark's passing.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ANDY MCCURRY

Mr. MANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of a

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great Kansan, Andrew J. McCurry, who passed away on February 12 at his home in Burrton, Kansas, surrounded by his loving family.

Andy was born in 1950 in Hutchinson, Kansas. After studying animal science and industry at Kansas State University, he and his wife, Mary, started their registered Angus operation Marands Angus, which later became McCurry Angus Ranch.

As third- and fourth-generation Angus breeders, Andy and his family built a legacy all their own while carrying on the traditions of their ancestors.

Andy spent a lifetime pounding posts by hand, making a suitable place for hosting cattle sales, chuckwagon cookouts, livestock judging teams, and visitors from across the U.S. Ultimately, he built a place to raise both his family and world-class Angus cattle by the sweat of his brow.

Andy's gift was the ability to meet people from all walks of life and spend time getting to know them, and his network of friends was nationwide.

Later in life, Andy pursued another career as a pharmacist. He attended the University of Kansas School of Pharmacy, graduated in 1990, after which he worked as a pharmacist in the Hutchinson, Kansas, area for 30 years, retiring on his 70th birthday in 2020.

Because of his career-change experience, Andy was able to come alongside young people and help them find direction in their lives. He encouraged so many.

To Andy's wife, Mary; his son, John; his daughter, Emily; and all his grandchildren, you have my prayers as you gather together to remember Andy's loving impact.

Andy's legacy lives on in so many ways, especially in the cattle his family still produces. I know the first bull sale without Andy will be a tough one, but what a way to honor his legacy by continuing on the tradition he loved so much.

I will be praying for you tomorrow during the sale that your family would have peace, Andy would be honored, and that the bulls would set new records.

REDUCING VETERAN SUICIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. UNDERWOOD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, last month President Biden announced a vision to advance progress on his Unity Agenda in the year ahead. I am encouraged by the agenda's focus on reducing veteran suicide, which has been one of my highest priorities since coming to Congress. I am encouraged by the specific focus on expanding outreach to justice-involved veterans, who may be at even greater risk for suicide.

In recent years, we have seen some signs of progress on this issue. From 2018 to 2020, age- and sex-adjusted veteran suicide rates fell by nearly 10 percent.

However, with nearly 17 veterans still dying by suicide every day—a rate that is more than 50 percent higher than suicides among nonveteran adults—we know that we have much more work to do to save lives.

Part of the administration's agenda is an important focus on increasing lethal means safety, which is an intentional, voluntary practice to reduce suicide risk by limiting access by those in crisis to lethal means, like medication, firearms, and sharp instruments that can be used to inflict self-directed violence.

The data on lethal means safety are clear. People who reduce their access to lethal means during times of heightened risk are reducing their risk of dying by suicide.

Given the robust evidence on the effectiveness of lethal means safety in preventing suicide, the Trump administration implemented a requirement for every clinician at the Veterans Health Administration to complete a lethal means safety training so that they would be prepared to have conversations with the veterans they care for about this lifesaving practice.

Thanks to this requirement, nearly 100 percent of Veterans Health Administration clinicians have completed the Department's lethal means safety training. However, the training remains optional for all other staff, including at the Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, vet centers, and vocational rehabilitation facilities.

This lack of a mandate has consequences. Without a requirement to do so, a mere fraction of 1 percent of VA's nonclinical employees have completed the Department's lethal means safety training. What this means is that every day we have veterans who could be in crisis interacting with VA employees who might be able to identify risk factors and have lifesaving conversations, but these VA staff are not trained to do so, and we could be losing our veterans because of it.

That is unacceptable, and that is why I introduced the Lethal Means Safety Training Act, which would make the Department's evidence-based training a requirement for all VA staff who regularly interact with veterans in their work, as well as community providers and family caregivers.

I will continue my work to get this passed in Congress, but no legislation is needed to expand VA's existing training requirement to other VA employees. Unfortunately, the administration's announcement last month did not include any plans for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use his existing authority to expand the Department's lethal means safety training requirement.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs already has the authority to take this lifesaving action today, and I once again call on him to do so immediately. Every day that VA does not take this simple step is another day that we are leaving valuable tools in our toolbox unused. It is another day that we will lose nearly 17 veterans to suicide.

Not every single death can be prevented with an expanded lethal means safety training requirement, but at no cost to the Department and with no need for additional legislation, there is no reason to further delay on implementing this policy.

The Secretary has an opportunity to help save the lives of our veterans with the stroke of his pen, and I urge him to do so immediately, by expanding the Department's lethal means safety training requirement to all staff who regularly interact with veterans in their work. This step would build on the meaningful actions the Secretary has already taken and other steps announced by the President last month.

SECRETARY BUTTIGIEG SHOULD RESIGN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to demand accountability. Pete Buttigieg has shown he is unfit to lead the Department of Transportation and must resign immediately.

From his first day in office, he has been more focused on diversity training and identity politics than on building and maintaining America's transportation system. He has abandoned his Department's mission of improving safety, technology, and efficiency of our infrastructure in favor of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Case in point: The horrific train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio. Buttigieg took 10 days to acknowledge this incident and 3 weeks to show up and support the community.

As Ohioans fled their homes and worried about their health, the Secretary of Transportation was on TV whining about too many White people in construction industries. His policies have continuously put the wokes before the folks, and we are again seeing the consequences.

After seeing another Norfolk Southern train derail this weekend, I was reminded of the fact that the company wrote to shareholders stating that it is focused on DEI. This administration's focus on DEI is forcing private companies to rethink their goals, and one has to wonder, if Norfolk Southern's DEI policies are directing resources away from the important things, like greasing wheel bearings.

This insanity must stop. Speaking of insanity, it looks like Secretary Buttigieg is spending a lot of taxpayer money flying on private jets, but he doesn't want the American people to know where he is going or why.

I don't know about you, but I seem to recall a recent Health and Human

Services Secretary being forced to resign over this same exact thing.

Anyway, why is the DOT refusing to tell the American people how much Secretary Buttigieg's 23 flights on private jets have cost them?

Maybe the Secretary should just come to Capitol Hill and answer these questions for himself. It would be a cheap trip, and it wouldn't require airfare.

Either way, it is time for him to resign. That will allow him time to promote wokeness and take private jets on his own dime and his own time.

CELEBRATING THE WOMEN OF THE DIVINE NINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the women of the Divine Nine, the historically Black sororities of the National Pan-Hellenic Council.

I am proud to honor the organizations that have produced some of our Nation's best and brightest leaders. For over 100 years, these organizations have fostered and empowered generations of Black women to become leaders in government, business, academia, and so much more.

I am not exaggerating when I say these historically Black sororities have shaped the course of history.

I want to take a moment to salute each sorority.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority—their colors are salmon pink and apple green—was founded in 1908 at Howard University. Their mission: Service to all mankind. Their sisterhood proudly boasts Vice President KAMALA HARRIS; also my colleagues, Congresswomen SHEILA JACKSON LEE, TERRI SEWELL, FREDERICA WILSON, ALMA ADAMS, BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, LAUREN UNDERWOOD, EMILIA SYKES, and LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER.

□ 1015

I salute former Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson and also members of their membership, civil rights leaders Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King, and their honorable president, Danette Anthony Reed.

Next, we have Delta Sigma Theta. Their colors are crimson and cream, founded in 1913 at Howard University. Delta's motto is ''intelligence is the torch of wisdom.''

Delta counts as sisters, my esteemed colleagues YVETTE CLARKE, JOYCE BEATTY, STACEY PLASKETT, LUCY MCBATH, SUMMER LEE, JASMINE CROCKETT, VALERIE FOUSHEE, and our newest Member, JENNIFER MCCLELLAN. I also salute former Congresswoman Val Demings and our HUD Secretary, Marsha Fudge.

Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm was the first African-American woman elected to Congress, and she also was a member of Delta Sigma Theta. Their honorable president is Elsie Cooke-Holmes.

Next, we have Zeta Phi Beta Sorority. Their colors are blue and white. It was founded in 1920 at Howard University. Zeta's founding principles are scholarship, service, sisterhood, and finer womanhood.

My colleague Congresswoman SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE is a member of Zeta Phi Beta, as well as former Congresswoman Donna Edwards and the late Congresswoman Julia Carson. They boast as members Anita Hill and author Zora Neale Hurston. Their honorable president is Stacie NC Grant.

Last but not least, my sorority, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority. We wear the colors of royal blue and gold. We were founded in 1922 at Butler University, just celebrating our 100th year.

My sisters in Sigma are Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, as well as the late Congresswoman Lindy Boggs, and former Congresswoman Corrine Brown. In our membership is the first African-American winner of an Academy Award, Hattie McDaniel, and the first African-American woman journalist to cover the White House, Alice Allison Dunnigan. Our esteemed grand basileus is Rasheeda S. Liberty.

The women of the Divine Nine have driven progress on everything from women's suffrage to civil rights. These organizations were instrumental to the end of the brutal regime of Jim Crow. Alumnae have also made advancements in industry, medicine, entertainment, and more.

In short, the historically Black sororities have been critical to the advancement of Black women in America and have changed history for the better.

Our work is far from done. The strength and solidarity of these organizations is needed now more than ever.

In just the first months of 2023, our country continues to see efforts to turn back the clock on fundamental civil rights. Black people are still not safe in their own communities. Black people have less say in their government, and voting rights are being chipped away. The threat of racist violence is still painfully present in too many communities.

I have so much hope in the new generation of leaders that begin their journey as college students with Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Zeta Phi Beta, or Sigma Gamma Rho. Each year, more young people go out into the world to make our country a better place.

The road ahead is long, but I am confident that our coalitions for justice and equality will only grow because of the continued strength of the women of the Divine Nine along with our five historically Black fraternities.

WESTERN WATER CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Mrs. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LEE of Nevada. Madam Speaker, I rise today to shed light on a critical dilemma in the fight to address the worst drought facing the American West in 12 centuries.

Right now, water managers are doing everything they can to address and respond to the ongoing Western water crisis. At the same time, they cannot always readily access the critical data they need to measure water loss, respond effectively, and keep more water in Lake Mead for Nevadans.

I have said it before, and I will say it again: We can't manage what we cannot measure.

Nevada's plentiful sunshine is one of our State's greatest assets. It makes our State a top destination for outdoor recreation, the solar center of our transition to clean energy. It is also a key driver in evapotranspiration, or ET, water loss in Nevada, throughout the West, and across this country.

The situation at Lake Mead and across the West remains dire. We need to take action now. The future of our water supplies depends on us getting this information into the hands of people who are on the ground tackling this crisis every day.

That is why I am introducing the bipartisan, bicameral Open Access Evapotranspiration Data Act to formally establish a Federal OpenET program and fill the biggest data gap in water management by making critical ET data more accessible.

It will allow everyone access, from water managers and experts like scientists, academics, and advocacy organizations to farmers and ranchers to literally anyone with internet access; it is that accessible.

There is no time to waste in protecting our most precious resource. It is time to start better measuring, managing, and planning to protect Nevada's future.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. LEE of Nevada. Madam Speaker, I rise today on International Women's Day as a woman in Congress who has served not one, not two, but three terms in this House where every single time we have shattered the record for the largest number of women serving in this body.

A woman's place is in this House, and I am honored to serve alongside such strong trailblazers who are setting the stage for the next generation of girls who will undoubtedly continue to shatter this glass ceiling.

We are not there yet. While women make up the largest voting bloc in the United States of America, we are still a minority here in the people's House. That is why I tell every little girl I meet crisscrossing southern Nevada to dream big and run for something.

Just over 100 years ago, we didn't have the right to vote in this country, and that is why so many of the laws and flaws of our system are stacked against us; whether that is equal pay for equal work, affordable childcare, adequate healthcare coverage for

mothers, and equitable access for women of color who continue to face disproportionately high maternal mortality rates, or the right to make our own decisions with our own bodies.

Today marks the first International Women's Day since the Supreme Court obliterated our rights less than a year ago in overturning 50 years of Roe; 50 years of a woman's right to choose.

In States across this country, the right to an abortion is under attack even in cases of rape, incest, and the health of a mother.

In this House there are extreme proposals to set us all backwards with a national ban on abortion. We will not go back, and we will not be intimidated.

I am proud to be from the Battle Born State, home of a majority woman Federal delegation in Congress, home of a majority woman State Supreme Court, and home of the first woman majority State legislature.

That is worth celebrating today. That is the model for this House by, for, and of the people. This is what I hope will inspire the next generation of girls to run, win, and lead our country forward.

SOCIAL SECURITY IS NOT AN UNEARNED HANDOUT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Madam Speaker, in my district, the average per capita income is $32,000 a year. That is six counties from Lincoln County, down the coast of Oregon, to Curry County and the California border.

Over 160,000 seniors in my district rely on Social Security for retirement.

My colleagues across the aisle are approaching Social Security as if it is an unearned handout, and that is beyond offensive. This is not what it was meant to do. This is not what it was meant to be. People have paid into this system for their whole lives. They should be able to get their contributions back. That is the promise of our Social Security program.

Right now, we only tax income up to $160,000 a year to fund Social Security. Millionaires and billionaires who get their income from investments instead of earning a paycheck through hard work are not paying their fair share into Social Security at all, and we must change that system.

By finally requiring that the wealthiest Americans pay into Social Security at the same rate as hardworking nurses and firefighters across this country, we can expand benefits and not cut them.

My bill, the Social Security Expansion Act, which I introduced with Representative JAN SCHAKOWSKY and Senator BERNIE SANDERS, would allow us to increase the Social Security benefits for everyone by $200 a month and help account for the inflation that has impacted many seniors in my district and across this country.

This bill would also extend the solvency of this critical program for the next 75 years.

I am not in Congress to protect billionaires. I am here to make sure those people who have paid into this system for their whole lives, who have worked so hard, including our fishermen, electricians, and schoolteachers can retire with dignity. We can welcome a new generation of the workforce as they retire.

It is our responsibility to make sure that Social Security can be successful into the future, and I am proud to have a bill that helps protect that.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate International Women's Day and to recognize that there are many faiths in this Nation, but in some of our faith the Book of Proverbs talks about the virtuous woman. I would like to emphasize that theme in its broadness.

The virtuousness of women across the land and around the world is to be able to acknowledge the very unique and specific duties and responsibilities and vulnerabilities that women have and to celebrate them in every aspect of life.

Today, in America, women get up and go to work in blue-collar labor jobs for low hourly wages—from waitresses to bus drivers to working in the building trades to being in jobs that barely make ends meet—tough jobs—but giving them a better way of life. They have never refused their assignment. They are the caretakers. They are the loving moms. The little ones grab their legs and look to them for hope and survival.

I pay tribute to those women, the everyday women, ordinary women doing extraordinary things. Thank you to America's women.

Then I take to this podium to honor those women in conflict, the women protecting their children in Ukraine, fighting in the battles in uniform in the Ukrainian military.

I honor those women who fell in battle. I honor those women who fell under the vicious bombing and brutality of Russia's desperate Vladimir Putin in this horrible war with Ukraine.

I honor the women in Sudan. I honor the women from Pakistan to India. I honor the women in Syria and Turkiye in the midst of this horrible earthquake. I honor impoverished women, women who are barely surviving on the continent of Africa and South and Central America. I honor the migrant women who are struggling to give their family a better life.

It is important that I recognize and honor the civil rights fighters. This weekend, we spent time honoring Bloody Sunday that our late colleague John Lewis reminded us of, the moment of fighting for voting rights. We know that Sister Boynton, Coretta Scott King, so many women—Viola Liuzzo—fought in the civil rights movement nonviolently and are no longer here with us by loss of life from natural causes but others who were simply murdered because they believed in civil rights.

I am here to honor those in my own community. It is important to take note of Willie Bell Boone, Beulah Shepard, Etta Crockett, who is fighting for her life, but has been an enormous strength in our community, believing in not only civil rights but the process of voting and empowerment.

I honor my grandmother Olive Jackson; my grandmother Vannie Bennett; my big grandmother Mrs. Sims. I honor—called big mother, of course—my mother, Ivalita Jackson; my Aunt Valrie Bennett, and my other close aunts, Sybil Gooden and Sarah Jackson.

These women molded me and indicated that in spite of the segregated life you lived in, that all things are possible.

□ 1030

It is important today, as we honor the international women suffering, fighting still for their freedom and their dignity, that we honor those who have fallen by way of age or disaster.

We honor those in my own community in Houston. I honor my former women mayors, Kathy Whitmire and Annise Parker, in Houston, Texas, and recognize that women are still striving.

On this day, I make a pronouncement that I want to take a hammer to the scourge of domestic violence with brutality and guns against women. I want to stop the scourge of human trafficking, where young girls and women are the largest victims.

When we come to this podium to talk about International Women's Day, we must come with action and maybe even an iron fist that is, in fact, strong and nonviolent but with a commitment that we will stand for things that will draw us to make life better for these women who are there every single day.

I want to make sure that I pay tribute to those who molded me outside of my home. Thank you to the teachers of America, some going unapplauded, some going unappreciated, some going uncompensated. Thank you to America's teachers. I could not be where I was or am today without public school education. Who was in it? It was our teachers.

Madam Speaker, I say to you: International Women's Day is a day of honor and a day of action.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 32 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. CAMMACK) at noon.

PRAYER

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

Almighty God, to You all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from You no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, that we may approach You today without guile or self-righteousness.

Accept the desires of our hearts, desires for peace in our world, especially in Ukraine, Taiwan, and Myanmar. Grant us wisdom to know how You are calling us to respond to the severity of the humanitarian needs, the atrocity of offenses upon the innocent, the infringement on territorial and ideological integrity.

On this International Women's Day, make us keenly aware of the mothers, daughters, and small girls whose lives are in imminent danger at the hands of the enemy. Hear their voices and amplify them, that we would respond to their cries for freedom and safety.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, observing the wicked and the good. Let not then the secrets of evildoers be hidden from Your watchful eye. But to You may each give account for their iniquity.

We stand before You today with hope for Your mercy and the promise of Your salvation.

In Your sovereign name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. VALADAO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will now entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

EVENTUALLY THE RAIN WILL STOP

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

Mr. VALADAO. Madam Speaker, this week, California is preparing for more atmospheric rivers that are bringing much-needed rain to our State.

This is welcome news to the Central Valley farmers who have suffered through the last 3 years of exceptional drought.

While I am grateful for this rain, and I know my fellow farmers are, as well, we have all seen this situation before. Eventually this rain will stop.

That is why it is critical to capture and store as much of this rain as physically possible so we don't put ourselves in this type of situation with another man-made water shortage again.

Extreme environmentalists and Sacramento bureaucrats have grossly mismanaged our water with complex and contradictory laws and regulations that control how much we are able to pump and what storage projects we are able to move forward with.

While I am grateful for the Governor for his temporary relief that he pushed for a few weeks back, we cannot let this water go to waste. We must maximize what can be moved at all times through the delta and invest in water storage infrastructure and conveyance projects so we can capture and store this critical resource. Thousands of livelihoods and the future of agriculture production in California and countless Americans we feed depend on it.

WELCOMING THE TOWING AND RECOVERY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to welcome the Towing and Recovery Association of America to Washington and thank them for their work.

Tow truck operators from nearly 20 States are attending to advocate on behalf of road safety. I have championed these issues for my entire career in Congress, but through the advocacy of TRAA, I have learned that tow truck operators and all our first responders face harrowing conditions during roadside emergency response. Even one roadside fatality is too many.

That is why I proudly introduced a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''move over'' laws to raise awareness of the need to move over and slow down while passing roadside responders.

Last year, the House adopted this resolution, and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee just voted to advance it again this year. This is not a partisan issue.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to send a message by joining me in support of this resolution. Together we can save lives.

ACKNOWLEDGING WOMEN IN SMALL BUSINESS

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

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today for International Women's Day to acknowledge women in small business from New York's Third Congressional District.

Pam Ocasio from Pam's Jamz—with a z—is a mom with a talent for curating unique homemade jams and marmalades from local ingredients. She is always at the local farmers market in Oyster Bay with a smiling face and a can-do attitude.

Another wonder woman, Angela Carillo, is a mother of two from Bethpage with an associate's degree in medical technology and a bachelor's degree in biology. She put her chemistry skills to the test in her basement studio in 2010 curating beautiful and fabulously scented home soaps. I have seen her work at local craft fairs around the district, and I must say, she certainly gives any major manufacturer a run for their money.

Joey Bowen is a mother of two who built her business as a single mom. Joey lives in Bethpage and hand makes stylish clear handbags. She started in her living room and expanded to an international operation. She now has storefronts around Nassau County and supports the local economy and the workforce.

Cheers to all these women out there and for their extraordinary accomplishments.

IN MEMORY OF JASON ARNO

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, last week the Buffalo Fire Department lost a brother, and western New York lost a hero in the line of duty during a four-alarm fire on Main Street in the city of Buffalo.

Jason Arno was a 3-year member of the Buffalo Fire Department serving at Engine 2, one of the busiest companies in the city.

A son, a brother, a husband, a father, and a friend, Jason was committed to putting his life on the line each day for the community that he loved.

As our city mourns this tragic loss, we are once again reminded of the bravery and the sacrifice it takes as a first responder.

While Jason is laid to rest this Friday, our hearts are heavy. Our thoughts are with the Arno family, the

western New York community, and his brothers and sisters of Buffalo Professional Firefighters Local 282.

The city of good neighbors and a grateful nation are forever indebted to firefighter Jason Arno for his selfless sacrifice.

UKRAINE FREEDOM CRUCIAL

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, last week, The Washington Times featured a thoughtful open letter from Clifford D. May, president of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, to President Biden. He wrote: ''Dear Mr. President, first, kudos to you for going to Kyiv.''

''For the past year, you've been providing the Ukrainians enough weapons to prevent them from losing but not enough . . . to drive out the [Putin] invaders. Why not ask such military experts as retired General Jack Keane what's necessary to get the job done as fast as possible?''

''The moral argument for supporting Ukraine is obvious to most people but you still haven't made clear why its defense is a vital American national interest. . . . The rulers of neoimperialist Russia, Communist China, and Islamic Iran share a goal: the diminishment—if not death—of the United States.''

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years as the global war on terrorism continues moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America.

Congratulations, Ambassador Georgi Panayotov, for the Library of Congress National Bulgaria Day reception.

HARRIET TUBMAN DAY

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, the contributions of women run deep throughout the history of America and the fabric of our entire Nation.

One such woman was Harriet Tubman, who escaped slavery and dedicated her life's mission to ensuring freedom for others.

Building a network of abolitionists, Harriet Tubman organized safe houses throughout the Underground Railroad, including in my district, while making rescues and freeing others who were previously enslaved.

As she put it, there are one of two things that she had a right to—liberty or death.

Madam Speaker, on International Women's Day and 2 days before Harriet Tubman Day, we remember her. When we look at young girls in Afghanistan and we look at young girls in other parts of the world like Iran seeking to have education, we remember Harriet Tubman. When we fight for equal pay for equal work, we remember Harriet Tubman. When we fight and advocate for a woman's right to choose, we remember Harriet Tubman. When we help those mothers that try to seek asylum at the border with their children, Madam Speaker, we remember Harriet Tubman.

Let's remember Harriet Tubman today as we celebrate International Women's Day.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF LEWIS BEAR

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

Mr. GAETZ. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to rise and celebrate the life of one of the greatest Florida men to have ever lived: Lewis Bear.

Lewis was a legend for all times. He was a prolific businessman and an even more prolific philanthropist. Lewis was CEO of Florida's oldest privately held company, the Lewis Bear Company. It was started by his grandfather in 1876. Lewis grew this small family grocery distribution business to one of Florida's largest beer distributors. If you have cracked open a beer in my district, there is a pretty good chance that Lewis moved it.

Lewis' generosity did not stop with libations. Through the Lewis Bear Family Foundation, he donated tens of millions of dollars to local organizations and charities, including hospitals and nonprofits focused on curing childhood cancer. He single-handedly protected the Deepwater Horizon oil spill settlement funds for northwest Florida and saw that the money was used for lasting economic development.

I know that Lewis will be sorely missed by our family and by his family, especially by his wife, Belle, and their three children: Lewis, Cindi, and David.

Northwest Florida will never be the same without Lewis Bear. We are certainly grateful that we had my friend for 82 years.

CONGRESS MUST ADDRESS STUDENT DEBT

(Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today as an educator who spent 10 years as a college instructor and administrator to support the President's student debt relief plan, which is now currently under threat by the Supreme Court.

When I was in the classroom, I saw my students taking out loans to pay for basic needs like rent or food. We tell young people to get an education, to go to college, to work toward your chance at the American Dream, but for so many, that means taking out tens of thousands of dollars in student loans.

Student loan debt also disproportionately impacts low-income students, and millions of students may not have access to financial training or advice.

To this day, I am also paying off my student loans, and I have former students who continue to struggle with student debt years after they have graduated.

Yes, we need to do more to address college affordability and access, but we must address student debt.

If the Supreme Court takes the dangerous, irresponsible step of ending relief to student borrowers, then Congress has a duty to codify the President's debt relief plan and protect these 40 million Americans.

GET OUR FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER

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

Mr. FULCHER. Madam Speaker, not long ago, America was the largest energy producer in the world. Gas was affordable, and groceries weren't worth an entire paycheck. These are not faraway memories from our country's bygone golden era—this was the reality for Americans just a few years ago.

Government spending has increased over $9 trillion since President Biden has taken office. This predictably resulted in the highest inflation in four decades. American families have had to bear the brunt of this crisis, yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle still seem to have no plan to tackle inflation outside of spending more taxpayer money.

House Republicans have been clear about our mission in 2023: set our fiscal house in order so that we can lower the cost of living for Americans. We can find solutions to our debt crisis by working on new budgetary framework focused on fiscal restraint.

Republicans' commitment to America offers tangible solutions to set us on that path—from strengthening our supply chains to enacting progrowth policies.

DELIVERING FOR RHODE ISLAND'S COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY

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

Mr. MAGAZINER. Madam Speaker, last month, I had the opportunity to visit the Port of Galilee in Narragansett, Rhode Island, one of the most productive commercial fishing ports in the entire Northeast. Galilee is home to more than 270 commercial fishing boats, supporting 3,500 jobs and landing more than 16 million pounds of seafood per year.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I am committed to fighting for resources for America's ports and to supporting the commercial fishing industry, which is vital to how we feed our Nation and support our economy.

I am also introducing a bill to secure a voice for the Rhode Island fishing industry in the Mid-Atlantic Fishery

Management Council. I am proud to support and fight in Congress for Rhode Island's fishermen, and I encourage everyone to try the best seafood in America, which is Rhode Island seafood.

HONORING JUDGE FRANCES SECKINGER

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Judge Frances Seckinger, who passed away on March 2. I might also note that it is appropriate on International Women's Day to honor a great judge.

Judge Seckinger served in the judicial system when she was elected as a probate judge in Effingham County in 1977. That election sparked the beginning of a long and fruitful career in public service until her retirement in 2008. It is also important to note that Judge Seckinger's election made her the first female to hold an elected position in the Effingham County Judicial System.

Outside of her public service, Judge Seckinger was a faithful attendee of Springfield United Methodist Church, and she enjoyed hobbies such as crocheting blankets for friends and family. Judge Seckinger's selfless career of community service and her love for family and others should serve as an inspiration for all of us.

My condolences go out to Judge Seckinger's family, and I hope they know how grateful I am for her years of service.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. AGUILAR. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 205

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: Mr. Bishop of Georgia.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES: Mrs. McClellan (to rank immediately after Mr. Davis of North Carolina).

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS: Mr. Schneider.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY: Mrs. McClellan (to rank immediately after Ms. Lee of Pennsylvania).

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, ranked as follows on the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET: Mr. Panetta (to rank immediately after Mr. Doggett).

Mr. AGUILAR (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAKING IN ORDER AT ANY TIME CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 21, SYRIA WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider H. Con. Res. 21 in the House if called up by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs or his designee; that the concurrent resolution be considered as read; that the previous question be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution to adoption without intervening motion except for 1 hour of debate equally divided among and controlled by Representative MCCAUL of Texas, Representative MEEKS of New York, and Representative GAETZ of Florida or their respective designees; and that the provisions of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution, 50 U.S.C. 1546, shall not apply to H. Con. Res. 20.

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 140, PROTECTING SPEECH FROM GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 27, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, CORPS OF ENGINEERS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY; AND S. 619, COVID–19 ORIGIN ACT OF 2023

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 199 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 199

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 140) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit Federal employees from advocating for censorship of viewpoints in their official capacity, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability or their respective designees. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Accountability now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118-1. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 27) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States' ''. All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 3. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 619) to require the Director of National Intelligence to declassify information relating to the origin of COVID–19, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to commit.

SEC. 4. The provisions of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546) shall not apply to a concurrent resolution introduced during the first session of the One Hundred Eighteenth Congress pursuant to

section 5 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1544) with respect to Syria.

SEC. 5. If a veto message is laid before the House on House Joint Resolution 30, then after the message is read and the objections of the President are spread at large upon the Journal, further consideration of the veto message and the joint resolution shall be postponed until the legislative day of March 23, 2023; and on that legislative day, the House shall proceed to the constitutional question of reconsideration and dispose of such question without intervening motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MASSIE

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to amend the pending resolution with an amendment that I have placed at the desk.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike section 4 of the resolution and redesignate the subsequent section accordingly.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution is amended.

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, last night, the Rules Committee met and reported House Resolution 199, providing for consideration of three measures: H.R. 140, H.J. Res. 27, and S. 619.

The rule provides for H.R. 140 to be considered under a structured rule with 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability or their designees.

The rule further provides for consideration of H.J. Res. 27 under a closed rule with 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

□ 1230

Additionally, the rule provides for consideration of S. 619, under closed rule, with 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Select Committee on Intelligence.

Finally, the rule postpones the vote on a potential veto message from the President on H.J. Res. 30 until the legislative day of March 23.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for yielding me time.

I thank our colleagues on the other side of the aisle for working with us on that unanimous consent, which I think is important. It is important for us to have a full debate and a full airing of the use of war powers in the United States.

As James Madison pointed out, it was critically important that we put that power in Congress. We should have this debate. If we are going to have troops in Syria, this body, this House of Representatives, this Congress ought to speak to it; and we shouldn't hide behind a 2001 authorization of the use of military force and not update that authorization of the use of military force.

I am not here to say whether we should or should not be in Syria. I am here to say that Congress should speak to it. We should debate it. We should decide. We should have an actual conversation in this body, on this floor, when we are going to place our men and women in uniform in harm's way. That is the point that we should be considering.

I very much believe that the gentleman from Florida has brought something forward using privileged tools that we have here in the body, and that we should take that under consideration. We should support the resolution the gentleman has brought forward, and if we have concerns, we should then have a debate, a full-throated debate, about the use of military force and our men and women in uniform in Syria.

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

Last night, the Rules Committee met and reported out a rule for three bills.

First, let me just say, this is an awful rule; and I don't want to hear my Republican colleagues talk about fairness or openness ever again. We got lecture after lecture about how they wanted to be more open and more inclusive.

Well, guess what? So far, in this Congress, 22 of the 26 rules have been completely closed. I mean, there are more closed rules in this rule than Democratic amendments made in order.

Speaker McCarthy promised he would open things up, but he has locked things down more than ever.

My colleague from Kentucky (Mr. MASSIE) said that he joined the Rules Committee to be our conscience. So I would ask him, I mean, does he think this is okay?

Madam Speaker, 43 of 44 amendments submitted by Democrats were blocked by his majority; is that right? Is that the openness that we were promised by his Speaker?

The bottom line is the last time Republicans controlled the House they had more closed rules than any other time in the history of our country, and they are on track to beating their own record.

Our first bill today, considered under a closed rule, is S. 619, the COVID–19 Origin Act of 2023.

I think I speak for everyone when I say that we all want to know how COVID started. But I also want to point out, for the RECORD, that Donald Trump was President when COVID started, not Joe Biden.

Donald Trump said: ''China has been working very hard to contain the coronavirus. The United States greatly appreciates their efforts and transparency. It will all work out well.'' Joe Biden didn't say that.

What Joe Biden actually did do is he ordered this investigation, and thanks to his investigation and the work of the intelligence community, we now have a report that gives us some answers.

The gentleman from Kentucky says, Democrats all believe this was a conspiracy theory. Yet, strangely enough, it was a Democratic President who told the intelligence community to look into the origins of COVID. So I am just a bit confused here as to his logic.

I will quickly mention two other bills. H.J. Res 27, also considered under a closed rule, seeks to roll back a majority of the protections on rivers, lakes, and streams that have been implemented since the creation of the Clean Water Act.

I find it particularly ironic that Republicans go to East Palestine, Ohio, saying, we stand with you, we are with you, while here in Congress, they are passing a bill that makes it easier for the company that dumped toxic waste into their rivers to get off scot-free.

Finally, we have H.R. 140, the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act, which does not protect free speech from government interference. In fact, it seeks to expand the First Amendment to include Vladimir Putin and the Chinese Communist Party, while telling America's own Federal law enforcement agencies that they are now forbidden from even notifying social media companies of attempts by Russia and the CCP to spread propaganda.

But there is one more thing I want to bring up today, Madam Speaker, and it is not in this rule, but it is just as important and consequential for our democracy.

On Monday of this week, FOX News aired an offensive, dishonest, shameful representation about what happened on January 6, 2021. For nearly an hour, Tucker Carlson said that January 6 was not, in fact, a violent attack on American democracy. In fact, he said it was not an attack at all.

He called it a peaceful sightseeing day; downplayed what happened; tried to sanitize and gloss over the first responders who were attacked and died; called the people attacking our Capitol Police officers meek; ran interference

for a racist mob that came into these Halls that day to overturn an election.

I am furious because I was here that day. I was literally in this room. I was one of the last ones off the House floor. I sat in the Speaker's chair that day. I saw how close we came to disaster, and I don't need Tucker Carlson or anyone else to tell me what happened that day.

I am not just furious for me; I am furious for the people he lied to. I am furious for the memory of the officers he insulted. I am furious for the police officers who were beaten and injured that day. I am furious for the staff who thought that they were going to die.

January 6 was an attack on our democracy, and now Tucker Carlson has chosen to side with the enemies of democracy.

But what is most alarming about all of this, what is most dangerous, is that he was aided and abetted by Republican Speaker of the House KEVIN MCCARTHY.

I have to say, this is a new low. Speaker MCCARTHY's treacherous decision to coordinate with Tucker Carlson to deliberately distort what happened that day is beyond the pale; and the worst part is the blatant lying.

On November 21, 2020, Carlson said in a private text that lies about voter fraud were shockingly reckless and called the very conspiracy theories he was promoting on the air as insane and absurd to his colleagues.

He called those propagating the big lie dangerous as hell. He knew that claims the election was stolen were dangerous lies.

But instead of owning up to the truth, he went on TV, and with zero respect for his viewers and for the people of this country, zero respect for the truth, zero respect for our democracy, he sold those dangerous lies to the American people. He should be ashamed.

Speaker MCCARTHY's disgraceful decision to help him spread these lies will forever be a stain on this institution.

So my question for the Speaker is: Was it worth it?

Was the backroom deal with the far right to help Tucker Carlson lie about what happened that day worth the damage done to our democracy?

Was it worth insulting the memory of the law enforcement officers who died defending this building and what it symbolizes?

The family of fallen Officer Brian Sicknick doesn't think so. I want to enter their full statement into the RECORD today, but our rules prevent me from doing that. So let me just read a part of it here:

''The Sicknick family is outraged at the ongoing attack on our family by the unscrupulous and outright sleazy so-called news network of FOX News who will do the bidding of Trump or any of his sycophant followers, no matter what damage is done to the families of the fallen, the officers who put their lives on the line, and all who suffered on January 6 due to the lies started by Trump and spread by sleaze-slinging outlets like FOX.''

They go on to say: ''Every time the pain of that day seems to have ebbed a bit, organizations like FOX rip our wounds wide open again and we are frankly sick of it.''

That is what Speaker MCCARTHY is doing here. It is sick. It is indefensible. Frankly, I find it disgusting.

So when the hell will House Republicans stand up here and say this is wrong?

At least some Senate Republicans, to their credit, have actually denounced Carlson's lies.

Senator JOHN KENNEDY said: ''I was here. It was not peaceful. It was an abomination.''

Senator THOM TILLIS says: Tucker's depiction was B.S. He called it indefensible.

Senator MITT ROMNEY says: ''You can't hide the truth by selectively picking a few minutes out of tapes and saying this is what went on. It's so absurd. It's nonsense. It's a very dangerous thing to do. . . . ''

But all we get out of this side of the Capitol is deafening silence; and every moment House Republicans do not come out and condemn these evil lies, more damage is done to the fabric of our democracy because, mark my words, January 6 will happen again if we do not correct the record and tell the truth about what happened that day.

It was an attempt to overthrow the government of the United States, based on lies spread by the former President of the United States. So for the sake of this institution, for the sake of the country, it is time to tell the truth.

For my Republican colleagues, it is time for you to condemn these lies.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this rule and in support of the underlying legislation, H.R. 140, which went through regular order, which was marked up in the Oversight and Reform Committee, where Democrats had copious opportunities to offer amendments and to change the bill, as did Republicans.

H.R. 140 is called the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act, and would prohibit Federal employees from using their official authority to censor a private entity, including outside of normal duty hours or away from an employee's normal duty post.

Under President Biden, administration officials and Federal bureaucrats have abused their positions, authority, and influence to encourage censorship and erode Americans' First Amendment rights.

Recently released reports have uncovered efforts by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Centers for Disease Control, the Department of Homeland Security, and other government agencies to pressure social media companies and internet providers to censor and remove speech posted on social media platforms.

Advocates for this censorship flag certain posts and users as spreading misinformation on various topics, including COVID–19, racial justice, and the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Executives at Facebook and Twitter have admitted that prior to the 2020 Presidential election, after a warning from the FBI, they censored the sharing of news regarding Hunter Biden's laptop leak, which has since been proven true. It was not a Russian disinformation campaign.

Even former White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, during a July 2021 press briefing, called on Facebook to ban specific accounts from its platform.

Congress should recognize that the biggest spreader of misinformation over the last several years, whether it has been about elections or about COVID, has been the Federal Government.

The censorship must stop. Congress must restore constitutional protections enshrined in the First Amendment.

H.R. 140, and the amendments that are pending votes here as well, are critical to ensure that government officials can never again promote censorship and pressure private entities to suppress Americans' First Amendment rights.

Additionally, the rule before us provides for consideration of H.J. Res. 27, a resolution ''providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of Title 5, United States Code, of the rules submitted by the Department of the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense, and the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Revised definition of 'Waters of the United States.' ''

It is Groundhog Day again in America. Every time the administration changes, this rule changes.

The Biden administration's new rule would radically redefine the term ''Waters of the United States'' to expand the Federal Government's authority in regulating bodies of water.

Specifically, Biden's EPA would expand the term to include impoundments of jurisdictional waters, tributaries, adjacent wetlands, and additional waters.

□ 1245

To be clear, what the Biden administration is pushing through here will heap serious burdens on farmers, small businesses, homebuilders, and rural communities across our country.

In 1972, Congress didn't tell the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers: Do whatever you think is necessary to protect water. That is not what the bill said. Yet, that is what they have taken as their directive.

The Clean Water Act was never intended to be applied as broadly as the

Biden administration is proposing. Every Member of Congress should be concerned about the EPA's attempt to expand its authority over individuals' private property and regulate farms and communities, even those which lie far away from any lakes, rivers, or streams and very far away from Washington, D.C.

Congress has the constitutional authority and responsibility to provide oversight and to review regulations issued by the executive branch. If the executive branch promulgates rules that could overstep their authority, as President Biden is doing here, it is vital that we exercise our oversight authority in Congress.

Finally, the rule before us provides for consideration of S. 619, the COVID–19 Origin Act of 2023, which would finally declassify any information relating to potential links between the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the origin of COVID–19.

In 2020, at the height of the pandemic, anyone who spoke out questioning whether COVID–19 might have come from the Wuhan lab in China was denounced as a conspiracy theorist, and their words were labeled as ''dangerous misinformation.'' People were censored online, their accounts were suspended, and their reputations were damaged for questioning the origins of COVID–19.

What is the difference between COVID–19 conspiracy theory and the truth? About 2 years. We have seen them called natural immunity conspiracy theories. We have seen people who said masks don't work called conspiracy theorists. Now, we are finding out that all of those conspiracy theories, so-called, were accurate.

Fast-forward to today. Even the government admits it. The Department of Energy and the FBI have both publicly reported their conclusions that COVID–19 likely emerged as a result of a lab leak from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, a research institute in Wuhan, China, controlled by the People's Republic of China and, ultimately, the Chinese Communist Party.

Was it funded in part by our government? Yes, it was.

This legislation is long overdue and is necessary to expose the truth about the origins of COVID–19. Americans deserve to see the information. President Biden could have released this information at any point. It could have been released a year ago. It could be released today without this resolution. But this resolution is important because the President has not released this information. The last Congress, led by Speaker PELOSI, could have voted to do what we are doing here today. But no, they wanted it to remain hidden from the American public. I fear the Federal Government has been involved in a coverup about the origins of COVID–19 because they are afraid of being exposed as culpable in the creation of the disease at the center of the pandemic.

To my colleague's point about the videos that were released on Monday, I think the other side of the aisle is out of touch and out of step with the American public on this.

A recent poll by Rasmussen showed that 81 percent of likely voters believe that all of the tapes should be released. The Democrats had 2 years to release these tapes. But 81 percent of voters believe that.

Is that just Republicans? No.

Madam Speaker, 86 percent of Republicans and 78 percent of Democrats—they are out of step with their own party—believe that these videotapes should be released because Americans deserve to know the truth and the defendants in these trials deserve to have the evidence they need to present their defense.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert into the RECORD a USA Today piece titled: ''Fact check: COVID–19 vaccines primarily designed to prevent serious illness, death.''

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

There was no objection.

[From USA TODAY, Jan. 21, 2022]

FACT CHECK: COVID–19 VACCINES PRIMARILY DESIGNED TO PREVENT SERIOUS ILLNESS, DEATH

(By Valerie Paviionis)

As the omicron variant surges across the world and the United States logs case numbers near and over 1 million per day, the virus is prompting scientists to develop new treatments and government officials to fight to curb the spread.

While the Biden administration continues to urge Americans to get vaccinated, a Jan. 10 Facebook post claims that Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said vaccines can't prevent COVID–19 transmission. Other sites have shared the same claim, linking Walensky's words back to an interview with CNN in August 2021.

''Qur vaccines are working exceptionally well,'' Walensky said to CNN's Wolf Blitzer in the interview. ''They continue to work well for delta, with regard to severe illness and death—they prevent it. But what they can't do anymore is prevent transmission.''

Though Walensky did say these words on CNN, the original interview was aired in early August, not recently. And while it's true vaccines can't entirely halt transmission, experts say they do reduce it—and reduce the chances of hospitalization and death—as USA TODAY previously reported.

USA TODAY reached out to the original poster of the claim for comment.

Various websites have written about the same claim, amassing thousands of interactions on Facebook.

VACCINE EFFECTS DEPEND ON SEVERAL FACTORS

In an email, Walensky spokesperson Kathleen Conley wrote that in August 2021—when the interview originally ran—the delta variant was the dominant variant in the United States.

Experts at that time said it was clear the vaccines provided protection.

''Vaccines provide significant protection from 'getting it'—infection—and 'spreading it'—transmission—even against the delta variant,'', a professor of immunobiology and molecular, cellular and developmental biology at Yale University, told USA TODAY in November.

However, Conley noted data did show vaccines were ''less effective at preventing infections and transmission with Delta than with previous other variants.'' Omicron has proven even more difficult to contain.

While mRNA vaccines—produced by Pfizer and Modema—continue to offer some level of protection against transmission of omicron, other vaccines—such as Johnson & Johnson, Sinopharm and AstraZeneca—offer ''almost no defense,'' according to a Dec. 19, 2021, report by the New York Times.

Other factors beyond variant type, vaccination type and booster status can also influence whether or not a person contracts COVID–19.

Dr. David Dowdy, associate professor of epidemiology at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, said it's difficult to succinctly explain the vaccines' nuanced effects on transmission.

A vaccine might protect you from a passing interaction with someone at a grocery store, but it may not prevent infection from someone you live with and share air with for several hours a day.

''It gets very easy to misconstrue,'' Dowdy said. ''If someone asks, do vaccines prevent infection, and you have to give a yes or no answer, then the answer is no, they're not a perfect blockade. But do the vaccines offer some protection against infection? The answer is yes.''

VACCINES STILL PROTECT AGAINST SERIOUS DISEASE

While vaccinations don't offer perfect protection against the transmission of COVID–19, experts still urge people to get vaccinated.

According to Conley, COVID–19 vaccination remains effective against hospitalization and death caused by the virus. Getting a booster, she added, further decreases these risks, and the CDC continues to recommend that Americans receive vaccines and boosters.

Dr. Chris Beyrer, professor of public health and human rights at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, said both the mRNA and J&J vaccines were never designed to prevent infection entirely.

It's ''very hard'', he said, to prevent infection via an injected vaccine when you're dealing with a virus that enters the body through the nose and mouth. Instead, the vaccine trials were designed to study reduction in serious illness, hospitalization and death. All three vaccines were highly effective by this measure, Beyrer said.

''People who say, well, why would I take it if it doesn't prevent me from getting infected?'' Beyrer said. ''You have to remember that having a COVID–19 infection can be everything from completely asymptomatic . . . to a head-cold-like symptoms or full flu-like symptoms, all the way to death. So what the vaccines are doing is really dramatically increasing the likelihood that you will have mild infection. And that's incredibly important.''

A CDC study released Jan. 21 showed booster shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines were 90 percent effective at preventing hospitalizations from the omicron variant.

OUR RATING: MISSING CONTEXT

Because it can be misleding without additional information, we rate MISSING CONTEXT the claim that the CDC director says vaccines can't prevent transmission of

COVID–19. While vaccines do not offer 100 protection against COVID–19 infection, they can still partially defend against infection. Vaccines remain effective at protecting from COVID–19-caused serious illness, hospitalization and death.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert into the RECORD an AP News article titled: ''Ex-Twitter execs deny pressure to block Hunter Biden story.''

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

There was no objection.

[From the AP News, Feb. 8, 2023]

EX-TWITTER EXECS DENY PRESSURE TO BLOCK HUNTER BIDEN STORY

(By Farnoush Amiri and Barbara Ortutay)

WASHINGTON (AP).—House Republicans are expected to question former Twitter executives about the platform's handling of reporting on Hunter Biden, the president's son, fulfilling a party promise to investigate what they have long asserted is anti-conservative bias at social media companies.

Three former executives will be appearing Wednesday before the House Oversight and Accountability Committee to testify for the first time about the company's decision in the weeks before the 2020 election to initially block from Twitter a New York Post article about the contents of a laptop belonging to Hunter Biden.

The witnesses Republicans subpoenaed to testify are Vijaya Gadde, Twitter's former chief legal officer; James Baker, the company's former deputy general counsel; and Yoel Roth, former head of safety and integrity.

Democrats have a witness of their own, Anika Collier Navaroli, a former employee with Twitter's content moderation team. She testified last year to the House committee that investigated the Capitol riot about Twitter's preferential treatment of Donald Trump until the then-president was banned from Twitter two years ago.

The hearing is the GOP's opening act into what lawmakers promise will be a widespread investigation into President Joe Biden and his family, with the tech companies another prominent target of their oversight efforts.

''Americans deserve answers about this attack on the First Amendment and why Big Tech and the Swamp colluded to censor this information about the Biden family selling access for profit,'' Rep. James Comer of Kentucky, the committee chairman, said in a statement announcing the hearing.

The New York Post first reported in October 2020, weeks before the presidential election, that it had received from Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, a copy of a hard drive from a laptop that Hunter Biden had dropped off 18 months earlier at a Delaware computer repair shop and never retrieved. Twitter blocked people from sharing links to the story for several days.

Months later, Twitter's then-CEO, Jack Dorsey, called the company's communications around the Post article ''not great.'' He added that blocking the article's URL with ''zero context'' around why it was blocked was ''unacceptable.''

The newspaper story was greeted at the time with skepticism due to questions about the laptop's origins, including Giuliani's involvement, and because top officials in the Trump administration had already warned that Russia was working to denigrate Joe Biden before the White House election.

The Kremlin had interfered in the 2016 race by hacking Democratic emails that were subsequently leaked, and fears that Russia would meddle again in the 2020 race were widespread across Washington.

Just last week, lawyers for the younger Biden asked the Justice Department to investigate people who say they accessed his personal data. But they did not acknowledge that that data came from a laptop that Hunter Biden is purported to have dropped off at a computer repair shop.

The issue was also reignited recently after Elon Musk took over Twitter as CEO and began to release a slew of company information to independent journalists, what he has called the ''Twitter Files.''

The documents and data largely show internal debates among employees over the decision to temporarily censor the story about Hunter Biden. The tweet threads lacked substantial evidence of a targeted influence campaign from Democrats or the FBI, which has denied any involvement in Twitter's decision-making.

Nonetheless, Comer and other Republicans have used the Post story, which has not been independently verified by The Associated Press, as the basis for what they say is another example of the Biden family's ''influence peddling.''

One of the witnesses on Wednesday, Baker, is expected to be the target of even more Republican scrutiny.

Baker was the FBI's general counsel during the opening of two of the bureau's most consequential investigations in history: the Hillary Clinton investigation and a separate inquiry into potential coordination between Russia and Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. Republicans have long criticized the FBI's handling of both investigations.

For Democrats, Navaroli is expected to counter the GOP argument by testifying about how Twitter allowed Trump's tweets despite the misinformation they sometimes contained.

Navaroli testified to the Jan. 6 committee last year that Twitter executives often tolerated Trump's posts despite them including false statements and violations of the company's own rules because executives knew the platform was his ''favorite and most-used . . . and enjoyed having that sort of power.''

The Jan. 6 committee used Navaroli's testimony in one of its public hearings last summer but did not identify her by name.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, Twitter itself is saying the government isn't telling them to suppress anything. This is yet, unfortunately, just another Republican conspiracy theory.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert into the RECORD an article from The Hill titled: ''Trump officials roll back Obama oil train safety rule.''

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

There was no objection.

[From The Hill, Sept. 24, 2018]

TRUMP OFFICIALS ROLL BACK OBAMA OIL TRAIN SAFETY RULE

(By Timothy Cama)

The Trump administration on Monday repealed a mandate that would have required trains carrying crude oil to use special brakes with new technology.

The Department of Transportation's Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) said it undertook a congressionally mandated analysis of the provision in a 2015 regulation under which oil trains would have had to use electronically controlled pneumatic (ECP) brakes.

''The Department [of Transportation] determined that the expected benefits, including safety benefits, of implementing ECP brake system requirements do not exceed the associated costs of equipping tank cars with ECP brake systems, and therefore are not economically justified,'' PHMSA said.

The mandate to phase out traditional air brakes for crude oil use was part of a comprehensive rule that the Obama administration wrote in 2015 to try to improve the safety of crude oil trains.

Transporting crude oil by rail has increased dramatically in recent years due to a boost in domestic and Canadian oil production. But with the increased traffic have come major crashes and explosions, like one in 2013 in Lac-Megantic, Quebec, that killed 47, one in 2013 in North Dakota and one in Oregon in 2016.

The rule was mainly meant to implement a new design for tank cars that carry crude, with new requirements for metal thickness and fire protection. The brake mandate and speed limits were also in the new regulation.

The brake requirement was a top target for the railroad and oil industries in pushing back against parts of the 2015 rule.

Congress, in the bipartisan Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act of 2016, told the PHMSA to conduct a new cost-benefit analysis of the brake provision. If the costs outweighed the benefits, the PHMSA was required to repeal it.

''Despite the additional testing and modeling, we still believe that there is insufficient data demonstrating that ECP braking systems provide a demonstrable increase in safety over other more widely used braking systems,'' the American Petroleum Institute told the PHMSA after it proposed Monday's action in December.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, on February 3, 2023, a train with 38 cars derailed in East Palestine, Ohio, and the full devastating aftermath of that tragedy is ongoing. The affected community needs answers and change to make sure that something like this does not happen again.

The Trump administration rolled back train safety rules. Now, Republicans want to make it easier for polluters to pollute. They put a chemical industry lobbyist in charge of the EPA office in charge of chemical safety. I mean, you can't make this stuff up. They rolled back regulations on train brakes, and they reduced rail inspections.

I just want to say one thing to my colleague from Kentucky. I have no problem with releasing all the tapes, but that is not what happened. The Speaker of the House selectively and carefully released them to one person, to one news agency, who then deliberately cherrypicked things to advance a distortion of what happened that day, an insult to the people who work here, an insult to the Capitol Police officers who were injured that day. That is not transparency. That is propaganda. That is deliberately distorting a horrific event in which this Capitol was attacked, our democracy was attacked. So, please, give me a break.

Madam Speaker, I urge that we defeat the previous question, and if we do, I will offer an amendment to the rule to provide for consideration of a resolution that affirms the House's unwavering commitment to protect and

strengthen Social Security and Medicare and states that it is the position of the House to reject any cuts in the program.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment into the RECORD along with any extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, Social Security and Medicare are the bedrocks of our Nation's social safety net. Yet, as my Republican colleagues demand reckless cuts in exchange for paying our Nation's bills, these programs are under threat.

Despite recent rhetoric to the contrary, Republicans claim that they won't cut Social Security and Medicare benefits. Well, Madam Speaker, today, Democrats are yet again giving Republicans another chance to back up that claim with action by providing them a chance to reassure the American people not just with their words, but with their votes. Today, they can vote unequivocally that they will not cut these vital programs. Anything short of that is an empty promise.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alaska (Mrs. PELTOLA), to discuss our proposal.

Mrs. PELTOLA. Madam Speaker, with enactment of the Social Security Act in 1935, this country promised Americans that if they worked hard and contributed to the program to support others, when they retire or become disabled or lose a spouse, they will be taken care of, too.

Social Security helps us provide for retirees but also disabled workers, widows and widowers, spouses, and children.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt claimed that Social Security would ''promote the common welfare and the economic stability of the Nation,'' and it has.

Social Security has kept millions of seniors out of poverty and continues to do so. Today, Social Security provides monthly checks to more than 65 million beneficiaries who rely on it for food and other necessities.

For over 85 years now, trusting in the promise of Social Security, millions of Americans have worked hard, paying into the program out of every single paycheck for decades.

In 2019, Social Security had helped 31,146 Alaskans stay out of poverty. A report from a few years ago found that without Social Security the elderly poverty rate in Alaska would have increased from 7.6 percent to 28 percent. As of 2021, over 110,000 Alaskans were receiving monthly Social Security benefits, including 84,796 who are 65 and older. In total, that is over 13 percent of Alaskan residents.

I was raised, as I think many others were, with the value of treating elders with great deference and respect, to care for them as they have cared for us. I can think of no better way to do that than to ensure that they have a safe and secure retirement. Simply, this program reflects our values. All Americans deserve to retire with dignity.

We must support our senior citizens by strengthening Social Security and not slashing it. We need to protect and expand Social Security.

Despite the many demonstrated successes of the Social Security program, there have been no benefit increases to the program in over 50 years. I hear from many Alaskans back home who are scared that they will not receive the Social Security benefits they have worked so hard for all their lives.

Alaskans worry that the checks they depend on will suddenly disappear, and they have no plan B. They count on receiving this earned benefit that they rely on to pay for essentials like heating. My own monthly heating bill in my hometown of Bethel, Alaska, is over $1,000 a month, and my understanding is that is a low bill.

People do not deserve to live with this kind of uncertainty and insecurity. That is why safeguarding and reforming Social Security must be a priority for this Congress.

Social Security was a solemn promise made to Americans by its government in full faith and credit. I commit to protecting this promise for Alaska and all Americans and implore my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LANGWORTHY).

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the rule, which provides consideration for three important pieces of legislation to restore trust and certainty for millions of Americans.

Specifically, I will highlight H.J. Res. 27, which would provide for congressional disapproval of the Biden administration's overreaching new Waters of the United States, or WOTUS, rule that threatens the livelihoods and survival of our Nation's farmers and rural communities.

The Biden EPA's new reinterpretation of WOTUS is a complete rejection of the Clean Water Act's decades-long, broadly accepted jurisdiction. The new rule gives the Federal Government sweeping authority over private lands and unleashes the Federal regulatory machine on private property owners, over bodies of water as small as ditches, low spots, and ephemeral drainages. And God forbid, if a farmer is perceived to have violated the EPA's vague new WOTUS regulatory framework, they could find themselves tangled in years of expensive litigation and red tape threatening their very survival as an operation.

Now, my district in western New York, in the Southern Tier, has over 800 dairy operations. These are generational farms with deep roots in our surrounding communities. My farmers, as in the case with farmers across this country, are deeply worried about how the Biden EPA's new WOTUS rule will impact the long-term survival of their operations.

Our farmers should be focused on production and growing and maintaining their operations, not hiring outside, expensive consultants to help them navigate a maze of new burdensome government regulations. They shouldn't be worried about whether farming a certain part of their land will lead to thousands, hundreds of thousands, or even millions of dollars in penalties, enough to put these family farms out of business. But under the Biden administration, sadly, this is just considered the cost of doing business.

Now, some might say I am speaking in hyperbole. But we have seen this play out before in 2015. We saw what an overly broad interpretation of WOTUS meant to our farmers, many of whom suffered devastating fines from an overzealous Obama-era EPA for having the audacity to manage and farm their own private lands.

So the question before us with this resolution isn't how to best regulate a pond versus a stream or a low spot. It isn't how far we should turn the dial up on regulation, forward or backward, so as to not inflict too much pain on rural America. It is a question of whether we stand for the long-term survival of American agriculture and domestic food security or whether we are willing to regulate the American farmer out of business and out of existence.

Congress has a duty to review and oppose this radical interpretation of WOTUS. I strongly support the rule, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Madam Speaker, I don't want to be lectured about farms and our farmers. I represent a district with thousands of farms in it.

The bottom line is my farmers care about things like clean water. They care about the environment because they know that contaminated water can contaminate the food supply, among other things. My farmers are worried about climate change and the impact it is having on their ability to grow crops.

I don't want to be lectured about farms or what farmers want. I don't know of any farmer who wants to create a situation where polluters are basically not held accountable for the pollution they cause.

Think about what happened in East Palestine, Ohio. Is it the position of the Republicans that the railroad should not be required to pay for the damage that they have done, that the community should assume those costs, or the Federal Government? I don't know who should pay for it. The farmers should pay for that? Come on.

We can hear a lot about, ''This does X, Y, and Z,'' when we know it is an exaggeration.

Putting that aside, I will say for the record that I represent a lot of farmers. I talk to my farmers all the time. I do farm tours every single year. What they talk to me about is making sure that we have a clean environment, that they have access to clean water, and that we actually start paying attention to climate change, which is destroying their ability to be profitable and to be able to thrive.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD an article in the New York Post titled: ''10 myths told by COVID experts—and now debunked,'' by Marty Makary, a professor at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

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

There was no objection.

[From the New York Post, Feb. 27, 2023]

10 MYTHS TOLD BY COVID EXPERTS—AND NOW DEBUNKED

(By Marty Makary)

In the past few weeks, a series of analyses published by highly respected researchers have exposed a truth about public health officials during COVID:

Much of the time, they were wrong.

To be clear, public health officials were not wrong for making recommendations based on what was known at the time.

That's understandable. You go with the data you have.

No, they were wrong because they refused to change their directives in the face of new evidence.

When a study did not support their policies, they dismissed it and censored opposing opinions.

At the same time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention weaponized research itself by putting out its own flawed studies in its own non-peer-reviewed medical journal, MMWR.

In the final analysis, public health officials actively propagated misinformation that ruined lives and forever damaged public trust in the medical profession.

Here are 10 ways they misled Americans:

MISINFORMATION #1: NATURAL IMMUNITY OFFERS LITTLE PROTECTION COMPARED TO VACCINATED IMMUNITY

A Lancet study looked at 65 major studies in 19 countries on natural immunity. The researchers concluded that natural immunity was at least as effective as the primary COVID vaccine series.

Public health officials downplayed concerns about vaccine-induced myocarditis—or inflammation of the heart muscle.

In fact, the scientific data was there all along—from 160 studies, despite the findings of these studies violating Facebook's ''misinformation'' policy.

Since the Athenian plague of 430 BC, it has been observed that those who recovered after infection were protected against severe disease if reinfected.

That was also the observation of nearly every practicing physician during the first 18 months of the COVID pandemic.

Most Americans who were fired for not having the COVID vaccine already had antibodies that effectively neutralized the virus, but they were antibodies that the government did not recognize.

MISINFORMATION #2: MASKS PREVENT COVID TRANSMISSION

Cochran Reviews are considered the most authoritative and independent assessment of the evidence in medicine.

And one published last month by a highly respected Oxford research team found that masks had no significant impact on COVID transmission.

When asked about this definitive review, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky downplayed it, arguing that it was flawed because it focused on randomized controlled studies.

A study recently found that masks didn't have much of an effect on preventing COVID–19 transmission.

But that was the greatest strength of the review. Randomized studies are considered the gold standard of medical evidence.

If all the energy used by public health officials to mask toddlers could have been channeled to reduce child obesity by encouraging outdoor activities, we would be better off.

MISINFORMATION #3: SCHOOL CLOSURES REDUCE COVID TRANSMISSION

The CDC ignored the European experience of keeping schools open, most without mask mandates.

Transmission rates were no different, evidenced by studies conducted in Spain and Sweden.

MISINFORMATION #4: MYOCARDITIS FROM THE VACCINE IS LESS COMMON THAN FROM THE INFECTION

Public health officials downplayed concerns about vaccine-induced myocarditis—or inflammation of the heart muscle.

They cited poorly designed studies that under-captured complication rates. A flurry of well-designed studies said the opposite.

We now know that myocarditis is six to 28 times more common after the COVID vaccine than after the infection among 16- to 24-year-old males.

Tens of thousands of children likely got myocarditis, mostly subclinical, from a COVID vaccine they did not need because they were entirely healthy or because they already had COVID.

MISINFORMATION #5: YOUNG PEOPLE BENEFIT FROM A VACCINE BOOSTER

Boosters reduced hospitalizations in older, high-risk Americans.

But the evidence was never there that they lower COVID mortality in young, healthy people.

That's probably why the CDC chose not to publish its data on hospitalization rates among boosted Americans under 50, when it published the same rates for those over 50.

Ultimately, White House pressure to recommend boosters for all was so intense that the FDA's two top vaccine experts left the agency in protest, writing scathing articles on how the data did not support boosters for young people.

MISINFORMATION #6: VACCINE MANDATES INCREASED VACCINATION RATES

President Biden and other officials demanded that unvaccinated workers, regardless of their risk or natural immunity, be fired.

They demanded that soldiers be dishonorably discharged and nurses be laid off in the middle of a staffing crisis.

The mandate was based on the theory that vaccination reduced transmission rates—a notion later proven to be false.

But after the broad recognition that vaccination does not reduce transmission, the mandates persisted, and still do to this day.

A recent study from George Mason University details how vaccine mandates in nine major U.S. cities had no impact on vaccination rates.

They also had no impact on COVID transmission rates.

MISINFORMATION #7: COVID ORIGINATING FROM THE WUHAN LAB IS A CONSPIRACY THEORY

Google admitted to suppressing searches of ''lab leak'' during the pandemic.

Dr. Francis Collins, head of the National Institutes of Health, claimed (and still does) he didn't believe the virus came from a lab.

Ultimately, overwhelming circumstantial evidence points to a lab leak origin—the same origin suggested to Dr. Anthony Fauci by two very prominent virologists in a January 2020 meeting he assembled at the beginning of the pandemic.

According to documents obtained by Bret Baier of Fox News, they told Fauci and Collins that the virus may have been manipulated and originated in the lab, but then suddenly changed their tune in public comments days after meeting with the NIH officials.

The virologists were later awarded nearly $9 million from Fauci's agency.

The theory that COVID–19 originated from a Chinese lab in Wuhan proved to be true.

MISINFORMATION #8: IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GET THE SECOND VACCINE DOSE THREE OR FOUR WEEKS AFTER THE FIRST DOSE

Data were clear in the spring of 2021, just months after the vaccine rollout, that spacing the vaccine out by three months reduces complication rates and increases immunity.

Spacing out vaccines would have also saved more lives when Americans were rationing a limited vaccine supply at the height of the epidemic.

MISINFORMATION #9: DATA ON THE BIVALENT VACCINE IS 'CRYSTAL CLEAR'

Dr. Ashish Jha famously said this, despite the bivalent vaccine being approved using data from eight mice.

To date, there has never been a randomized controlled trial of the bivalent vaccine. In my opinion, the data are crystal clear that young people should not get the bivalent vaccine.

It would have also spared many children myocarditis.

MISINFORMATION #10: ONE IN FIVE PEOPLE GET LONG COVID

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention claims that 20% of COVID infections can result in long COVID.

But a UK study found that only 3% of COVID patients had residual symptoms lasting 12 weeks. What explains the disparity?

It's often normal to experience mild fatigue or weakness for weeks after being sick and inactive and not eating well.

Calling these cases long COVID is the medicalization of ordinary life.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention claims that 20% of COVID infections can result in long COVID, but other studies say differently.

What's most amazing about all the misinformation conveyed by CDC and public health officials is that there have been no apologies for holding on to their recommendations for so long after the data became apparent that they were dead wrong.

Public health officials said ''you must'' when the correct answer should have been ''we're not sure.''

Early on, in the absence of good data, public health officials chose a path of stem paternalism.

Today, they are in denial of a mountain of strong studies showing that they were wrong.

At minimum, the CDC should come clean and the FDA should add a warning label to COVID vaccines, clearly stating what is now known.

A mea culpa by those who led us astray would be a first step to rebuilding trust.

Marty Makary MD, MPH is a professor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and author of ''The Price We Pay.''

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, in this article that I have just referenced, misinformation No. 7 was that ''COVID originating from the Wuhan lab is a conspiracy theory.'' It is not. I think we are going to find that out when this resolution passes, and I expect a lot of Democrat support for the resolution. It passed by unanimous consent in the Senate.

''Google admitted to suppressing searches of 'lab leak' during the pandemic. Dr. Francis Collins, head of the National Institutes of Health, claimed, and still does, he didn't believe the virus came from a lab.

''Ultimately, overwhelming circumstantial evidence points to a lab leak origin, the same origin suggested to Dr. Anthony Fauci by two very prominent virologists in a January 2020 meeting he assembled at the beginning of the pandemic. According to documents obtained by Bret Baier of FOX News, they told Fauci and Collins that the virus may have been manipulated and originated in the lab, but then suddenly changed their tune in public comments days after meeting with the NIH officials. The virologists were later awarded nearly $9 million from Fauci's agency.''

Maybe this is why we are not getting the truth yet. We will get the truth if this rule passes and the subsequent S. 619 passes here in the House. I think it is very important.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I don't think there is any controversy over the bill to make as much of the classified report unclassified that is possible. There is no controversy over that.

I want to make sure that people understand who is responsible for actually doing the investigation. It was Joe Biden, not the previous President.

I want people to remember what the previous President said. On January 24, 2020, Donald Trump said: ''China has been working very hard to contain the coronavirus. The United States greatly appreciates their efforts and transparency. It will all work out well. In particular, on behalf of the American people, I want to thank President Xi.'' Really?

On February 7, 2020, Trump said: ''I just spoke to President Xi last night, and, you know, we are working on the problem, the virus. It is a very tough situation, but I think he is going to handle it. I think he has handled it really well. We are helping wherever we can.''

On February 7, he said: ''Just had a long and very good conversation by phone with President Xi of China. He is strong, sharp, and powerfully focused on leading the counterattack on the coronavirus. He feels they are doing very well, even building hospitals in a matter of only days. . . . Great discipline is taking place in China, as President Xi strongly leads what will be a very successful operation. We are working closely with China to help.''

Then he also said: ''Late last night, I had a very good talk with President Xi, and we talked about—mostly about the coronavirus. They are working really hard, and I think they are doing a very professional job. They are in touch with the world organization—CDC also. We are working together, but World Health is working with them. CDC is working with them. I had a great conversation last night with President Xi. It is a tough situation. I think they are doing a very good job.''

Then he said on February 10: ''I think China is very, you know, professionally run, in the sense that they have everything under control,'' Trump said. ''I really believe they are going to have it under control fairly soon. You know, in April, supposedly, it dies with the hotter weather, and that is a beautiful date to look forward to. But China, I can tell you, is working very hard.''

On February 13: ''I think they have handled it professionally, and I think they are extremely capable. And I think President Xi is extremely capable, and I hope that it is going to be resolved.''

On February 23, President Trump said: ''I think President Xi is working very, very hard. I spoke to him. He is working very hard. I think he is doing a very good job. It is a big problem, but President Xi loves his country. He is working very hard to solve the problem, and he will solve the problem. Okay?''

Then, on February 29, he said: ''China seems to be making tremendous progress. Their numbers are way down. . . . I think our relationship with China is very good. We just did a big trade deal. We are starting on another trade deal with China, a very big one, and we have been working very closely. They have been talking to our people. We have been talking to their people, having to do with the virus.''

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD an article from Politico titled: ''15 times Trump praised China as coronavirus was spreading across the globe.''

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

There was no objection.

[Politico, Apr. 15, 2020]

15 TIMES TRUMP PRAISED CHINA AS CORONAVIRUS WAS SPREADING ACROSS THE GLOBE

(By Myah Ward)

The president has lambasted the WHO for accepting Beijing's assurances about the outbreak, but he repeated them, as well.

President Donald Trump yanked U.S. funding for the World Health Organization on Tuesday, complaining that the United Nations public health agency was overly deferential to China and had put too much faith in Beijing's assertions that it had the coronavirus outbreak there was under control.

''Had the WHO done its job to get medical experts into China to objectively assess the situation on the ground and to call out China's lack of transparency, the outbreak could have been contained at its source with very little death,'' the president said Tuesday. ''Instead, the W.H.O. willingly took China's assurances to face value.''

Trump, however, echoed many of those same assurances regarding China and its response to the virus throughout January and February, as the unique coronavirus began to infiltrate countries around the world. Just days before the U.S. recorded its first death from Covid–19, Trump touted China's government for its transparency and hard work to defeat the coronavirus that causes the illness.

POLITICO has compiled a list of 15 times the president hailed China for its push to prevent a pandemic in the early months of 2020—an effort that ultimately failed:

Jan. 22, Twitter:

''One of the many great things about our just signed giant Trade Deal with China is that it will bring both the USA & China closer together in so many other ways. Terrific working with President Xi, a man who truly loves his country. Much more to come.''

Jan. 24, Twitter:

''China has been working very hard to contain the Coronavirus. The United States greatly appreciates their efforts and transparency. It will all work out well. In particular, on behalf of the American People, I want to thank President Xi.''

Jan. 29, Remarks at signing ceremony for the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement:

''And, honestly, I think, as tough as this negotiation was, I think our relationship with China now might be the best it's been in a long, long time. And now it's reciprocal. Before, we were being ripped off badly. Now we have a reciprocal relationship, maybe even better than reciprocal for us.''

Jan. 30, Fox News interview:

''China is not in great shape right now, unfortunately. But they're working very hard. We'll see what happens. But we're working very closely with China and other countries.''

Feb. 7, Remarks at North Carolina Opportunity Now Summit in Charlotte, N.C.:

''I just spoke to President Xi last night, and, you know, we're working on the—the problem, the virus. It's a—it's a very tough situation. But I think he's going to handle it. I think he's handled it really well. We're helping wherever we can.''

Feb. 7, Twitter:

''Just had a long and very good conversation by phone with President Xi of China. He is strong, sharp and powerfully focused on leading the counterattack on the Coronavirus. He feels they are doing very well, even building hospitals in a matter of only days . . . Great discipline is taking place in China, as President Xi strongly leads what will be a very successful operation. We are working closely with China to help.

Feb. 7, Remarks before Marine One departure:

''Late last night, I had a very good talk with President Xi, and we talked about—mostly about the coronavirus. They're working really hard, and I think they are doing a very professional job. They're in touch with World—the World—World Organization. CDC also. We're working together. But World Health is working with them. CDC is working with them. I had a great conversation last night with President Xi. It's a tough situation. I think they're doing a very good job.''

Feb. 10, Fox Business interview:

''I think China is very, you know, professionally run in the sense that they have everything under control,'' Trump said. ''I really believe they are going to have it under control fairly soon. You know in April, supposedly, it dies with the hotter weather. And that's a beautiful date to look forward to. But China I can tell you is working very hard.''

Feb. 10, campaign rally in Manchester, N.H.:

''I spoke with President Xi, and they're working very, very hard. And I think it's all going to work out fine.''

Feb. 13, Fox News interview:

''I think they've handled it professionally and I think they're extremely capable and I think President Xi is extremely capable and I hope that it's going to be resolved.''

Feb. 18, remarks before Air Force One departure:

''I think President Xi is working very hard. As you know, I spoke with him recently. He's working really hard. It's a tough problem. I think he's going to do—look, I've seen them build hospitals in a short period of time. I really believe he wants to get that done, and he wants to get it done fast. Yes, I think he's doing it very professionally.''

Feb. 23, remarks before Marine One departure:

''I think President Xi is working very, very hard. I spoke to him. He's working very hard. I think he's doing a very good job. It's a big problem. But President Xi loves his country. He's working very hard to solve the problem, and he will solve the problem. OK?''

Feb. 26, remarks at a business roundtable in New Delhi, India:

''China is working very, very hard. I have spoken to President Xi, and they're working very hard. And if you know anything about him, I think he'll be in pretty good shape. They're—they've had a rough patch, and I think right now they have it—it looks like they're getting it under control more and more. They're getting it more and more under control.''

Feb. 27, Coronavirus Task Force press conference:

''I spoke with President Xi. We had a great talk. He's working very hard, I have to say. He's working very, very hard. And if you can count on the reports coming out of China, that spread has gone down quite a bit. The infection seems to have gone down over the last two days. As opposed to getting larger, it's actually gotten smaller.''

Feb. 29, Coronavirus Task Force press conference:

''China seems to be making tremendous progress. Their numbers are way down. . . . I think our relationship with China is very good. We just did a big trade deal. We're starting on another trade deal with China—a very big one. And we've been working very closely. They've been talking to our people, we've been talking to their people, having to do with the virus.''

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I remind my Republican colleagues that the leader of their own party repeatedly applauded China during the peak of the pandemic.

The bottom line is that we should all be grateful that we have a President now that has actually launched an investigation to get to the bottom of this.

Today, hopefully, we will, in a bipartisan way, vote to make as much of that investigation declassified as possible.

Let's not forget the history here. Let's not forget who was praising China's reaction to the coronavirus because I think it is important that we keep that in mind, especially listening to some of the rhetoric coming from the other side.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, although it is not the subject of today's resolution or any of the bills covered by this resolution, the Democrats just can't avoid talking about the release of the January 6 videos. They keep going back to it during this debate.

Madam Speaker, I would remind them that 78 percent of Democrats out in America support the release of all of these videos.

The fact that they are apoplectic about the few minutes of video that Tucker Carlson released on Monday shows that Tucker Carlson is over the target. For 2 years, they have been selectively releasing information and videos to set a narrative. In just a few minutes, the entire narrative was challenged—might I say it collapsed under the scrutiny, under the review of just a few minutes of undoctored video that came from this body.

I applaud Tucker Carlson for releasing that. The American people are right. If the Democrats are so upset that only a few of these videos were released, I would remind them that they were able to release these at any point in the past.

Moving on to something that is the subject of this resolution, I want to talk about the repeal of Joe Biden's 2023 WOTUS ruling, the waters of the U.S. ruling. Like I said before, it is ''Groundhog Day'' again.

Under President Bush, we had one set of rules that farmers, homebuilders, and landowners came to understand. They were a little hard to comply with because every division of the Army Corps of Engineers might interpret them differently, or different States would interpret them differently, or different bureaucrats at the EPA would interpret them differently.

Then, Obama came along with a rule to expand the definition of waters of the U.S., and then Trump came into office and the rules changed again. Now, Biden is here trying, once again, to change the rules on what are the waters of the U.S.

The farmers and homebuilders I talk to don't say they don't want any regulations. Nobody in this body has said no regulation is what we want.

The question is, give us clear, precise, understandable regulations we can follow that do not change. Frankly, those should be written by Congress. They shouldn't be made up by every administration that comes into power. Yet, that is what we are doing, or that is what has happened.

Today, we are talking about repealing those onerous changes and unclear changes. For instance, Susan Bodine testified in front of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee this year on this topic, and she talked about the significant nexus test that they apply in WOTUS 2023, waters of the U.S. To support expanded jurisdiction under this rule, the agencies now claim that isolated water can affect the biological integrity of navigable water.

What does that mean? If you have a puddle of water that a bird lands in and drinks from and takes some seeds or some larvae, and when it drinks and flies to a river and deposits it in its bird droppings, or maybe as it flies over the river and it doesn't even visit the river, if there is any kind of biological connection—and as we have found, everything is biologically connected on this planet. If there is any biological connection that they can establish between a puddle of water on your property and a navigable water, then they say, this is now covered under waters of the U.S. This is ridiculous.

The only certainty that our farmers and our landowners are going to get from Biden's 2023 WOTUS rule is the certainty that if a raindrop has fallen on your property, a government agent will show up someday and tell you what you can and can't do with that property under this rule.

That is why it is important for us to repeal that, and that is why this resolution is so important.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, this is the second time the gentleman has said that all the tapes of what happened on January 6 were released. Maybe he can tell us where the general public can find them. How do they get access to them?

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, I said that the other side could have released them.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, the gentleman said that all the tapes had been released. The only person who got the tapes was a political hack at FOX News who used them to distort the reality and the truth and to insult the service of the people who work up here, including our Capitol Police officers.

I am for releasing as much as can be released so long as it doesn't violate any security protocols. Let's listen to what the U.S. Capitol Police chief said in response to Tucker Carlson's coverage of January 6. He said: ''Last night, an opinion program aired commentary that was filled with offensive and misleading conclusions about the January 6 attack. The opinion program never reached out to the department to provide accurate context.

''One false allegation is that our officers helped the rioters and acted as

'tour guides.' This is outrageous and false. The department stands by the officers in the video that was shown last night. I don't have to remind you how outnumbered our officers were on January 6. Those officers did their best to use deescalation tactics to try to talk rioters into getting each other to leave the building.

''The program conveniently cherry-picked from the calmer moments of our 41,000 hours of video. The commentary fails to provide context about the chaos and violence that happened before or during these less tense moments.

''Finally, the most disturbing accusation from last night was that our late friend and colleague Brian Sicknick's death had nothing to do with his heroic actions on January 6. The department maintains, as anyone with common sense would, that had Officer Sicknick not fought valiantly for hours on the day he was violently assaulted, Officer Sicknick would not have died the next day.

''As some people select from 41,000 hours of video clips that seemingly support the narrative they want to push, those of you who were here on January 6, those of you who were in the fight, those of you who ensured that no Member of Congress was hurt, those of you who contributed to the effort to allow this country's legislative process to continue know firsthand what actually happened.''

I would just simply say, Madam Speaker, if we want to make sure that we do not see another January 6 ever again occur in our country's future, then we all ought to speak with one voice, condemn what happened that day, and characterize it for what it was: an attack on our democracy.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1315

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

Madam Speaker, I surely didn't expect this to turn into a debate on the January 6 videotapes or to hear the Democrats propose that it sounds like they are in favor of all of the tapes being released instead of just some of them.

I think if the gentleman would review the transcript, and I could be wrong, but I think he will find out that I said Tucker Carlson only released a few minutes of that, and those few minutes were able to destroy the narrative that had been constructed over 2 years.

But if the gentleman cares to answer a question, then maybe we have come to some bipartisan agreement that all of the tapes should be released.

Madam Speaker, I would ask if the gentleman when he speaks next if he would speak to that topic and if he would be in favor of releasing all of the tapes instead of releasing them partially.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, when the gentleman says that what Tucker Carlson aired somehow destroyed the narrative, I mean, give me a break, he is essentially basically saying what happened on January 6 conforms with what Tucker Carlson said. It is offensive to everybody who was here that day. It is offensive to the staff, and it is offensive to the Capitol Police officers. It is offensive to everybody.

Madam Speaker, let me just say to the gentleman that what I said before was that I favored releasing tapes so long as they did not—it is my personal opinion—so long as they do not at all compromise any security. That is what I said.

But it is so sad to be on this House floor after what happened on that day and to hear Members of Congress basically try to cover up the horrendous atrocity that occurred that day, the attack on our democracy. It is shameful.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 5½ minutes remaining.

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

Madam Speaker, what is just as revealing as what we are debating this week is what we are not talking about.

We are now 3 months into the Republican majority. They haven't passed a single bill into law yet, and, in fact, rather than debating things that people care about, we are spending week after week passing bills that are designed to get Facebook likes and retweets instead of making an actual difference with the people back home.

Three out of four Americans say that the Republicans in Congress do not have the right agenda.

Madam Speaker, if you want proof that they are right, then look no further than what so much of today's debate was focused on.

Democrats passed bills to bring jobs back from China and take on Putin's war of aggression. Republicans are passing bills to make it easier for Russia and China to spread their propaganda here in the United States.

Democrats passed laws holding polluters accountable, took action to get rid of lead pipes and clean up our rivers and lakes. Republicans are passing bills to protect the polluters that dump toxic chemicals into our water.

The American people expect more. They expect us to pass bills that actually matter to our families. Democrats have been putting people over politics to do it. We get stuff done while Republicans are chasing down the approval of the hyper online far right that spends all their time on Twitter trying to own the libs.

So that is why I am asking my colleagues to join me in defeating the previous question so we can get this House on record as saying that we are going to protect Social Security and Medicare.

Finally, Madam Speaker, again, the idea that the leadership on the Republican side was complicit with FOX News and with Tucker Carlson to spread lies and distortions about what happened on January 6 and to insult the service of the brave men and women who protect this building and all of us who are in it is unconscionable.

It would be so refreshing for Republicans to join us in condemning the distortions that were on FOX News. It is stunning to me that we can't get any of them to condemn. Some of them—their Senate counterparts—did, and I praise them for it. But the silence here is deafening, and it is offensive. It is offensive.

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

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

Madam Speaker, it is somewhat serendipitous, but in the context of this debate on a rule about other bills, it seems we have come to some agreement, it appears to me, with the American people, 81 percent of whom believe that all of the tapes should be released. It seems as if we have come to some agreement that we all would be better off if we get to the bottom of the truth and all of the truth comes out and all of the tapes come out so that no one side can distort what actually happened that day, and then let the American people decide.

So in the interest of transparency and in the interest of getting back to the subject matter at hand, which are three bills covered by this rule, I want to talk about S. 619, which is so important. It is transparency, and it is the transparency that the American people deserve. It passed by unanimous consent in the Senate. Even though it seems like there is some opposition on the other side, I suspect we are going to get a lot of votes from Democrats on S. 619.

I think it is important to go on the record for elected Representatives to say whether or not they believe their constituents are entitled to the truth which our government possesses or at least information that they possess that would help somebody come to a conclusion of what the origins of this virus were and did they come from Wuhan.

The President could do this at any time. He could have done it at any time in the past 2 years. He hasn't done it. It is time to put him on the spot and say: You either veto this or you release that information that you have withheld from the American public for 2 years, which is too long. I suspect we could overcome his veto.

Next, Madam Speaker, I want to talk about the Waters of the U.S. rule.

Why is this timely?

Because on March 20 this goes into effect. That is why it is so urgent to repeal the 2023 Waters of the U.S. rule.

These are laws.

Were they written by lawmakers?

No. Our Founding Fathers created three branches of government. We have the executive branch which enforces laws, we have the judicial branch which resolves disputes, and we have the legislative branch which is supposed to make the laws. Yet, here we sit abdicating that authority and that responsibility. You can delegate authority, but you can't delegate responsibility, Madam Speaker.

We have a responsibility to the American people to make sure that these laws are concise, that they don't change on the whim of an executive who gets in the White House, that they are not onerous, that they have their intended effect, and that they are applied uniformly across the country.

Yet we have abdicated that responsibility. But we will take that responsibility back by the passage of this rule and the subsequent legislation to repeal the WOTUS, Waters of the United States 2023, by Joe Biden. We, the American people, deserve that.

Finally, I will close by talking about H.R. 140. This is a bill that went through regular order. What a wonderful thing. We have talked about it so much. It is a bill that covers one topic only. We have talked about that so much. Here we are, and we even have a chance—even though it was amended in the committee—to amend it here on the floor to perfect it even more for Members and by Members who aren't members of that committee.

Are these amendments that are not germane?

Are these the kind of amendments that the American people hate where Members offer an amendment and then they stick something into a bill that is completely unrelated to it?

No. Every one of these amendments is germane to this bill. We have made sure of that in the Rules Committee. The gentleman serves on the Rules Committee, and he had plenty of time to voice his concerns there.

So we have a lot of amendments that are great. I think they will improve the bill. But what is most important is that people have a chance to have their point made and to get a vote on this.

Finally, I will talk about what H.R. 140 would fix. It would fix this loophole that they think they have constructed that allows the Federal Government to violate the Constitution.

Obviously, Federal agents can't take away our First Amendment rights, and, obviously, the Constitution wasn't meant to bind social media companies. It was meant to bind the administration.

What we have is a loophole where the administration leans on a social media company that they are paying money to. Millions of dollars have gone to these social media companies from the CDC and from the FBI.

So when they say:

> Would you pretty please ban this user?

Or:

> Would you pretty please take down these posts? There is a whole series of these posts.

The government doesn't get in line. They have a back door that they can trot to every day and submit lists of people whom they think should be banned because they don't like what they have said.

This is dangerous to our Republic. If the other side wants to call it a democracy, then it is dangerous to the democracy. But this is a republic.

Our government has built an elaborate but constitutionally unsound framework for violating these natural rights.

As we have seen with the Twitter files, they boldly work in close cooperation with private-sector actors who aren't subject to constitutional restrictions imposed on government by our Founders.

But they also claim foreign influence and national security so they can target U.S. citizens with agencies in the government under the military chain of command whose missions are ostensibly directed at foreign actors who have no constitutional rights.

Elected lawmakers be damned, legions of government lawyers create shaky legal scaffolding and ad hoc doctrine to indemnify the actors within our government who eagerly exploit these loopholes.

In this way, government actors can claim everything they do is legal. They have a bunch of lawyers to back them:

> Oh, we didn't do anything illegal, it is all legal. Here, look at our doctrine. The lawyers have gone through it, it is all legal.

Here is the problem, Madam Speaker: much of what they do is unconstitutional.

So whose job is it to resolve that difference?

It is actually not the Supreme Court's job. We are entrusted with oversight. We all here swore an oath to the Constitution, and if we know that authorizations that we have made or that funding that we have appropriated has been twisted in a way to get around the Constitution or to drive through a loophole that some lawyers in the administrative branch have created, then it is our obligation—we owe it to the American people, we swore an oath to the Constitution—to fix that—not to make them go to court to get some remedy—but to fix it, to stop it in its tracks.

H.R. 140 with its pending amendments is a good down payment on that promise to the American people.

Madam Speaker, I support this rule, I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

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

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 199

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 5. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the resolution (H. Res. 178) affirming the House of Representatives' commitment to protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees.

SEC. 6. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 178.

Mr. MASSIE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question on the resolution, as amended.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 217, nays 205, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 134]

YEAS—217

Aderholt	DesJarlais	Hill
Alford	Diaz-Balart	Hinson
Allen	Donalds	Houchin
Amodei	Duarte	Hudson
Armstrong	Duncan	Huizenga
Arrington	Dunn (FL)	Hunt
Babin	Edwards	Issa
Bacon	Ellzey	Jackson (TX)
Baird	Emmer	James
Balderson	Estes	Johnson (LA)
Banks	Ezell	Johnson (OH)
Barr	Fallon	Johnson (SD)
Bean (FL)	Feenstra	Jordan
Bentz	Ferguson	Joyce (OH)
Bergman	Finstad	Joyce (PA)
Bice	Fischbach	Kean (NJ)
Biggs	Fitzgerald	Kelly (MS)
Bilirakis	Fitzpatrick	Kelly (PA)
Bishop (NC)	Fleischmann	Kiggans (VA)
Bost	Flood	Kiley
Brecheen	Foxx	Kim (CA)
Buchanan	Franklin, C. Scott	Kustoff
Buck	Fry	LaHood
Bucshon	Fulcher	LaLota
Burchett	Gaetz	LaMalfa
Burgess	Gallagher	Lamborn
Burlison	Garbarino	Langworthy
Calvert	Garcia, Mike	Latta
Cammack	Gimenez	LaTurner
Carey	Gonzales, Tony	Lawler
Carl	Good (VA)	Lee (FL)
Carter (GA)	Gooden (TX)	Lesko
Carter (TX)	Gosar	Letlow
Chavez-DeRemer	Granger	Loudermilk
Ciscomani	Graves (LA)	Lucas
Cline	Graves (MO)	Luetkemeyer
Cloud	Green (TN)	Luna
Clyde	Greene (GA)	Luttrell
Cole	Griffith	Mace
Collins	Grothman	Malliotakis
Comer	Guest	Mann
Crane	Guthrie	Massie
Crawford	Hageman	Mast
Crenshaw	Harris	McCaul
Curtis	Harshbarger	McClain
D'Esposito	Hern	McClintock
Davidson	Higgins (LA)	McCormick
De La Cruz		McHenry

Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Santos
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Stewart
Strong
Tenney
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—205

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson Lee
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Perez
Peters
Pettersen
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)

NOT VOTING—12

Boebert
Castro (TX)
Cleaver
Hoyer
Leger Fernandez
Lieu
Phillips
Schrier
Steube
Thompson (PA)
Weber (TX)
Wilson (FL)

□ 1354

Messrs. GALLEGO, KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mses. SALINAS, WILD, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mses. BROWN, and WATERS changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. POSEY, GARBARINO, and BANKS changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 134.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the adoption of the resolution, as amended.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. McGOVERN. On that, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 216, noes 206, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 135]

AYES—216

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia, Mike
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
McHenry
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Santos
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Stewart
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOES—206

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson Lee
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Perez
Peters
Pettersen
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—12

Castro (TX)	Kiley	Salazar
Cleaver	Leger Fernandez	Schrier
Estes	Lieu	Steube
Hoyer	Phillips	Weber (TX)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1402

So the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. ESTES. Madam Speaker, I was not present for rollcall No. 135, on agreeing to the resolution, as amended. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye.''

SYRIA WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of today, I call up the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 21) directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLOOD). Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the concurrent resolution is considered as read.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 21

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1544(c)), Congress directs the President to remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria by not later than the date that is 180 days after the date of the adoption of this concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The concurrent resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided among and controlled by Representative MCCAUL of Texas, Representative MEEKS of New York, and Representative GAETZ of Florida, or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ), each will control 20 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the United States is not at war with Syria. Rather, the United States is conducting limited but important counterterrorism operations in Syria against ISIS, formerly known as al-Qaida in Iraq, pursuant to the 2001 counterterrorism AUMF.

Those operations are being reported regularly to Congress, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. They are not new or unique to the Biden administration.

In fact, let me quote President Trump about what we are doing here when he said: ''A small presence of United States Armed Forces remains in strategically significant locations in Syria to conduct operations . . . to address continuing terrorist threats emanating from Syria.''

''These ongoing operations, which the United States has carried out with the assistance of numerous international partners, have been successful in seriously degrading ISIS capabilities in Syria and Iraq.''

When ISIS was at the peak of its power in 2015, it controlled vast territory in Iraq and Syria, which it used to launch attacks in the Middle East and beyond. Those terrorists ruled with medieval brutality. We all remember the graphic videos of ISIS fighters beheading journalists and innocent civilians.

These monsters drew thousands of volunteers to join their ranks in Iraq and Syria and inspired terrorist attacks around the world.

Our U.S. military, working with a global coalition and local forces on the ground, helped to dismantle and destroy this vicious caliphate.

I am proud that our men and women in uniform answered the call to fight this menace, which threatened the United States and the world.

Even though ISIS no longer controls significant territory, there are still tens of thousands of hardened terrorist fighters in Iraq and Syria who are hell-bent on reestablishing their terror state.

In fact, in the last quarter of 2022, ISIS claimed 72 attacks in Iraq and Syria, including several IED attacks.

Thankfully, our small deployment of U.S. servicemembers is remarkably effective at working with local partner forces to achieve results and ensure the enduring and complete defeat of ISIS. Otherwise, these numbers would be much worse.

In 2022, we were involved in 108 partner and 14 unilateral operations, killing 466 ISIS operatives and detaining 215 others.

None of us want our soldiers overseas and in harm's way any longer than is absolutely necessary. I understand that the gentleman from Florida has introduced this resolution in good faith and is well intentioned, and he did it in response to a February 17 operation to kill an ISIS leader, in which four U.S. servicemembers were wounded.

Any injured or killed servicemember is a tragedy. We are eternally grateful for the sacrifice made by our men and women in uniform and their families and never take them for granted.

It is our responsibility as Members of Congress to reassess, on an ongoing basis, whether their deployments and the risk they involve are necessary. In doing that, we must recall President Obama's disastrous decision to prematurely withdraw our troops from Iraq in 2011.

A few short years later, American troops returned to fight the deadly ISIS caliphate, which grew out of the al-Qaida presence that had not been defeated.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Milley, was in Syria just days ago to see our troops and assess the state of our mission. He went there to figure out what value this mission holds for our security. He said: ''Unless you support and devote the correct amount of resources to it, things will get worse,'' and, ''If you completely ignore and turn your back, then you are setting the conditions for a resurgence.''

That is why I strongly oppose this resolution directing the removal of United States Armed Forces from Syria, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

□ 1415

If we withdraw our troops from Syria now, we could see a resurgence of ISIS or another lethal successor in a short time. Withdrawal of this legal, authorized U.S. troop deployment must be based on the total defeat of ISIS.

Let me be clear: Congress' power to declare war is one of our most solemn Article I responsibilities. I understand why some in this Chamber are uncomfortable with using a 22-year-old force authorization for current operations.

I believe that we should be working together, in a bipartisan manner, to have an updated replacement to this AUMF to address the current threat environment, while also keeping Congress engaged with our constitutional responsibilities.

But this resolution does not work to that end. I believe it would call for an artificial withdrawal and it would be a win for the ISIS terrorists committed to our destruction.

The bottom line is: The premise upon this resolution—as the Parliamentarian doesn't make fact-based determinations—the premise of this whole thing is that there is no authorization for troops to be in Syria today. It is just not accurate. In fact, it is wrong. In 2014, the ISIS threat was addressed under the Presidential authority of the 2001 AUMF.

I remember being in the White House with President Trump addressing this crisis, as well, about what to do about Syria, and whether we believe our U.S. troops should remain, in a very small footprint of 900 soldiers, in Syria.

At that time, President Trump made the decision that, under the 2001 AUMF, to keep these troops in country, and I believe that was the correct decision, and I stand by that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in this opposition, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res. 21.

Mr. Speaker, though I oppose an indefinite U.S. military presence in Syria, this measure forces a premature end to our mission at a critical time for our efforts. Forcing such a premature removal of U.S. forces not only endangers our national security, it threatens that of our allies and partners across the region and beyond and, most of all, the Syrian Kurds.

Our very small footprint in northeast Syria, alongside our courageous Syrian Kurdish partners, continues to serve a valuable purpose as we partner with them in ensuring ISIS does not reconstitute and again destabilize the region or use Syria as a base for attacks elsewhere.

We have seen how ISIS has wrought its brutality, not only on the populations of Syria and Iraq, especially against ethnic minority groups, but also launched brutal attacks, such as those in Paris, Brussels, Istanbul, and beyond.

Our military and intelligence leaders continue to warn publicly about the potential for ISIS to resurge if they are given the opportunity, including Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley, who, just last week, made a public visit to northeast Syria. He highlighted the importance of finishing the job against ISIS and emphasized, if we ignore and turn our back, then we are setting the conditions for a resurgence.

Our presence also serves a critical advisory and assist role as the SDF continues to administer ISIS detainee facilities, including those holding experienced, highly trained ISIS fighters, as the United States, along with our coalition partners, works to safely and humanely repatriate them to their countries of origin. Pulling the plug now on this important mission jeopardizes the important work and support role that we play.

Finally, while I share the passion of the cosponsor of this legislation for Congress reclaiming its war powers, I do not think this concurrent resolution is the proper vehicle for doing so.

Last Congress, under my leadership, the House Foreign Affairs Committee marked up repeals of three of the four existing AUMFs that are on the books. The full House passed each of these measures as well but, unfortunately, they languished on the other side of the Capitol.

We need to continue this work, and I look forward to working with Chairman MCCAUL and the gentleman from Florida on these efforts. Congress must repeal outdated war authorizations once and for all, and I applaud the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for their bipartisan vote to repeal the 2002 and the 1991 AUMFs earlier today.

So we have important work to do. We should define hostilities in statute, not because it is an easy fix, but because it is a hard question that underpins key national security issues around the globe.

Toughest of all, we must repeal the 2001 AUMF and replace it with a narrow force authorization that grants the President authority to combat select terrorists enumerated in countries where the United States' national security is at stake. I intend to introduce such an AUMF later this year.

I believe that the importance of combating ISIS in Syria should be on such an authorization, and this is part of why I oppose H. Con. Res. 21.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to oppose this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, most Americans don't know a single Syrian, and so people watching this debate might wonder, how has it come to be that Syria has become the great platform of great power competition in the world?

It begins in 2011, during the Arab Spring, when Assad, who is undeniably a madman and a despot, opens fire on his own people protesting. Then part of the Syrian Army defects; they engage in warfare against Assad, and all of a sudden, they have a whole lot of weapons and money being sent from the rich gulf monarchies, through Jordan, into Syria.

So Iran is not just going to watch this. Assad is their ally. They activate Hezbollah, they then invade Syria. So now you have Jordan, the gulf monarchies, Iran.

But wait, Russia is pitching their vision of the world as a regime preservation force, whether you are Maduro or Assad. So they get involved.

What do they get for their time?

A warm-water port in the Eastern Mediterranean.

So we have got Russia, the gulf monarchies. Israel starts to get worried about Hezbollah and Iran, so Israel cuts a deal with Russia to keep Iran out of southern Syria.

If it doesn't get any worse than that, now all of a sudden, you have got the Kurds who declare war on Syria, and it makes it a little messy that the Kurds are also in conflict with Turkiye, which is a NATO ally.

Then somehow the United States in 2015, says, you know what? We need to get involved in this mess in Syria.

Since we have been there, we have seen Americans die. We have seen tens of billions of dollars wasted.

What is hilarious about the 2001 AUMF—that the neo-conservatives wave around like some permission slip for every neo-conservative fantasy of turning an Arabian desert into a Jeffersonian democracy—is that that very 2001 AUMF would justify attacking the people that we are fighting against and the people we are funding because both have ties to al-Qaida and, of course, the 2001 AUMF dealt with al-Qaida.

All this talk about a reemergence of ISIS; I would encourage my colleagues to go read the inspector general's report of the last quarter that indicates that ISIS is not a threat to the homeland. And with the Turks conducting operations in Syria against ISIS, with Assad and Russia having every incentive to create pressure on ISIS, I do not believe that what stands between a caliphate and not a caliphate are the 900 Americans who have been sent to this hellscape with no definition of victory, with no clear objective, and purely existing as a vestige to the regime change failed foreign policies of multiple former Presidents.

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

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE).

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today in strong opposition to H. Con. Res. 21 to pull forces out of Syria.

Like many in this distinguished Chamber, I have served in the region. I spent 23 years as a Navy SEAL. I have hunted war criminals. I have dismantled terrorist cells, and I have fought for freedom on foreign shores.

There are several self-evident truths in Syria. First, the U.S. troops are authorized by Congress.

Second, I do believe that we should review those authorizations. They may need to be reviewed. We should have answers on objectives, on failures, on victories, on a plan for ultimate success. I agree.

But there is no doubt that Syria also remains a center for radical Islamic forces and terrorism, like ISIS, like PKK. These are organizations that will never stop, ever. They are committed to destroying this Nation and our allies, and we should be aware of their objectives.

Lastly, the hard truth is this: Either we fight them in Syria or we will fight them here. Either we fight and defeat them in Syria, or we will fight in the streets of our Nation.

To understand the scope of the military presence, we are talking about 900 troops. That is 900 troops that have to have the capability for intelligence collection, self-defense, surveillance, targeting. In case our troops get in trouble, that force must be sufficient to get them out of trouble because every sailor, soldier, airman, and marine, deserves nothing less.

Nine hundred military personnel is an objectively small contingent. When you look at it, that is about the size of a Walmart which employs, on average, 300 people.

So I agree with many of the supporters of the resolution that Congress has the powers, and these powers should be reviewed. We should ask the hard questions: What is the path to victory?

What are the resources that are being spent? Are they being spent in the right spot?

Is there a clear path to victory, and what are the interests of the United States?

But believe me, Mr. Speaker, I understand the burden of war. I have lost a lot of friends. I understand the consequences of war on foreign shores, both to the servicemen and our families, which is why I call on my colleagues today to ask the right questions, but to reject this well-intended, but really, really bad idea.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), the ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in opposition to this resolution, and I want to associate myself with the remarks of the chairman and the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

For all those reasons, we cannot withdraw our 900 troops now because of what was said about ISIS.

But in addition to that, we are defending the Kurds against certain slaughter at the hands of the Peshmerga if we were to withdraw our troops.

□ 1430

The Turks, as we know, are supporting the Peshmerga. In addition to which, if we were to withdraw our troops, that increases the worry that Israel has to have about Iran, and that increases the odds of a conflict between Israel and Iran, which is the last thing the Middle East needs or the world needs.

For all these reasons, I strongly urge this body to reject this resolution. We truly should review all of the AUMFs we have lying around. I didn't know we had one from 1991. This resolution is the wrong vehicle, and it is productive of chaos and probably slaughter. I, therefore, oppose it.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, my patriotic colleague, Mr. ZINKE of Montana, gave up the game when he said ISIS will never be gone. So, presumably, the position of those holding that viewpoint is that we have to stay in Syria forever, maybe make it the 51st State.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE), a member of the Homeland Security Committee and the House Oversight Committee.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have the great privilege of serving with many veterans here in Congress, and to them, I am so grateful for their service. This is also why I rise in support for this resolution, to pull our great military from Syria.

I would point out, on the official website for the U.S. Department of Defense, when it tells who the Department of Defense is on the ''about'' page, it says: We are your defense. The Department of Defense is America's largest government agency. With our military tracing its roots back to prerevolutionary times, the Department has grown and evolved with our Nation. Our mission is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and ensure our Nation's security.

That is the job of our Department of Defense, not to wage war in foreign lands and foreign countries at the expense of the American taxpayer. It is to deter war.

It is also the role of the Department of Defense to ensure our Nation's security, but our border is being ignored. Every single day, our border is invaded by thousands, and over 300 Americans die daily from fentanyl brought into our country by Mexican cartels. I would say those are the enemies we need to be focusing on, not in a country called Syria where no one in my district ever demands: ''Marjorie, we must go to war in Syria.'' I never hear that request from anyone who voted for me.

As a matter of fact, the veterans in my district say: We are sick and tired of foreign wars. We are fed up with it, and too many of our American military have died in foreign lands serving their foreign borders and their foreign causes.

I thank my colleague, MATT GAETZ, for introducing this resolution, and I strongly encourage all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res. 21.

Stopping the resurgence of ISIS now, before more attacks on American families, is critical. My appreciation of military service is as a 31-year Army veteran myself, but I am particularly grateful that I have had four sons: Alan, who served in Iraq; Addison, who served in Iraq; Julian, who served in Egypt; and my youngest son, Hunter, who did a tour in Afghanistan. So I know personally the significance of military service.

I think of the last 20 years that our military, because of 9/11, has stopped attacks in the United States. So this strength must be maintained.

At the height of ISIS' reign of terror, Operation Inherent Resolve was formally launched in October of 2015 to counter the terrorist network's rapid expansion in Iraq and Syria. Upon defeat of the physical caliphate in Baghouz in 2019, the United States conducted a drawdown of forces.

Currently, there are approximately 900 U.S. soldiers in northeast Syria. The remaining troops assist the Syrian Democratic forces in deterrence of continued terrorist threats from Iranian-backed terror organizations and maintenance of facilities containing—amazing; this is incredible; the American people need to know—10,000 hardened ISIS prisoners who are dedicated and trained mass murderers, along with thousands of their radicalized family members.

While the American-led coalition was successful, the threat of ISIS and the extremism in the region remain. Reporting indicates that ISIS is making significant efforts to reorganize in Syria and Iraq. Iranian-backed terrorists, who back up the murderous regime of Bashar al-Assad, also continue attacks on U.S. forces at Al-Tanf and pose a tremendous destabilizing effect. Upon withdrawal, terrorists would also have unfettered access to the Omar oil field.

A full withdrawal of the efficient forces remaining would completely open the region to the resurgence of ISIS and other terrorist organizations whose mission is the destruction of American families.

Such a threat to American national security would warrant intervention. Uprooting the small contingent of troops who have successfully maintained order to the extent possible would simply ensure that we will be returning to a much larger, more complex problem at a higher cost and threat to Americans worldwide.

The resolution, we know, is well-intended, but deterrence is cheaper and more effective than facilitating a full-scale response after the fact. We don't need to repeat 9/11. Peace is best maintained through strength.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. CROW).

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H. Con. Res. 21.

Now, I have been one of the most vocal proponents in this Congress on reasserting congressional authority in matters of war and peace, because the Constitution delegates to this body the decision to debate and decide when to send our men and women into harm's way.

Now, Congress after Congress has abdicated that authority to both Republican and Democratic administrations. Yes, it is time to pull it back, and it is time to reassert our authority and to have the debates that have been long overdue for many, many years. I join my bipartisan colleagues in that endeavor, because it is a right, true, and just endeavor, and we owe our constituents nothing less.

There is a good way to do it, and there is a wrong way to do it. I rise in opposition to this concurrent resolution, because it is the wrong way to do it for three reasons.

Many of us have spent the morning in the Foreign Affairs Committee rehashing the disaster of the 20 years in Afghanistan and hearing about the moral stain of our partners and allies that we have left behind in Afghanistan. I am not willing to make that mistake again, of saying that we will leave behind the Kurds and the Syrian Democratic forces and our other partners who have fought side-by-side with us in years past and again today.

Number two, the dangers that ISIS poses to the American people are well documented, and we are not prepared yet to abdicate and turn our back on that threat.

Number three, any military person knows that retrograde operations or withdrawal operations are the riskiest operations that you can conduct. Setting an arbitrary timeline on a retrograde that is not tied to defined benchmarks or operational requirements is the wrong way to do it and puts our men and women at risk.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this measure.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, before yielding to my colleague, I would observe that we have done a lot for the Kurds: $1.5 billion. We can love the Kurds, but it is not a marriage. It is not until death do we part. It seems as though the Kurds have made book with Assad and that that would provide a structure for them to continue to exist.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLS), a patriotic American who served in our military, who served in Iraq and Syria, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and my colleague.

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Speaker, the 2001 and 2002 Authorizations for Use of Military Force licensed the executive branch to conduct broad military operations, and Congress has disregarded its constitutional oversight powers as a result. Repealing these outdated AUMFs restores Congress' constitutional check on executive fiat.

The United States military forces are present in the Middle East pursuant to an Authorization for Use of Military Force that was enacted more than 20 years ago. At that time, Congress did not conceive that these authorizations would sanction an endless military commitment.

The United States is not the world's policeman, and it is incredibly unwise to promote this level of involvement in international disputes. However, Democrat and Republican Presidents alike have abused the powers of war granted under the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs, and Congress must act to reign back the executive branch's war authorities.

Further, continuing to dump trillions of dollars into these endless wars is irresponsible, runs contrary to American economic and security interests, and unnecessarily places American lives in jeopardy.

It is clear that the basis for the AUMFs currently in force have long expired, and Congress must fulfill its constitutional responsibility and ensure we are conducting proper oversight of the executive branch's military operations.

Now, I hear my colleagues on the left talking about leaving the Kurds and withdrawals, but yet, I note these are the exact same individuals that their party argues that it was time to withdraw from Afghanistan and leave our allies and Americans behind, something I know about, since I am the only Member of Congress who actually conducted the first overland rescue of Americans out of Afghanistan after they were left behind.

I also note that these are the same people saying that pulling away is going to increase ISIS' presence. Is this not the exact same government that said that nation building was a great strategy for Iraq? Is this not the same government who utilized and helped to implement the 2005 Iraq Constitution that implemented Article 76 that sets forth a sectarian democracy giving rise to Iran's political stronghold?

I have spent 7 years of my life in Iraq, almost 3 years in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Pakistan, northern Somalia, been blown up twice in 2006, a Bronze Star recipient, and a proud combat veteran. I can tell you that in the 20-plus years that we served in Iraq and Afghanistan, had it been a counterterrorism operation or counterinsurgency strategy, I could have fully gotten behind that. But we continue to play political football, and that is exactly what the dangers of AUMFs are. They allow people to basically do carte blanche with warfare, and that is not the intent.

In fact, I would argue that we have already lost the advantage, and we should be refocusing our efforts on what is happening at our southern border, where just a day ago, we had two Americans who were killed by what I would consider to be a worthy adversary, which is the cartels.

So we sit here today, and I am not going to talk about the arguments of the $86 billion that we left behind when we talk about the ISIS buildup.

Let's talk about the ISIS buildup. What about ISIS-Khorasan? What about the Haqqani network? What about the Taliban, who has $86 billion in weapons, armament, defense products, millions of dollars of pallets of cash? They are now the closest to being a true caliph with an actual sovereignty in its borders and a recognized government. That is who we need to be concerned with.

When I went to Afghanistan, I thought it was to help to fight from this becoming a safe haven of terrorism. Instead, we have actually promoted, funded, trained, and actually made it a safe haven of terrorism.

The American people are not about endless wars. The American people are about us being involved in things that we have control over. Unfortunately, due to the political football and the fact that it was the suits, not the boots, making the decisions, we have no clear military objective, and that is why this has continued to be a failure.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me just say to my colleague, who serves with me on the Foreign Affairs Committee, we are a lot in agreement. I think the 2001 AUMF is outdated, and it should have been sunsetted. Congress has a constitutional responsibility to address this. Now, as chairman, that is my intention, and I hope to work with the gentleman on this.

But the point is, this is a privileged resolution under the War Powers Act 5(c), section (c), that basically says if U.S. forces are engaged in hostilities without authorization, such forces shall be removed by the President, if directed by a congressional concurrent resolution.

We have authorization here, and it is the 2001 AUMF. We may not like that. We can debate whether we need to update this thing, and I think we do. The ranking member and I have had these discussions, as well. But that is really the centerpiece of what we are talking about on this privileged resolution.

So when this is all said and done, I hope we can perhaps work on updating this outdated authorized use of military force to what is the modern-day threat.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAWLER).

□ 1445

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I acknowledge and thank my colleague, the gentleman from Florida, for his service and for his insights, which are invaluable to our committee and the work that we are doing. I thank him.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res. 21, which would remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria.

While the situation in the Middle East remains complicated and volatile, we must not forget the critical role that the United States plays in furthering peace and combating international terrorism in the region.

As the chairman just pointed out, the use of military force is authorized under the 2001 agreement. We must fulfill our obligations in rooting out al-Qaida and its direct successors in ISIS.

As a resident of New York who was in his fifth day of freshman year of high school on September 11, I will never forget the events of that day, what occurred and the aftermath of it, and our obligation to combat and confront terrorism wherever it rears its head.

ISIS may no longer hold territory, but they are still a threat. They were responsible for 72 terrorist attacks in Iraq and Syria in the last quarter of 2022 alone. Just last month, U.S. Forces killed a senior ISIS leader in Syria.

ISIS once held territory the size of Great Britain, but thanks to our ongoing efforts, it no longer does. A complete withdrawal of U.S. Forces, however, will have the same disastrous consequences as our rapid withdrawal from Afghanistan, a topic on which our committee is holding a hearing today. Without U.S. Forces in Syria, our enemies will return; they will regrow; and they will come after our allies and, potentially, the United States.

While I appreciate and support the desire to prevent any further loss of American life and limb, there is no doubt in my mind that if we let international terrorist groups run rampant in Syria and throughout the Middle East, especially in the wake of a devastating natural disaster that the

country just experienced, we are abdicating our responsibility to keep the American people safe from harm.

Not only that but by maintaining our troop presence in Syria, we can continue to support our allies in the region and work toward a more stable and peaceful Middle East, including supporting and growing the Abraham Accords.

Of course, we must always prioritize the safety and well-being of our military personnel, and any decision to maintain a true presence in Syria must be carefully considered and strategically planned. The Biden administration must be cognizant of this fact and not allow our true presence in Syria to go the way of the disastrous Afghanistan withdrawal.

I agree with my colleagues about the need to reevaluate and look at the AUMFs, reform the process, and move forward, but we need to do so in a deliberative manner. This is not the way to go about it. For those reasons, I cannot in good conscience support this.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that this body will reject this resolution and allow our committee to do the work that it needs to do to reform this process.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOULTON).

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, the safety and security of the United States over 21 years since 9/11 is no accident. It is due to the sweat, toil, and blood of thousands of young Americans.

Many Americans have enjoyed the fruits of this labor with not contributing anything to the cost. As a veteran of the war on terror myself, I stand here today and, from the bottom of my heart, genuinely wish I could tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I could tell my colleagues: ''Mission accomplished. We can go home.'' I truly wish I could say that, but the mission is not accomplished yet. It is not finished. There is still work to do, which our troops in Syria carry on today.

ISIS remains the deadliest terrorist threat in the world. The work that these troops do day in and day out is a relatively small investment in our security and the security of our allies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, I share the general consensus that we should re-debate the AUMF. That is Congress' job. I have voted for measures similar to this in the past that will force that debate. We should force Congress to debate the AUMF, but we should not force our troops to withdraw.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, Republicans and Democrats alike have been citing the 2001 AUMF. It is important to note that there are Americans fighting in Syria today who were not born when the 2011 AUMF was approved. About 9 out of every 10 of us in the House of Representatives weren't here to vote on it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS).

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) for sponsoring this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there is no legal authority for the U.S. to be involved in the Syrian civil war. There is no authority.

Section 5(c) of the War Powers Act does not say, and I am quoting the chairman now, it does not say, ''without authorization.'' That is not the language. The language says, ''specific statutory authorization.'' You either declare war or you have specific statutory authority.

Do you know what that 2001 AUMF says? It says those who ''aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001.'' It doesn't say ''ISIS.'' It doesn't say ''Syria.'' It is talking about the events of 2001, as the gentleman from Florida just referenced.

It is a quaint idea to say we are going to rely on that 2001 AUMF. I thought they were going to say they were relying on the 2002 AUMF. Either way, neither one works. You don't have authority, and you are going to be there and put U.S. soldiers in harm's way. This is a civil war.

One Syrian analyst said this recently: ''Until we see the externals confront each other directly rather than on the Syrian ground, I don't see an actual end to the Syrian conflict.''

Do you know who the externals are? The U.S., the Russians, and Iran. That is the externals, and we have no authority to be one of those externals. The analyst went on to say this is a proxy war. That is what is happening. It is another U.S.-Russia proxy war.

When the Syrian civil war began with protests during the Arab Spring of 2011, U.S. President Obama went to the regime in Syria and said: ''The future of Syria must be determined by its people, but President Bashar al-Assad is standing in the way. For the sake of the Syrian people, the time has come for President Assad to step aside.''

Is that our objective—regime change? Is that what it is? No. We don't know what the objective is. You can't even define what the exit ramp is.

Assad responded that time by fueling the civil war, the exacerbation of that problem, and it has just grown. Now, you have us with our allies the Turks and our allies the Kurds. They are fighting against each other. They don't want each other.

ISIS, in 2019, was declared to be defeated. Even the inspector general recently said they don't have an ability to cause damage and fear and harm in the homeland.

The result is, in the last 13 years, the U.S. has spent more than $15 billion on humanitarian aid, and we don't even know what we have spent in Department of Defense costs. Do you know why? Because they are grouping it with what is going on in Iraq. We tried to obtain information. How much have we spent? Nobody will tell us.

When General Milley says—by the way, he was the architect of that disastrous Afghanistan retreat, and he is a believer in a ''however long, no matter the cost'' approach in Ukraine. He insists we prolong our involvement in the civil war in Syria in order to help our allies.

General Milley, who are our allies? Is it the Kurds? Is it the Turks? Who is it? Is it the Assad regime?

He can't tell you. No one can tell you.

All of this is being done, though, without legal authority. It is time for us to stop fighting proxy wars. It is time for us not to say next time we will take care of these AUMFs. We have had time. This is the time to get rid of them. I urge us to vote for this.

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

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER).

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today as a Member of Congress who has proudly worked to fight and defeat terrorism as a CIA officer. I worked with my colleagues to protect the lives of the American people, our servicemembers, and our interests around the world.

I fully agree that we need to revisit our Authorizations for Use of Military Force. I have worked with Members of Congress, including the esteemed gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ), to raise this issue. I am proud to see that we are actually seeing progress toward the repeal of the 1991 and 2002 AUMFs. That is encouraging.

However, that does not mean that we should abandon ongoing operations that keep the United States safe that are authorized under the 2001 AUMF. Should we discuss it? Should we debate it? Should we look toward reforming it? Perhaps. Should we order the men and women in uniform to come home over the next few months? Absolutely not.

We should not encourage a resurgence of ISIS. We should not abandon our work with the Kurdish fighters on the front lines. We should understand the implications for the long-term stability of the Middle East and the actions we take here today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Virginia.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I oppose the resolution to withdraw quickly from Syria, and I look forward to earnest, bipartisan, forward-looking conversations about how we can reassert our constitutional role and protect our ongoing work to defeat terrorism and keep the homeland safe.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, Syria is such a mess. We are sometimes funding both sides in the same battle.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an L.A. Times piece titled: ''In Syria, militias armed by the Pentagon fight those armed by the CIA.''

[From the L.A. Times, Mar. 27, 2016]

IN SYRIA, MILITIAS ARMED BY THE PENTAGON FIGHT THOSE ARMED BY THE CIA

(By Nabih Bulos, W.J. Hennigan, Brian Bennett)

Syrian militias armed by different parts of the U.S. war machine have begun to fight each other on the plains between the besieged city of Aleppo and the Turkish border, highlighting how little control U.S. intelligence officers and military planners have over the groups they have financed and trained in the bitter five-year-old civil war.

The fighting has intensified over the last two months, as CIA-armed units and Pentagon-armed ones have repeatedly shot at each other while maneuvering through contested territory on the northern outskirts of Aleppo, U.S. officials and rebel leaders have confirmed.

In mid-February, a CIA-armed militia called Fursan al Haq, or Knights of Righteousness, was run out of the town of Marea, about 20 miles north of Aleppo, by Pentagon-backed Syrian Democratic Forces moving in from Kurdish-controlled areas to the east.

''Any faction that attacks us, regardless from where it gets its support, we will fight it,'' Maj. Fares Bayoush, a leader of Fursan al Haq, said in an interview.

Rebel fighters described similar clashes in the town of Azaz, a key transit point for fighters and supplies between Aleppo and the Turkish border, and on March 3 in the Aleppo neighborhood of Sheikh Maqsud.

The attacks by one U.S.-backed group against another come amid continued heavy fighting in Syria and illustrate the difficulty facing U.S. efforts to coordinate among dozens of armed groups that are trying to overthrow the government of President Bashar Assad, fight the Islamic State militant group and battle one another all at the same time.

''It is an enormous challenge,'' said Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Burbank), the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, who described the clashes between U.S.-supported groups as ''a fairly new phenomenon.''

''It is part of the three-dimensional chess that is the Syrian battlefield,'' he said.

The area in northern Syria around Aleppo, the country's second-largest city, features not only a war between the Assad government and its opponents, but also periodic battles against Islamic State militants, who control much of eastern Syria and also some territory to the northwest of the city, and long-standing tensions among the ethnic groups that inhabit the area, Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen.

''This is a complicated, multi-sided war where our options are severely limited,'' said a U.S. official, who wasn't authorized to speak publicly on the matter. ''We know we need a partner on the ground. We can't defeat ISIL without that part of the equation, so we keep trying to forge those relationships.'' ISIL is an acronym for Islamic State.

President Obama this month authorized a new Pentagon plan to train and arm Syrian rebel fighters, relaunching a program that was suspended in the fall after a string of embarrassing setbacks which included recruits being ambushed and handing over much of their U.S.-issued ammunition and trucks to an Al Qaeda affiliate.

Amid the setbacks, the Pentagon late last year deployed about 50 special operations forces to Kurdish-held areas in northeastern Syria to better coordinate with local militias and help ensure U.S.-backed rebel groups aren't fighting one another. But such skirmishes have become routine.

Last year, the Pentagon helped create a new military coalition, the Syrian Democratic Forces. The goal was to arm the group and prepare it to take territory away from the Islamic State in eastern Syria and to provide information for U.S. airstrikes.

The group is dominated by Kurdish outfits known as People's Protection Units or YPG. A few Arab units have joined the force in order to prevent it from looking like an invading Kurdish army, and it has received airdrops of weapons and supplies and assistance from U.S. Special Forces.

Gen. Joseph Votel, now commander of U.S. Special Operations Command and the incoming head of Central Command, said this month that about 80 percent of the fighters in the Syrian Democratic Forces were Kurdish. The U.S. backing for a heavily Kurdish armed force has been a point of tension with the Turkish government, which has a long history of crushing Kurdish rebellions and doesn't want to see Kurdish units control more of its southern border.

The CIA, meanwhile, has its own operations center inside Turkey from which it has been directing aid to rebel groups in Syria, providing them with TOW antitank missiles from Saudi Arabian weapons stockpiles.

While the Pentagon's actions are part of an overt effort by the U.S. and its allies against Islamic State, the CIA's backing of militias is part of a separate covert U.S. effort aimed at keeping pressure on the Assad government in hopes of prodding the Syrian leader to the negotiating table.

At first, the two different sets of fighters were primarily operating in widely separated areas of Syria—the Pentagon-backed Syrian Democratic Forces in the northeastern part of the country and the CIA-backed groups farther west. But over the last several months, Russian airstrikes against anti-Assad fighters in northwestern Syria have weakened them. That created an opening which allowed the Kurdish-led groups to expand their zone of control to the outskirts of Aleppo, bringing them into more frequent conflict with the CIA-backed outfits.

''Fighting over territory in Aleppo demonstrates how difficult it is for the U.S. to manage these really localized and in some cases entrenched conflicts,'' said Nicholas A. Heras, an expert on the Syrian civil war at the Center for a New American Security, a think tank in Washington. ''Preventing clashes is one of the constant topics in the joint operations room with Turkey.''

Over the course of the Syrian civil war, the town of Marea has been on the front line of Islamic State's attempts to advance across Aleppo province toward the rest of northern Syria.

On Feb. 18, the Syrian Democratic Forces attacked the town. A fighter with the Suqour Al-Jabal brigade, a group with links to the CIA, said intelligence officers of the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State know their group has clashed with the Pentagon-trained militias.

''The MOM knows we fight them,'' he said, referring to the joint operations center in southern Turkey, using an abbreviation for its name in Turkish, Musterek Operasyon Merkezi. ''We'll fight all who aim to divide Syria or harm its people.'' The fighter spoke on condition of anonymity.

Marea is home to many of the original Islamist fighters who took up arms against Assad during the Arab Spring in 2011. It has long been a crucial way station for supplies and fighters coming from Turkey into Aleppo.

''Attempts by Syrian Democratic Forces to take Marea was a great betrayal and was viewed as a further example of a Kurdish conspiracy to force them from Arab and Turkmen lands,'' Heras said.

The clashes brought the U.S. and Turkish officials to ''loggerheads,'' he added. After diplomatic pressure from the U.S., the militia withdrew to the outskirts of the town as a sign of good faith, he said.

But continued fighting among different U.S.-backed groups may be inevitable, experts on the region said.

''Once they cross the border into Syria, you lose a substantial amount of control or ability to control their actions,'' Jeffrey White, a former Defense Intelligence Agency official, said in a telephone interview. ''You certainly have the potential for it becoming a larger problem as people fight for territory and control of the northern border area in Aleppo.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. LUNA), a veteran and also a military spouse of one of our brave patriots who fought in Syria.

Mrs. LUNA. Mr. Speaker, I will start out by saying ISIS has been destroyed. A few hundred troops will not stop the next terrorist dot-com, and that is never going to end. I am, frankly, tired of hearing the sentiment on both sides that if we do not fight them there, they will come here. There are way too many countries to apply that logic.

If we are so concerned, then why is the majority of the U.S. Government stagnant on the southern border where it matters. Terrorists are literally walking in.

Better yet, if that is a true concern, then why did we leave billions of dollars in equipment during a botched withdrawal in Afghanistan? Do you really think terrorist dot-coms aren't going to use that equipment like ISIS did?

Peace is accomplished through superior firepower, strong leadership, and a plan, not blunders of failed foreign policy literally repeating itself.

We have zero strategic advantage and zero reason to be in Syria. In fact, they don't even want us there.

Al-Assad and Putin are tight. If you check out some of Russia's naval warships, they are actually hanging out in the western port of Syria. What we need to be focusing on is a bigger issue like China.

Syria is a very dangerous place for us to be leaving a few hundred Americans. We are better off sending those troops to places like South America, where we can build stronger and useful allies who will actually work with us.

Make no mistake, if we take China at their word, a near-peer fight is coming. It will require 100 percent of our military and more than the American people are going to pay for it. That is why I support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, if I can also add, to those of my colleagues that had mentioned the Kurds, our NATO ally Türkiye, who is not the best NATO ally, might I add, has deemed them a terrorist organization. After the takeback of Mosul, we actually turned our back on them after promising to recognize them as a nation at the United Nations.

□ 1500

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank the ranking member of the committee and the chairman of the committee, and my colleague from the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Florida, because this is a thoughtful initiative dealing with a question that Congress must confront, and that is the AUMF in its totality. We have had it since 2001, and I believe that is an important discussion.

I would like to distinguish, however, what I think is an area that does not warrant the removal of 900 of our troops. It is a tough area. It is an area in Syria where if you talk to Syrian Americans, Mr. Speaker, they want the people of Syria to be protected.

In my meetings with the President of Syria so many years ago, I had hoped for a new vision with Syria. I had hoped for an ally with Syrians.

Syrian Americans want democracy. In this instance, we are on the border in a very tough location, and I have to look at the humanitarian question. I have to look at the issue of the protection of women and children as well as the Kurds. The Kurds have no one but us, and the opposition has a strong ally as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I recognize the fact that we all want peace, but in this instance—also in the midst of the crisis of the earthquake—we knew the stories and heard the stories that the Syrians in that area were not getting help because of the conflict and fighting. That is tragic that we allow people to be desperate and need humanitarian aid because they cannot get the protection they need.

It is important for the stability of that area, for the protection of women and children, and to save lives that at this time we do not withdraw our troops.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to oppose the underlying legislation and to respect the gentleman for the discussion that I think we should have.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to my remaining time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 5 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues how many more remaining speakers they have and are they prepared to close?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 2 minutes remaining.

The gentleman from New York has 7½ minutes remaining.

The gentleman from Florida has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close.

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

Mr. Speaker, much of the discussion today has revolved around whether or not withdrawing from Syria will ignite some new ISIS caliphate. We have pointed out time and again to inspector general reports saying that is unlikely.

I am not entirely sure that our having troops in Syria deters ISIS more than it is a recruiting tool for ISIS.

Moreover, President Trump said that if Russia wanted to kill ISIS, then we should let them. I think there is wisdom in that.

Both Assad and Turkiye are in stronger positions today to put downward pressure on ISIS. Maybe if we weren't giving weapons to people shooting at Assad, then Assad would have every incentive to be able to engage ISIS in a way to ensure that it doesn't come back.

We have to also acknowledge Syria and Iraq are the two countries on the planet Earth where we have done the most to fund ISIS. We give weapons to these so-called moderate rebels—which I actually thought was an oxymoron—and it turns out that they are not so moderate. Sometimes the rebels we fund to go fight Assad turn around and raise the ISIS flag.

So it is quite silly to be saying we have to withdraw to stop ISIS when it is our very presence in Syria in some cases that has been the best gift to ISIS.

There are groups like al-Nusra and associated entities that are like our frenemies when they are in Syria, and then they cross over the border into Iraq and they become full-fledged jihadists posing a so-called threat to the homeland. There are 1,500 different groups in Syria, so today's friend is tomorrow's ISIS.

There is no real clear delineation as to what the enduring defeat of ISIS means.

Do we have to keep 900 Americans in Syria until the last heartbeat stops of the last person who holds some sympathy for ISIS?

I would certainly hope not. It would mean we would have to be there forever.

Israel has made their deal with Russia to be protected, the Kurds have made their peace with Assad to be protected, and what we see among this quagmire is that there is really not a role for the United States of America in Syria.

We are not a Middle Eastern power. We have tried this time and again to build a democracy out of sand, blood, and Arab militias, and time and again the work we do does not reduce chaos. Oftentimes it causes chaos, the very chaos that then subsequently leads to terrorism.

My colleagues and my staff who have served in Syria and my constituents tell me that often these anti-ISIS raids are just raids of local thugs and drug dealers who have some cousin that is in ISIS, and it is not appropriate to put Americans at risk.

Often our Americans are guarding these oil fields where the Iranians are sending Kamikaze drones, and I am shocked that we have not had escalatory accidents or even more casualties for our U.S. servicemembers.

So if this is all one big Georgetown School of Foreign Service essay exam about great power competition in Syria, then you go tell that to the parents of the Americans who have to sleep tonight in Syria, and who have to guard oil fields with Iranian drones coming at them, that they are necessary to preserve the balance of power. That is not true.

The Kurds have an opportunity to pave their path. Let's pave ours. And if we are so worried about threats to the homeland, how about we actually focus on our true point of vulnerability, which is not the emergence of some caliphate, it is the fact that terrorists are crossing our southern border on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. We seem far less concerned about that than we undeniably should be.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this resolution to reassert Congress' power to speak on these matters of war and peace. So often we come to the floor and we debate frivolities. This is one of the most important things we can be talking about: how we use the credibility of our fellow Americans, how we spend America's treasure, and how we spill the blood of our bravest patriots.

We have stained the deserts in the Middle East with enough American blood. It is time to bring our servicemembers home.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, there is one thing that is clear from this debate that I think we all can agree upon: We need to debate and look at AUMFs and that Congress must assert its authority that the Constitution has given us. I think that that is something that we can all agree and work together on.

Chairman MCCAUL and I had these conversations last year in the last Congress, and we will continue to have them on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I am sure, because it is important.

For me, the toughest votes that I have had as a Member of Congress is to determine whether or not we should send our women and men into combat. So I should not now, because it is a tough vote, yield that to anyone because it is my responsibility and our responsibility as Members of Congress to make that decision.

I, again, call on Members to oppose this measure as such a forced premature end to our presence and joint

efforts in northeast Syria because this not only threatens to give ISIS an opportunity to resurge and again use Syria as a launchpad for attacks throughout the region and beyond, but it also leaves our Syrian partners out to dry.

Any withdrawal of U.S. forces must be done in close coordination with our coalition allies and partners because our courageous Syrian opposition friends need to be a part of this, and we need to talk to them in a manner that ensures our national security.

I hope my colleagues will join me as I oppose this resolution and look forward to a future debate on AUMF issues.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let me say, it has been a good debate. There is nothing more important in this body than issues of war and peace and what we have been talking about today.

I was a counterterrorism Federal prosecutor after 9/11 and the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee when ISIS and the caliphate were at their strength with external operations and, yes, the southern border and the threat that that poses. We can talk about the merits some more, and I appreciate this discussion.

But at the heart of this under the War Powers Resolution privilege is, and I am quoting directly: '' . . . that United States Armed Forces are engaged in hostilities . . . without a declaration of war or specific statutory authorization, such forces shall be removed by the President if the Congress so directs. . . . ''

The authority is there, and if you look under the AUMF of 2001 '' . . . to prevent any future acts of international terrorism. . . . ''

I want to close with what President Trump said. I was a part of this decision with him on June 9, 2020. He said:

> Since October 7, 2001, United States Armed Forces have conducted counterterrorism operations against al-Qaida. Since August of 2014, they have targeted the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, otherwise known as ISIS, formerly known as al-Qaida in Iraq.
>
> These ongoing operations have been successful in seriously degrading ISIS capabilities in Syria and Iraq.

If we want to start having a debate without repealing and replacing the 2001 AUMF, then I would just argue to my colleagues that that would be the productive route to fix this issue of whether the United States should be present in the Middle East at all.

And to close, our Afghanistan hearing, what a mess we have left behind and what a threat that has become, as well.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the previous question is ordered on the concurrent resolution.

The question is on adoption of the concurrent resolution.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1515

PROTECTING SPEECH FROM GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 140.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GROTHMAN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 199 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of H.R. 140.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FLOOD) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1515

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 140) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit Federal employees from advocating for censorship of viewpoints in their official capacity, and for other purposes, with Mr. FLOOD in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GOLDMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 140, the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act. This legislation is clearly needed.

During the Oversight and Accountability Committee's February 8 hearing on protecting speech from government interference and social media bias, the Oversight and Accountability Committee learned just how easy it was for the Federal Government to influence a private company to accomplish what it constitutionally cannot, and that is limit the free exercise of speech.

At the hearing, we heard hours of witness testimony that revealed the extent to which Federal employees have repeatedly and consistently communicated with social media platforms to censor and suppress the lawful speech of Americans.

The hearing exposed just how much the Biden administration attempted to normalize a policy of Federal censorship. Biden administration officials have publicly called upon and privately coordinated with private-sector social media companies to ban specific accounts viewed as politically inconvenient.

During our February 8 hearing, one of our witnesses, a former FBI official and former Twitter employee, called for Federal legislation that would reasonably and effectively limit government interactions with private-sector platforms.

I agree with him. It is inappropriate and dangerous for the Federal Government to decide what lawful speech is allowed on a private-sector platform.

My bill, the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act, makes this type of behavior an unlawful activity for Federal officials to engage in, subjecting those who attempt to censor the lawful speech of Americans to disciplinary actions and monetary penalties.

The Federal Government should not be able to decide what lawful speech is allowed. We have the First Amendment for a very good reason. Federal officials, no matter their rank or resources, must be prohibited from coercing the private sector to suppress certain information or limit the ability of citizens to freely express their own views on a private-sector internet platform.

Former White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, for example, should not have been free to use her official authority to openly call for Facebook or any other social media company to ban specific accounts or types of speech from its platform. That was not an appropriate use of the authorities or resources of a senior executive branch official.

Further, Federal employees should not feel empowered to infringe on the independence of private entities by pressuring them to complicate or change their community guidelines and content modernization policies.

If the Biden administration needs to express its policy positions or political preferences, it has immense communication resources of its own through which to engage in the public square and offer its information and arguments.

If the administration feels it is losing the policy argument and the public's

confidence to stronger voices, the answer should never be to deploy the resources and power of the Federal Government to limit the speech of others.

The legislation before us today expands the current Federal employee political activity limitations of the Hatch Act to include a prohibition on Federal employees using their official authority to influence or coerce a private-sector internet platform to censor lawful speech.

This includes a prohibition on actions that would result in a private-sector platform suppressing, restricting, or adding disclaimers or alerts to any lawful speech posted on its platform by a person or entity.

Whether an ordinary citizen or an established media organization, all Americans have a right to utilize these new and powerful communication technology resources to share their views and opinions without Uncle Sam putting his thumb on the scale to tilt the debate in one direction.

Americans know that the First Amendment protects them from this kind of government censorship, protects them from Federal officials who seek to use their positions, their influence, and their resources to censor lawful speech.

The only thing that has changed is that the public square has moved online, with powerful new communication tools.

We are discussing this legislation today because Americans know that something is wrong, and they have asked Congress to fix it.

This bill is a targeted first step to address one clear part of the problem—the troubling development that Federal officials in the U.S. Government view it as their role to censor the speech of Americans.

I urge all my colleagues to support this very necessary legislation.

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

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill purports to protect free speech from government censorship. I agree, it is a great idea. It is such a good idea, in fact, that the Founding Fathers put it in the Constitution. It is called the First Amendment. We don't need a new bill to protect free speech because that is currently the law of the land, so we must ask ourselves: What is the point of this bill?

As our esteemed ranking member observed last night, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping probably don't make a habit of watching congressional proceedings, but we are willing to bet that this floor debate is of keen interest to Russian and Chinese agents bent on destabilizing our democracy and influencing our elections to serve their interests.

H.R. 140 would effectively allow these and other foreign malign actors—who have poured hundreds of millions of dollars into online propaganda to create chaos, mistrust, hate, and confusion for Americans—to continue using social media platforms unfettered to wreak havoc on our democratic institutions, including the integrity of our elections.

It would do so by undermining the only defense that we have against these operations, which is the ability of our national security, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies to warn social media platforms and the public about the deployment of counterfeit accounts, disinformation, and cyber surveillance by malign actors.

Now, I have no doubt that my Republican colleagues will claim that, of course, all of our national security apparatus is able to warn social media companies of foreign interference. But the way that this bill is written—even if that is the case, which it is not—they would have to wait 72 hours in order to do that. Seventy-two hours on the internet is a lifetime. Everything that they would want to accomplish would be accomplished within 72 hours.

Now, there are exceptions to that. So, clearly, my Republican colleagues recognize that there need to be exceptions, but those exceptions cover a very, very narrow window, a narrow scope of child pornography, human or drug trafficking, or the dissemination of classified information. Anything else that might not be lawful speech still has to wait 72 hours, far too long.

Now, Democrats acted in good faith to identify and correct these dangerous loopholes in our committee, but all of our amendments were voted down. Our Democratic and Republican colleagues attempted again to address the most dangerous flaws of this bill by submitting 64 amendments for floor consideration, but Republicans only allowed 10 to be considered here today. Of those, only one—one—was offered by a Democrat. So much for all the open floor rules that our Republicans have talked about.

Now, in fairness, Republicans accepted multiple minor amendments that were submitted late, and yet still rejected many of the timely amendments. Some of those Democratic amendments would have cured the obvious weaknesses and loopholes of this unnecessary bill.

There was one amendment that would allow our intelligence community, national security apparatus, and law enforcement to inform social media companies of national security threats.

Another amendment would allow them to inform the social media companies in order to combat domestic and international terrorism.

Another amendment would have addressed fraud targeting seniors.

Another amendment would have ensured the safety of children online. Another amendment prevented attacks on the U.S. Capitol.

One amendment even would have prevented the incitement of violence by Neo-Nazis and other hate groups.

They were all voted down. They even blocked a bipartisan amendment offered by Congresswoman HOULAHAN and Congresswoman MACE to ensure that law enforcement can still act immediately to prevent sexual assault.

By rejecting these commonsense amendments, Republicans have made it clear that this bill is not about protecting the rights and safety of all Americans. In fact, even though there is no evidence—and I will get to that in a minute—that warrants this bill, there is plenty of evidence that Russia interfered in our elections in 2016.

Now, what this bill does is it welcomes the same kind of election interference that we know Russia did in 2016 and that they continue to do today. Just like Donald Trump sided with Vladimir Putin over our intelligence communities in Helsinki in 2018, this bill and the Republicans who are sponsoring this bill are siding with Russia and Vladimir Putin over our national security apparatus and our law enforcement.

My Republican colleagues claim that they have put this bill forward because the FBI somehow colluded with Twitter to suppress the New York Post article on the Hunter Biden laptop story for all of 24 hours 3 weeks before the Presidential election, a private business decision based on the best information available at the time, and which had absolutely no discernible impact on the availability of the article nor the outcome of the election.

The chairman of this committee just referenced a hearing that we had where there were hours of testimony about censorship. Well, the only testimony I witnessed about censorship was former President Trump trying to take down tweets that he did not like on Twitter. There was no evidence—none at all—that the FBI or any other law enforcement agencies directed Twitter to take down any unlawful speech, and that includes the Hunter Biden laptop story.

Now, we can spend some time, although we don't need to, on why that story was both highly suspicious and also glaringly false, but the broader point is that this is a bill that seeks a solution where there is no problem. There is no protected speech that has been prohibited by the Federal Government, and there is no actual evidence of any censorship under the First Amendment.

We are basically trying to change the law to redefine censorship, and in doing so we would be opening up the floodgates to allow for all sorts of unprotected speech to be distributed throughout our social media world online because the government officials who are charged with making sure that our laws are not violated, that crimes are not committed will be handcuffed and unable to do their jobs for fear that they will be fined thousands of dollars if they are wrong.

I urge all my colleagues to stand with free speech and American democracy and oppose this dangerous bill.

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. BOEBERT).

Mrs. BOEBERT. Mr. Chairman, free speech is under attack here in America, the free United States of America. Putin is a thug, yes. China is a threat. But nothing—and I mean nothing—will bring America to its knees like the removal of our free speech, the cornerstone for our constitutional Republic.

America without free speech is like a phone without a charger. It is only a matter of time before it dies.

□ 1530

Attacks on free speech should not be seen with a partisan lens. Any attack on free speech is an attack on every American who gave their life so that you and I could live freely, so that you and I could express our thoughts, beliefs, and opinions without fear of retribution or persecution.

Mr. Chair, the sad reality is the Biden administration has decided to collude with Big Tech to silence the voice of the American people under the guise of misinformation.

We saw in our committee hearings it was demonstrated that the FBI colluded with Big Tech to silence Americans' free speech. The gentleman from New York says, well, it is Russia and China who are going to interfere with our elections. No, no, Democrats are doing just fine with that on their own. When they have the Federal Government working for them and their agenda to push that forward and silence Americans' free speech, they are doing just fine with election interference.

We have seen the polls that said if Americans knew about the Hunter Biden laptop from hell, the election outcome would have been different, and you all wanted that silenced so greatly.

Now let me ask you—we certainly have the Constitution; I would love to get my colleagues on the other side of the aisle a copy—who decides what is true or false? I certainly don't trust the Federal Government to make that distinction.

They were wrong about the Hunter Biden laptop. They were wrong about the vaccine mandates, about masks, about the Wuhan lab leak, wrong about shutting down churches and schools and businesses, and they are dead wrong to use their positions to attack Americans' free speech.

For the current resident of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, the only thing harder than climbing a flight of stairs, riding a bicycle, or reading a teleprompter seems to be telling the truth.

Free speech isn't just for kind speech or true speech or widely accepted speech, it is for all speech, and it is worth fighting for. I thank my friend, colleague, and chairman of the Oversight and Accountability Committee, Mr. COMER, for his work to preserve free speech in America.

The CHAIR. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I would like to respond briefly because there is all this talk about collusion between the Biden administration and the FBI and Twitter, and you can say it as many times as you want to say it, and it still doesn't make it so because there is no evidence of that.

In this country we rely on facts and evidence. We don't just rely on conclusory allegations including fake polls that don't support what you're trying to say.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LANDSMAN).

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to ensure that this debate is placed in an honest and important historical context.

In the 1930s and early 1940s, Hitler needed America out of his war. He used propaganda in this country to divide us and to keep us out of his war in Europe.

Pro-Hitler propaganda was all over the country, and it reached this body. We know this now. Members of Congress were in on it.

As a Jew, this is frighteningly similar to what is happening today.

One year ago, a new foreign adversary invaded Eastern Europe. Putin, like Hitler, wants us divided and isolated from his war. We must be clear-eyed about pro-Putin propaganda and who and why some intentionally, and others unintentionally, are promoting his will.

Why are we being asked to ban American officials from trying to stop propaganda from foreign adversaries like Putin?

Why are some proposing we leave Syria, which Putin wants?

Why is the call to abandon Ukraine continuing to emerge from some Members?

Remember, Hitler did this. He used Americans to spread his propaganda, and it cost millions their lives. Putin is doing the same thing.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on H.R. 140 and to call out any and all attempts to promote Putin's propaganda and will.

At the appropriate time I will offer a motion to recommit this bill to committee.

If the House Rules permitted, I would have offered the motion with an important amendment to the bill. The amendment would have delayed implementation of the bill until Federal agencies reported to Congress that this bill would have no negative impact on lawful activities to combat speech that incites violence, discriminatory speech, or domestic terrorism.

The bill as drafted is very unclear on those points. As I and my colleagues have pointed out, if passed, H.R. 140 will encourage the spread of foreign propaganda. It will also promote hateful, harmful, and violent content online, undermine democracy, and make us less safe.

We clearly need more information about the effects this bill would have on speech that incites violence, discrimination, domestic terrorism, and Federal agencies, including the Department of Justice and the intelligence community, are best positioned to provide that information. These critical issues must be addressed before this bill is implemented.

Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD the text of my amendment.

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE; REPORT ON NEGATIVE EFFECTS.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not take effect until the date that the head of each employing agency has submitted a report to Congress confirming that this Act and the amendments made by this Act will have no negative effect on lawful activities to combat—

(1) speech that incites violence;

(2) discriminatory speech; or

(3) domestic terrorism.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE).

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Chairman, free speech is the cornerstone of a free and thriving society.

Unfortunately, recent revelations made in the Twitter files show that free speech under the First Amendment is under attack—even by those within our own Federal Government.

Our Founding Fathers fought hard to enshrine the right to free speech in our Constitution. As social media companies and Big Tech corporations collude with rogue Federal officials to censor and deplatform members of our free society—including Members of Congress and other conservative voices—we must continue to do everything we can to fight to protect the First Amendment for everyone.

The Protecting Speech for Government Interference Act does exactly that. It is a victory against the modern-day attacks on our freedom, and it is a victory for all freedom-loving citizens of the United States who embrace and accept the right to free speech.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, I will point out one additional factor here that I think is very important for everyone to consider. When asked what evidence there is that the FBI colluded or directed Twitter to take down any speech, the chairman offered two emails from one specific FBI agent, which suggested that a couple of Twitter handles or tweets had given misleading information very specifically about the time, place, or manner of voting in the upcoming elections.

If my Republican colleagues believe that people should be able to lie on Twitter and provide disinformation about when, where, and how to vote, then they should absolutely support this bill. If that is all that you have, and that is all that you have cited, this bill is a complete waste of time and is totally unnecessary.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LOIS FRANKEL).

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Chairman, my, my, my. If you want to talk about protecting speech from government interference, let's talk about my home State of Florida because nowhere in this country is free speech more endangered than in the Sunshine State.

Florida: Where Republicans are erasing Black history and gender studies from our schools; where Republicans are threatening teachers and librarians with jail time—jail time—if they put books on their shelves that celebrate the likes of Rosa Parks or Roberto Clemente; Florida, where Republicans have made it illegal—illegal—for businesses to promote a culture of diversity, inclusion or respect; Florida, where progressive thinkers are being fired from colleges, and rightwing donors are being appointed to their boards.

It is Florida where Republicans actually punished Disney World because Disney World opposed the State's homophobic legislation. It is the great State of Florida where free speech is only free if you agree with our governor.

If you want to talk about protecting free speech from government interference, let's talk about Florida.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 140, Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act, and I applaud and appreciate Chairman COMER bringing this bill forward.

In a recent hearing held by the Oversight and Accountability Committee with former executives from Twitter, a clear and very disturbing pattern emerged: A coordinated effort between a privately owned social media giant and the Federal Government to suppress critical reporting ahead of the 2020 Presidential election.

Mr. Chairman, the Federal Government and its legions of unelected bureaucrats must not be the final decisionmaker of what information Americans can and cannot read.

The onus is on Congress to provide a way to effectively prevent Federal bureaucrats from suppressing lawful speech. This bill, H.R. 140, would do just that.

For almost 100 years, the Hatch Act has served as an important barrier against taxpayer-funded employees participating in political activities while on official time, and added suppression of free speech to its list of prohibited activities.

I urge strong support for this legislation, and I am encouraged by Chairman COMER's commitment to thoroughly investigate the ever-increasing encroachment by Big Tech companies into the privacy and First Amendment rights of millions of Americans.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, I have no idea what hearing the gentleman from North Carolina is referring to, because at the hearing with Twitter executives that I attended where the head of trust and safety was specifically asked if the FBI had given any information, instructions, or directions about the Hunter Biden New York Post story, he specifically said no, they did not receive any information.

If that is what you all think that you are basing this bill on, the actual facts in evidence are precisely the opposite of that.

It is preposterous that you continue to say that over and over and over as if it is true when the evidence is directly contradictory to that.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The CHAIR. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

□ 1545

Ms. JACKSON LEE. How grateful I am to be on the floor with the distinguished gentleman from New York and, of course, our distinguished ranking member, who has really laid out the parameters of this legislation. I certainly acknowledge the manager of this underlying legislation and offer my thoughts, with a little bit of consternation.

I cherish the Constitution and cherish the First Amendment. It is first for a reason: The Founding Fathers were wise enough, even with some of the failings of the Constitution, including the existence of slavery—but they were wise enough to understand that the core of democracy is, in fact, the freedom to express, the freedom to associate, the freedom to access, the freedom of religion. The First Amendment captures all of those elements.

I am somewhat lost to connect this legislation to the protection of free speech. I do know that this is part of the unending obsession that my friends on the other side of the aisle have with Mr. Biden, President Biden, and his son.

All investigations that are relevant and that are concerning the American people's integrity or national security are important, but how do you stretch this legislation to suggest that it is a question of free speech in the decisions being made to hold or not hold on purposes that may be business purposes, for all we know, Mr. Chair? It may not be free speech.

I would say that there are many other instances that free speech has been stifled. We cannot discuss the history of African Americans through the misrepresentation of critical race theory.

We are getting orders in our States like Texas to not engage in diversity, equity, and exclusiveness.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. This bill does not deal with free speech. This bill is a gotcha bill, and I ask my friends if we can, in a coordinated manner, discuss some of the important issues of the day that really need addressing.

I know that we will do the debt ceiling in months to come, but I would argue that we should protect the First Amendment, give everybody a right to freedom of speech and freedom of what they hear.

If they would join me on that, I would welcome their support in what true free speech is. We can hear, and we can speak. That is important.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. FRY).

Mr. FRY. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 140, Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act.

I thank Chairman COMER for his leadership and work to bring this issue to the floor, and I appreciate the hard work of the House Oversight Committee.

As promised, House Republicans have already opened the transparency floodgates, shedding light on a slew of this administration's failures and oversteps in their position of power, working against the American people.

Because of this work, the House Oversight Committee has deduced that Federal officials have been using their influence and position of authority to censor Americans on social media platforms.

This is a blatant threat to every single American's First Amendment rights, Mr. Chair. The Federal Government should not be able to nitpick what speech is or isn't allowed in this country or limit citizens from freely voicing their opinions, which includes on social media platforms.

Our government, Mr. Chair, and, indeed, our Constitution were created to protect those freedoms, not suppress them.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill and prohibit Federal employees from using their authority to influence and censor the lawful freedom of speech.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I remind you and everyone that the First Amendment does not protect all speech. It protects lawful speech.

For example, if you make a death threat over the internet, that is not protected speech. That is a Federal crime.

Let's remember, as we take on this absolutist view that all speech is free speech, that there are many restrictions under our laws about what is lawful speech and what is not.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), our constitutional legal scholar and esteemed and distinguished ranking member.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished gentleman from New York for his excellent leadership on this bill today on the floor.

The distinguished gentlewoman from Colorado posed a question that I have been hearing my Republican colleagues utter over the last several days: Who decides what is true or false? How can we know what is true or false? The gentlewoman confided her fear that the Federal Government would end up defining what is true or false.

Well, my, my, my. That is an absolute assault on the Constitution of the United States because we have an entire Federal judiciary, which is based on people getting up in court and swearing an oath under God or the Constitution to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The whole point of what Federal courts do is to determine what is true and what is false.

Yet, now, we have an entire political party, which is organizing itself around this radical, moral agnosticism, claiming that there is no way we can know the difference between whether an election is on Tuesday or whether an election is on Thursday, as Vladimir Putin wants to tell us through his sinister propaganda put out by the Internet Research Agency.

The whole judicial system is based on the difference between truth and lies.

In fact, the administrative system, do you want to get Social Security? Either you are 65, or you are not. That is a matter of positive fact.

You qualify for Medicare, or you don't. Truth or fact.

Yes, our system operates on the basis of truth or fact. Don't throw up your hands and say: ''Oh, well, we can't know what the truth is. We can't know what lies are. We don't want bureaucrats telling us what that is.''

That is what democratic government is. That is how we operate, by our commitment to the truth. That is why we all swear an oath here to uphold the Constitution. That is why people go to court and swear an oath to tell the truth.

Now, they take their shocking nihilism about what is true and what is false, and they convert it to this entire Congress. It all starts, of course, with January 6 and, before that, the Presidential election. It all starts with the big lie, Donald Trump's big lie.

They say: ''Well, who knows? Maybe he won. Maybe he didn't. You say Joe Biden is President. We say Donald Trump is President.'' Nonsense.

Mr. Chairman, 60 Federal and State courts rejected every claim of electoral fraud and corruption that they put forward. They don't have a single court that ever ruled in their favor.

Donald Trump lost that election by more than 7 million votes, 306–232 in the electoral college, so then their big lie now has to stretch all the way over January 6. We have to disbelieve the evidence of our own eyes, of our own ears. We saw them come and descend upon this Chamber, this Congress, wounding and injuring 150 of our police officers, breaking people's noses, breaking people's fingers, putting people in the hospital.

Already, they are back on the news with big lies, saying, ''No, no, no. It was a tourist visit,'' like these real tourists up here who have come to watch Representatives in the United States Congress say there is no difference between truth and lies, real tourists who are not beating the daylights out of our police officers.

So the lie now extends to January 6. Who knows what really happened? Yes, we all saw it. We saw the Vice President of the United States getting chased out of the Chamber with people yelling, ''Hang Mike Pence, hang Mike Pence.''

We had a bipartisan committee for a year and a half with more than a thousand witnesses, a hundred subpoenaed witnesses under oath, most of them from the Trump White House and the Trump family and Republicans testifying about Trump's plan to overturn the Presidential election and get Pence just to install him in office.

Yet, they are agnostic about: ''Well, the truth and lies, who knows what really happened? Who knows?'' Yes. Who knows.

They have a perfect bill for you, then. We call it the Putin protection act. That is what it is, the Putin protection act.

The distinguished gentleman from New York explained Putin spent millions of dollars in 2016 to pump propaganda, electoral sabotage, into our political system. He did. Every security agency in the country told us that. We got a bipartisan report from the Senate saying it.

They are agnostic about it. When it comes to Putin, they see no evil, hear no evil, none of it. But we know that it happened.

That is Putin's plan. Why? Putin cannot beat America politically. He can't beat us economically. He can't beat us militarily. Putin can't beat us philosophically. There is one thing he has—the internet. Why? Because we are a wide open country. He says: Let's take advantage of it. Let's go on their social media platform. We will put people who oppose Putin on the internet in jail—which they do. If you send a tweet against Putin, you are going to jail.

If you put out a tweet against his filthy imperialist war, which some of them support in Ukraine, if you put out a tweet against that in Russia, you are going to jail.

He says: Let's take advantage of America's openness. We will take advantage of them, and we are going to put out propaganda. We will lie about when the election is. We will say it is on Thursday when it is on Tuesday. We will tell people to go vote next week, whatever.

That is the genesis of this whole thing. We have our security agencies who alert social media. They say they are putting up fraudulent information on your platform.

Now they come forward and say that the Democrats are trying to—what?—tell the truth. Not Democrats, the government, our paid Federal Government agencies, are trying to tell the social media when foreign malign actors like Russia, China, and Iran are trying to interfere in our elections.

That is what this is about—Putin protection act. They want Putin and Xi to run free over our platforms, and then they want to fine Federal Government employees thousands of dollars if they alert our government to what foreign malign actors are doing.

The whole justification for it is their silly obsession with Hunter Biden's laptop and this New York Post story, which was taken down by Twitter for 1 day 3 weeks before the election as an exercise of their private decision-making.

Then Elon Musk buys Twitter, and he fires six journalists because they disagree with him. They have no problem with that because, of course, it is a private entity. They can do whatever they want. They want to fire journalists, they fire them. They want to take the story down for an hour or a day, they can do that.

Then they want to turn that into the basis for handcuffing the entire Government of the United States so we can't protect ourselves against Vladimir Putin and President Xi? Give me a break.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chair, I also rise to speak in favor of H.R. 140, the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act.

It is unfortunate that this bill is necessary today. We all know why it is necessary.

In the past, the government weighed in on Twitter and Facebook to lean on them to remove certain posts regarding news stories regarding eventually President Biden's son and his interactions with Ukraine, as well as perhaps interactions with regard to China.

The reason the government weighed in this time is because they wanted to make sure that President Biden won the election.

This is a dangerous thing. There is a certain type of government in which the government weighs in on private businesses. The private businesses are able to stay wealthy. The owners of these businesses are allowed to remain billionaires, provided they play ball with orders from the government.

In other words, you give up your freedom; you maintain your wealth. I am afraid that is the type of country we are heading toward.

The scariest thing about this speech is when we looked at the Pew Research Center and found that 65 percent of Democrats apparently support some form of censorship by the government, which is really a scary thing as to where we head.

Soon the day may come in which a majority of Americans—I don't know the breakdown of that 65 percent, how many were young Americans and old

Americans. Apparently, our young Americans are being educated that this is okay, that the government knows best.

Apparently, whether it is on political matters like we had going on with Hunter Biden, I suppose also with regard to things like COVID and treatments for COVID, whatever it is, everybody, now we can marshal the big corporations of America and, under threats of who knows what, we can ask these big businesses, which don't exactly have monopolies but, as a practical matter, you have to use them.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. As a practical matter, you have to use them, and we say: Okay. You are worth a billion dollars, to those who own these companies, but we want you to say such and such.

It is very scary that the type of young people who apparently are voting Democrat in elections don't have a problem with this.

That is why this bill is introduced today. We want to make sure that, in the future, when the government has a preferred opinion, be it on a potential President's relative, be it on a certain treatment for a disease, that the American public will be able to also get the other side of the story, the side of the story the government doesn't want you to know.

That is why it is so scary that the Democratic Party is opposing this and why it is so scary that apparently their base, if this opinion is right, doesn't have a problem with a bunch of smart government bureaucrats deciding which version of the truth you are going to get.

I realize it is difficult, apparently, where your base voter is, for the Democratic Party to vote for this bill.

□ 1600

I hope you vote for it anyway and I hope you correct what the young people have apparently been getting in school, that in a free country, one of the things we should all have is the ability to say what we want. The news you are getting should not be vetted by the government.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I must commend my colleagues. Everyone is really consistent on the talking points that must have been circulated. Of course, they are not based on evidence, but everybody does seem to believe that somehow the FBI was censoring people on Twitter. Of course, those of us on the Oversight Committee who have sat through the hearings have not seen any of that.

I am also a little bewildered now because what is basically coming out is that my friends on the other side of the aisle apparently don't support law enforcement doing their jobs, don't support the Intelligence Committee doing their jobs to protect our national security, to protect our elections, to protect our democracy. Instead, they want to provide an opportunity for alternative facts to get around the internet as fast and as quickly and as unfettered as possible, but I am here to tell you that we Democrats fully support the First Amendment.

Every single one of us observes, adheres, cherishes the First Amendment. That is, in fact, part of the reason why we in the minority on the Oversight Committee have asked the chairman to do some oversight of Michael Cohen, the former President's former personal lawyer, who was jailed in solitary confinement for 16 days by the Trump administration because they did not want him to publish a book.

That is a prohibition on our free speech. That is censorship. That is a violation of free speech. If we want to talk about free speech, that is what we should be talking about, not some phantom issue that doesn't exist about the FBI trying to make sure that our elections remain free and fair and without foreign interference.

Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MOOLENAAR). The gentleman from New York has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I have now been here for about an hour. I have yet to hear any evidence at all that the FBI has, in any way, censored any one on social media, on Twitter, or otherwise.

What I have heard is a private company has temporarily restricted a false article from appearing on its website based on serious suspicions of its derivation and, in fact, the same basis for that false article, a hard drive, was proven subsequently to have been altered.

The basis of what we are talking about underlying their concern was false, but nevertheless it was still able to be sent around the internet with ample time, and the social media site even apologized for doing it.

This is a bill that, once again, is a solution searching for a problem. Our First Amendment covers everything that is in here, but the effect of this is it would allow foreign countries to jeopardize our national security, to jeopardize our elections, and to, once again, interfere in our democratic process.

That is the only thing that this bill accomplishes and it should be voted down.

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, the problem I face is that the Federal employees see it as part of their job to censor Americans' First Amendment protected speech on social media and internet platforms, especially if the speech is misaligned or inconvenient for the administration's political priorities.

This legislation fixes and addresses this problem head-on with a narrow prohibition on the activities of civil servants.

This bill expands the Hatch Act to prohibit Federal employees from using their official authority to censor lawful speech on third-party online platforms. This is the first step toward important work that should be done in this space of addressing the challenges of preserving free speech on the internet for all Americans.

I thank Judiciary Committee Chairman JIM JORDAN and Energy and Commerce Committee Chair CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS for their early support in crafting this very important legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this necessary bill.

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

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of the Rules Committee Print 118–1. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 140

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON FEDERAL EMPLOYEE CENSORSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBCHAPTER VIII—PROHIBITION ON FEDERAL EMPLOYEE CENSORSHIP

''§ 7381. Policy regarding Federal employee censorship

''It is the policy of the Congress that employees acting in their official capacity should neither take action within their authority or influence to promote the censorship of any lawful speech, nor advocate that a third party, including a private entity, censor such speech.

''§ 7382. Prohibition on Federal employee censorship

''(a) IN GENERAL.—An employee may not—

''(1) use the employee's official authority to censor any private entity, including outside of normal duty hours and while such employee is away from the employee's normal duty post; or

''(2) engage in censorship of a private entity—

''(A) while the employee is on duty;

''(B) in any room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties by an individual employed or holding office in the Government of the United States or any agency or instrumentality thereof;

''(C) while wearing a uniform or official insignia identifying the office or position of the employee;

''(D) while using any vehicle owned or leased by the Government of the United States or any agency or instrumentality thereof; or

''(E) while using any information system or information technology (as defined under section 11101 of title 40).

''(b) EXCEPTIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNCTIONS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an employee from engaging in lawful actions within the official authority of such employee for the purpose of exercising legitimate law enforcement functions, including activities to—

''(A) combat child pornography and exploitation, human trafficking, or the illegal transporting of or transacting in controlled substances; and

''(B) safeguarding, or preventing, the unlawful dissemination of properly classified national security information.

''(2) REPORTING.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 72 hours before an employee exercises a legitimate law enforcement function to take any action to censor any lawful speech (in this paragraph referred to as a 'censorship action'), but not including any such action relating to activities described under subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1), the head of the agency that employs the employee shall submit, to the Office of Special Counsel and the chair and ranking member of the committees of Congress described under subparagraph (B), a report that includes—

''(i) an overview of the action, or actions, to be taken, including a summary of the action being taken and the rationale for why a censorship action is necessary;

''(ii) the name of the entity which the action is being requested of;

''(iii) the person and entity targeted by the censorship action, including the associated name or number of any account used or maintained by the entity and a description of the specific speech content targeted;

''(iv) the agency's legal authority for exercising the law enforcement function;

''(v) the agency employee or employees involved in the censorship action, including their position and any direct supervisor;

''(vi) a list of other agencies that have been involved, consulted, or communicated with in coordination with the censorship action; and

''(vii) a classified annex, if the agency head deems it appropriate.

''(B) COMMITTEES.—The committees of Congress described under this subparagraph are the following:

''(i) The Committee on Oversight and Accountability, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

''(ii) The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

''(C) CLARIFICATION OF OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The reporting requirements in this paragraph do not apply to the Office of Special Counsel's advisory and enforcement functions under subchapter II of chapter 12.

''(c) PENALTIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An employee who violates this section shall be subject to—

''(A) disciplinary action consisting of removal, reduction in grade, debarment from Federal employment for a period not to exceed 5 years, suspension, or reprimand;

''(B) an assessment of a civil penalty not to exceed $1,000; or

''(C) any combination of the penalties described in subparagraph (A) or (B).

''(2) APPLICATION TO SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.—Paragraph (1)(B) shall be applied by substituting '$10,000' for '$1,000' for any employee who is—

''(A) paid from an appropriation for the White House Office; or

''(B) appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate;

''(d) ENFORCEMENT.—This section shall be enforced in the same manner as subchapter III of this chapter.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this subchapter—

''(1) the term 'censor' or 'censorship' means influencing or coercing, or directing another to influence or coerce, for—

''(A) the removal or suppression of lawful speech, in whole or in part, from or on any interactive computer service;

''(B) the addition of any disclaimer, information, or other alert to lawful speech being expressed on an interactive computer service; or

''(C) the removal or restriction of access of any person or entity on an interactive computer service generally available to the public, unless such person or entity is engaged in unlawful speech or criminal activities on such service;

''(2) the term 'employee' has the meaning given that term in section 7322;

''(3) the term 'interactive computer service' has the meaning given that term in section 230(f) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 230(f)); and

''(4) the term 'lawful speech' means speech protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBCHAPTER VIII—PROHIBITION ON FEDERAL EMPLOYEE CENSORSHIP

''7381. Policy regarding Federal employee censorship.

''7382. Prohibition on Federal employee censorship.''.

(c) INCLUDING CENSORSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER JURISDICTION OF OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL.—Strike paragraph (1) of section 1216(a) of title 5, United States Code, and insert the following:

''(1) political activity and censorship prohibited under subchapter III and subchapter VIII of chapter 73, relating to political and censorship activities, respectively, by Federal employees;''.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act or any amendment made by this Act should be interpreted as prohibiting a lawful action by a Federal agency to enforce a Federal law or regulation, to establish or enforce the terms and conditions of Federal financial assistance, or to prohibit a Federal employee from using an official Federal account on an interactive computer service to communicate an official policy position, and relevant information, to the public, or provide information through normal press and public affairs relations.

(e) SEVERABILITY.—If any provision of this Act or any amendment made by this Act, or the application of a provision of this Act or an amendment made by this Act to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act, and the application of the provisions to any person or circumstance, shall not be affected by the holding.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order, except those printed in House Report 118–7. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. CLYDE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 6, after line 16, insert the following and redesignate accordingly:

''(e) REPORT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 240 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights and the Office of Special Counsel, shall submit to the committees of Congress described in subsection (b)(2)(B) a report evaluating the compliance by the Federal Government with this section, including a description of any action by the head of an agency or department in the executive branch to—

''(A) consult with any third parties about censorship by employees in the executive branch; or

''(B) engage in any activity prohibited under this section.

''(2) SUNSET.—This subsection shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this subsection.''

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Chair, I rise today to speak in support of my amendment to the Protecting Free Speech from Government Interference Act.

As we all know, the First Amendment is the foundation of our Republic. It protects our right to speak, to worship, and to express ourselves without fear of government retribution.

Unfortunately, we have seen an alarming trend of government officials attempting to censor and silence viewpoints with which they disagree, which are frequently conservative viewpoints.

This censorship often takes the form of using private companies to do the government's bidding, otherwise known as government-by-proxy censorship. The government can pressure or coerce these companies to silence certain viewpoints, effectively bypassing the protections afforded by the First Amendment. This is an egregious violation of our constitutional rights and it must be stopped.

That is why I am proud to offer my amendment, which will strengthen the Protecting Free Speech from Government Interference Act.

My amendment requires the Attorney General to submit an annual report to Congress evaluating compliance with this Act by Federal agencies and employees in the executive branch, including any instances of censorship.

My amendment will shine a light on the Orwellian practice of using taxpayer dollars to suppress speech through leveraging private companies and hold the government accountable

for any attempts to circumvent Americans' First Amendment freedoms.

I thank Chairman COMER for his leadership on this critical issue and for his support of my amendment. Together, we can make sure that the government is held accountable and that our fundamental rights are protected.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting my amendment and the Protecting Free Speech from Government Interference Act.

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

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment that is offered at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, we hear that the gentleman is concerned about the censorship of conservative viewpoints on social media. But we don't hear the same concern when Elon Musk takes over Twitter and immediately takes down the accounts of six journalists that he does not like. There was no other explanation for it, but it certainly sounds exactly like what my Republican colleagues are talking about, horrific censorship on Twitter. But somehow, that is okay.

So the only, then, explanation we get is, oh, well, it wasn't the Federal Government who told Mr. Musk to do that. Yet, it was the Federal Government who told Twitter to—I don't know—stall the Hunter Biden story or whatever we did, whatever they were alleged to do.

Well, the facts don't bear that out. There was actually no effort by the FBI to censor any journalist, any New York Post story, or anything else. But we continue to hear that over and over and over. Unfortunately, the facts don't actually match up with it.

Now, Twitter can do whatever it wants; it is a private company. So we need to have some sort of nexus to the Federal Government. Unfortunately, the facts and the evidence that has so far been developed by the Republican majority on the Oversight and Accountability Committee do not support any of these allegations.

What this amendment will do is continue their effort to undermine our Federal law enforcement, because what this amendment will do is create more bureaucracy, more reports, more time wasted on doing things other than keeping Americans safe and protecting our national security and our democracy.

This is nothing but an effort to have our good men and women in Federal law enforcement be distracted from doing the jobs that they are supposed to do, which is to protect our elections and our democracy from foreign interference, rather than write lengthy reports.

For that reason, I oppose this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Chair, the gentleman from New York's remarks in opposition to my amendment are puzzling.

I think my commonsense amendment should pass with broad bipartisan support as it simply requires transparency and accountability via the mechanism of a report to Congress. That is not a novel idea. It is actually a very good one. It keeps the average American citizen informed.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment.

The Protecting Free Speech from Government Interference Act ensures that this new prohibition on government censorship is enforced in the same way as the Hatch Act.

My colleague, Mr. CLYDE's, amendment provides much-needed oversight of the implementation and enforcement of this new prohibited Federal employee activity. The amendment's required annual reports by the Attorney General—to be generated in consultation with the Office of Special Counsel—will help Congress evaluate the governmentwide compliance with this new prohibition.

□ 1615

The Clyde amendment will help create transparency and provide Congress valuable insight into any violations of this prohibition of government censorship. I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia working with the committee on his amendment, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

I thank my friend from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) for his support for my amendment to the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act.

It is clear that this should be a bipartisan issue, and we must come together to protect Americans' fundamental right of free speech.

My Democrat colleague on the other side of the aisle's opposition to my amendment is disappointing but not surprising. The Democrats have consistently shown that they are willing to use any means necessary to censor speech with which they disagree, whether it is through government officials or private companies. My amendment simply requires transparency and accountability from the executive branch, and I fail to see how anyone can be opposed to that.

Again, I urge all my colleagues to support my amendment to the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act. We must take a stand against government-by-proxy censorship and ensure that the First Amendment is upheld for all Americans.

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

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, it is funny to hear about how the Democrats are colluding in order to censor free speech on social media when the administration in control of the Federal Government at the time of the alleged horrific censorship that my Republican colleagues are citing was a Republican administration.

It was the administration of President Donald Trump in October of 2020 when the Hunter Biden laptop story was paused for 24 to 48 hours. Yet, somehow, I gather that the FBI is supposed to be a Democratic-leaning organization and agency doing the Democrats' bidding. Well, you could have fooled me back in 2016 when the Director of the FBI announced 10 days before the election that he was reopening an investigation into the Democratic candidate for President while an investigation was also ongoing into the Republican candidate for President and yet that remained quiet. Explain to me how that is the FBI doing the bidding of the Democrats.

This whole thing, this amendment and this bill, have no place in this Congress. The amendment would just simply add more burdensome bureaucracy to what is already a fruitless effort of a bill. Therefore, we oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. COMER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 8, strike ''and'' and insert ''or''.

Page 3, line 9, strike ''safeguarding, or preventing,'' and insert ''safeguard, or prevent''.

Page 3, line 10, insert a comma after ''of''.

Page 6, line 14, strike the semicolon and insert a period.

Page 6, strike lines 15 and 16 and insert the following:

''(d) ENFORCEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) and subsection (c)(2), this section shall be enforced in the same manner as subchapter III of this chapter.

''(2) APPLICATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including section 1215(b), the Special Counsel may, in lieu of sending a report to the President under section 1215(b), seek civil monetary penalties under subsection (c)(2) pursuant to section 1215(a). This paragraph shall not be construed to limit or otherwise affect the President's authority to enforce any disciplinary action against an employee described under subsection (c)(2).''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My amendment makes minor enhancements to this important piece of

legislation that were brought to our attention after our markup.

First, this amendment makes a few technical drafting edits. Second, this amendment clarifies the enforcement section of this legislation with the conforming edit to ensure that the U.S. Office of Special Counsel has the specific authority necessary to carry out the enforcement provisions this legislation establishes for senior government officials.

With this technical change to the special counsel's enforcement capabilities, we are ensuring that the real penalties we have introduced for senior officials can be carried out. We must ensure that senior officials will not escape accountability when they engage in government censorship prohibited by H.R. 140. This will help deter government employees.

Further, this amendment clarifies that the OSC can enforce a civil monetary fine of up to $10,000 against senior officials, as clearly intended by the text we reported out of committee.

Mr. Chair, I ask for my colleagues' full support of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is a technical amendment. It doesn't make much of a difference to what is already a bad bill.

But it is interesting to me that this amendment was allowed to come to the floor, and so many amendments from the Democrats, which actually made meaningful substantive changes to this bill, were not allowed to come to the floor.

Now, we have heard a lot over the past 2 months of this Congress about how the Republican majority is going to do things differently, that they are going to have open rules so that everybody can offer amendments on the floor. But what is clear is that the open rules, I suppose, only apply to the Republican Party. They don't apply to the Democratic Party.

What is upsetting about that, at least for me personally, is I had an amendment that I had also offered in the Rules Committee last night to include an exception not just for child trafficking, child exploitation, human trafficking, and drug trafficking, but also for foreign interference in our elections so that our law enforcement could actually do the work that is needed to protect our democracy, to protect our elections.

This is not some fanciful idea that this bill is actually addressing, a nonexistent problem where the FBI is not actually even censoring people. No, that amendment had to do with two charged indictments of Russians in 2016 for interfering in our election. There is actual evidence to support that amendment. Yet, my Republican colleagues did not even allow it to come to the floor.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chair, I just want to echo the very important point you just made. We have a sequence of trivial amendments that have been added by the majority, and they refuse to consider what I think is the central amendment that this legislation would need in order for it not to be an utter disaster for America if this legislation were to pass.

Now, they concede implicitly by their legislation that there is a problem with saying we are not going to allow any government officials to get in touch with the social media, because they create an exception for certain things: for child pornography, for human trafficking, and for drug dealing. And I agree with all of those. But are those more important and more grave than the national security interests of the United States itself?

What about assaults on our elections, which go right to the heart of national security? What about assaults on our energy security structure? What about assaults on our power structure? Not only do they not build that into their bill; they will not even allow us to put it on the floor for an open vote among all of our colleagues in Congress.

Why won't they do that? Well, because if there is a national security exception to their Putin protection act, at that point, the exception swallows the rule, because the rule is let's let Putin and Xi and every autocrat, theocrat, and dictator on Earth run amuck on our social media and not allow our government officials to say anything about it. That is the effect of this legislation.

I thank Mr. GOLDMAN for yielding.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I just want to reiterate this. This bill protects the First Amendment rights for American citizens. My colleagues would like us to believe that by protecting an Americans' right to say whatever lawful speech they want, we are empowering Russia and China. It is just not true.

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

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Chair, I think this amendment and the chairman's comments are very telling. Of course nobody objects to protecting the free, lawful speech of any American from the Federal Government. That is the First Amendment. But what this bill does is it creates a tremendous barrier to our law enforcement intelligence community and national security apparatus from protecting Americans from all sorts of illicit, malign activity that occurs on social media.

So by preventing us from bringing our substantive, thoughtful amendments to the floor for a vote, what this bill is ultimately doing, the net effect of it, even if it is not the intent of it, is that it is allowing foreign actors to interfere in everything that happens in our democracy, including our elections.

Now, why does this matter? Why would it matter? Well, because we all know the special counsel definitively proved that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to help Donald Trump win. And the Trump campaign welcomed that interference and used it for their benefit. If you disagree, go look at Special Counsel Mueller's report. That is what is called conclusions based on evidence, not what this bill is.

Mr. Chair, for that reason, we oppose this amendment as well as the underlying bill itself.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, beginning on line 25, strike paragraph (1) and insert the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an employee from engaging in lawful actions against unlawful speech within the official authority of such employee for the purpose of exercising legitimate law enforcement functions.''.

Page 3, line 15, after ''function'', insert ''under paragraph (1)''.

Page 3, line 16, strike ''lawful'' and insert ''unlawful''.

Page 3, line 17, strike ''but'' and all that follows through line 24 and insert the following: ''and consistent with subparagraph (D), the head of the agency that employs the employee shall submit, to the Office of Special Counsel and the chair and ranking member of the committees of Congress described under subparagraph (B), a report that includes—''.

Page 5, after line 19, insert the following:

''(D) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN ACTIONS.—

''(i) Any censorship action relating to combating child pornography and exploitation, human trafficking, or the illegal transporting of or transacting in controlled substances shall be exempt from the reporting requirement under this paragraph.

''(ii) With respect to any censorship action related to safeguarding, or preventing the unlawful dissemination of, properly classified national security information, subparagraph (A) shall be applied by substituting 'Not later than 72 hours after' for 'Not later than 72 hours before'.''.

Page 5, line 6, before ''and the'', insert ''the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence,''.

Page 5, line 11, before ''and'', insert ''Select Committee on Intelligence,''.

Page 7, line 14, strike ''and''.

Page 7, beginning on line 16, strike ''Constitution.''.'' and insert ''Constitution; and''.

Page 7, after line 17, insert the following:

''(5) the term 'unlawful speech' means speech not protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Chair, I am grateful that the chairman and lead sponsor will, I anticipate, lend his support to this amendment. It will close a loophole that would defeat the purpose of the bill. In fact, absent this amendment, the bill would inadvertently validate the very conduct this bill aims to stop.

Emerging evidence, most notably the Twitter files, depicts what one expert has termed the largest censorship program in U.S. Government history. On the pretext of protecting election infrastructure or enforcing the Foreign Agents Registration Act, personnel of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, CISA; the Department of Homeland Security, DHS; the FBI, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence; the CIA; the Global Engagement Center from the State Department, which most Americans had never heard of; and even the CDC practically embedded themselves with operators of social media platforms and corporate media to manage and curate Americans' public discourse, to induce Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, et cetera, to take down lawful and First Amendment protected speech of Americans time and again and again.

In so doing, these omnipresent Federal agencies established working relationships with a small cadre of supposed internet research groups, affiliated in some cases with well-known universities and NGOs, but loaded with political partisans, who purported to create black-box analytical efforts to identify social media accounts that amplified content from Russia.

But these purported experts, like Hamilton 68, didn't identify Russian-amplifying bot networks, as they claimed, through some sophisticated algorithm. They just found a bunch of American Trump supporter accounts and labeled them that. And for months and months, as they became a trusted source for media that cited Hamilton 68, Twitter ''trust and safety executives'' like Yoel Roth stood quietly by knowing that Hamilton 68 was a fraud.

□ 1630

Guess what? Follow the money. Part of the working relationship between the agencies and the research groups was funding that flowed by the millions in government grants. Each day, it becomes clearer that between these three pillars—Federal security agencies, media operators, and internet analysts—a new Washington revolving door has emerged to facilitate the same people moving between them and profiting from the scam.

The base text of this bill would allow exactly this process to continue, but there is never a legitimate law enforcement purpose for Federal agents to take down speech that the First Amendment protects.

We have now seen agencies of the Federal Government once again targeting Americans for their political views. In the government's attempt to stop Russian misinformation, they have targeted and attacked Americans for simply voicing opinions that they disfavor. Their actions violate our First Amendment principles, and Congress must take this action to stop it.

The amendment will address the flaw in the bill, but it is odd to me that Democrats who used to so revere the First Amendment are no longer concerned about it. In Lamont v. Postmaster General in 1965, which Democrats lauded, the Court held that Americans have a right to receive communist propaganda from abroad. The Democrats loved it then. Now, they don't even want Americans to be able to post their views on social media. How abhorrent.

We will fix it. This bill will fix it. The amendment will fix the bill.

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

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, my esteemed colleague from North Carolina says that lawful speech on the internet should never be prohibited by Federal agencies, by the government. We agree. It is called the First Amendment. It has existed long before H.R. 140 was written.

What H.R. 140 does and what this amendment does even further is it makes it impossible for unlawful speech to actually be policed. What the private companies do not have is access to the intelligence agency information, national security information, law enforcement information that can determine whether or not the speech that is on the internet is being used in furtherance of crimes or is in and of itself a crime.

They recognize this because there is an exception. There is an exception to this prohibition on law enforcement agencies or Federal Government agencies from actually communicating with social media.

There is an exception for child pornography, human trafficking, and drug trafficking. I gather this amendment also deals with obscenity, but I think it is trying to close this loophole.

Clearly, there is a recognition that law enforcement needs to coordinate to some degree with our social media sites. What this law does is that, but for those very narrow categories, law enforcement has to wait 72 hours.

Everything is around the internet and over again many times within 72 hours. It is an exception that eats the rule. There is no way that law enforcement can do its job because of this bill.

One would say if you were correct and if there were actual prohibition and censorship of lawful speech that was going on, and if you could show us evidence of that, then maybe one could imagine that a congressional bill was warranted and necessary. Of course, we have none of that. All we have are allegations without any facts or evidence.

We have people who have clearly not read the Twitter files talking about the Twitter files. What we don't even hear about is all the evidence that Twitter algorithms actually promoted conservative voices more than they promoted Democratic voices.

If this amendment, as I understand it, restricts law enforcement's ability to coordinate with social media sites to protect the public, prosecute crimes, investigate crimes, protect our national security, and protect our infrastructure, then I oppose this amendment because it makes a bad bill even worse.

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

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Chair, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment.

The Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act prohibits Federal employees from censoring lawful speech while ensuring that the government can still protect American citizens and enforce the law. It does this by narrowly exempting lawful actions to exercise legitimate law enforcement functions from the prohibition on censorship.

These are lawful actions to suppress unlawful speech, such as child pornography, the illegal transportation of controlled substances, or preventing the unlawful dissemination of properly classified national security information.

My colleague's amendment further clarifies the initial intent of this exemption while preserving the bill's reporting requirement to provide Congress timely reports on any lawful actions taken by agencies under this exemption.

Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague for his engagement on this important issue.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, as the designee of Congresswoman VIRGINIA

FOXX, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 19, strike ''; or'' and insert '';''.

Page 2, line 22, strike the period and insert ''; or''.

Page 2, after line 22, insert the following:

''(F) while the employee is engaged in activities for which official time is authorized under section 7131 of this title.''

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise to offer Dr. FOXX' amendment to prohibit censorship while acting as an employee performing activities under taxpayer-funded time. We want to prohibit censorship while you are acting as an agent of the Federal Government using taxpayer dollars.

Public-sector unions already make liberal use of the so-called official time policy—in my opinion, to the detriment of the American people. That is not what this is about.

However, it is important to get a context here of how much time we are talking about. Take the Department of the Treasury, which houses the IRS. In fiscal year 2019—going back a few years—employees spent nearly 350,000 hours receiving taxpayer funds while doing and conducting union activities.

I know in our office, especially during the pandemic, we often had to intervene with the IRS on behalf of our constituents who couldn't get their refunds back and couldn't get answers. Yet, 350,000 hours were used by these same people.

Mr. Chair, that is the equivalent of 40 years of time in 1 year conducting union activities. Those are the 350,000 hours that the employees at the IRS are not answering taxpayer inquiries.

Let's look at the Department of Veterans Affairs. VA employees spent over 500,000 hours in 1 year wheeling and dealing for their own union interests while our Nation's veterans stood in line. We have heard about the waiting list and the backlog. I don't know, maybe we can do something with that 500,000 hours, which is 57 years accumulated in 1 year.

We are not here to talk about these excesses. We are here to talk about censorship being conducted while on official government time. While I object to the entire practice, I hope even my colleagues who support taxpayer-funded lobbying can agree that those employees should be expressly prohibited from censoring the American people while on official time. That is it.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, it is unclear to me at all why this amendment is here because Federal officials are not allowed to censor lawful speech in their official capacity, which is also what the bill says. This is a completely redundant, unnecessary amendment, I suppose designed to rail against public service unions.

I do find it odd that the gentleman refers to the IRS not being able to respond to calls from Americans seeking help with their taxes when one of the very first bills that the majority passed would have eliminated the increase in IRS employees that was passed as part of the IRA last summer specifically so that the IRS would have enough employees to respond quickly to Americans seeking assistance.

Apparently, we have had a rise of conscience here recognizing that Americans and constituents of all of ours cannot get through to the IRS, which is why the IRA increased the number of agents working at the IRS. Apparently, that is not okay if they are collectively bargaining for fair wages and benefits.

This amendment is completely unnecessary. It is redundant. It makes what is already a bad bill duplicative and superfluous, and therefore, I oppose.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, just to comment before I yield some time, if the bill is redundant, if this isn't happening anyhow, then you shouldn't be opposed because it will affect no one.

Regarding the 87,000 IRS agents, we are not talking about hiring 87,000 process workers to go through claims. We are talking about 87,000 agents to come to your home to investigate you. That is what we oppose.

We want it to be done efficiently, and maybe if they weren't spending so much time on themselves, they could spend time on the American people.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment.

The Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act ensures that the new prohibition on government censorship is enforced in the same manner as the Hatch Act is currently enforced.

My colleague's amendment further strengthens this enforcement. It enshrines Congress' intent to ensure that the Office of Special Counsel continues to treat employees exercising public-sector union-negotiated official time as official duty time.

Official time is taxpayer funded, and this amendment makes certain the Hatch Act's new censorship prohibition will continue to act to apply to Federal employees on official time.

Mr. Chair, I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this amendment.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, part of the problem with having a redundant amendment on the floor is that there were so many important amendments that the Democrats offered that were not even allowed to come to the floor, notwithstanding the purported open rules that Republicans have been so proudly championing this Congress.

One of those amendments would have included in the category of exceptions to this unnecessary bill coordinating between law enforcement and social media companies about neo-Nazis inciting anti-Semitic violence on social media. That amendment was offered in the committee and was unanimously rejected by my Republican colleagues, who apparently believe that neo-Nazis should incite violence against Jews unchecked and unfettered on social media.

□ 1645

Unfortunately, that amendment was also offered and rejected at the Rules Committee last night, and so, therefore, we don't have it here to argue about, and we will not be able to vote about it on the floor. Instead, we are voting on this redundant, unnecessary, and confusing amendment that does nothing to meaningfully change this bill but, instead, is an opportunity to rail against union workers.

For that, Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PERRY. May I inquire of the time remaining, Mr. Chairman?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PERRY. What is awesome, Mr. Chairman, is that finally we can actually have amendments on the floor. We can have debate. Let's face it, as my good friend, my colleague from New York says, he is disappointed that his amendment or some amendment didn't make it through. But for the entire time of Speaker PELOSI's last reign of terror around here where we ran the place like an armed prison camp, there were no amendments on the floor—not one.

The gentleman might not agree with the amendment, he might not agree with the process, but at least the American people's voices are heard because amendments are on the floor now, and we are debating them right now.

This is a good amendment, it is required, and it should be required because we can't have government officials censoring their citizens while using taxpayer dollars to do it.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. GOOD OF VIRGINIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 8, line 10, insert ''(including any action to enforce a Federal law or regulation addressing obscene matters)'' after ''regulation''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOOD) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would add to the rule of construction a clarification that law enforcement can still enforce current law regarding obscenity matters.

Currently, Federal law prohibits the interstate distribution of obscene visual matter which is not protected speech under the First Amendment. In 2016 President Trump signed the Children's Internet Safety Presidential Pledge, and this pledge sought to protect children from the harms of pornography within the limits of the First Amendment. The pledge also encouraged public-private partnerships to prevent the sexual exploitation of children online.

In 2019 Members of this body, including Representatives JIM BANKS, MARK MEADOWS, VICKY HARTZLER, and BRIAN BABIN, sent a letter to Attorney General Barr requesting the Department of Justice enforce obscenity laws and prosecute the pornography industry.

The harmful effects this terrible industry has on our country cannot be overstated. In fact, at least 16 States have declared pornography a public-health crisis and a threat to society.

According to Fight the New Drug, most kids today are exposed to porn by age 13, and 84 percent of males and 57 percent of females ages 14 to 18 have reported viewing pornography.

Beyond the harm to these children mentally, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually, exposure of this kind is sadly often connected to sexual violence. One study of hundreds of the most popular scenes in the porn industry found that 88 percent contained depictions of physical violence or aggression, while 49 percent contained depictions of verbal aggression.

The role of the Federal Government is to protect its citizens—particularly its children—and to fight to end sexual exploitation wherever it exists in our country.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in combating this terrible evil in our country and support this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, this is yet another redundant and unnecessary amendment. It is already presumably included in the exception for child pornography and child exploitation. I suppose if it is adding obscenity to those exceptions, then perhaps there is something there to it.

What really strikes me here is that there was a bipartisan amendment that was offered in the Rules Committee last night that would include an exception for sexual assault, and that was not passed through to the House floor.

If the chairman would indulge me for a moment and I could yield to him, can the gentleman explain why he opposed the bipartisan amendment that would prohibit sexual assault and yet he allowed through this amendment on basic obscenity?

Apparently, the chairman doesn't know what I am referring to.

There was a bipartisan amendment offered last night in the Rules Committee between Congresswoman HOULAHAN and Congresswoman MACE that would have added to the specified list of exceptions to law enforcement coordinating with social media companies in the event of information related to sexual assault.

That amendment was not passed through to the House, and we are not considering it today. Yet, here we are considering the gentleman from Virginia's amendment including as an exception, in the same way, issues related to obscenity and obscene matters.

Now, if my Republican colleagues believe that basic obscenity on the internet is worse than sexual assault, then they should say so. But that seems quite preposterous to me, and it is a shame that we cannot address the bipartisan Houlahan-Mace amendment on the floor today.

Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I would hope we would get bipartisan support then for this amendment which does further protect our children and clarify that law enforcement can still enforce current law regarding obscene matters.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Good amendment.

This bill clarifies that Federal agencies are not prohibited from taking lawful actions to enforce our Nation's laws and regulations. My colleague's amendment clarifies that Federal agencies may still enforce our Nation's laws that combat obscene matters which are not protected by the First Amendment.

This amendment clarifies congressional intent that our Federal agencies must continue working to keep our children safe from the lewd materials so often circulating on the Internet. Protecting our children should be a central focus of this legislative body, and this amendment cements that commitment.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the amendment.

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Let's get this straight. We have an amendment here because my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to protect children from obscenity. Yet amendments that the Democrats have offered to protect our national security, to protect our elections from foreign interference, to protect against live-streaming of terrorist events and attacks used by international terrorists around the country to strike fear in Americans and others worldwide, and to an amendment that could protect against sexual assault, none of those amendments are here for us to address today.

Instead, what we are addressing right now is in addition to child pornography and child exploitation—two very legitimate law enforcement purposes that, of course, should be permitted to have coordination with social media companies—no, now we are really worried about protecting children from seeing nudity online.

Apparently, that is of such paramount importance that we don't care if Vladimir Putin has a red carpet to interfere in our elections. We don't care if people are threatening to assault people online and to threaten sexual assault. And we don't care if people are sending death threats online. No. We need to protect our children from seeing some nudity. That is what is so important that we need an amendment on the floor.

The joke of it all—and the gentleman from Pennsylvania commented on how great it is that we are considering amendments—is that apparently it is only great if you are a Republican because only Republican amendments are allowed to be considered on the floor.

That is a travesty. That is not what we were promised. That is not what the American people want to hear. So for all of those reasons, I oppose this unnecessary amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOOD).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 118–7.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike section 2(e).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I acknowledge the ranking member and the chairman of the important Oversight and Reform Committee and the work that they do to ensure that government agencies work well.

As they do so, I would expect that their efforts would meet all tests of credibility and, as well, the four corners of the Constitution.

I have tried to study this legislation. However, it concerns me, again, because it would make it more difficult for Government agencies to share pertinent information with important stakeholders to keep our country safe.

With no clear exceptions for national security, this legislation would add burdensome and unworkable reporting requirements and a 72-hour waiting period which could be detrimental to our democratic institutions during times when communication is necessary to protect our democracy.

This bill is seeking to limit the lawful activities of Federal law enforcement agencies, and it is a threat to our national security.

All of us stand on this floor and stand shoulder to shoulder with law enforcement. Our firefighters are here on the campus. We stand shoulder to shoulder with them. I am afraid, Mr. Chairman, this legislation would not show our confidence in those who have to do the job.

So I offer an amendment that provides a response to the section on severability that keeps the remaining portions of the act in place should a portion of the act or amendment made by the act be held to be unconstitutional. The insertion of such a severability clause in this bill is telling of the complete lack of faith, I believe, in the constitutional viability and credibility this entire bill aims to put forth.

While the general purpose of the severability doctrine clause is used to direct courts on what to do with a statute or a part of it, if a provision is invalidated, Congress is actually discouraged from using express severability clauses given it is unnecessary due to the court's strong presumption in favor of any such need for severability.

Moreover, Congress assumes its laws are constitutional. This should be constitutional. As such, the primary application of a severability clause is for the functionality of the statute and whether the surviving provisions are capable of functioning independently.

This is not free speech. The majority is denying our Federal officers free speech to do their job to protect America.

So the included general severability clause in H.R. 140 is not intended to provide clarity to the court on particular specific sections of this bill, but rather, it is an ill attempt to save a poorly written bill and one that steps on the First Amendment rights of our hardworking patriots—our Federal employees—because it is anticipated that this bill may be held unconstitutional.

Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, this bill is timely and necessary. We have learned just how easy it is for the Federal Government to influence a private company to limit the exercise of First Amendment protected speech.

During a recent hearing on the Twitter files, the Oversight and Accountability Committee heard from a former FBI official and Twitter employee who called for Federal legislation that would reasonably and effectively limit government interactions with private-sector platforms.

Let me be clear: A former FBI official and former Twitter employee endorsed and called for legislation just like this.

This legislation should not be controversial, but the intention of this amendment is to gut this bill. The intention of this amendment is to risk the implementation of this necessary legislation.

□ 1700

The inclusion of the clause this amendment removes is standard legislative practice. All this clause does is make sure that if a court decides to strike down any part of this act, that the rest of the act stays intact. It is that simple.

These clauses have been used in legislation for decades. Including a clause like the one in this legislation is standard practice that ensures that this much-needed and noncontroversial legislation can be faithfully implemented.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 2 minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GOLDMAN).

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, just briefly, we were at that Twitter hearing when the former general counsel of Twitter and of the FBI suggested that there needs to be legislation in order for social media companies to properly coordinate with law enforcement, and we wholeheartedly agree.

I am certain that he would never in a million years imagine that this would be the legislation because this completely guts the FBI's ability to protect the safety and security of the American people and our democracy.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 10 seconds to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, let's not pretend the witness at that hearing wants this bill to be the legislation in order for social media and law enforcement to coordinate. I am happy to work with the chairman on that, but it is not this bill.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

First of all, let me thank the gentleman from New York for his clarification. He was in the hearing. He heard the witness ask for relief. But I would say that gentleman did not ask to have, at the core of the relief, a legislative initiative rooted in far-right conspiracy theories despite the clear lack of evidence that any Biden administration official violated the First Amendment or censored Americans or social media platforms.

We want to make sure that we are safe and have national security, but at the same time, how are we going to amend the Hatch Act and really shut down those who are involved in law enforcement and national security?

We saw what happened on January 6. We need all of the communications and intelligence that we need, not only to protect our law enforcement but to protect the United States of America.

My amendment is necessary, Mr. Chairman. It is necessary because the court's presumption is that the statute is constitutional. If there is a section that is found unconstitutional, the court will yield to this idea that they will look at it in a manner to discern what are the facts.

My amendment simply says that to put this in the legislation, you are then going to have a guardrail against this bill being found unconstitutional.

With that in mind, I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment, which is a clear expression of the law.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the Jackson Lee Amendment No. 6 which would strike Section 2, Subsection (e), the severability provision in H.R. 140—the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act.

Subsection (e) of Section 2 in H.R. 140 ''provides a severability clause that keeps the remaining portions of the Act in place should a portion of the Act, or an amendment made by the Act, be held to be unconstitutional.''

The insertion of such a severability clause in this bill is telling of the complete lack of faith

in the constitutional viability and credibility this entire bill aims to put forth.

While the general purpose of the severability doctrine clause is used to direct courts on what to do with the statute or a part of it, if a provision is invalidated, Congress is actually discouraged from using express severability clauses given it is unnecessary due to the court's strong presumption in favor of any such need for severability.

Moreover, Congress assumes its laws are constitutional. As such, the primary application of a severability clause is for the functionality of the statute and whether the surviving provisions are capable of functioning independently.

To include a general severability clause in H.R. 140 is not intended to provide clarity to the courts on particular or specific sections of this bill, but rather it is an ill attempt to save a poorly written bill that is anticipated to be unconstitutional in part or in whole.

Such a provision does not belong in this legislation and does not comport with traditional intended uses for such a doctrine typically preserved and carefully applied by courts (not legislators) in reviewing statutes in question as to unanticipated functionality or constitutionality concerns.

The entire bill as written is problematic, and such a clause would not save it.

For these reasons, I ask that my colleagues vote yes to the Jackson Lee amendment No. 6 to strike the severability clause of H.R. 140.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. OGLES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 6, line 2, strike ''5'' and insert ''10''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, accountability matters. Our Nation deserves nothing less than full transparency from Federal officials working in the name of the American people.

When government officials abuse their office to infringe on Americans' right to free speech, it is a very grave offense. Government officials who abuse official taxpayer-funded resources to censor Americans need to be out of government service for a long time.

My amendment allows the Office of Special Counsel, which adjudicates the Hatch Act, and would adjudicate the newly added provisions of this bill, to punish those employees with a longer span of debarment.

This amendment revises the disciplinary action under the bill to allow for debarment from Federal employment for up to 10 years rather than 5. This better reflects the gravity of their offense. People who abuse their official office to violate Americans' constitutional rights shouldn't be able to return to government employment after a brief stint in the private sector.

Mr. Chair, I urge adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, accountability matters, says my friend from Tennessee, and his amendment would place further penalties in the hands of the Office of Special Counsel which, as he mentions, is the office that also adjudicates the Hatch Act. Well, if you want accountability, let's start talking about the Hatch Act. Let's talk about the 13 Trump administration officials who violated the Hatch Act. Let's talk about Kellyanne Conway, who had more than 60 violations of the Hatch Act, so many that the Office of Special Counsel—that the gentleman from Tennessee references—recommended that she be fired.

Did anything happen to her? No. You know what she said? She said: Come talk to me when there is a jail sentence. Well, that is why last week in our markup on this bill I introduced the Kellyanne Conway amendment, which would have added criminal penalties for a knowing, willful, and intentional violation of the Hatch Act.

Now, as we all know, the Hatch Act is actually a law that prohibits government officials from abusing their office, as the gentleman from Tennessee just said. Without teeth in those penalties, the Trump administration senior officials ran roughshod all over that.

Unfortunately, what Mr. OGLES and the chairman are focused on is not on adding accountability to prohibit government officials from abusing their positions for political purposes. Instead, we are talking about the phantom problem of government officials abusing their authority to censor free speech, none of which has happened, and yet here we are with so many examples of violations of the Hatch Act, but we are not dealing with that.

We are not dealing with actual evidence, actual facts, actual violations of the law to put accountability, as the gentleman from Tennessee says, and some teeth into our laws under the jurisdiction of the Oversight Committee to prevent abuse of power by government officials. That is where we should be spending our time, not on this bill and not on this amendment, which already has plenty of punishment for those who are in violation.

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

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, this bill simply empowers the Office of Special Counsel to do better and adjudicate their job.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act aims to prevent Federal employees from censoring the lawful speech of Americans.

My colleague's amendment further strengthens the enforcement of this new prohibition on Federal employee actions by increasing the potential debarment penalty from 5 to 10 years.

Increasing this debarment for up to 10 years serves as a strong deterrent to Federal employees and clearly underscores Congress' understanding of the significant harm these censorship activities have done to America's trust in their Federal Government.

We must rebuild this public trust that the Federal agencies Congress is charged with conducting oversight over are operating within the boundaries of their lawful authorities.

Civil servants that extend their duties beyond their legal authority to encroach on the speech rights of Americans do not deserve to serve in our Nation's government.

Mr. Chair, I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this amendment.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to appear so tough that 5 years of debarment from Federal employment is not enough, so we are going to make it 10 because 5 just doesn't do it. The difference between 5 and 10 is going to mean that someone, some government official who is trying to censor lawful speech on the internet is going to say, whoa, whoa, 10 years, oh, I am not going to do it now—but 5 years.

These amendments are trivial; they are unnecessary; they have no meaning; and yet the meaningful amendments were not allowed to be brought to the floor.

Apparently the open rules only apply to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, they do not apply to us. That is a shame because there are some very significant amendments that would make this bad, bad bill slightly better.

For that reason, I oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. OGLES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 118–7.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 6, line 9, strike ''$10,000'' and insert ''$50,000''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 199, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, again, accountability matters. If you are paid from an appropriation for the White House office or appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, you need to be held to a standard of utmost impartiality.

These folks are paid generous salaries and have large platforms as Cabinet Secretaries or senior White House aides. The monetary penalty should reflect their increased responsibility compared to rank-and-file employees.

The American people have had enough of the swamp, and its efforts to infuse authoritarianism into the fabric of American society.

This amendment, which raises the penalty from $10,000 to $50,000 for senior officials who abuse their office to violate Americans' constitutional rights deserve a costly penalty.

I urge adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, the problem with these civil penalties is not that it is going to bankrupt any government officials, but it has a tremendous chilling effect on anyone trying to do their job, on any Federal law enforcement or intelligence community official trying to protect our country, trying to enforce our laws, trying to keep Americans safe, trying to keep our democracy safe because what these penalties will do is create an amorphous barrier to this amorphous law where no one has any idea whether what they are doing is lawful or unlawful because who is to define lawful speech?

Well, traditionally, it is a court, and it is government officials who have to make that initial call, that initial discretionary decision whether or not speech is lawful. In what world, if they are risking a $50,000 fine, are they ever going to take a risk to actually try to do something that might be on the line?

What these penalties will ultimately do is encourage good, upstanding, patriotic American Federal officials not to pursue their jobs, not to do their jobs in the way that we, the American people, need them to do their jobs, in a way that keeps us safe, in a way that enforces our criminal laws, in a way that protects us.

That will not happen because they are going to be fearful that they will lose a third to a quarter of their salary if they violate this H.R. 140.

Why on Earth would anyone take a chance if they are going to lose a third of their salary for an entire year on actually executing their job if they run the risk that someone somewhere is going to say that they stepped over the line and that in retrospect speech that they thought might be in furtherance of a crime wasn't actually in furtherance of a crime, and therefore, they lose their job and they lose a third of their salary?

□ 1715

It has an incredible trickle-down detrimental effect on any Federal official trying to do his or her job. Whether or not you realize that, that is how it is going to be perceived by every hard-working, patriotic American who has decided to go to work for their government.

You may think, my friends on the other side of the aisle, that the real problem here are Federal Government officials. You would be sorely mistaken, because I spent 10 years as a Federal career government official, working alongside every single law enforcement agent we had, and they are all trying to do their best.

What this law will do is it will prevent them from doing their best, and it will jeopardize every American in this country because of it.

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

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this amendment is to create greater accountability, responsibility, thoughtfulness in these Cabinet secretaries and senior officials so that it is not partisan politics that rules the day, but, rather, the American people—or the interests of the American people.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Ogles amendment.

The Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act introduces newly created civil fines for the most senior officials.

My colleague's amendment further strengthens this enforcement penalty for senior officials by increasing the civil monetary fines up to $50,000.

This $50,000 will serve as a deterrent to the administration's most senior officials—Senate-confirmed Presidential appointees and the White House staff—to prevent them from censoring the lawful speech of ordinary Americans.

It is especially important that our Nation's most senior leaders are held to a higher level of accountability given their higher level of influence.

I thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) for proposing this amendment which preserves the carefully negotiated structure of the bill.

I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the amendment.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ALFORD) having assumed the chair, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 140) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit Federal employees from advocating for censorship of viewpoints in their official capacity, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1731

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR) at 5 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Adoption of H. Con. Res. 21; and

Motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 753.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

SYRIA WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on adoption of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 21) directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers

Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the adoption of the concurrent resolution.

This is a 15-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 103, nays 321, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 136]

YEAS—103

Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Bean (FL)
Beyer
Biggs
Bishop (NC)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Boebert
Bonamici
Bowman
Brecheen
Buck
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Bush
Cammack
Carson
Casar
Chu
Clarke (NY)
Cline
Cloud
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Crane
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Emmer
Espaillat
Fry
Gaetz
García (IL)
Garcia, Robert
Gomez
Good (VA)
Gosar
Green, Al (TX)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Hageman
Harris
Hern
Higgins (NY)
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Hunt
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jordan
Joyce (PA)
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Larsen (WA)
Lee (CA)
Lee (PA)
Luna
Mace
Massie
McClintock
McGovern
Meng
Miller (IL)
Mills
Mooney
Moore (WI)
Napolitano
Nehls
Norman
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Ogles
Omar
Pallone
Perry
Pingree
Pocan
Posey
Pressley
Ramirez
Rosendale
Roy
Sánchez
Santos
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schweikert
Thanedar
Tiffany
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Vargas
Velázquez

NAYS—321

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Alford
Allen
Allred
Amodei
Armstrong
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Bice
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bost
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Bucshon
Budzinski
Calvert
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Cicilline
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Escobar
Eshoo
Estes
Evans
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fletcher
Flood
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, C. Scott
Frost
Fulcher
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Mike
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gooden (TX)
Gottheimer
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Grijalva
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Harder (CA)
Harshbarger
Hayes
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huizenga
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jackson Lee
James
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Joyce (OH)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Landsman
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lee (NV)
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lofgren
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luttrell
Lynch
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Mann
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCarthy
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McHenry
Meeks
Menendez
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Murphy
Nadler
Neal
Neguse
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Nunn (IA)
Owens
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Pence
Perez
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Porter
Quigley
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Ross
Rouzer
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rutherford
Ryan
Salazar
Salinas
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Stevens
Stewart
Strickland
Strong
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Timmons
Titus
Torres (CA)
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vasquez
Veasey
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOT VOTING—11

Arrington
Castro (TX)
Cleaver
Hudson
Larson (CT)
Leger Fernandez
Lieu
Loudermilk
Phillips
Schrier
Steube

□ 1756

Messrs. SORENSEN, DAVIDSON, EVANS, AGUILAR, BABIN, PAYNE, DUNCAN, PETERS, VEASEY, KEATING, VAN DREW, and NADLER changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. CARSON, DOGGETT, Ms. TLAIB, Messrs. GARCÍA of Illinois, and THANEDAR changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was not agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I regrettably missed the vote on H. Con. Res. 21. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 136.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably delayed outside of the Chamber. Had I been present, I would have voted ''nay'' on rollcall No. 136.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CREATION OF ON-SITE TREATMENT SYSTEMS AFFORDING VETERANS IMPROVEMENTS AND NUMEROUS GENERAL SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 753) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 426, nays 0, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 137]

YEAS—426

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Alford
Allen
Allred
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Auchincloss
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Balint
Banks
Barr
Barragán
Bean (FL)
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NC)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brecheen
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budzinski
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Bush
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes
Evans
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fletcher
Flood
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, C. Scott
Frost
Fry
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
Garcia (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Mike
Garcia, Robert
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, Vicente
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Granger

Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harder (CA)
Harris
Harshbarger
Hayes
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jackson Lee
Jacobs
James
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Khanna
Kiggans (VA)
Kildee
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Landsman
Langworthy
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (CA)
Lee (FL)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lofgren
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Lynch
Mace
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Mann
Manning
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McClintock
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McGovern
McHenry
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Murphy
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nehls
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Ogles
Omar
Owens
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Pence
Perez
Perry
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Posey
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Ross
Rouzer
Roy
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rutherford
Ryan
Salazar
Salinas
Sánchez
Santos
Sarbanes
Scalise
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Stevens
Stewart
Strickland
Strong
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOT VOTING—8

Boebert
Castro (TX)
Cleaver
Leger Fernandez
Lieu
Phillips
Schrier
Steube

□ 1806

Messrs. STANTON and GARCÍA of Illinois changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECTING SPEECH FROM GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). Pursuant to House Resolution 199 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 140.

Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MOOLENAAR) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1811

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 140) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit Federal employees from advocating for censorship of viewpoints in their official capacity, and for other purposes, with Mr. MOOLENAAR (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 8 printed in House report 118–7 offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) had been disposed of.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House report 118–7 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 4 by Mr. PERRY of Pennsylvania;

Amendment No. 6 by Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the request for recorded vote on amendment No. 4, printed in House Report 118–7 by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 207, noes 223, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 138]

AYES—207

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Brecheen
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fleischmann
Flood
Foster
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garcia, Mike
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
González-Colón
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
McHenry
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Moylan
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perez
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Radewagen
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Santos
Scalise
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smucker
Spartz
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Stewart
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOES—223

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Bacon
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett

Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fitzpatrick
Fletcher
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (NC)
Jackson Lee
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
LaLota
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawler
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Molinaro
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Norton
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Peters
Pettersen
Pingree
Plaskett
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Sablan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Stevens
Strickland
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Van Drew
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—10

Boebert
Castro (TX)
Cleaver
De La Cruz
Jackson (IL)
Leger Fernandez
Lieu
Phillips
Schrier
Steube

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1812

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 138 for H.R. 140, I mistakenly recorded my vote as "aye". As a strong supporter of unions, I oppose the Perry/Foxx amendment, and I intended to vote "no."

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 209, noes 221, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 139]

AYES—209

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson Lee
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Norton
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Perez
Peters
Pettersen
Pingree
Plaskett
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Sablan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NOES—221

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Craig
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia, Mike
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
González-Colón
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
McHenry
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Moylan
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Radewagen
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Santos
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Stewart
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOT VOTING—10

Boebert
Castro (TX)
Cleaver
De La Cruz
James
Leger Fernandez
Lieu
Phillips
Schrier
Steube

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1817

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Chair, due to illness, I was unable to be present today. Had I been present, I would have voted: "nay" on rollcall No. 134, "nay" on rollcall No. 135, "nay" on rollcall No. 136, "yea" on rollcall No. 137, "nay" on rollcall No. 138, and "yea" on rollcall No. 139.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I move that the committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HUNT) having assumed the chair, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state

of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 140) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit Federal employees from advocating for censorship of viewpoints in their official capacity, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF OLA COX

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th birthday of Ola Cox.

Ola is a lifelong resident of Venango County, Pennsylvania, where she continues to make history in her own right over the last century. She has broken gender barriers, supported community endeavors, and brought a global perspective home.

Born in Pittsville, Pennsylvania, Ola graduated high school at 16 years old and enlisted in the Navy WAVES. After returning from naval service during World War II, she married Lester ''Boone'' Cox and started a family.

Ola continued to break gender barriers as a working mom beside her husband at their Franklin Print Shop. In Ola's 100 years of life, she has countless stories, from their working farm to raising four children.

Following her time in the print shop, she worked at Oakwood Rose Gardens, served as the township tax collector, and frequently volunteered in her community and with her church, the Rockland Methodist Church. She also traveled the world.

Mr. Speaker, Ola is a dedicated wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She cared for her dear husband and spent countless hours with her children and great-grandchildren so they could learn and understand the importance of family, community, and the world.

I thank Ola for her service to our country and her dedication to our community.

CELEBRATING COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths nationwide, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This year, more than 153,000 Americans will be diagnosed with the disease, and more than 51,000 people will die from it. Yet, if we catch it early, 90 percent of patients can survive within 5 years.

The key is awareness and education. If we can educate more Americans about colorectal cancer, we can limit the number of deaths from it. We can remove the fears and stigmas that prevent people from getting screenings.

It is 11 years, 2 days ago, on March 6, that I lost my father, Congressman Donald Payne, Sr., to colorectal cancer.

If more people get screened, we can prevent more families, more fathers, more mothers, more sisters, and more brothers from succumbing from the dreaded disease.

PARENTS HAVE SACRED ROLE IN RAISING THEIR CHILDREN

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, parents have a God-given right and role in the raising of their children.

When they send their kids to the public schools, they expect the schools to deliver a quality education to their children in order to prepare them for success in the future. Unfortunately, government schools have abused this trust and have been indoctrinating children with far-left lies and poisoning their minds with woke gender ideology.

School administrators and teachers unions seem to think they own America's children, that they alone have the right to decide what these children think and believe, and that they alone should be the sole authority in a child's life.

Schools across this country have been caught trying to convince vulnerable teenagers that their bodies are wrong, filling their heads with lies and convincing them to see their parents as enemies. This line of thinking is morally wrong.

In my own district, a school district is being sued by a parent for secretly changing her daughter's pronouns and identity without her parent's knowledge or consent. Woke administrators have no moral authority to experiment with children's minds in this way.

Parents have a moral right to be involved in their children's education and should never be kept in the dark about issues that their child is going through at school.

Congress must take action to enshrine parental rights over their children.

□ 1830

CONGRATULATING EWING TOWNSHIP GIRLS' BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my alma mater, Ewing High School, on winning the NJSIAA 2022–2023 Group 3 girls' basketball championship—and their first State title in 24 years.

Their hard-fought victory comes after months of diligent work, consistent growth, and exceptional achievement.

I hope this big win instills in them the confidence and determination to succeed in any challenge that comes their way. There is no obstacle that these young women cannot overcome.

I hope head coach Dan Montferrat and the girls' basketball team are celebrating their accomplishment and enjoying this exciting time.

I wish Ewing High School all the best, and, as always, go Blue Devils.

OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, I had the chance to visit the southern border for the very first time. It was truly educational.

I thank the people of southeast Texas who showed me the true impact of what it means to have an open border.

President Biden and his administration officials continue to tell the American people that the border is secure.

Tell that to the families of two Americans who were killed this week by a Mexican cartel.

Tell that to the record number of parents who have lost kids to fentanyl that was brought over the border.

Tell that to the countless public officials we met on that trip who were pleading with us to say that they are just overloaded. Their facilities are overcapacity, and they need help.

Mr. Speaker, I have been to the border, and tonight I am here to tell you that it is not secure.

Mr. Speaker, you know that it is not just a Texas problem; it is America's problem. We need to secure the border. Our national security depends on it.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY TRAILBLAZER: BESSIE COLEMAN

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on International Women's Day to honor a trailblazer.

Mr. Speaker, Bessie Coleman inspired women to reach for their dreams just as she did soaring through the skies as the first African-American and first Native-American woman pilot. She continued to follow her dreams no matter how often those around her told her not to or to find a different path.

She wanted to be a role model so that future generations of women are inspired to accomplish whatever they set their minds to accomplish.

Because of Ms. Coleman, 21 women at Elizabeth City State University, located in my district, now have hands-on flight simulation, interactive panel

conversations, aviation program tours, and more as part of the Bessie Coleman Aviator Academy for Women.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, was inspired by Bessie Coleman. We must continue to celebrate and cherish Ms. Coleman for all she has done and for her contributions to women's history and American history.

HONORING LIEUTENANT RUTH COUGHLIN, TENNESSEE'S SECOND DISTRICT'S MARCH 2023 VETERAN OF THE MONTH

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

Mr. BURCHETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Lieutenant Ruth Coughlin, an American hero who served in the Navy faithfully from 1953 to 1958.

Lieutenant Coughlin was born in Spartanburg, South Carolina. After high school, she went to St. Vincent's Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama, where she graduated as a registered nurse. From 1944 to 1953, she worked in private practice in ophthalmology and oral surgery practices.

In 1953, she joined the Navy as a Lieutenant Junior Grade and was stationed in Maryland at Bethesda Hospital. During her career she served as a nurse aboard a medical ship that made 32 round trips crossing the Atlantic Ocean from Brooklyn, New York, to north Germany. In 1957, she was reassigned to the U.S. Naval Hospital in Corona, California, where she met her husband, Dennis.

They moved to Knoxville and raised five children together. She will be turning a very young 100 years old this month. I think it is very appropriate during International Women's Day that we honor her.

So happy birthday, Ruth.

Our country's heroes are the men and women of our Armed Forces, like Lieutenant Ruth Coughlin, who has dedicated her life to the service of her country. It is my honor to recognize Lieutenant Coughlin as the Tennessee Second District's March 2023 Veteran of the Month.

FACTS ABOUT OUR DEBT CEILING

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

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lay out a few facts about the debt ceiling.

Raising the debt ceiling is about meeting obligations the government has already made and has nothing to do with new spending.

Since World War I, we have raised the debt ceiling under every single President—every single President.

So let's remember a few facts: The national debt under the Trump administration rose significantly by $8 trillion, a total of roughly 25 percent of the entire debt at the time he left office. That is one-quarter of the entire debt by President Trump.

Republicans voted three times—three times—to raise the debt limit under the Trump administration.

So where was the Republican outrage then?

President Biden has lowered the deficit by $1.7 trillion during the first 2 years of office and has a plan to reduce it even more.

Mr. Speaker, yet House Republicans used their very first bill to hand a giveaway to big corporations and billionaires that cheat on their taxes, adding an explosive $114 billion to the deficit, and still no plan to reduce debt. House Democrats put people over politics, solutions over rhetoric.

HIRZEL CANNING COMPANY AT 100 YEARS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say hurray and recognize a northwestern Ohio institution, Hirzel Canning Company and Farms, on its 100th anniversary.

Headquartered in Northwood, Ohio, the Hirzel family rose from humble beginnings to become a major player in the national canned produce market, particularly canned tomato products. They are the best you will ever eat.

Carl Hirzel was a Swiss immigrant who lost his job as a brewer during Prohibition and moved to northwest Ohio to find opportunity. In 1923, he began farming a 60-acre plot in what is now Northwood.

He initially had trouble selling fresh products in the established produce market, until a local butcher who liked his sauerkraut told him there was an untapped canned vegetable market.

As their CEO, Joe Hirzel, always says, ''Whatever you guys do, do not forget quality.'' That is the Hirzel way.

So today with plants in Northwood, Pemberville, and Ottawa, and a farming operation near Luckey, Hirzel now distributes in 36 States nationwide. Their company is top quality, grown right in northern Ohio, and especially top quality are the people who operate and work there.

I just want to congratulate Hirzel again. Our entire region is so very, very proud of them and all of their accomplishments.

SYRIA WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

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

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support Congress' restoring its constitutional authority over matters of war and peace.

No matter what else we are discussing here today, the plain and simple truth is that Congress has not authorized military presence in Syria. For far too long, we in Congress have neglected this key Article I responsibility.

If my colleagues believe that we need the military in Syria, then they should author an AUMF. They should debate that in committee, and they should bring it to a vote on the floor. We must not continue to hand over power to the executive branch when the politics get too difficult.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support today's resolution.

IRAN STUDENT POISONINGS

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

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, schools aren't battle zones, but Iranian students are caught in the crossfire.

In recent months, a chain of chemical attacks have hit Iran's schools. Although the motive is unclear, girls and young women have been the clear target. Hundreds of schoolgirls have been poisoned, and an 11-year-old was killed.

As a mother, I share the anger and frustration of every parent too fearful to send their kids to class.

Iranians deserve answers and accountability, but their government remains silent. The regime cares more about covering up these attacks than stopping them. Iranian authorities have falsified medical reports and spread disinformation. They have even intimidated parents of victims to keep their stories from the press.

I stand with these parents demanding a full investigation and a quick end to these attacks. The United States must stand with them and every Iranian demanding a future free of violence.

DEMOCRATIC AND SAFE ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor where I am always reminded of the privileges of this Nation. That is why we fight so hard to end voter suppression, oppression, and the denial of the right to vote.

This institution is the cradle of democracy. This past weekend we were in Selma, Alabama, where really the first start of democracy and the right to vote was reignited in the 20th century.

As Nigeria, our ally and friend, begins to look at its national elections, I call upon the Nigerian diaspora to insist on democratic and safe elections and to be assured that the count is accurate and that the people's voices are counted.

As the chair of the Nigerian Caucus in the United States Congress, I must insist that our ally gives the same rights and privileges that we fight for in the United States: the unfettered right to vote and for the vote to count.

The fact is that the vote is your birthright and it is your voice.

I hope that the Nigerian Government and all of those in the Nigerian diaspora will stand for democracy and the right to an unfettered vote in the Nigerian elections.

OUR NATION'S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I am going to pause here for 5 seconds, and I will tell you why.

I did that to note something. I did that because I want to note that our Federal Government just spent $1 million in 5 seconds—$1 million. By the time I finish this speech, the government will have spent over $50 million. By the time my colleagues finish their speeches, that figure will be in the hundreds of millions.

As it stands right now, our government is spending $197,000 per second, which as a recent publication by the America First Policy Institute points out, is faster than the speed of light.

Let's look at this graphic here real quick.

My staff just ran this up on the copy machine because I wanted to blow it up. This is a post by the AFPI. They point out the fastest things on the Earth, and they note that we are actually spending right now faster than the speed of light. The speed of light is 186,282 miles per second. We are spending $197,000 per second.

Our national debt is well over $31 trillion right now—$31 trillion.

Now, if those figures alarm you, Mr. Speaker, you are not alone. Everybody on our side of the aisle is deeply concerned about this. We understand what a risk it is to our national security and to the stability of our constitutional Republic.

□ 1845

However, you won't find anyone—hardly anyone, I think—on the other side of the aisle who understands this or agrees with it. I mean, based upon their voting records, based upon their proposals to continue to raise taxes and raise spending, based upon some of the speeches they gave here on the floor tonight, they don't get it, and neither does the mainstream media. That ought to be of even greater concern to you.

Earlier this month, the Congressional Budget Office released a frightening report. All Members of Congress in a bipartisan fashion met in the congressional auditorium this afternoon to hear the CBO Director relay some of this really frightening information.

It is about our economic outlook. If you haven't heard about it yet, it is because really the media is not covering this. The 24-hour news cycle buries it for the next big thing, but there is hardly anything bigger than this.

Let me give you a couple of the highlights that came out of that briefing this afternoon:

Number one: Net interest on our national debt will reach $10.5 trillion over the next decade.

Now, I know these numbers are big and it is sort of hard to grasp them, but you think about $10.5 trillion over the next 10 years. For reference, listen to this: since 1940 the total net interest payments on our national debt has been $12.9 trillion, adjusted for inflation. Since 1940.

In the next 10 years, we are going to spend $10.5 trillion just on interest alone. It is staggering. Our national debt is going to reach $154 trillion by 2053—$150-plus trillion. That equals $540,000 per household when you adjust for inflation. That is more than four times the current median household income.

Deficits are going to average—average—$2 trillion annually, or 6.1 percent of our gross domestic product over the next 10 years. The government had a lower deficit than this every single year from 1945 to 2009. The cost of the annual interest will balloon from $350 billion to $1.4 trillion in just a decade. That is 20 cents of every tax dollar that is collected by this Federal Government is going to go to paying interest on America's debt.

Mr. Speaker, we are in uncharted economic waters. We have never seen anything like this. Our country has only faced an economic threat like this during times of war and pandemic. If you only listen to the media and Democrat politicians, all of our colleagues over here, you would think there is really no issue at all.

I mean, the Biden administration continues to portray this rosy outlook. They were saying it today: the state of the economy isn't so bad. We are doing well. We are trending in the right direction, they say. That is absolutely not true.

The CBO, by the way, is a nonpartisan entity. They don't choose a side. They just came in and presented the objective facts to Republicans and Democrats because we want to make everybody face this harsh reality.

President Biden has touted that his administration ''cut $1.7 trillion of the deficit.'' He says that is evidence that he is really serious about the national debt, but that is obviously fiction as well. That reduction naturally occurred with the statutory end of the increased spending that Congress approved to combat COVID–19. That wasn't because of any shrewd economic policy from the White House. It is exactly the opposite.

Speaking of economic madness, you know, tomorrow the President is expected to release his 2023 budget proposal. It is more than a month late. Every news report, all the early ones, suggest that his budget is replete with trillions of dollars in new taxes, raising taxes in the middle of an inflation crisis that he created; more spending on frivolous, liberal pet policies and projects and no plan at all to reduce the deficit.

For the first time in his Presidency, he won't have a Democrat rubber stamp over here. He won't have the Democrats in charge of this House to go along with that destructive agenda.

Mr. Speaker, the American people made their voices heard when they gave Republicans control of this House, and we are going to do our job. They have entrusted our new majority to provide a much-needed check on the Biden administration, and that starts with the power of the purse.

Over the next few months, the discourse around here is going to intensify. There is going to be some heated debate. It is likely to get off track with squabbles about everything from defense spending to earmarks, but House Republicans will not lose sight through this of the bigger picture. We are going to rein in spending and inflation because we must. We are going to promote responsible budgeting because we must. We are going to chart our country on a course back to fiscal sanity. It is the duty of every Member of this body to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield to a number of my colleagues tonight who will participate in this Special Order hour, talking about lots of important things on the hearts and minds of the American people. I just want to suggest that the debt is one of those.

Mr. Speaker, I yield first to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER), my dear friend.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman JOHNSON for hosting this Special Order.

The American agriculture industry powers our economy and feeds the world, but President Biden wants to burden farmers and landowners with higher taxes and more red tape with his disastrous waters of the United States rule.

Farmers and ranchers do not want to be told how to use and regulate their land by Biden's radical Cabinet Secretaries. I introduced a bill called Define WOTUS Act with Senator BRAUN to protect my fellow farmers and stand against the disastrous Biden EPA, which is working to regulate every pond and puddle in America. Our Nation's farmers, ranchers, and property owners come last in the Biden agenda.

This week, I will proudly stand with House Republicans to pass legislation ending Biden's disastrous WOTUS rule.

We are going to put American farmers first. It is my privilege to advocate for my fellow Illinois farmers on the House Agriculture Committee and represent our needs in Congress.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for highlighting that really important issue. The WOTUS rule has gotten completely out of control.

Mr. Speaker, I yield next to the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO), one of our new Members to Congress.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that radical criminal justice legislation passed by the Washington, D.C. Council appears to be headed for defeat, thanks to widespread rejection by House Republicans.

The legislation in question, known as the revised Criminal Code Act of 2022, eliminates mandatory minimum sentences for a long list of crimes, while also reducing maximum sentences for things like first-degree burglary, armed burglary, and first-degree sexual assault.

This law being advanced by the far left, D.C. local politicians handcuffs the courts and empowers convicted criminals to get back out on the streets in record time.

Not only is this legislation misguided, but it comes at the height of a crime wave currently ravaging Capitol Hill.

Over the last year, our Nation's Capital has seen a 76 percent increase in carjackings, a 17 percent increase in homicides and a 117 percent uptick in sexual assaults.

To fight this scourge, we need to be taking a harder line on criminals, not coddling them like this justice reform package would do.

When the RCCA came before the House of Representatives for congressional review, House Republicans stood united in our opposition to this proposal. I am glad 31 of our Democratic colleagues did the right thing for the people of Washington, D.C., and crossed the aisle to stand with the Republican Conference in opposing the bill.

Now it appears a bipartisan group from the Senate will be joining myself and our House colleagues to defeat the RCCA, with President Biden also poised to lend his support.

Safeguarding our streets should never be a partisan issue, and common sense must always remain at the forefront of legislators' minds. I am glad such common sense seems to be winning the day in this case.

During my career as an NYPD detective, I served alongside law enforcement professionals of differing political persuasions, religions, and cultural backgrounds. Let me remind everyone that when people call 911, we never ask what political party they are from. What united us as cops was our commitment to serving the people and protecting the public from criminals.

Now, as a Member of Congress, I will continue that service by combating far-left attacks on our criminal justice system and forcefully reject radical legislation much like the RCCA and the criminal justice reform put in place by Democrats in my home State of New York.

I will always advocate for safe streets and prosperous communities. That is my pledge to you, and that is our House Republican commitment to America.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his service as a police officer, law enforcement, and also now in Congress. We are delighted to have you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield next to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. JOHNSON for leading these opportunities for us to communicate with the American people openly and freely in a more casual, unhurried way of doing so.

It is good to be able to talk about these issues. Hopefully, folks are paying attention. We are just trying to get the truth out and call out the issues that are extremely important to them that we are working on in Congress.

When I get up here, a lot of times I am talking about our food supply and the farmers who grow it—as a Californian, we grow a lot of different crops—the water it takes to grow those crops, our energy, the condition of our energy in this country.

Tonight, I will talk more about our fiscal condition in this Nation and of this government. It is troubling because a recent report issued by the Congressional Budget Office found that the net interest of our national debt—Mr. JOHNSON was talking about that a little bit ago on spending—just the interest payment on our national debt will amount to a $10.5 trillion burden for our taxpayers over the next decade.

We talk in these 10-year numbers. If you average that out, that is $1.05 trillion per year just in interest service. For comparison, those interest costs over the previous decade amounted to only $3 trillion, again, versus $10.5 trillion for the coming decade. That is crushing on our national budget and crushing on the discretionary portion that we have over that budget.

That is not to take away from the fact that the Federal Government already is taxing and extracts more in taxes from American families than at any point in history.

This kind of payment on interest will devour a lot of our budget if we don't get a handle on this. I shudder to think if interest rates go up much more, the service on that debt becomes that much more extensive. Of course, Federal spending coupled with that is rising at an even higher rate. The increased spending has pushed our national debt over that magic $31 trillion number, again, that we were speaking about.

As high as this is, it pales in comparison to the United States' unfunded liabilities, which amount to about $182 trillion. Unfunded liabilities, meaning the debt obligations that do not have sufficient funds set aside to pay them, include Social Security, Medicare, Federal debt held by the public, and Federal employee and veteran benefits. Social Security and Medicare's liabilities add up to $57 trillion. These numbers clearly show the United States Federal Government is living beyond its means.

Social Security and Medicare are called entitlement programs. Let me stop on that for a moment.

Sometimes that word ''entitlement'' is thought of as a dirty word, right?

It gets used pretty freely around here.

However, when you are talking about the entitlement as applied to Social Security and Medicare, it is not necessarily a dirty word because the people that paid into them are entitled to draw out from them. That is not a bad word in that sense. They are entitled to what they paid in and the amount that it grew during the time, hopefully, while it was being held for them more or less in trust by the Federal Government.

The CBO, Congressional Budget Office, predicts that Social Security will run out of money in 2033 and Medicare in 2026. The fund will be depleted.

We need to have an honest conversation about these funds, about these programs going forward. No one wants to take away Social Security. Nobody wants to deplete Medicare, but if they are going to be on the rocks in the year 2033 for Social Security, for example, then we better be doing something now. There needs to be an honest, bipartisan discussion about doing so.

What are we going to do to head that off and have the numbers not crunch badly by the time that time comes?

□ 1900

There are ways we can do that, but it is going to take an honest bipartisan discussion, not scaring people saying, oh, Republicans are going to take away Social Security. The President stood right up there and tried to claim that until he had to walk it back just a few weeks ago. There needs to be an honest discussion, not one used as a talking point or a political weapon.

What we have is 47 million retirees in America today, and 40 percent of the 47 million live entirely off Social Security. For these Americans, their benefits being reduced in the future could be disastrous. That is why we have to figure out how to make the fund go beyond 2033 and be sustainable, well, permanently.

If we are going to save these programs for the current and future generations, Congress must act swiftly, honestly with a real debate and set these finances in order and return to the fiscal responsibility that we should have had all along.

As stewards of the public's dollars, it is important that Congress spend the public's money wisely and respectfully. The House must use its powers to allocate government funds in a reasonable,

responsible way. There is a lot of room for debate on how that is, but if we are having an interaction, instead of hurrying through or doing a last minute patch-up at the end of the fiscal year, it is going to be a lot better in the light of day doing so.

The current D.C. model of taxing, borrowing, and spending money that we don't have will saddle our grandchildren with the burden of paying off today's debts. We don't even have to wait for our grandchildren. It is our children. It is us that are still in the work world. We are stuck with this. We have to do better.

Failure to fix Washington, D.C.'s, spending today will mean our children will have to live at lesser standards. We have always aspired that our children should always do a little better than us, to leave something a little better off. Why should they have to live under a worse standard only because we are spending like crazy? They will be saddled with a higher debt, higher taxes, and less opportunity.

America's strength on the world's stage depends on a strong American economy at home. We must get to getting it actually balanced and not take so long to truly balance our budget. It is our responsibility.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that wise counsel. It is about responsibility, and the gentleman said it so well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. KUSTOFF).

Mr. KUSTOFF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for organizing this evening's Special Order. The gentleman is a brilliant orator and brilliant lawyer, and I am proud to serve with him.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to speak about one of the biggest challenges facing our country today, and that is our national debt. We have heard about it tonight.

Our national debt today stands at over $31 trillion. It is really hard to comprehend a number that large even for us who serve in the House of Representatives.

Instead of taking advantage of the record tax revenues that were produced from the Republican-passed Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in 2017, Democrats have used the 2 prior years that they had in power when they had the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives to spend an unprecedented amount of taxpayer dollars.

Here are two big democratic initiatives: Almost $2 trillion spent on the American Rescue Plan; almost $750 billion spent on what they call the Inflation Reduction Act, really the inflation expansion act.

Here is the bottom line: The result of the massive and colossal spending over those past 2 years has produced skyrocketing debt and rampant and raging inflation. We all hear about that inflation each and every day, just the fact that Americans have a tough time affording to live and exist today.

Right now, our country is on track to add almost $20 trillion to the national debt over the next decade. We have heard these numbers quite a bit tonight. I don't think the American people can hear it enough.

By 2053, that number will reach almost 153 to $154 trillion; trillion with a t. The interest costs on our national debt will amount to almost $10.5 trillion for taxpayers over the next decade.

Now, again, to put that in perspective, the net interest cost over the previous 10 years was a little over $3 trillion. Almost a month ago, our government officially hit its debt limit, and the Treasury Department is now using extraordinary measures to postpone a default.

Every household, every business, frankly, everybody, must balance their budget in order to survive. The Federal Government should be no exception.

The bottom line is something has got to change because Americans are getting crushed under the weight of President Biden's failed economic policies.

The good news is that House Republicans are committed to turning this around for American families, for American businesses, for the American people.

Just this week, I traveled to Yukon, Oklahoma, with my colleagues on the House Ways and Means Committee to hear about the economic and regulatory challenges that they face each and every day. It is the second field hearing that the committee has held since taking back the House of Representatives.

In February, we traveled to West Virginia to hear from people in Appalachia. Republicans on the House Committee on Ways and Means are determined to hear directly from taxpayers, from businessowners, from farmers, from manufacturers, from energy producers about how we can ensure that we can get past all the hardships and all the hurdles. We want to ensure that everyone can succeed. The message that we have heard as a committee from the American people has been very clear: Americans have had enough.

In our commitment to America, House Republicans promise to work toward creating an economy that is strong. One of the most effective ways that we can do that is to reign in the out-of-control spending and get our government's fiscal house in order. We have got to find sensible, reasonable, and responsible solutions to addressing our Nation's economic and debt crisis.

As it stands now, we are leaving our children, our grandchildren, and the next generation with the bill and forcing them to live with potentially higher taxes and less opportunities unless we can do something and do something now.

From all of us on this side of the aisle, we want to make sure that Congress can come together, that we get our country's finances in order so that the promise of the American Dream stays intact for families in my home State of Tennessee, in my district, and certainly across the Nation.

We can do it. We have got to work hard. We have got to reign in this out-of-control spending.

I thank you, Congressman JOHNSON, for organizing tonight's Special Order so we can speak directly to the American people about this crucial issue.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his remarks; that was so well said. The gentleman is a great orator, and I love how he laid out the case methodically. That is what a former U.S. attorney from the Western District of Tennessee would do.

Facts are stubborn things, as John Adams said.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE), another brilliant lawyer and also my good friend.

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding me the time. It is true, the wasteful spending, the tax hikes, and the excessive regulations of the Biden administration are crushing working families and small businesses across this country.

In particular, I rise tonight in support of the House Joint Resolution to denounce Biden's overly ambitious rule proposed for changing the definition of the waters of the United States, also known as WOTUS.

You know, agriculture is the number one industry in Virginia, and the Sixth District is proud to be home to more than 8,000 farms.

Narrowly defined water regulation is key to ensure that Virginia's agriculture industry can succeed and local industries can thrive. Unfortunately, the disastrous EPA is working to regulate every pond and every puddle, every stream and small creek with their new WOTUS regulation.

This new rule is going to negatively impact the vital goods and services that farmers, ranchers, and small businesses provide to the Commonwealth and across the Nation.

I have heard from farmers and property owners up and down my district. One thing is clear: They do not want to be told how to use and regulate their land by Joe Biden's radical EPA.

Imposing this overly broad and burdensome regulation will grant Biden's bureaucrats more arbitrary control over our rural communities, saddling folks with costly red tape.

It is far past time that we rescind the administration's new WOTUS ruling and protect America's farmers from this gross overreach of government power.

I thank the gentleman again for organizing this evening's Special Order.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his remarks. The regulatory environment is just out of control, and that recent Supreme Court opinion of West Virginia v. EPA came out on our side, and I think that some of these agencies will

begin to have their wings clipped a bit, and hopefully this WOTUS rule will be handled appropriately. I thank the gentleman for highlighting that important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BRECHEEN), one of the new stars of the Republican Party in the Congress, a former State senator there who now represents the Second District representing his people very well.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't stand for a more important topic. This is what I believe is the greatest domestic threat that is facing this country. Our national debt in our last 40 years of inheriting prosperity from our parents and grandparents, and in the last many years we have been borrowing and stealing prosperity from our children and grandchildren because of an insatiable appetite for spending other people's money, which is the easiest thing to do in a manner that is not in line with our revenue.

There is a Founding Father who gave us a great warning. Thomas Jefferson told us, he said you should not allow your leaders to load you with perpetual debt. It is the same Thomas Jefferson who years later would make the comment which he defined in Latin terms as the ''abusive state of man.'' He said: '' . . . the fore-horse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression.''

Our liberty as a Nation is in jeopardy. We hear trillions of dollars that are, you know, tossed around, and I don't think we really understand the size and scope of a trillion dollars. If I stood on this floor and at a second at a time I laid a dollar bill on this podium and I didn't stop to eat or sleep, taking a second at a time to lay out that dollar bill, it would take me 11 days—you would get tired sitting in that chair, Mr. Speaker—11 days watching me count out a million dollars.

If I was to lay out a dollar at a time on this table a second at a time, the time to lay it out and retrieve my hand, it would take me 31 years to lay out a billion dollars if I didn't stop to eat or sleep.

In order to get to a trillion dollars, it would take me 31,000 years, 31,000 years if I didn't stop to eat or sleep a second at a time.

We know what has happened in 2022: 40-year high record of inflation. The average Oklahoman spent $7,000 more than they did the year prior to buy the exact same goods and services because of devaluation of the dollar.

That is the tip of the iceberg. That is what we see. That is what people are feeling. What is under the water that we can't see is this collision course that we are headed toward, this gigantic iceberg of the mountain of debt in our unfunded obligations.

Our national debt at $31.5 trillion, every man, woman, and newborn child, if you take that number and you divide it, every baby, including babies that open their eyes today and take in their first breath of air, owe $94,000 just to pay off that $31.5 trillion. They will pay it off through a lower standard of living. It is a hidden tax that we are going pass on to our kids because of our selfishness.

$1.4 trillion has been a number that has kind of been in my head for the last few days.

□ 1915

The CBO number, the Congressional Budget Office number, said that this year's deficit is $1.4 trillion. We will overspend $1.4 trillion this year.

If you go back 40 years ago to 1983, that is exactly the size of our gross national debt in 1983. It was $1.4 trillion. It took us 200 years as a nation to get to $1.4 trillion. This year, we will overspend in 1 year that amount.

CBO is also giving us projections about where our interest rates are taking us. Within 7 years, what we spend that will be flushed down the toilet just in interest payments is going to match what we spend on the entire defense of our country.

If you take that interest rate out to 10 years from now, it is also $1.4 trillion. There is the number yet again.

In 1983, after 200 years, the size of our gross national debt was $1.4 trillion. This year, we will overspend by that amount, our annual deficit.

Ten years from now, that will be just the interest that will be flushed down the toilet, the annual debt service payments 10 years from now.

That is a 50-year spread of $1.4 trillion. We are in trouble.

Our current gross national debt-to-GDP ratio is 129 percent. There are only 11 other countries in the world that have a higher debt-to-GDP ratio than we do, and these are the small countries, the small countries that aren't a world leader, a shining city on a hill.

Economists are predicting that Medicare will be insolvent in 2028. They actually bumped the number to 2028. We are only going to be able to pay out to 90 percent. There will be an automatic 10 percent cut in 2028 to Medicare if we do nothing.

In 2033, the actuaries are telling us Social Security becomes insolvent. There will be an automatic 25 percent cut to Social Security. Without anyone changing anything, that is what we face.

When you add the liabilities, the unfunded liabilities of Medicare, Social Security, what we owe veterans for pensions, Federal employees for pensions, other trust programs we have stolen out of over the last many years, and you add in addition our $31 trillion, our sum total is $120 trillion of unfunded liabilities debt. That came out last year with very little fanfare. Only the Heartland Institute picked it up.

That $120 trillion total, they said if you put it against all assets in America, if you assessed it against the valuation of all property, all land, all homes, all stocks, and—they even said this—down to pieces of furniture, it is 86 percent of all wealth in America right now.

You will remember I talked through how long it would take to get to a trillion dollars. It would take you 31,000 years if you counted out a dollar at a time. It would take you 3.7 million years to get to $120 trillion if you didn't stop to eat or sleep and you counted out a dollar at a time.

According to the U.S. Treasury Department in its February 2022 report that I just cited, in order for us to pay this all back, another way of looking at it, if every household would just send a million-dollar check to your Federal Government, that will make us square with the house as a nation.

Thomas Jefferson wasn't alone. Benjamin Franklin warned us, if we can gather it from his conversation with Elizabeth Powel when this Constitution was put together. When he was asked outside by Elizabeth Powel, as one of the leading members of Philadelphia society, after weeks of putting this Constitution together, she said: What have you given us, a republic or a monarch?

His response was: We have given you a republic if you can keep it.

That is important because Article IV, Section 4, of our U.S. Constitution guarantees to every State a republican form of government and to protect them from invasion.

We will stay on the republican conversation, the republic form, for a moment. Why is a republic important? Our Founders in that study, in the Constitutional Convention, they looked at all forms of government. They spent weeks. A republic was different—they knew it—than a democracy. Benjamin Franklin also described democracy. He said it is two wolves and a lamb voting on what they are going to have for lunch, but liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote.

What we are talking about is the liberty of this country. We are trading our liberty for debt and dependency. Liberty means something.

In the constitutional preamble, it says: ''We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.'' It is a mission statement. We have a duty to live up to the mission statement that was handed to us 200 years ago, and we are missing the mark.

May God help us obtain the courage to put our national interests ahead of our own personal self-interests and squarely face these problems that are addressing the American people.

I will end by saying this: Martin Luther King, Jr., had a statement that my old boss, Tom Coburn, kind of tweaked, and he shortened it. It is this:

Cowardice asks the question, is it safe? Vanity asks the question, is it popular? But conscience asks the question, is it right?

It is right to secure the blessings of liberty, not just for ourselves but our posterity.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, it is a harsh truth, and we have to address it. My colleague is right. As he implied there, the inevitable result of living beyond our means today is that we and our children inevitably are going to have to live below our means tomorrow.

We are going to have higher debt, higher taxes, less security, less opportunity. It is not going to be the same America that we have always known and valued. It is a harsh truth.

Mr. Speaker, I yield next to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN), my good friend.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I know normally this hour is taken up with speeches that I think are not bipartisan enough. I have decided to take this time to congratulate President Biden on his decision not to veto the bill we are sending over to him, which will prevent the District of Columbia from decreasing the penalties for severe crimes committed in this city.

I think what President Biden has done is finally recognized what a lot of us have been saying over the last few years. The District of Columbia is just plainly and simply not capable of self-governance at this time. I am glad President Biden agrees with us on that topic.

Right now, the District of Columbia has the second-highest spending per capita in the country on its schools, trailing only New York. Nevertheless, its test scores are abysmal.

The over 200 murders last year in the Nation's Capital is also an embarrassment, and that number has skyrocketed this year so far as of mid-February.

I will tell you, this is the Nation's Capital. There is no city we should care about more than the District of Columbia. It should be a shining light to represent the United States. People come here from all around the world.

I remember once I took a trip to Taipei, the large capital city of Taiwan. I was there with some friends. I asked our tour guide if there was anywhere at night we should not go, expecting there were some places we could not walk to without danger. We were told there was nowhere in Taipei we can't go. Nowhere in Taipei is not safe.

I was kind of embarrassed about my country because I thought, well, I was safe going to Taipei, but if I had visitors coming from Taiwan to Washington, D.C., I would be talking for quite a while, explaining all the places we couldn't go here.

I don't know whether people are aware that Vladimir Putin makes fun of our country for allowing such decline in the District of Columbia, not only how embarrassingly high our crime rate is but how embarrassingly low our test scores in the schools are, how embarrassing it is to have so many homeless people wherever you look.

I hope President Biden builds on this new conversion in which he is admitting the District of Columbia is not capable, apparently, of setting appropriate punishments for crimes here.

I look forward to working with President Biden on perhaps things we can do to improve the decisions by the local school board on their schools, maybe make some changes in their welfare policies that lead to so many homeless people here.

In any event, like I said, I would like to end tonight's speeches on an upbeat message, thanking President Biden for his conversion to the understanding that the people here in the District of Columbia, who, by the way, he is not a perfect man, but they voted 6 percent for Donald Trump in the last election. I kind of wondered what type of people would do that, but they did.

In any event, hopefully, President Biden will be happy to meet with us and think of other things we can do to improve life in our Nation's Capital.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I point out, as he said, that our resolution blocking those crazy changes to D.C.'s criminal code was so strong that even Joe Biden couldn't agree to veto it. We are doing the right thing. We must continue, and we will.

I am grateful to my Republican colleagues for joining me for this Special Order hour.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 26 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 9, 2023, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. STEIL: Committee on House Administration. House Resolution 197. Resolution providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eighteenth Congress; with an amendment (Rept. 118–8). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mrs. LUNA (for herself, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. MOYLAN, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. POSEY, Mr. FRY, Mr. DONALDS, Mr. CARSON, Mr. STEUBE, Ms. MACE, Mrs. BOEBERT, Mr. DUNN of Florida, Mrs. MCCLAIN, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART):

H.R. 1434. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to require a member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty to receive self defense training once a month to combat sexual assault; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. LATTA, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. OBERNOLTE, Mr. EMMER, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. POSEY, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. ROY, Mr. MILLER of Ohio, Ms. VAN DUYNE, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. MAST, Mr. PENCE, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JACKSON of Texas, Mr. ISSA, Mrs. BOEBERT, Mr. GUEST, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. BOST, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, Mr. DONALDS, Mr. OWENS, Mr. WALBERG, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mrs. BICE, Mr. STAUBER, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. HERN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LATURNER, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. MANN, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. CAREY):

H.R. 1435. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to prevent the elimination of the sale of internal combustion engines; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. BROWN, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mrs. HAYES, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 1436. A bill to provide additional funding for scholarships for students at 1890 institutions; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. ROSE (for himself and Mr. SOTO):

H.R. 1437. A bill to authorize livestock producers and their employees to take black vultures in order to prevent death, injury, or destruction to livestock, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BERGMAN:

H.R. 1438. A bill to require certain nonprofit and not-for-profit social welfare organizations to submit disclosure reports on foreign funding to the Attorney General; and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CASE, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. TAKANO, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 1439. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to allow all eligible voters to vote by mail in Federal elections, to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to provide for automatic voter registration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LAMALFA (for himself, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 1440. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on heavy trucks and trailers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. BROWNLEY:

H.R. 1441. A bill to require the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to further develop, finalize, and implement updated regulations for offshore oil and gas pipelines to address long-standing limitations regarding its ability to ensure active pipeline integrity and address safety and environmental risks associated with decommissioning, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CARL:

H.R. 1442. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the forfeiture of certain Federal retirement benefits for Federal employees convicted of making false statements before Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida (for herself, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. SOTO, Mr. FROST, Mr. MCCORMICK, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ):

H.R. 1443. A bill to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to prohibit oil and gas preleasing, leasing, and related activities in certain areas of the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of Florida, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CLEAVER (for himself, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. BROWN, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. LEE of California, and Ms. TOKUDA):

H.R. 1444. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to provide for the consideration of climate change, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 1445. A bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to annually report on aviation consumer complaints related to passengers with a disability; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. BACON):

H.R. 1446. A bill to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to expand foster parent training and authorize new appropriations to support the obtainment of a driver's license; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DELUZIO (for himself, Mr. POCAN, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. TITUS, Ms. WILD, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MULLIN, and Ms. BARRAGÁN):

H.R. 1447. A bill to prohibit an employer from terminating the coverage of an employee under a group health plan while the employer is engaged in a lock-out or while the employee is engaged in a lawful strike, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. FEENSTRA (for himself, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. GUEST, and Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana):

H.R. 1448. A bill to amend the Defense Production Act of 1950 to prohibit investment by foreign adversaries in United States real estate suitable for renewable energy or renewable fuels production, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FULCHER:

H.R. 1449. A bill to amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to increase the frequency of lease sales, to require replacement sales, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. FULCHER (for himself, Ms. PEREZ, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. KILMER):

H.R. 1450. A bill to amend the Agricultural Act of 2014 to modify the treatment of revenue from timber sale contracts and certain payments made by counties to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior under good neighbor agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GALLEGO (for himself and Mr. CARBAJAL):

H.R. 1451. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize the enlistment of certain aliens in the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GARAMENDI:

H.R. 1452. A bill to amend the Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 to direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to provide certain data related to water quality, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GARBARINO (for himself, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. BACON, and Mrs. MCBATH):

H.R. 1453. A bill to amend title 11 of the United States Code, to allow full subrogation, including subrogation to the priority rights of the United States, of claims for the payment of customs duties; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN (for herself and Ms. TOKUDA):

H.R. 1454. A bill to amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to establish a cacao tree health initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN (for herself and Ms. TOKUDA):

H.R. 1455. A bill to amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to provide research and extension grants to support the study of insects and pests that impact plantains and bananas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. GREEN of Tennessee:

H.R. 1456. A bill to limit the use of funds for the production of films using assets of the Department of State under certain circumstances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 1457. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to take certain actions with respect to certain qualified coal applications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HERN (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Ms. MATSUI):

H.R. 1458. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of prescription digital therapeutics under such titles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. HINSON (for herself, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. FINSTAD, and Ms. CRAIG):

H.R. 1459. A bill to leverage incentives for the adoption of precision agriculture technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 1460. A bill to require an interagency study on the environmental and energy impacts of crypto-asset mining, to assess crypto-asset mining compliance with the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself and Mrs. PELTOLA):

H.R. 1461. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture and the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry out a study on coastal seaweed farming, issue regulation relating to such farming, and establish an Indigenous seaweed farming fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania (for himself, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. STEIL, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mr. RYAN, and Mrs. FISCHBACH):

H.R. 1462. A bill to require enforcement against misbranded milk alternatives; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KIM of New Jersey:

H.R. 1463. A bill to prohibit Federal officials from owning covered investments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Agriculture, Oversight and Accountability, House Administration, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LESKO (for herself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. CISCOMANI):

H.R. 1464. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to clarify that the Secretary of Homeland Security may waive certain environmental requirements to permit U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to search for unlawful border crossing tunnels on private land to prevent the illegal entry of aliens into the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MACE (for herself, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. CASTEN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Mrs. KIM of California, Mr. LIEU, Mr. MAST, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. NEGUSE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. PERRY, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POSEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. STEUBE, Ms. STEVENS, Ms. TITUS, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. TRONE, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. WALTZ, Ms. ADAMS, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia):

H.R. 1465. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to allow for the adoption or non-laboratory placement of certain animals used in Federal research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mrs. MCCLAIN (for herself, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. ALLEN, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. POSEY, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BOST, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 1466. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit research with human fetal tissue obtained pursuant to an abortion, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 1467. A bill to adjust the amount of monthly old-age, survivors, and disability insurance payments under title II of the Social Security Act based on locality-based comparability payment rates; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin (for herself, Ms. CHU, Mr. EVANS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. TORRES of New York, Ms. OMAR, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Ms. TOKUDA, and Ms. PINGREE):

H.R. 1468. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and improve the earned income tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. NORMAN (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Ms. GREENE of Georgia, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, and Mr. STEUBE):

H.R. 1469. A bill to prohibit a mask mandate to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on a military installation in the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. NORMAN (for himself, Mr. BANKS, Mrs. BOEBERT, Mr. CLOUD, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Mr. GOSAR, Ms. GREENE of Georgia, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. HERN, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. OGLES, Mr. ROSENDALE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. WALTZ, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. LAMBORN):

H.R. 1470. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for abortion through financial or logistical support to individuals traveling to another State or country to receive an abortion; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. OMAR (for herself, Ms. PRESSLEY, and Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ):

H.R. 1471. A bill to provide for the imposition of sanctions with respect to foreign countries that are in violation of international human rights law or international humanitarian law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Intelligence (Permanent Select), and Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PANETTA (for himself and Mr. BAIRD):

H.R. 1472. A bill to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to provide for a consistent definition for plant biostimulants; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. LAMALFA):

H.R. 1473. A bill to provide for a program within the Forest Service to detect, document, monitor, and remediate the environmental damages caused by trespass cultivation on National Forest Lands, and amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to include criminal penalties for illegal pesticide application on Government property, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

H.R. 1474. A bill to allow States to elect to observe year-round daylight saving time, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMUCKER (for himself and Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina):

H.R. 1475. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop and nationally disseminate accurate, relevant, and accessible resources to promote understanding about sensitivities regarding adoption in the health care industry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. TIMMONS:

H.R. 1476. A bill to provide for the collection and sharing of information, including tax return information, for purposes of criminal investigations with respect to loans under the Paycheck Protection Program; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Small Business, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WITTMAN (for himself and Ms. SPANBERGER):

H.R. 1477. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit certain expenses associated with obtaining or maintaining recognized postsecondary credentials to be treated as qualified higher education expenses for purposes of 529 accounts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. NEHLS (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. OGLES, and Mr. JACKSON of Texas):

H.J. Res. 41. A joint resolution disapproving of the rule submitted by the Department of Homeland Security relating to ''Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. AGUILAR:

H. Res. 205. A resolution electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives and ranking a Member on a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. LEE of Florida (for herself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida):

H. Res. 206. A resolution expressing support for the 88th Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City, Florida, its cultural significance to the State of Florida, and the contributions of Plant City's strawberry industry to American agriculture; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. LUTTRELL (for himself, Mr. HERN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mrs. BOEBERT, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, and Mr. ELLZEY):

H. Res. 207. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to prohibit Members, officers, and employees of the House from serving on the board of directors of any entity which receives funding from, or is affiliated with or owned or controlled by, the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party, any other element of the Chinese Communist Party, or any foreign adversary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. CARSON:

H. Res. 208. A resolution observing the 100th anniversary of the birth of John Leslie ''Wes'' Montgomery and commemorating his contributions to jazz music; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BOWMAN, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK, Ms. CHU, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MENG, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OMAR, Ms. PORTER, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. STEVENS, Ms. TITUS, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. TOKUDA, Mrs. TORRES of California, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia):

H. Res. 209. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the importance of taking a feminist approach to all aspects of foreign policy, including foreign assistance and humanitarian response, trade, diplomacy, defense, immigration, funding, and accountability mechanisms; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI:

H. Res. 210. A resolution supporting the designation of December 5 of each year as ''National Soil Health Day''; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

By Mr. NEGUSE (for himself, Mr. CROW, Ms. PETTERSEN, Ms. CARAVEO, and Mr. LAMBORN):

H. Res. 211. A resolution expressing support for the designation of March 8, 2023, as ''National Emily Warner and Women Airline Pilots Day''; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

By Mr. NICKEL (for himself, Mr. SORENSEN, and Ms. PETTERSEN):

H. Res. 212. A resolution opposing a national sales tax on working families and supporting a tax cut to benefit the middle class; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Armed Services, Veterans' Affairs, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H. Res. 213. A resolution supporting the designation of March 2023 as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY AND SINGLE SUBJECT STATEMENTS

Pursuant to clause 7(c)(1) of rule XII and Section 3(c) of H. Res. 5 the following statements are submitted regarding (1) the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution and (2) the single subject of the bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. Trone:

H.R. 1428.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To repeal Section 297B(e)(3)(B) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1639p(e)(3)(B)) and eliminate the 10-year drug felony prohibition for hemp farmers.

By Mrs. LUNA:

H.R. 1434.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 cl. 14

The single subject of this legislation is:

Self defense/combat training for active duty service members

By Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 1435.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3 provides Congress with the power to ''regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Clean Air Act to prevent the elimination of the sale or use of internal combustion engines.

By Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia:

H.R. 1436.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The commerce clause power under article 1, section 8, clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Funding for 1890s institutions.

By Mr. ROSE:

H.R. 1437.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To authorize livestock producers and their employees to take black vultures in order to prevent death, injury, or destruction to livestock.

By Mr. BERGMAN:

H.R. 1438.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 18, necessary and proper

The single subject of this legislation is:

Foreign Government Accountability

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 1439.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4

The single subject of this legislation is:

This legislation expands access to the right to vote.

By Mr. LAMALFA:

H.R. 1440.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution: ''The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.''

The single subject of this legislation is:

To repeal the Federal excise tax on heavy trucks and trailers.

By Ms. BROWNLEY:

H.R. 1441.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Offshore pipelines

By Mr. CARL:

H.R. 1442.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article 1, Section 8.

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill would strip federal employees of their pension benefits if they are convicted of lying to Congress about their official duties while employed.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H.R. 1443.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution provides Congress with the authority to ''provide for the common Defense and general Welfare'' of Americans.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to prohibit oil and gas preleasing, leasing, and related activities in certain areas of the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of Florida

By Mr. CLEAVER:

H.R. 1444.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

The subject of this bill is Superfund sites.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 1445.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Aviation

By Mr. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 1446.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution: To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the powers enumerated under section 8 and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Child Welfare

By Mr. DELUZIO:

H.R. 1447.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

The single subject of this legislation is:

Labor

By Mr. FEENSTRA:

H.R. 1448.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 4 of the Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

To prohibit investment by foreign adversaries in United States real estate suitable for renewable energy or renewable fuels production.

By Mr. FULCHER:

H.R. 1449.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, providing Congress to ''make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution'' the power enumerated in Article 1 and ''all other Powers vested by [the] Constitution of the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

The single subject of this legislation is;

Related to increase of geothermal leases on Federal lands and consideration of geothermal drilling permits timetables.

By Mr. FULCHER:

H.R. 1450.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, providing Congress to ''make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution'' the power enumerated in Article 1 and ''all other Powers vested by [the] Constitution of the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer therof.''

The single subject of this legislation is:

Related to Good Neighbor Authority to provide shared receipts for entities like counties and Tribes through the authority.

By Mr. GALLEGO:

H.R. 1451.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: ''[The Congress shall have the power. . .] To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

The single subject of this legislation is:

Armed Services

By Mr. GARAMENDI:

H.R. 1452.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8, Article I of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 to direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to provide certain data related to water quality, and for other purposes.

By Mr. GARBARINO:

H.R. 1453.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend title 11 of the United States Code, to allow full subrogation, including subrogation to the priority rights of the United States, of claims for the payment of customs duties.

By Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN:

H.R. 1454.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 18, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution

Congress shall have the power . . . ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution of the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof.''

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill amends the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to establish a cacao tree health initiative, and for other purposes.

By Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN:

H.R. 1455.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 18, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution

Congress shall have the power. . . ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution of the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof.''

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill amends the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to provide research and extension grants to support the study of insects and pests that impact plantains and bananas, and for other purposes.

By Mr. GREEN of Tennessee:

H.R. 1456.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Restricts the use of Department of State assets or technical assistance for U.S. film production entities if they engage in content censorship at the behest of the Chinese Communist Party.

By Ms. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 1457.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Requires Secretary of Interior to take certain actions with respect to certain qualified coal applications

By Mr. HERN:

H.R. 1458.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Medicare

By Mrs. HINSON:

H.R. 1459.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend Sections 304 and 310 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act and Sections 1201, 1240, and 1242 of the Food Security Act of 1985 to utilize existing programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help producers obtain precision agriculture technology.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 1460.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Cryptocurrency

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 1461.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture and the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry out a study on coastal seaweed farming, issue regulation relating to such farming, and establish an Indigenous seaweed farming fund, and for other purposes.

By Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 1462.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To require enforcement against misbranded milk alternatives.

By Mr. KIM of New Jersey:

H.R. 1463.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Stock Trading

By Mrs. LESKO:

H.R. 1464.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Border Security

By Ms. MACE:

H.R. 1465.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution under the General Welfare Clause.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Would require all federal agencies to enact policies allowing for the retirement of surviving lab animals no longer needed in taxpayer-funded experimentation.

By Mrs. McCLAIN:

H.R. 1466.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit research with human fetal tissue obtained pursuant to an abortion, and for other purposes

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 1467.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution [page H10170]

The single subject of this legislation is:

To direct the Social Security Administration to increase an individual's monthly Social Security benefit amount in accordance with the locality-based comparability payment rate applicable to the federal locality-pay area in which the individual resides.

By Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin:

H.R. 1468.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Sections 7 & 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Federal taxation

By Mr. NORMAN:

H.R. 1469.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To prohibit the Secretary of Defense from imposing any federal mask mandate policies pertaining to COVID–19 on military installations located in the United States.

By Mr. NORMAN:

H.R. 1470.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To prohibit the use of Federal funds for abortion through financial or logistical support to individuals traveling to another State or country to receive an abortion.

By Ms. OMAR:

H.R. 1471.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To restrict security assistance and arms sales with respect to foreign countries that are in violation of international law.

By Mr. PANETTA:

H.R. 1472.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, clause 18

The single subject of this bill is:

agriculture.

By Mr. PETERS:

H.R. 1473.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Public lands

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

H.R. 1474.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Daylight Savings Time

By Mr. SMUCKER:

H.R. 1475.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I of the U.S. Constitution (the Spending Clause)

The single subject of this legislation is:

To establish a grant program to fund adoption education for hospitals and establish a committee of adoption experts to disseminate nationally best practices in adoption sensitivity procedures.

By Mr. TIMMONS:

H.R. 1476.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

A Bill to identify and report fraudulent PPP Reciepients.

By Mr. WITTMAN:

H.R. 1477.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Eligible expenses of 529 savings accounts

By Mr. NEHLS:

H.J. Res. 41.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statement is submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

The Resolution of Disapproval would prevent the rule submitted by the Department of Homeland Security relating to ''Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility'' (87 Fed. Reg. 5547; published September 9, 2022), from having any force or effect.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 5: Mr. MOLINARO, Mr. BABIN, Mr. SANTOS, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.

H.R. 53: Mrs. LUNA.

H.R. 82: Mrs. FLETCHER and Mr. LUTTRELL.

H.R. 223: Mrs. LUNA.

H.R. 231: Mr. SELF.

H.R. 314: Ms. LEE of Florida.
H.R. 330: Mrs. LUNA.
H.R. 343: Mrs. LUNA and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 371: Mrs. MILLER of Illinois.
H.R. 372: Mrs. MILLER of Illinois.
H.R. 383: Mrs. LUNA.
H.R. 491: Mr. MOSKOWITZ.
H.R. 516: Mr. MOSKOWITZ.
H.R. 524: Ms. MACE.
H.R. 525: Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas.
H.R. 537: Mrs. LEE of Nevada.
H.R. 564: Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 568: Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas.
H.R. 574: Mr. GOODEN of Texas.
H.R. 589: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 645: Mr. MOSKOWITZ.
H.R. 661: Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 662: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 698: Mr. SORENSEN.
H.R. 700: Mr. ESTES.
H.R. 734: Mrs. LESKO, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. DUNCAN, Mrs. HOUCHIN, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. BEAN of Florida, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 735: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mr. STEIL.
H.R. 736: Mrs. MCCLAIN and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 750: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 758: Mr. VALADAO and Mr. ROSE.
H.R. 767: Ms. BARRAGÁN.
H.R. 801: Mrs. LUNA, Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 807: Mr. OWENS and Mr. MANN.
H.R. 813: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 830: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 856: Mr. GOMEZ.
H.R. 871: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 911: Mrs. FLETCHER and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 915: Mr. BOST.
H.R. 916: Mr. MOYLAN.
H.R. 953: Ms. BALINT and Ms. DEGETTE.
H.R. 965: Ms. SALAZAR.
H.R. 1006: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 1007: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 1009: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 1023: Mr. BUCSHON and Mr. CURTIS.
H.R. 1047: Ms. CHU.
H.R. 1068: Mr. WALBERG and Mr. CURTIS.
H.R. 1070: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1074: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 1077: Ms. NORTON, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. BROWN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. NADLER, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. BUSH, Mr. CARSON, and Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 1088: Mrs. FOUSHEE.
H.R. 1140: Mr. CRENSHAW and Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 1141: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 1143: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 1145: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1154: Mr. CARSON.
H.R. 1158: Mr. WALBERG and Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 1199: Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. POSEY, Mr. FERGUSON, and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 1202: Mr. VAN DREW and Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 1218: Mr. STEUBE.
H.R. 1220: Mr. OGLES.
H.R. 1228: Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 1231: Mr. HIGGINS of New York.
H.R. 1233: Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. CHU, and Mr. CORREA.
H.R. 1238: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. EVANS, Mr. CASAR, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Ms. TITUS, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SORENSEN, Ms. PETTERSEN, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 1250: Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 1255: Ms. WILD, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. OMAR, and Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE.
H.R. 1267: Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1292: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 1293: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois and Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 1297: Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 1310: Mr. VASQUEZ.
H.R. 1318: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI and Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER.
H.R. 1324: Mr. STEUBE, Mr. ELLZEY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and Ms. SHERRILL.
H.R. 1327: Mrs. FOUSHEE.
H.R. 1348: Ms. SALAZAR.
H.R. 1362: Mr. JACKSON of Texas.
H.R. 1378: Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK.
H.R. 1382: Mr. NORMAN, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BABIN, Ms. VAN DUYNE, Mr. ESTES, Mr. ROSE, and Mr. CLYDE.
H.R. 1383: Mr. CARSON.
H.R. 1387: Ms. LEE of California and Ms. WILD.
H.R. 1396: Mr. COSTA, Mr. KHANNA, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 1399: Mr. POSEY, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. CLYDE.
H.R. 1425: Mr. GROTHMAN and Ms. HAGEMAN.
H.J. Res. 11: Mr. ROSENDALE, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. DUARTE, and Mr. TIFFANY.
H.J. Res. 25: Mr. RYAN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. SORENSEN, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. CASAR, Ms. SALINAS, Mr. HIMES, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. FROST, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Mr. CORREA, Ms. CARAVEO, Mrs. RAMIREZ, and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.J. Res. 31: Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H. Con. Res. 14: Mr. ALLEN.
H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. PALMER, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. CRENSHAW, and Mrs. LESKO.
H. Res. 7: Mrs. LUNA.
H. Res. 108: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Ms. SCANLON.
H. Res. 115: Mrs. LUNA.
H. Res. 124: Mr. LAMALFA.
H. Res. 170: Mr. LAWLER.
H. Res. 173: Mr. CASE.
H. Res. 200: Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania.
H. Res. 202: Mr. POSEY.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 169 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023 No. 44

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who alone spreads out the Heavens and rules the raging of the sea, thank you for the gift of life and for the opportunity to invest in freedom.

Lord, infuse our Senators with strength to meet the challenges of our time. Remind them that humility precedes honor and that service is the litmus test of greatness. May our lawmakers look to You throughout this day for guidance. Help them to remember that they are doing Your work and reward them from the reservoir of Your love.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 8, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING 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 Patrice H. Kunesh, of Minnesota, to be Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans, Department of Health and Human Services.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FOX NEWS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night, additional new evidence came to light that Rupert Murdoch and FOX News knew Donald Trump lied about the 2020 election. Yet they allowed the Big Lie to air on their network all the same. More and more evidence keeps pouring out that these are the undisputed facts.

I have never heard of a news organization push a story with such intensity while acknowledging, very candidly behind the scenes, that what they were peddling was total balderdash.

In one email just revealed last night, Mr. Murdoch admitted sometime after January 6 that ''maybe Sean and Laura went too far,'' referring to prime-time hosts Sean Hannity and Laura Ingraham.

In another instance published in last night's Washington Post, Mr. Murdoch speculated that after losing the election, Donald Trump was going ''increasingly mad.'' Murdoch said Donald Trump is going ''increasingly mad,'' and then Murdoch worried that President Trump's allies' plans to overturn swing State results ''sound ridiculous'' and could lead to ''riots like never before.''

Murdoch, the head of FOX News, allowing these lies to continue, worries that they could lead to ''riots like never before.''

But it is not enough for Mr. Murdoch to express doubt and regret in private, which is continuing to be documented, because today, after he makes these expressions of doubt and regret and is very pejorative of his own newscast and newscasters, the Big Lie still has a home at FOX News, Mr. Murdoch's station—news network. Just look at Carlson's segments this week.

Members on the Republican side of the aisle should drop the pretenses and say it plainly: FOX News lied to the country about the 2020 elections and, in doing so, eroded the public's trust in American democracy. For their own sake and for the sake of the country, Mr. Murdoch and FOX News leadership should put a halt to the spread of the Big Lie on their network.

This is about preserving trust in our 200-year-old system of government. When enough people believe elections are not on the level, that is the death knell of democracy.

Of course, the fault also lies with the person who shared Capitol security footage with FOX News to begin with—

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

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Speaker MCCARTHY. Speaker MCCARTHY has held a gavel for less than 3 months and already he has done more than any party leader in Congress to enable the spread of Donald Trump's Big Lie.

While the Speaker can't undo his decision to share security footage with FOX News, he should denounce them for the way that FOX News manipulated that footage to rewrite the history of January 6. The Speaker should not delay because his decision to share sensitive security footage with FOX News has made our democracy weaker because millions—millions—of people, sadly, believe Mr. Carlson when he says January 6 was a legitimate protest. And the more people who believe that January 6 was legitimate, the more they will accept the lie that Donald Trump won the 2020 election.

Bewilderingly—bewilderingly—Speaker MCCARTHY said yesterday that he didn't regret his decision to share Capitol security footage. He said he didn't see what FOX News aired; that people can make their own conclusions. Then, for some reason, he started pointing the finger at CNN.

For Speaker MCCARTHY not even to watch the spoiled fruits of his labor, it shows a callousness and unconcern far beneath the dignity of his office.

Speaker MCCARTHY, rescue your office from that indignity by finally speaking out. If you are dealing with a burglar, Speaker MCCARTHY, the last thing you should do is give them your house keys. If you are dealing with an arsonist, Speaker MCCARTHY, the last thing you should do is give them a box of matches. And if you are dealing with FOX News, Speaker MCCARTHY, the last thing you should do is give them security footage of January 6 because, as we have seen, their hosts will lie to the American people—baldly lie about what happened.

So, once again, Speaker MCCARTHY can't undo his decision to share security footage with FOX, but he should at least denounce FOX News for the way they have manipulated the footage to rewrite the history of January 6.

THE BUDGET

Mr. President, now on the budget, President Biden's budget won't be released until midday tomorrow, but we can already draw a couple of big conclusions about the contrast between his vision—the Democratic vision—and the Republican vision for our country.

The President, for instance, is willing to do what Republicans are not: lower the deficit in a realistic, responsible way without cutting benefits that tens of millions of people rely on.

In fact, Democrats have already proved it is possible: The Inflation Reduction Act not only saved families money, it also lowers the deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars.

The Republicans like to talk about cutting the debt, but Democrats are the ones actually getting it done. Unlike Republicans, the President is also asking the richest of the rich to pay a little more of their fair share in taxes so that tens of millions of Americans will not see their Medicare benefits wither away in a few years. Under the President's plan, Medicare would remain solvent well beyond 2050. Isn't that great? Medicare, which we have always worried about, which is so important to tens of millions of Americans, would stay solvent until 2050.

Republicans, of course, want to go the other way. Instead of cutting taxes for the middle class, their priority is tax cuts to billionaires and large corporations. Now, I have no problem with those at the very top. God bless them. They are doing just fine. But I think most Americans agree that CEOs should never have a lower tax burden than nurses, teachers, cabdrivers, firefighters, and police officers. If my friends on the other side want to call that outlandish or extreme, they can go right ahead, but I warn them they will be at odds with the vast majority of Americans.

Finally, the President's plan will build on what Democrats accomplished last year to lower the cost of prescription drugs.

For the first time ever, Medicare now has the authority to negotiate the price of certain drugs, saving taxpayers billions of dollars, but the President is right to push further in expanding the list of drugs whose prices Medicare can negotiate.

So let's run through the list one more time. The President's plan is going to continue lowering the cost of prescription drugs. He is going to ensure that Medicare remains solvent beyond 2050, without cutting a penny in benefits. He is going to ask the wealthy to pay just a little more of their fair share in taxes without raising taxes on anyone making less than $400,000 a year. And his plan will cut the deficit by $2 trillion—$2 trillion—over the next 10 years.

Speaker MCCARTHY, what about you? Where is your plan? Enough with the dodging. Enough with the excuses. It is time to level with the American people so they can see the contrast between Democrats and Republicans for themselves.

RAIL SAFETY

Now, Mr. President, on rail, yesterday, the NTSB announced the opening of a special investigation into Norfolk Southern's organization and safety culture in light of multiple derailments, including the toxic derailment in East Palestine last month.

When Norfolk Southern's CEO, Alan Shaw, comes before the Senate tomorrow, I expect him to own up to his company's spotty safety culture, particularly the increasingly apparent pattern of negligence, because you don't need a full investigation to understand that when rail companies willingly neglect safety upgrades, push for looser regulations, and lay off workers, they are asking for disaster.

So, tomorrow, I want to hear from Norfolk Southern's CEO as to why they spent years lobbying for looser regulations designed to prevent accidents like this, particularly when Trump was President. After seeing a record $3.3 billion in profits last year, I want to hear why Norfolk Southern chose to prioritize billions in stock buybacks instead of investing in safety equipment or their workers.

I also expect Mr. Shaw to lay out precisely what steps Norfolk Southern is taking to prevent future disasters like East Palestine. How does Norfolk Southern plan to address rail safety inspections in the future? Will Norfolk Southern commit to having its conductors and other rail employees undergo additional safety and response training? And if, God forbid, another accident happens, how will Norfolk Southern ensure communities get the resources they need to respond to accidents?

These are questions that Mr. Shaw must answer tomorrow: how the railroad will address rail safety inspections in the future, whether they will commit to having their conductors and rail employees undergo additional safety and response training, and how they will help communities if, God forbid, another accident occurs.

TRIBUTE TO ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER

Finally, Mr. President, there is Andrew Lloyd Webber. Today, it is my honor to pay tribute to one of the world's alltime greatest composers, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber.

This month, Mr. Lloyd Webber will turn 75 just as his latest musical, ''Bad Cinderella,'' opens at the Imperial Theatre on Broadway. Boy, it takes your breath away just thinking about his amazing, amazing career. Just listen to this: ''The Phantom of the Opera,'' ''Cats,'' ''Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,'' ''Evita''—all done by just one man. These works stand the test of time already.

For those of us in New York, Mr. Lloyd Webber has often been called the backbone of Broadway, and thank God, because New York would not be the same without Broadway.

It has been a hard time for the performing arts in recent years, and I was proud to work in the Senate to pass Save our Stages, which has provided over $1 billion to thousands of theaters, music venues, jazz and comedy clubs, and more in New York and across our entire country. And allies like Mr. Lloyd Webber have been outstanding to keep the arts going when times have gotten tough.

So, Sir Andrew Lloyd, we wish you a happy 75th. Thank you for everything you have done for our great city and for culture and music in the world, and we just can't wait to see what you have in store for us next.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, there is a regrettable and un-Presidential thread that has been woven throughout the whole Biden Presidency. Whenever this President finds himself facing bad headlines, he tries to change the subject by fearmongering about civil rights and voting rights and pretending we are in the 1950s or sixties.

Remember early last year when the full impact of the Democrats' inflation was coming into focus? That is when President Biden flew to Georgia, screamed that Jim Crow was coming back and our democracy was on death's doorstep, and compared Republicans—listen to this—to Bull Connor and Jefferson Davis. He compared us to Bull Connor and Jefferson Davis.

Well, here he goes again. Last weekend, down in Alabama, the President suggested that the right to vote in America is ''under assault'' today, on par with Bloody Sunday on the Edmund Pettus Bridge nearly 60 years ago. Nobody believes this. Nobody seriously believes that race relations or voting laws or any of these issues are anywhere near—anywhere near—where they were back in the 1960s. This is utter nonsense.

President Biden again referenced the Republican State's voting laws that he last year called Jim Crow 2.0, as if all of that hysteria had not been completely disproven in the meantime.

Last November, the exact same Georgia voting law that the Democrats called evil and racist and the death knell for democracy created record-high turnout, lightning-fast voting lines, and a supermajority of African-American voters reporting that the voting experience was—listen to this—excellent.

Do you know the share of Black voters in Georgia who described their voting experience under the new Republican law as poor? Let me say that again. Do you know the share of Black voters in Georgia who described their voting experience under the new Republican law as poor? It is zero. Zero. President Biden said this law was the second coming of segregation, and zero percent of Black voters said they had a poor voting experience.

Ah, but here he goes again with the same lies, the same hysteria. We are back in this bizarre, bizarre twilight zone where the President of the United States periodically says these utterly absurd, apocalyptic things with zero basis in reality, and everybody just carries on like it really didn't happen: Well, there goes the leader of the free world, shouting unhinged—unhinged—and false things about the end of democracy one more time. Oh, you know, just another day. What else is on TV?

It is utterly surreal and, frankly, embarrassing, the President walking on stage every couple of months, shouting angry things and appearing confused—confused—about whether it is 2023 or 1963—utterly confused. And nothing happens. The world keeps turning. The Republicans keep passing popular, commonsense laws that make it easy to vote and hard to cheat. Voters of all races continue having good voting experiences. The President, his advisers, and a few radical activists are the only people stuck—stuck—in this fake parallel universe.

Our democracy is in fine shape no matter what a few extreme voices are shouting. It is this White House's grip on reality that is truly concerning.

DC CRIMINAL CODE

Now, Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, a man stabbed to death in a public library, a woman kidnapped and mugged in broad daylight, a construction worker assaulted by suspects who fled in a stolen car—this is just a small sampling of life in Washington, DC, in recent months.

Carjackings and car thefts have become a daily routine. Homicides are racking up at a rate of four—four—per week. There have been so many attacks on people riding public transportation that civilian volunteers have had to create their own patrols on Metro trains and platforms.

We are the greatest superpower Nation in history, and this is our Capital City, but local politicians have let its streets become a danger and an embarrassment.

Earlier this year, local Democrats tried to respond by going even softer on crime and putting violent convicts back on the streets even more rapidly. Well, Republicans say: Enough is enough. Enough is enough. We have brought forward a resolution here in Congress that will overrule the left's effort to make this catastrophe even worse.

Democrats were not happy. The White House put out a formal statement opposing us. The vast majority of House Democrats voted against us. But then President Biden had an epiphany. He reversed himself. The public pressure was so great that the President now says he wants to sign the same Republican bill that he had previously announced he opposed.

The headlines tell the story: ''Biden's About-Face on DC Crime Bill Shows Democrats on [the] Defensive.''

The Democrats' flip-flop is good news for the residents of the District of Columbia and the 300-plus million Americans who deserve—deserve—to be able to visit their capital in peace.

But our Democratic friends are not getting off the hook this easily. They are not going to be able to duck the heat for the violent crime surge to which their policies, their rhetoric, and their political movement have directly contributed. What about all of the Americans who live in cities and neighborhoods all across our country? In my hometown of Louisville, violent crime has become an unwelcome daily fixture. Since the start of the pandemic, over 500 lives have been lost to homicide—dozens of the victims have been children—and last fall, a car was stolen, on average, every 2.5 hours. Minneapolis has seen 19 percent more vandalism than at this point last year; San Francisco, 18 percent more robberies. In Chicago, this year's rate of car thefts is already 138 percent higher than last year's. In St. Louis, kidnappings are up 113 percent.

Over the weekend, in Atlanta, dozens of rioters attacked and laid siege to the site of the city's future public safety training center—public safety training center. These people lit construction equipment on fire and aimed fireworks and Molotov cocktails at police officers. Twenty-three of these radical leftists have been charged with domestic terrorism.

This is what happens when the political left spends years—years—spotlighting anti-law enforcement rhetoric.

This is what happens when Democrats at all levels decide we need fewer arrests, shorter sentences, and more generosity to criminals at the expense of less justice for victims and for families.

This is what happens when far-left dark money flows to radical candidates for district attorneys' offices and the liberal DAs simply refuse to prosecute whole sections of the Criminal Code.

This is what happens after every single Senate Democrat voted on party lines against additional police funding just last year. Every Democratic Senator voted in lockstep against Senator RUBIO's amendment that would have redirected some of their massive, reckless tax-and-spending spree to actually fund law enforcement.

Look, nobody will confuse Washington Democrats' last-minute reversal on this one resolution for a ''road to Damascus'' moment on the crime issue. The American people are a lot smarter than that.

VOTE ON KUNESH NOMINATION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kunesh nomination?

Mr. DURBIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 47 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Baldwin	Hoeven	Reed
Bennet	Kaine	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kelly	Rounds
Booker	Kennedy	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Capito	Luján	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	McConnell	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Tester
Cramer	Merkley	Thune
Daines	Moran	Tillis
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Gillibrand	Murphy	Warnock
Hassan	Murray	Warren
Heinrich	Ossoff	Welch
Hickenlooper	Padilla	Wyden
Hirono	Peters	Young

NAYS—35

Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Graham	Ricketts
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Braun	Hagerty	Romney
Britt	Hawley	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Tuberville
Crapo	Lummis	Vance
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	

NOT VOTING—8

Cardin	Feinstein	Van Hollen
Carper	Fetterman	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

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

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. 61, Daniel I. Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2027.

Charles E. Schumer, Ron Wyden, Catherine Cortez Masto, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Sherrod Brown, Margaret Wood Hassan, Raphael G. Warnock, Gary C. Peters, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tina Smith, Ben Ray Luján, Elizabeth Warren, Christopher A. Coons, Martin Heinrich, Christopher Murphy, Tammy Baldwin.

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 Daniel I. Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2027, 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 Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Pennslyania (Mr. FETTERMAN), and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 48 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Bennet	Hirono	Sanders
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schatz
Booker	Kelly	Schumer
Brown	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Luján	Smith
Cassidy	Markey	Stabenow
Collins	Menendez	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Welch
Grassley	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	Young

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Hagerty	Ricketts
Boozman	Hawley	Risch
Braun	Hoeven	Romney
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Budd	Johnson	Rubio
Capito	Kennedy	Schmitt
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Lee	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lummis	Sullivan
Crapo	Manchin	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Vance
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Mullin	

NOT VOTING—5

Cardin	Feinstein	Van Hollen
Carper	Fetterman	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, 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 Daniel I. Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2027.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Tennessee.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—H.J. RES. 26

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I move to discharge H.J. Res. 26 from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

The motion was agreed to.

DISAPPROVING THE ACTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COUNCIL IN APPROVING THE REVISED CRIMINAL CODE ACT OF 2022

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.J. Res. 26.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 26) disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now up to 10 hours of debate equally divided between the proponents and opponents.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I am looking forward to a robust debate today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I am so glad the Senator from Tennessee is on the floor with H.J. Res. 26. I want to thank him for being insightful to know how important this is going to be to this Congress, to this city, to this country. So I thank the Senator for his steadfast work on this issue, and I look forward to supporting the resolution. We are also going to be talking a lot on the floor about this. So I thank him very much.

I rise today to talk about an issue that I actually came to the floor on 3 weeks ago and that is just very, very relevant, especially today, and that is out-of-control crime and a disregard for law and order that, unfortunately, President Biden has enabled in his own backyard.

Under the Biden administration's soft-on-crime agenda and rhetoric, Washington, DC, the capital of our beautiful country, has seen a 25-percent increase in crime, a 33-percent increase in homicides, a 121-percent increase in sexual abuse, and a 108-percent increase in motor vehicle theft—just this year, and we are just starting.

To make matters worse, in the midst of ongoing crime, the DC Council thought that now was an appropriate time to rewrite the Criminal Code. Instead of enforcing law and order in light of all of these statistics and supporting our police officers and making residents and visitors of the District feel safe, the DC Council found it fitting to lessen the punishment for violent criminal offenses—hard to believe, isn't it?—and embolden those who dare to break the law instead of heeding local calls for increased safety and policing from their residents.

It really doesn't get any more tone-deaf than that. Believe it or not, when the DC Council originally passed their irresponsible Criminal Code overall,

Mayor Muriel Bowser vetoed the bill—the Mayor of the city of DC—claiming that ''this bill does not make us safer.''

She knows. She sees these statistics every single day and talks to her police officers every single day.

Well, Mayor Bowser, my colleagues and I could not agree with you more. It is obvious that the DC Council's legislation is the complete opposite of what is needed to control the out-of-control crime.

Now, I am sure that you have seen that, in the face of an imminent bipartisan and bicameral rejection of their policy, the DC Council, then, has attempted to withdraw their Criminal Code revision legislation. That is a glaring—a glaring—admission by the council that they knew what they were doing is absolutely wrong.

But do you know what? It is simply too little, too late. Regardless of this unprecedented and potentially unlawful move, the Senate is poised to reject the DC Council's sweeping and irresponsible ''Revised Criminal Code of 2022'' on a bipartisan basis. We certainly saw that in the House.

This vote, led by my colleague Senator HAGERTY of Tennessee, gives every Member of the U.S. Senate the chance to stand with law and order, the chance to stand with our law enforcement officers, the chance to stand with the people of our Nation's Capital, whose calls for safety have fallen on deaf ears.

You think of all the visitors—springtime, Cherry Blossom Festival—this is the time everybody is coming to this beautiful, gorgeous city that we are lucky enough to serve in. Our constituents are here. Many of us have our families here. We are here. All the staff and folks that work in and around these buildings every day—in and out of their cars, in and out of restaurants we hope—getting that revival post-COVID that we see. And certainly we see many, many more visitors. Our residents and visitors are living with what could happen. What kind of crimes can they see?

There are a multitude of additional negative factors that impact the city when crime runs out of control and leaders are not held accountable. Often these issues go unseen, but they are just as impactful: factors like the education of our children, factors like the health of our residents—our DC residents—and the strength of the economy.

According to research led by the professors at the University of Illinois, at Syracuse, and NYU, students face declines in standardized test scores following exposure to violent crime. What is that doing to the children of DC? They have to face this every day.

The same decline was observed for students who attend schools that are perceived to be unsafe or schools that lack a sense of community. This study suggests that schools with stronger community bonds can shield students from the negative effects of neighborhood violence and directly show the disadvantages impacting our young people who are coming of age in dangerous communities.

When it comes to health, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have linked violent crime to negative health outcomes—it makes sense—finding that decreased violent crime in communities was significantly associated with a decrease in mortality rates from cardiovascular disease and coronary artery disease. Community areas that experienced a similar decline in crime also experienced smaller improvements in cardiovascular mortality.

The study also noted that the stress created by exposure to violent crime is tied with a lower intake of healthy foods and higher rates of substance abuse in a community. These aren't things that I am making up. These are validated in a study from the University of Pennsylvania.

Further, the study noted that continued exposure to high rates of violent crime is associated with several additional negative health factors, like higher body mass index and even elevated blood pressure.

So now let's look at the economics of this in crime. A study by the Urban Institute found that surges in violent crime, especially gun violence, reduced the growth of new retail and service businesses. You see that all over Washington. You see that all over Washington.

It further notes that increases in violent crime slow home value appreciation and can be associated with fewer jobs and lower home values. It makes sense. In Washington, DC, this means surging crime leads to fewer job opportunities, fewer businesses opening, and more businesses closing. I mean we just saw that at Union Station. I think the Starbucks pulled out there because of the crime issue.

The economic indicators of violent crimes are obvious. Walmart just announced it is closing all of its stores in Portland, OR, locations. The Walmart just over here in DC on H Street has announced that it was closing as well. The announcements come shortly after Walmart's CEO warned that stores could close and prices could increase due to, specifically, rocketing retail crimes affecting stores across the Nation.

Each of these aspects pile onto the obvious humanitarian effects of violent crime: the destruction, loss, and sorrow—actually, I think if you are subject to a violent crime and you manage to live through it, it doesn't just affect you that day; you carry it with you the rest of your life—and how each one of these offenses further rips apart the delicate fabric of our communities.

Residents of our States and cities will not stand for the continuing devastation. We saw crime play a major part in Chicago's mayoral election just last week, and it was also a center of debate of the New York City elections in 2021.

So, Mr. President, I am glad that our Nation's Capital and our complex are once again open to the public. It is so great to see the halls filled and the young people coming back, and I have enjoyed welcoming many West Virginians to Washington today and every day to talk about the issues they care about. It is important. Questions have also been raised by many residents about the safety of our streets here in Washington, DC.

So today's vote to reject the DC Council's Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022 puts every Member on record. As some of my Republican colleagues highlighted last night and continue to highlight today, we intend to stand on the right side of this issue, and we will continue to heed the calls for increased safety that local officials in Washington are attempting to ignore or reshape and protect the communities that we serve.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I rise to express my support also for the resolution of disapproval of the new soft-on-crime law approved by the District of Columbia City Council. The resolution represents my chance to say: Enough is enough.

Today, Americans feel increasingly unsafe. It is not hard to understand why, since it has become impossible to disregard or dismiss the unraveling of law and order across the country over the past few years.

Whether it is the lack of law enforcement on the border, anti-police rhetoric, or weakened punishments for the violent crimes, Americans know the shift away from law and order, right and wrong, is tearing all the fabric of their communities. Crime is at a 25-year high across the entire country.

Unfortunately, my home State of Mississippi is not immune from this trend. Our capital, Jackson, has recorded more than 100 homicides for 3 consecutive years.

It is the same song, different verse in our Nation's very own Capital, where overall crime is up 25 percent since last year. In fact, Washington, DC's murder rate is 34 percent higher today than this time last year. Auto thefts are up 110 percent in this city.

What has the response been from the Democratic leadership? Well, it certainly has not made public safety a priority. There is a good reason the Senate is considering a resolution of disapproval against the DC Council's Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022. With DC's growing record of lawlessness, the city council voted to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences and reduce penalties for crimes like robbery, carjacking, home invasion, burglary, and more. These are violent crimes that leave victims traumatized, injured, or worse—dead.

So why is the instinct to protect the criminal—to signal that the penalties for violating the law are being eased?

This law will put residents, constituents, tourists, Federal workers, and

elected officials directly in harm's way. Rather than holding them accountable for their own actions, the DC Council would prefer to let these violent criminals go back to the streets and commit the same violent crimes. Is it any wonder Washington, DC, has a police recruitment and retention problem?

At the same time, those responsible for enforcing our justice system seem more interested in carrying out ''justice'' based on politics. The Biden administration's Justice Department, for example, appears to be laser-focused on parents at local school board meetings, pro-life Americans exercising their right to protest, and spying on Catholic Americans, while taking a nothing-to-see-here approach to threats of violence against sitting Justices at the Supreme Court or attacks on pregnancy centers. If things continue this way, Americans will start to wonder if their safety and protection is determined by their political affiliation.

Mr. President, public safety should not be a political issue. It is not virtue signaling to lessen punishments for violent criminals; it is just dangerous. It is not progressive to pretend the breakdown in border security and subsequent flood of fentanyl aren't contributing to the surges in the crime and death; it is nonsensical.

Americans who live in the greatest Nation in the world at the very least deserve to feel safe. We deserve to live in a country of law and order. Yes, it is time to say ''enough is enough'' to the radical policies embraced by the Democratic Party that have only resulted in more crime, more fear and more tragedies.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my support for the resolution we are talking about on public safety in Washington, DC.

The DC Revised Criminal Code Act is another example of how the far left is so out of touch that they want to reduce penalties for violent crime in DC while residents, Federal employees, Members of Congress, our visiting constituents, and even our visiting diplomats are facing greater risk.

There are a number of concerns I have with the crime bill that the DC Council passed over the objections of the DC Mayor, many of which have already been discussed at length by my colleagues.

But one of the most puzzling to me is why you would ever reduce penalties for carjacking. DC city officials saw from 2019 to 2020, the number of carjackings in DC more than doubled from 152 to 360. They are not following trends either. In 2021, it went up to 425; and in 2022, it went up to 485. Despite the fact that carjackings have more than tripled in the last 4 years, far-left radicals on the DC City Council thought now was the time to reduce penalties for carjacking. That is one of only several examples we can go to that my colleagues have talked about.

That tells me that the DC City Council is blind to crime happening right in front of them—right outside their front door—or that the carjacking industry has some really good lobbyists here in Washington.

Now, to make it worse, only a month ago, President Biden's Office of Management and Budget issued a statement opposing this resolution and in support of letting radical DC activists on the council let the bill go into effect. Not only that, but at least on two occasions, President Biden's U.S. attorney in Washington, DC, expressed support for letting the radical proposal proceed, even while raising concerns about how extreme the policies were.

I am appealing directly to President Biden. First, I want to thank him for agreeing to sign this resolution when we send it to the President's desk after a successful vote. I am also asking the President to prove his commitment to public safety by working with my colleagues and me on commonsense, bipartisan proposals that keep communities safe. I think that I have a track record of bipartisanship here that the President should take as a good-faith offer. We need to get to work.

One of the bills that I would like to get support for is a bill that I filed last Congress—and I am going to file again—called the Protect and Serve Act. We need to get it into law because it creates penalties for those who assault or kill a police officer, the brave men and women in law enforcement.

We need to show our commitment to law enforcement and to law and order in this country, and I believe the Protect and Serve Act will send a clear signal to friends and foes alike that we care about law enforcement. We need the thousands of law enforcement jobs that are not being filled today because law enforcement feels like at least policymakers—I don't believe the American people—are working against them.

But now I also want to talk a little bit about how crime is getting worse. I consider the Presiding Officer a friend.

You are on the other side of the aisle, but I see us having a lot in common. But, Mr. President, I have to tell you, for those of you watching this speech—my mother and maybe a few others—I think it is important to understand how campaign finance works here.

Both the Republicans and Democrats have national organizations that work on supporting candidates. I think that is fine. Here is what I don't think is fine. It is actually something—I just made sure the subpage is still up. It is. I can't lift up my phone and show you all because it is a violation of Senate rules. If you Google ''ActBlue'' and ''all cops are bastards,'' you will go to a fundraising web page on ActBlue—the very same engine that my Democratic colleagues use for fundraising.

I know most of my Democratic colleagues do not embrace that as anything that they would support or contribute to, but it is out there. If you go to their website, you are going to see the 13.12-mile run. They go on to explain why they specifically picked that distance—because ''1–3-1–2'' translates into ''A-C-A-B.'' Do you know what ''A-C-A-B'' translates into? ''All cops are bastards''—all.

We know that in any area where you have tens of thousands of people, not all of them are angels, but all of them? Our law enforcement folks here on Capitol Hill—all of them? The ones who protected us on January 6? They are raising money to convince people that all cops are bastards—actblue.com.

It will be interesting to see if anybody on the city council in DC has actually provided a contribution.

More recently, I think that this sort of rhetoric is at least in part what occurred in Atlanta just about a week ago, where violent activists attacked a construction site for Atlanta's public safety training. At least 23 of the agitators were arrested and charged with domestic terrorism after conducting what the Atlanta Police Department is calling ''a coordinated attack on construction equipment and police officers.''

Here is what is ironic about that. I have been to several police officer training facilities, and do you know what they train there? They train them to protect themselves and protect innocent victims, but they also train them how to deescalate. They train them how to take a dangerous situation and let someone who may be a criminal be able to go and face justice but not die at a crime scene. They are teaching police officers to be better.

In Atlanta, because of this sort of rhetoric, they are attacking the very people we all want to see at our doorstep when we dial 9–1-1. The violent activists destroyed multiple pieces of construction equipment. Thankfully, no police officers were harmed. These are not your run-of-the-mill ''defund the police'' activists; these are radicals like the radicals who are raising money on it, who are willing to use violence to achieve their ends of abolishing the police.

This DC crime bill that we are going to overturn today is another step in that direction—enabling and encouraging unsafe communities at the expense of the vast majority of police officers and citizens who simply want to live in peace.

It is long past time for the Federal government to say enough is enough when it comes to crime in this country.

I was proud to join President Trump in supporting the First Step Act, by the way. If you want to talk to me about criminal justice reform, if you want to talk to me about reducing sentences for nonviolent offenders, if you want to talk to me about early release of those who look like they have an opportunity to reform and get back to being active members of society, count me in. Do you know why? Because I have already done it. I have done it at

the State level, and I have done it up here. That is smart criminal justice policy. This is dangerous.

I want to thank my friend and colleague from a onetime home of mine in Tennessee for moving this resolution.

You should be congratulated. You have done great work, and I think you have opened the eyes of several Members on the other side of the aisle here to why this is a sound bill. I am glad to see you carrying it all the way to the President's desk, and it will be successful.

Thank you, Senator HAGERTY.

But let's not end with this vote. Go onto that website and see what we are up against. Talk to your local law enforcement and talk about how many unfilled positions there are and how morale is low, and do your part to thank every man and woman in uniform for their service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I, too, want to acknowledge the great work of the Senator from Tennessee, Senator HAGERTY, on this matter on which we will be voting later this afternoon. It has to do with the issue of DC crime.

I think he has touched a nerve in a way that I think is going to lead to a very big bipartisan outcome on this because it is a recognition that the issue he addresses with this resolution is one that the American people, I think, feel deeply about; one that is affecting our cities, both large and small, across this country; and one on which I think this United States Senate needs to be heard.

The last weekend in February, eight men were fatally shot in Washington, DC—eight men in a single weekend. It was a tragic illustration of the current crime situation in our Nation's Capital. Homicides in Washington, DC, which had already reached disturbing heights in 2021 and 2022, are up 33 percent so far this year compared to this point a year ago. We are just 67 days into 2023, but so far this year, there have been 101 carjackings—that is a motor vehicle theft where the victim is actually present—66 percent of those involving guns. There have been a staggering 1,258 motor vehicle thefts to date this year—1,258. That is an average of roughly 19 motor vehicle thefts every single day—19 thefts every day.

In the face of the crime surge DC has been experiencing for a while now, the DC City Council recently decided to pass legislation weakening penalties for a number of crimes. The bill the council passed late last year would reduce the maximum penalty for crimes like carjacking, robbery, and firearm offenses; remove mandatory minimum sentences for all crimes except first-degree murder; clog up the court system by substantially expanding access to trial by jury to individuals charged with misdemeanors; and more.

Later today, we will be taking up legislation here in the U.S. Senate to block the bill. Congress, of course, has the legal authority to block DC ordinances thanks to Federal legislation rooted in the Constitution which gives Congress legislative jurisdiction over the seat of the U.S. Government—namely, Washington, DC.

It looks like today's vote will receive strong support from both parties. That certainly was not looking like it would have been the case a week ago. Last month, the Biden administration issued a statement opposing the move to block DC's crime bill. When the House took up the measure, 82 percent of House Democrats voted against blocking the DC bill. But last week, the President changed his tune. He announced that he would not veto the attempt to block the DC bill. Since then, Senate Democrats have been lining up to announce they will vote to block DC's measure.

I am pleased Democrats have recognized that weakening criminal penalties is not the way to address DC's crime surge. Blocking DC's crime bill will be a victory for common sense and for the people of DC, who deserve a safe city in which to live.

While I am pleased at the expected outcome of today's vote, I remain deeply concerned about how we got here in the first place. How have we gotten to the point where some people think that an appropriate response to a surge in crime is to weaken criminal penalties, to a point where ideology has overtaken common sense, to the detriment of public safety? Part of the answer lies in the deeply troubling surge in anti-law enforcement rhetoric over the past few years and the accommodation of it by members of the Democratic Party.

There has been talk of defunding our most essential public servants—the police; characterization of our justice system as fundamentally unjust; an attitude that the answer to crime is not to try to stop it from taking place but to stop punishing criminals. The Democratic Party has been deeply complicit in this. One leading Democrat Senator and Democrat Presidential candidate had this to say a few years ago:

> Let's just start with the hard truth about our criminal justice system. It's racist. It is. And when I say our system, I mean all the way. I mean front to back.

That from a leading Democrat Senator and Democrat Presidential candidate.

She is not the only prominent Democrat who has spoken that way. Many other Democrats, of course, have not been that explicit, but they have tried to have it both ways—attempting to say they support the police on one hand, while also accommodating the radical elements of their party who want to tear down our justice system and demonize not just a few bad police officers but a whole community of public servants who put their lives on the line for us every single day.

President Biden is a striking example of this. As his about-face on the DC crime bill makes clear, he is eager to portray himself as a supporter of law and order, especially, I assume, given that polling has made it clear Americans are deeply concerned about crime. But at the same time that he is trying to portray himself as anti-crime, he is nominating individuals to serve in his administration who have engaged in anti-police rhetoric.

The President can't have it both ways, and his attempt and Democrats' attempt to do so has helped a troubling anti-law enforcement, anti-justice system narrative to gain hold in our communities.

One thing I always think about when I hear anti-law enforcement rhetoric is how little attention is paid to the victim. People speak negatively about criminal penalties or overpolicing, but they don't talk about the victims of violent crimes and what it is like to live in a place where you literally fear for your safety.

As DC's Mayor recently said:

> We have to think about victims of crime as much as we think about perpetrators.

I would argue, more than we think about perpetrators.

But, too often, the focus of discussions is almost entirely on perpetrators, with little attention paid to the victims of crime or the consequences of tolerating criminal activity.

As the DC police chief recently said of DC's bill:

> Where's the victim in all of this? Who does this actually help? Is the victim being helped or is it the person who victimizes? I don't think victims win in that space. And again, that is a nonstarter for me.

That from the DC police chief, speaking of the very bill we are going to block today.

Bills like the DC City Council's bill should be a nonstarter for everyone. Democratic politicians need to stop accommodating the common ideology that thinks reducing criminal penalties is an appropriate response to crime.

I am thankful, as I said, for the Senator from Tennessee's leadership and that later today we are going to vote to block legislation that would endanger DC residents and visitors to our Nation's Capital. I hope—I sincerely hope—this bill will mark a return to common sense as we work to battle crime in DC and around the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I just want to convey my thanks and deep respect to our Republican whip for his thoughtful comments and my other colleagues who have been here today to speak on this serious matter. Thank you, all.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I join my colleagues today to speak regarding the rising crime rate in our country. Crimes, specifically violent crimes, are exploding at troubling rates nationwide. Crimes are at a 25-year high across the country.

Connected to the rise in crime is the Biden administration's open border policy, which is resulting in increased drug and human trafficking. At the same time, radical proposals to ''defund the police'' are the exact opposite of what we should be doing right now, which is supporting our men and women in law enforcement. We need to do that by giving them the resources, the tools, and training needed to do their job and protect our communities.

We must strive to protect our communities, enforce our laws, support our men and women in blue, and keep criminals off the street. Our Nation's Capital is, unfortunately, a prime example of the problems that we are having with crime right now in our cities. Crime is up 25 percent since March of 2022. In that same timeframe, homicides are up 30 percent and motor vehicle theft is up 110 percent.

As the center of our government and the symbol of our country, this is simply unacceptable. And instead of working to protect our Nation's Capital and all our constituents who visit here—and there are many of them here today—the DC Council has voted to ease violent crime penalties.

Last fall, the DC Council passed the Revised Criminal Code Act, which greatly weakens the criminal justice system here in the District of Columbia. This bill is so problematic that the Mayor of DC vetoed the bill, stating that ''it does not make us safe.''

DC's law enforcement community is also deeply alarmed by the bill, raising concerns of overwhelming the court system and exploding the already-high violent crime rate here in the District of Columbia.

We must get serious about protecting safety and addressing the nationwide rise in crime by supporting our law enforcement and ensuring they have the resources and training they need to protect our communities.

That is why I helped to introduce the Resolution of Disapproval to prevent such a reckless rewrite of the DC Criminal Code from taking effect. And I thank the good Senator from Tennessee for taking the lead in this very, very important matter.

As legislators, we should focus on keeping criminals off our streets, instead of attempting to weaken sentences for violent crimes and criminals. Let's get back to the basics and support our law enforcement and ensure they have the tools they need to keep our communities safe.

Again, we have people visiting here from all over the country. This isn't just the District of Columbia where people live like another city. This is our Nation's Capital. People come here from all over the country. They should feel safe. They should feel safe in our Nation's Capital.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, crime is surging across this Nation. Murder rates have risen over the last 3 years, carjackings are rising, robberies are rising.

Today, I want to discuss the resolution disapproving of the DC City Council's decision to eliminate mandatory minimums and to reduce maximum sentences for violent crimes, including robbery, carjacking, and burglary.

The DC City Council made this decision to lower penalties late last year, despite the fact that crime has been skyrocketing in this city. In the past 12 months, overall crime is up 25 percent in DC. Car theft has increased 110 percent in DC. And homicides have increased 30 percent.

Who, in their right mind, looks to those rising crime rates and says the answer is to lower the penalties for violent crime?

DC's spike in crime is hardly confined to the last 12 months. In 2021, the number of murders in DC was the highest it has been since 2003. The Mayor of DC, a Democrat, vetoed the city council's decision to rewrite the Criminal Code, saying:

> Any time there is a policy that reduces penalties, I think it sends the wrong message.

Unfortunately, the Democrats on the city council in DC overrode her veto.

Time and time again, we have seen Democrats in major cities reducing penalties for crime; and we have seen, as a result, crime spiking. We have seen this in San Francisco. We have seen this in Los Angeles. We have seen this in Portland. We have seen this in Boston. We have seen this in Philadelphia. We have seen this in New York. We have seen this in St. Louis. We have seen this in Chicago.

Crime is spiking in DC, and it is incredibly harmful to the men and women and children who live in DC to be lowering the penalties for violent crime. That is why I am proud to support the resolution to disapprove of the DC City Council's decision. And I thank my friend from Tennessee for his leadership in bringing this resolution.

This has already passed the House. And I believe it will pass the Senate as well. And, despite being soft on crime his entire Presidency, President Biden has said he will sign it if it passes the Senate. Now that is remarkable given Biden's record on crime. That is remarkable given that Biden has nominated not one, not two, but three of the leading advocates of abolishing the police to senior positions in the Department of Justice.

I am sorry to say that every Democrat in this Chamber voted to confirm not one, not two, but all three of those advocates of abolishing the police to senior positions in the Department of Justice. One of those was a George Soros-backed prosecutor in Massachusetts who, like the DC City Council, put out a list of crimes that she would not allow her prosecutors to prosecute, endangering the citizens she was charged to protect.

What was her reward for refusing to prosecute violent criminals? President Biden nominated her to be U.S. Attorney for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and every Senate Democrat voted to confirm her as the U.S. Attorney, the chief Federal prosecutor, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Now, once President Biden said he would sign this bill, the political pressure it has put on the DC City Council has had enormous impact. This week, the council tried to withdraw the legislation. ''Never mind,'' was their response. But simply withdrawing a bill doesn't permanently get rid of it under the Home Rule Act, which allows Congress to review legislation that comes out of the DC City Council.

To permanently stop the DC Council's harmful bill, Congress should proceed and pass the Resolution of Disapproval and President Biden should follow through on his commitment to sign it.

A recent poll found that 77 percent of Americans believe that violent crime is a major problem. Democrats, tragically, have been soft on crime for years; and crime has surged as a result.

At the end of the day, it is not complicated: If you let violent criminals go, they commit more and more violent crimes. We have seen patterns all over the country of mass murders carried out by violent criminals who Democrat DA's have let out of jail, only to see them turn around and commit more violent crimes.

Congress, right now, has an opportunity to come together and to speak in a bipartisan way and to say: Enough is enough is enough. Stop letting violent criminals out of jail. Let's protect our citizens. Let's do our job.

I urge every Senator, Republican and Democrat, to support this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 26, a resolution to overturn the recent law passed by the DC Council to revise the city's Criminal Code.

I was pleased to join Senator HAGERTY as an original cosponsor of the Senate's version he introduced in February.

The Nation's Capital is a unique American city in that it was established through the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in order to host the Federal system of government established by our Founders, separate from the authority of any one single State. Founded in 1790, the city has grown immensely since its earliest years and, with a population of nearly 700,000, has become one of the largest cities in the region.

In addition to the residents of this city and those who commute daily from neighboring Maryland and Virginia, Washington, DC, hosts nearly 20 million visitors on an annual basis—one of the most visited cities in the United States—as Americans from all

50 States, including my home of Kansas, come to the seat of their government to meet with their elected officials and visit the National Mall, memorials, and museums their tax dollars go to maintaining every year.

Sadly, as the Capital City has expanded, so, too, has the influence of the far-left politicians who serve as members of the council. Similar to their Democratic counterparts in the White House, Congress, and other U.S. metro areas, the DC Council has gone full tilt in giving the keys of this city to its criminals and vagrants and in failing in their duty to protect its inhabitants and visitors.

This culture of lawlessness—the same that is on display at our southern border, where just yesterday we learned that two of the four Americans kidnapped by the Gulf Cartel were brutally murdered—is a product of cashless bail laws and efforts to defund the police.

In DC, these efforts have come in the form of major cuts to the city's police department. In 2020, the council implemented a $15 million cut to their own police force—$15 million. Since then, the number of sworn officers has decreased steadily year over year, and, predictably, crime has been running rampant ever since. In 2021, more than 200 homicides were committed. It was the first time homicides surpassed 200 since 2003. In 2022, DC topped its mark again, and the trend is continuing in 2023. Crime is up 25 percent from this time last year; murders are up 33 percent; sexual abuse crimes are up 120 percent; and motor vehicle thefts are up 108 percent.

Shockingly, despite these staggering numbers, the DC Council, over the objections of the city's police chief and chief prosecutor, moved in November of last year to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences and reduce maximum penalties for these very crimes.

Thankfully, the same Constitution that established the Capital City gave Congress authority over the District, and while I am a strong supporter of local control, Republicans in Congress have taken an important stand to not stand by and watch as the radical DC Council further inflames the crime-wave engulfing our constituents' Capital City.

I myself am afraid for my own wife to walk from our apartment to the Capitol. I am afraid for my own staff to walk from working here to their own homes. This last Christmas, I gave every woman on my staff a special device to be able to defend herself should she be attacked. This is real. We see it every day in this city. We see the crime everywhere we go. This city is no longer safe. This city no longer belongs to the people. This city now belongs to the criminals.

I know the Democrats in the House did not get the memo from the President in time that he would sign our legislation into law—that of overturning the DC Council's overhaul—but I am glad our colleagues across the aisle here in the Senate will be joining him in passing this important bill in order to blunt the crime victimizing the residents and visitors of this city and the efforts of the DC Council to return the District of Columbia back to being the murder capital of America.

Unfortunately, we know this is just a politically motivated move to protect their electoral chances in 2024. Lawlessness runs deep in the Democratic Party, and no matter how they vote today, much more must be done to turn back the harm they have done to our inner cities and at our southern border.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, we are here today to discuss the resolution disapproving the DC Council's efforts to water down the city's Criminal Code.

Now, some might be wondering why the Congress has a say in the DC Criminal Code. The reason goes back to the founding documents of our country. DC's very existence is in our Constitution, which calls for a district not exceeding 10 square miles to be the seat for the Government of the United States so that, while DC is a place where people live and work, it belongs to the entire Nation.

Citizens from all across this country come here—students, for example—to learn about American history. In fact, I was meeting with some students just earlier today. Citizens come here to interact with their elected officials. We are here today because the DC City Council is trying to make this District—this constitutionally mandated seat of government—a less safe place to be able to live, work, and conduct business.

In the rewriting of DC's Criminal Code, DC is trying to make things such as first-degree murder, carjackings, robberies, burglaries, home invasions—it is trying to reduce the penalties for all of those crimes at a time when the crime rate in DC is rising. For the first time in a couple of decades, DC has seen 2 years of 200 or more homicides. Over the last 5 years, carjackings have increased every single year. In fact, in the first 67 days of this year, reported carjackings have been at 100. Crime, year over year, in DC is up 22 percent, and the DC police chief has said, when they arrest a homicide suspect, that suspect, on average, has been arrested 11 times previously.

Now, there are smart ways to think about criminal justice reform, and that is what we did in Nebraska back in 2015, but reducing the penalties and being soft on crime is not that approach. Rather than reduce the penalties for violent crimes, the city of DC should look at what Omaha, NE—my home city—has done and how they have used community engagement with the police force to reduce homicides. In fact, they have reduced homicides in each of the last 2 years. This is common sense.

We need to stand with law enforcement and respect their work to put criminals behind bars. We need to stand with the law-abiding victims and give them the justice they deserve, and we need to make sure that government is fulfilling its obligation to keep people safe.

That is exactly what we have done in Nebraska. We have rejected the woke politics of these soft-on-crime policies that reduce penalties. In Nebraska, we back the blue. We stand with law enforcement officers as they work to identify, investigate, and arrest criminals. As a seat of government, DC's rising crime is a threat to all Americans and to Nebraskans, which is why the House and the Senate have an obligation to act.

I am grateful to my esteemed colleague from the great State of Tennessee for introducing this resolution and for his leadership on this issue.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I understand that this was the first opportunity for my colleague from Nebraska to speak before the Senate. I want to commend him and thank him for being here to support my legislation today.

Congratulations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, just to set the stage before a few more of my colleagues come to speak on this resolution, just moments ago, over at Union Station, where there is a protest going on right now protesting our actions here, with people protesting in favor of this soft-on-crime position that the DC Council has taken, those protesters just witnessed an attempted carjacking. The assailant who was attempting the carjacking was confronted, and as that person fled, they ran right through the crowd.

That is the situation that we are dealing with right now, and I so appreciate my colleagues being here to speak on it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, about 20 million people a year visit our Nation's Capital, Washington, DC. They come to see our hallowed Capitol, DC's inspiring monuments and museums, and to experience the city's lively melting pot of cultures.

As we have seen across many major cities in our country, bad policymaking has turned a once vibrant city into a scarcely recognizable shadow of its former self. The DC Council is throwing gas on the fire through its woke criminal policies, which will embolden criminals and victimize residents and visitors alike.

We are seeing a staggering increase in crime. The stats speak for themselves. For example, today is day 67 of 2023—day 67—and already this year, there have been more than 1,200 carjackings—it sounds like 1,201 carjackings as of today—422 robberies, and a murder happening every 2 days—day 67, folks.

These aren't just numbers. These crimes have victims, and those victims have families.

The sad reality is that no one is off limits to criminals running rampant in our Capital. It is simply unsafe for everyone.

Just last month, a 15-year-old tried to carjack an elderly woman on her way to chemotherapy. The victim, affectionately known as ''Grandma,'' said:

> Baby, you better shoot me, because you're not taking my car.

Elsewhere, two children, ages 6 and 9, were shot while getting off a city bus—children who were just coming home from school.

Again, the very evening DC's Mayor threatened to veto the council's ill-conceived crime bill, an 8-year-old was shot by a stray bullet.

Despite the rise in crime and the chorus of opposition, the DC Council plowed forward with its lunacy.

DC is seeing an explosion of carjackings, and what does their policy do? Reduce sentencing for carjackers.

Similarly, murders are through the roof, and yet this new policy reduces penalties for murderers.

As one commentator put it, ''serious crime is increasing in the District of Columbia. So the city council has decided to reduce sentences for those who commit serious crimes.''

These ideas are crazy, folks. Even DC's very liberal Mayor says so:

> This bill does not make us safer.

The law was so reckless—so irresponsible—that only those congressional Democrats in the most extreme wing of the ''defund the police'' crowd defended the code change publicly. In fact, most Democrats did a complete 180 when the spotlight shined on their preferred criminal justice policies.

The Mayor opposes the policy. The DC police chief opposes it. And, most importantly, DC residents oppose it. So why is the DC Council doing it, and why are the far-left Democrats in Congress supporting it? Look no further than the policy's advocates, who say it will ''advance racial justice in the criminal legal system.''

Folks, this is just one more of the woke nonsense which gave us ''defund the police.''

The DC Council is free to make their own policy, but we in Congress cannot sacrifice the safety and security of the residents and visitors to our Nation's Capital on the religious altar of the ultraprogressive social justice agenda. While it is foolish for radical, leftist Democrats on the DC Council to support this, it is not surprising. It is also unsurprising that 173 House Democrats support the policy.

And, frankly, it is unsurprising that Biden quickly flip-flopped on his position when he realized the public and the press were not going along with this nonsense. That is right. When it became clear that this resolution was going to pass, President Biden reversed course. And now the DC Council has joined him in his flip-flop.

I can only wonder: What changed? Was it the shootout a few short blocks from the Capitol? Or maybe it was the assault on a Member of Congress just 3 days after President Biden issued a formal statement supporting DC's law? Whatever the reason, his flip-flop is a welcome surprise to those of us with common sense.

Welcome to the real world, Mr. President and DC Council.

Perhaps the ''defund the police'' crowd has finally learned what everyone else has known for ages: Criminal penalties are not just suggestions; they protect the public.

Folks, it is time to get serious about crime on our streets, and there is no better place to start than by blocking this reckless policy.

I am proud to join my colleagues in supporting this resolution because, to paraphrase one of my House colleagues, ''this policy ain't it.''

So my thanks to Senator HAGERTY for his leadership on this resolution.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I, too, come to the floor today to talk about the soft-on-crime policies of Democrats in Washington, DC.

In 2020, Democrats all across the country started their movement to defund the police. Almost immediately, we saw burning cities across the country, from the east coast all the way to Portland, OR.

Democratic leaders turned their backs on police officers all across the country. As a result, police officers began to retire or resign, and they did so in record numbers. The results were as painful as they were predictable. Violent crime skyrocketed all across America. We saw the fastest murder rate increase in our history. Homicides rose to a 25-year high. This is no surprise. If police officers are not able to do their jobs, then the streets of each town in America are not safe.

Well, today on the floor, Madam President, Senate Republicans are going to act to stop this recklessness. Thanks to the leadership of Senator HAGERTY, who is leading our discussion and our efforts, Senate Republicans are going to vote to stop Washington, DC's radical new legislation, this legislation that lets criminals get out of jail free. Senate Republicans are going to vote to make our Nation's Capital a safer place to visit, a safer place to live, and a safer place to work.

Wyoming families ask me all the time if it is safe for them to visit Washington, DC, or if it is safe for their kids to come to Washington, DC, for something like History Day, an opportunity to see the Nation's Capital. Imagine that: many American families actually afraid to visit or have their children visit our Nation's Capital.

Liberal cities all across the country have become danger zones. Families in Wyoming watch the nightly news. They can't believe their eyes. They see smashed storefronts in New York and in Chicago. They see innocent people getting mugged on the streets. They see it in New York, and they see it in Washington, DC. The cities run by liberals are not safe. Across the country, we have hit new records for carjackings, for assaults. But instead of backing the blue, Democrats are turning cities into safe havens for criminals. That is exactly what has happened here in Washington, DC.

So the city council here in Washington, DC, recently voted to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences for every crime except for first-degree murder. Well, there is a value in mandatory minimum sentences. It tells judges the bare minimum punishment for criminal behavior. Mandatory minimum sentences stop liberal judges from going soft and softer on crime. So it is no wonder that Democrats have waged war on mandatory minimums for at least the last decade.

The new DC law would also reduce maximum sentences for violent criminals like carjackers. For some gun charges, the maximum sentence would go from 15 years down to less than 5. The new crime law in the District of Columbia would mean more violent criminals free to roam the streets of our Nation's Capital and prey on innocent people.

Even the liberal Washington Post has said that the bill that passed the DC City Council is a bad idea.

Carjacking is already a major problem in Washington. We are seeing it in liberal cities all across the Nation. Carjackings in DC have tripled since 2019, and we just heard on the floor of the Senate today that a carjacking has recently taken place right down the street from the Capitol Building. That is today. Under the new Criminal Code, the maximum sentence for armed carjacking would be cut almost in half.

Why would the DC City Council reward the criminals who are creating this chaos in our Nation's Capital? These criminals and the liberal DC City Council members are driving away tourists from my home State of Wyoming who want to see their Nation's Capital. It is a part of education for so many young people.

Democrats in the House got behind the DC soft-on-crime policies when over 170 Democrats in the House voted to protect the criminals, not the citizens.

So Joe Biden is now trying to hide his soft-on-crime record. He just very recently announced that he would now support our Republican position.

This resolution we will soon be voting on will be a victory for every American who wants to feel safe when they visit their Nation's Capital. But Washington, DC, is just one city. It shouldn't stop here. Democrats' soft-on-crime policies remain in effect in liberal-led cities all across America. Democratic lawmakers and especially Democratic mayors need to take notice of this action by the U.S. Senate today.

It is time to start enforcing the law. It is time to get rid of prosecutors who are weak and prosecutors who are woke. They are not helping our country. We need to stand with law enforcement. We need to ensure police officers have the resources they need to protect our communities.

The American people overwhelmingly reject the soft-on-crime policies of Democrats in Washington. America is based on the rule of law. Lawlessness should have no place in this Nation. It is time to stop the crime, time to stop the chaos we are seeing in cities all across our country.

Republicans are united by solutions—solutions to make American communities safer. That is what this body is going to vote on today: to improve the security and the safety of those in our Nation's Capital.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I am so pleased to come to the floor today in support of Senator HAGERTY's legislation. It is so appropriate that we take this up, and I look forward to supporting the legislation as we vote later today and seeing this move to passage, seeing this become law, and seeing this add to protection for the citizens who live here in DC.

Over the past few years, our Nation has certainly witnessed a devastating increase in violent crime. Compared to mid-2019, America's largest cities have experienced a 50-percent increase in homicides and a 36-percent increase in aggravated assaults. It is unimaginable that, given the rise in violence in this country, the elected officials of the DC City Council think it is a good idea to reduce the amount of jail time for violent and deadly crimes. This includes carjackings, and Senator HAGERTY referenced one that was taking place in front of the protesters who were out there because they opposed this bill.

Now, these crimes are rampant here in our Nation's Capital. In fact, as of this morning, the Metropolitan Police Department tells us that motor vehicle theft is up more than 100 percent compared to last year. Homicides are up 33 percent. If you look at the direction those stats have gone over the past 10 years, it is not encouraging—incidences of sex abuse up 120 percent, property crime up 30 percent.

You don't have to live in the District to know that something has taken hold here, and reducing penalties for terrorizing innocent civilians is not the way to break free. Citizens should not feel unsafe in their communities, no matter where they live.

Today's vote is about protecting the people from this failed leadership, but it is also about holding the DC City Council accountable for prioritizing a cynical political maneuver over the safety of the very people they represent. This body has made a name for itself, this DC City Council, this legislative body for the District of Columbia. They have made a name for themselves because they have cherry-picked some violations and have chosen to impose some truly ridiculous restrictions on what District residents can and cannot do. They don't deserve the benefit of the doubt here.

Right now, the council is ready to retreat, but it would be a dereliction of our duty as Senators to allow them to do that. That is why we are supporting Senator HAGERTY in his resolution of disapproval and in his work to stop this foolishness from the DC Council.

We also have a duty to update and improve existing laws to combat criminals as their tactics evolve.

Earlier this year, I introduced the REPORT Act, which will go a long way in helping law enforcement tackle child exploitation online. The past few years of hearings with the Consumer Protection Subcommittee have made it clear that we need to modernize our child safety laws.

The explosion of social media and the expansion of underage users is making these children vulnerable to predators, and law enforcement simply cannot keep up with what is happening online while they are out trying also to find the burglaries, the robberies, the carjackings.

Once the Senate passes the REPORT Act, online platforms are going to be required to report all child sexual abuse material found on their sites to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline. Current law makes that step voluntary, but that standard is not working. We have to change it, and we have to make violating that new standard really hurt.

The bill significantly increases fines imposed on platforms that refuse to do this bare minimum. It also requires platforms to report child sex trafficking and enticement crimes. Current law imposes no obligation—none, zero—on platforms to report those materials, which means that most of these crimes are, unfortunately, going undetected.

The last two pieces of the bill will help law enforcement and advocates work together to bring down predators. It includes my END Child Exploitation Act, which extends the retention period for possession of abusive material to 1 year. This will ensure that law enforcement has enough time to access the evidence held by these companies and then prosecute the offenders. It also makes it clear that the vendors working with NCMEC, minors, and parents who report to the CyberTipline won't be held liable for possessing child sexual abuse material.

I am so pleased that so many of my colleagues have come to the floor today to talk about the rise in crime. The backlash against the DC crime bill highlights the fundamental difference between the left's priorities and the priorities of the American people. Anybody with a bit of common sense would look at the DC City Council's proposal and ask: Why would they even consider sending such a weak-on-crime message? It is an invitation to criminals to come and carry out their crimes.

It is time for the left to revisit their priorities and start paying attention to what the crime stats are telling them. The status quo isn't working, but surrendering to violence, lawlessness, and despair isn't the answer either.

On the Federal level, my Democratic colleagues need to support Federal, State, and local law enforcement and demand that this President nominate experienced judges.

Here in the Senate, we can help by making sure that police departments are able to hire, train, and equip officers with the tools that they need to do their job. Last Congress, Senator HAGERTY and I introduced the Restoring Law and Order Act, which would have repurposed the billions of dollars the Democrats handed to the IRS and used that money to support law enforcement and eliminate the rape kit backlog.

We can also modernize existing laws that are no longer working. I welcome my Democratic colleagues to come talk with me about how the REPORT Act will help catch child predators who are taking advantage of new technology to find their victims.

I encourage them to join Senator HAGERTY and me in restoring law and order, and I encourage each of them to stand today with Senator HAGERTY, vote for his resolution, and take a stand against the warped priorities of the DC City Council.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, Washington, DC, is our Nation's Capital. There is perhaps no city in America more capable of demonstrating the idea of the United States as a melting pot than is the District of Columbia. Here, you find people from every walk of life. It is the seat of our national government, where people from across the country come to work, seek an education, engage with history, witness what goes on here, and take look at our Nation's monuments and historical venues that can be found here.

Washington, DC, in short, belongs to all Americans. Tragically, a visible increase in crime has plagued DC. It is backed by numbers, felt by residents, and seen by millions of visitors.

Since March of last year, crime in DC is up 25 percent. Homicides are up 30 percent, and motor vehicle theft is up 110 percent—110 percent.

Despite being in the midst of a crime wave, the DC City Council passed a bill that reduced criminal penalties for violent crimes, including homicide, robbery, and carjacking.

Now, what message does that send?

It is such poor logic that Mayor Bowser opposed the bill, admitting that ''this bill doesn't make us safer.'' She is absolutely right; it doesn't make us safer. Yet the DC City Council chose to override her veto and force this through to make it the law of the land, even though it doesn't make us safer. It makes things much, much worse, and it makes things worse in many of the same ways that DC residents are already suffering.

When the DC City Council is to the left of Mayor Bowser, we have a serious problem. When carjackings are up 110 percent, this shouldn't be a partisan issue. Even President Biden telegraphed in a recent tweet:

> I don't support some of the changes D.C. Council put forward over the Mayor's objections—such as lowering penalties for carjackings.
>
> If the Senate votes to overturn what DC Council did—I'll sign it.

President Biden is right. Now is not the time to get soft on crime.

This is, by the way, a good time to demonstrate that this is not or should not be a partisan issue. How fitting is it that this bill, once it is passed by the Senate, is expected to be the first piece of legislation signed into law by President Biden during this Congress. It is also fitting that the House sponsor of this bill is none other than second-term Congressman ANDREW CLYDE, a Republican and a member of the House Freedom Caucus. So if this bill is able to unite the House Freedom Caucus and President Biden, it is doing something right.

Now, it is not often that I find myself in the company of President Biden and Mayor Bowser. We have already seen this play out with the campaign to ''defund the police.'' Cities with this disposition quickly discovered that lawlessness begets anarchy. Since the campaign began, crime has skyrocketed, and police resignations have soared. What started as a series of calls for justice culminated at a 25-year high in the national crime rate. Let us not make the same mistake twice—not here, not now. We can't afford to make such a mistake.

Voting for this resolution presents an opportunity for my Democratic colleagues to make a distinction. Will you join us in a bipartisan recognition that we cannot endanger the lives of DC residents by allowing this soft-on-crime bill to go into effect, or will you stand with the DC City Council and put politics above public safety?

I emphatically support Senator HAGERTY's resolution of disapproval because the residents and visitors of this city have a reasonable expectation of safety. I encourage my friends across the aisle to support this commonsense resolution and send a message that the Democratic Party is not beholden to its fringes, particularly where, as here, its fringes would lead to increased crime rate and additional unnecessary suffering.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I would just like to say thank you to all of my colleagues today who have joined me. I thank Senator LEE for his thoughtful remarks. I am looking forward to a very robust showing this evening as we vote on my resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 713

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, Washington, DC, is in the middle of a carjacking crime wave. There have been more than 100 carjackings in our Nation's Capital so far this year. It is only March 8. I think that is more than one a day. Two-thirds of DC carjackers use guns to force their terrified victims out of their vehicles.

What do the Washington Democrats do in response to this carjacking crime wave? Do they support ''fund the police,'' install more cameras, put more cops on the streets? No. They passed a law to reduce criminal penalties for carjacking—reduce criminal penalties for carjackings and other serious crimes. I wish I were joking; but, sadly, I am not.

Washington's answer to higher crime is less prison time for violent criminals. The only reason this is not going to happen is because Congress retains its constitutional authority over our Federal city because Washington is not a State, nor should it ever be a State. But in this case, some Democrats—even President Biden—got skittish about the political price they would pay for being this weak on crime, so they broke ranks and headed for the hills.

When House Republicans voted to disapprove Washington's soft-on-crime bill, 31 Democrats voted with them. I suspect something similar will play out later here today. President Biden says he will sign the resolution of disapproval once it passes because—and these are his words:

> I don't support some of the changes the DC Council put forward over the Mayor's objections, such as lowering penalties for carjackings.

Those are the President's words. I welcome the Democrats' rebuke of the Washington, DC, City Council. I hope it is more than a passing moment of sanity, but I do have my doubts.

So let's put their new tough-on-crime attitude to the test. It is really not enough to stop carjackings just here in Washington, DC, because carjacking is not a Washington, DC, problem alone. Many cities are suffering from carjacking crime waves as well, just as they are suffering from increases in the murder rate and other terrible crimes.

According to a recent report, carjackings rose an astonishing 29 percent in seven major cities between 2020 and 2022. Why the increase? Well, one reason is the FIRST STEP Act, soft-on-crime bill that Congress passed in the final days of 2018. That bill let criminals out of jail early for even serious violent offenses like mild molestation, bank robbery, assaulting a police officer, and, yes, carjacking.

The FIRST STEP Act wasn't the only effort to coddle violent criminals, but it is an egregious law that made clear too many of our elected officials no longer take serious crime seriously. The FIRST STEP Act increased, by about 15 percent, the amount of time that Federal criminals, even carjackers, can get off their sentences for so-called good behavior. This is in addition to the extensive sentencing reductions and early release programs for other crimes in the bill. The result was that if a carjacker, say, got 6 years in prison, he could be back out on the street to offend again in as few as 5 years.

It is time to rectify this mistake and to keep carjackers behind bars. That is why I am offering my bill, the No Early Release for Carjackers Act. The bill is as simple as its title. If you go to jail for violently hijacking someone's car, you should serve your entire sentence, not get time off for supposed good behavior.

So if President Biden and congressional Democrats are really committed to getting tough on carjackers—not just here in Washington, DC, where they drive around a lot—then they should support this effort.

I know that some of the defenders of the First Step Act will say, yes, carjackers should get out of jail early for good behavior. These criminals will, after all, get out of jail one day—or so the argument goes—so shouldn't we rehabilitate them by rewarding them, encouraging their good behavior?

To which I answer: Sure, we can reward good behavior for carjackers in prison. We can encourage good behavior, but we shouldn't reward it in a way that endangers the public. Letting dangerous criminals out of jail early endangers the public.

If the Members of the Senate are truly concerned with rewarding good behavior, we can offer well-behaved inmates other incentives, say, greater access to prison telephones, transfers to lower security facilities. And carjackers will remain eligible for other incentive programs that are so beloved by the soft-on-crime set like gardening classes or whatever else it is liberals think will turn supposedly hardened criminals into model citizens. But there is simply no good reason to release dangerous criminals from prison early, especially not in the middle of a violent carjacking crime wave.

Crime is a policy choice and the choice is simple: If we put criminals behind bars, crime goes down; if we let criminals run amuck, crimes goes up. We have seen the consequences of letting carjackers run amuck. Now we

have a choice to fix that terrible mistake.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 713, which is at the desk. I further ask that the bill be considered, and read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, last year, as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I convened a bipartisan hearing on carjacking. It was the first-ever Judiciary Committee hearing on the subject. We heard from experts in law enforcement and the automobile industry. And since then, I have been working with Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, Republican from Iowa, on a bill we are going to introduce soon on the subject.

The Senator from Arkansas is a member of the Committee on the Judiciary. He did not attend our hearing, and he has never raised this issue with me. In fact, he introduced the bill we are considering at this moment yesterday.

Why now? Well, he is very open when he said on the floor and what he said in his press release. Later this afternoon, there will be a vote on the DC Criminal Code. One of the issues is carjacking. He is trying to hitch a ride on this train in terms of the discussion of the penalties for crime. It is no coincidence.

Senator COTTON has brought this bill to the floor because, today, we are voting on that resolution. The opponents of the resolution have focused on the bill's new sentence for carjacking, reducing the penalty from 40 years to 24, and ignored the fact that the resolution increases sentences for a host of other violent offenses and goes after crime guns—a source of gun crimes in many cities, including Washington and those I represent.

Don't take my word for it. The Senator's own press release explicitly links his new bill to today's vote. The Senator knows this bill is not going to pass today. He wants a Democrat to object so he can falsely claim we don't care about carjacking.

The reality is that the Senator's bill would not help prevent carjacking, and it would make our Federal prisons less safe.

Let me explain. The Senator from Arkansas' bill is called No Early Release for Carjackers Act. Catchy title. But it fails to recognize one basic fact: Carjackers cannot get early release from the Federal system. Like every other Federal sentence, it is measured in years. Carjacking sentences have a full-term release date and a good conduct release date. If you go to Federal prison, you earn 54 days a year of good conduct credit if you follow the rules. If you break the rules, they take away your good conduct time. That has been the standard in the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, which abolished Federal parole.

Every Federal judge knows about good conduct time when they impose a sentence. Earning good conduct time isn't getting released early. It is getting released when you really expected to, so long as you behave and follow the rules.

I made it a point of visiting prisons regularly as a Member of Congress and Member of the U.S. Senate. I recommend it to all my colleagues. We spend a lot of time talking about criminal sentencing and criminals themselves and very little time actually visiting prisons to see what life is like behind bars. It is an educational experience.

I can tell you one thing you will come to realize right off the bat: It is a dangerous place. The men and women who are corrections officers in the Federal system literally risk their lives every single day to keep those incarcerated who have been sentenced by the courts. They ask us for very little: enough people to do the job right, safety in the workplace, and those few incentives that make it possible for them to have a decent day at work and go home alive at the end of the day.

One of those things is good conduct. If they can incentivize prisoners not to beat up other prisoners or the correction officers themselves with the promise of good conduct reductions in their sentences, it is a very important thing to do. We want these men and women, these law enforcement professionals, to have respect and also to have the law on their side.

There are no Federal offenses that disqualify you from good conduct time—not a single one. And for good reason. Good conduct time is an incentive to follow the rules in prison. That is what we want people who have broken the law to do while they are in prison: learn to follow the rules. The threat of losing good conduct time is also a deterrent against breaking the rules. That helps prevent violence in prison, protects correction officers, and protects the other incarcerated people. Good conduct time is a critical tool for Federal prison officials to maintain order. That is why we don't disqualify anyone from good conduct time based on their offense of conviction. This bill would be the first time in history. We have never done it before, and we shouldn't start now.

Now, this is not the first time that this Senator has opposed efforts to rehabilitate prisoners. The reason he is trying to dismantle good conduct credit is because carjackers are already excluded from an important rehab program created by the FIRST STEP Act. He comes to the floor regularly to criticize the FIRST STEP Act, which he didn't support, and it is his right not to. He fails to mention two things. It was a bipartisan measure introduced by the primary sponsor at the time, Senator GRASSLEY, and myself and Senator LEE. It was signed into law by President Donald Trump. Soft on crime? This bill passed by an overwhelming vote of 87 to 12 in the Senate. It was signed into law by President Trump.

Unlike most Republican Senators, Senator COTTON opposed the FIRST STEP Act. The FIRST STEP Act established earned time credits that allowed prisoners to earn time off their sentences in exchange for completing programs that help reduce the likelihood they will commit a new crime after their release. The bill included a compromise and excluded from the program individuals who had committed any of dozens of offenses. Carjacking is one of those offenses. So the criticism he is making of the FIRST STEP Act doesn't apply to the argument he made on the floor.

No matter how many recidivism-reducing programs a carjacker completes, no matter how many classes he takes or how many skills he learns, he cannot earn a day off his sentence under the FIRST STEP Act—exactly the opposite of what the Senator from Arkansas just said.

That compromise wasn't enough for the junior Senator from Arkansas. He offered an amendment to the FIRST STEP Act that would have excluded tens of thousands of low-level offenders for earned time credits. And I stood here on the Senate floor to oppose that amendment because I knew then and I know now the purpose of a recidivism reduction program is to reduce recidivism. Almost everyone in the Federal Bureau of Prisons will get out one day. And when we exclude people from these programs, we do not facilitate successful reentry, and we do not reduce recidivism.

Now let's talk about what we can do to reduce carjacking. I have been working for months on a bill with Senator GRASSLEY, a Republican from Iowa, as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Our Combating Carjacking Act is based on recommendations from experts who came to our hearing last year.

I have discussed one key provision many times with the sheriff of Cook County, Tom Dart, and here is what it does. Almost any car manufacturer today has some kind of vehicle location system built into it. It is a device that automatically calls for help if you have been in an accident.

This system is a great way to locate cars right away in real time after they have been carjacked, and that should be a huge deterrent to carjacking. If you take a car by threat of violence, law enforcement should be able to find you right away, take back the car, and put you under arrest for your crime.

But right now, law enforcement has a hard time getting auto manufacturers to provide that location data, even when the victim, the vehicle owner, is

standing there saying: Please help the police find the person who just stole my car.

Why? Some manufacturers are better than others about this, but they tell us that we are worried about violating the Federal Driver Privacy Act, and they are worried about liability.

So the bill we are working on, on carjacking, creates an exception to the Driver Privacy Act. It says, if a car manufacturer gets a reasonable, good-faith request from law enforcement for vehicle location data after a carjacking, they can provide that location data without liability because we want to make carjacking a crime that never pays off, and it won't if carjacked vehicles can be immediately tracked and recovered. That is why we are pursuing this.

As I said before, I agree with Senator COTTON, carjacking is a serious problem that needs local and Federal solutions. I invite him to join me and Senator GRASSLEY in our bipartisan effort. I don't agree that wiping out good conduct credit for Federal prisoners is the way to do it.

Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Well, Madam President, I am disappointed that our bipartisan bonhomie this week about carjacking only lasted as long as overturning Washington, DC's law.

We should address how we can stop more carjackings. I don't think we should blame cars for carjacking the way some would blame guns for gun violence. The simplest way to stop carjacking is to lock carjackers away in prison for a long time and not to let them out early.

And the Senator from Illinois, I will say, is right. I was the most implacable foe of the FIRST STEP Act, and I remain so. Guilty as charged. I will walk free, like most violent criminals in Washington, DC, who plead guilty as well, but continue my advocacy against that law which has led to hundreds and hundreds of its beneficiaries committing violent crimes. It was a mistake in 2018 when we passed it. Eighty-seven Senators committed the mistake, including most Republicans. President Trump made a mistake in supporting the FIRST STEP Act. That law is dangerous to public safety.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I rise in opposition to the resolution by Congress to overturn a law that was duly passed and enacted by the elected representatives of the people of the District of Columbia.

I support self-determination. I support self-governance. I support full democracy for the nearly 700,000 residents of the District of Columbia. Citizens who pay more Federal taxes collectively than the people in 21 States, citizens who serve their country in the Armed Forces, citizens who live in the Capital of the oldest democracy deserve the same rights to full democracy and self-determination as the citizens who live in any other State or any other city in the United States of America.

That is why I have long championed and supported the cause of DC statehood. But I want to point out, that is a fight not only for voting representation in the House and the Senate but also for the principle of local economy, the principle of self-determination also known as home rule.

In my view, this resolution is an attack on the democratic rights of the people of the District of Columbia, which has its own duly elected democratic representatives: the Mayor and the DC Council. Its residents and citizens are fully capable of deciding their own law and deciding their own future.

The Congress should not be overriding the will of the people of DC as reflected in their elected representatives. This process of directly overruling a law passed by the District of Columbia has not been used for 30 years—not for 30 years—and we should not start it now.

This bill was passed by the DC Council. It was vetoed by the Mayor. And I share some of the concerns that have been expressed by the Mayor. But then, the city council overruled the Mayor's veto by a vote of 12 to 1. And here is what the Mayor of the District of Columbia says; that while she had differences with what the council did, she strongly, strongly encourages this Senate to uphold the larger principle of democracy for the people of the District of Columbia.

Here is a letter she sent to all of us on February 23.

> [A]s Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer of the District, I call on all senators who share a commitment to basic democratic principles of self-determination and local control to vote ''NO''—
>
> Vote no—
>
> on any disapproval resolutions involving duly enacted laws of the District of Columbia.

The Mayor points out in this letter that she is in a back-and-forth with the council to try to address some of the concerns that she has expressed, concerns which I understand and which I share. But she is very clear that the U.S. Congress should not be bigfooting the decisions made by the elected representatives of the District of Columbia.

No other jurisdiction in the United States of America has its laws subject to veto by the U.S. Congress. We all have Governors of our State. We all have State legislators. We have cities with mayors and elected councils. No one here would appreciate the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives interfering and overturning decisions made by their State representatives or their local representatives, even if we might disagree with some of those decisions from time to time. And yet that is what we are doing to the people of the District of Columbia having elected their representatives, the Mayor and the council, to represent them.

We must ensure that the people who live in the Capital of the world's oldest democracy have the same democratic rights as the people who live in every other part of the country.

Now, I do want to address some of the particulars here because we have heard from lots of people, especially our Republican colleagues, that what the DC Council did and the DC government did was so egregious that we have really no alternative but to make a decision we haven't made for 30 years, which is to overturn a law that was duly passed by the DC government.

So let's take a look at it.

Even opponents within the District of Columbia acknowledge that the majority—the great majority—of the revised Criminal Code is noncontroversial, providing essential updates and clarification to a criminal code that is in desperate need of modernization. The Mayor herself who vetoed the legislation says she supports 95 percent of it and has offered concrete proposals to address the other concerns that she points out that even though she disagrees with 5 percent, that is no reason for the U.S. Congress to overturn a law that was passed by the government of DC.

Why did the District of Columbia revise its code? Because it is hopelessly outdated and confusing. It was written in 1901, more than 120 years ago. Many of our States have updated our laws since then—most of them, if not all of them—but in DC, while they made some changes to some parts over that 120 years, they had never taken a comprehensive look at the DC Criminal Code. We all know a lot has changed since 1901.

And so the revised DC Criminal Code is the result of an exhaustive effort led by the Criminal Code Reform Commission, an independent DC agency established in 2016 and comprised of nonpartisan experts. The commission drafted the code over nearly 5 years in a fully public process that included 51 public meetings, extensive public feedback, and robust negotiations.

The advisory group that unanimously approved the recommended changes included representatives from the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia and the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia.

The new code removes some obsolete provisions. It ensures that sentences are more proportionate to the actual sentencing. It simplifies overlapping charges and addresses missing and inconsistent laws that create legal loopholes that people have been able to slip through.

Now, while I may not have supported every one of these hundreds of provisions in the revised Criminal Code if I were sitting on the DC Council—I am not sitting on the DC City Council and

neither is any Senator in this Chamber. None of my 99 other colleagues were there to hear all the testimony that was heard by those who made these decisions on behalf of their constituents as elected representatives.

Let's dig a little deeper into some of the changes that were made because listening to some of the public discourse, you would think—I know my friend, the Senator from New Jersey, has heard this—you would think that, boy, the DC Council just went wild with this leftist effort to loosen the laws and let criminals run free.

Well, let's take a look at what they did. They raised some penalties. In some cases, they looked at actual sentences, not just in DC but other States, and lowered them, and in some cases, they closed legal loopholes.

Here is where they raised penalties: attempted murder. The current maximum sentence in the District of Columbia is 5 years in prison for attempted murder; the maximum under the new DC law, 23½ years for attempted murder.

How does this compare to other States?

Well, there are at least seven of our States that have maximum penalties for attempted murder below the new DC maximum penalty for attempted murder.

I see the Republican leader is not on the floor. The State of Kentucky has a lower sentence for attempted murder than the revised DC Code has. Maybe tomorrow I should introduce a piece of legislation to raise the penalty for attempted murder in the State of Kentucky because I just don't think that theirs is good enough for the people of Kentucky. That is what we are doing here. We are substituting our judgment for the considered judgment of the people of the District of Columbia.

Let's look at another area: attempted sexual assault. The DC government increased penalties for sexual assault from 5 years to 15 years. Again, I surveyed some of our other States. You know, we have Senators from a number of States—at least six—that have lower penalties for attempted sexual assault than the current, new, proposed DC law, including, once again, the State of Kentucky. The State of Kentucky has a lower maximum penalty for attempted sexual assault than the new, revised DC law has.

For Federal assault on a police officer, they raised it from the current max of 10 to 14 years. For misdemeanor sexual assault, the maximum will now be 2 years, up from 180 days.

The statute also includes new offenses. As I say, we are modernizing the code, including nonvehicular negligent homicide and reckless endangerment with a firearm and new penalties, such as for offenses against vulnerable adults, in order to strengthen public safety in the District of Columbia after having listened to their constituents.

It also includes increased penalty enhancements for aggravating factors—such as the presence of a firearm, such as property damage or having prior convictions—in addition to the base penalties that are established for various crimes.

Now, that is where they increase penalties, and that is where they close loopholes, but when you are doing comprehensive reform, you look at everything. You don't necessarily measure justice just because a maximum penalty for something goes up. Sometimes you measure justice by making sure that the penalty is proportionate to the crime.

We have had lots of debates on this floor, and the Senator from New Jersey, my friend Mr. BOOKER, has been front and center in leading the charge when it comes to criminal justice reform because we have an absolute scandal in the United States of America about the mass incarceration of people of color.

So when the DC Council passes some of these laws, people apparently ignore all of the cases they are increasing penalties for—things like attempted murder—and zeroing in on some areas where they are actually bringing sentences in line with what judges are doing based on their discretion.

A lot of attention has been given to the issue of armed carjacking because, in this case, the DC government lowered the maximum penalty for armed carjacking. They did that to bring the maximum penalty more in line with what the actual sentencing was. The current carjacking maximum after the change is 21 years. It went from 40 years down to 24 years.

Now, here is the thing: I looked again, as I know my friend from New Jersey did, at what other States' laws are for armed carjacking, their maximum penalties. Once again, in many cases, they are lower than the new DC statute, the new DC penalty. In fact, a lot of States don't even have armed carjacking statutes. So if you want a point of comparison for those States, you would look at armed robbery.

When you look at States with armed carjacking statutes and when you look at the penalties they apply for armed robbery in carjacking cases, you will find that 15 States have lower penalties than the new, lower DC maximum penalty for armed carjacking. Fifteen States represented by Senators in this Chamber who want to override DC law have sentences for armed robbery or armed carjacking lower than what DC's new penalty is. Those States include Alaska; they include Kansas; they include North Dakota; and yes, once again, they include the State of Kentucky. The State of Kentucky seems to be an outlier here in terms of low sentences for many violent crimes, lower than the newly revised code passed by the DC government.

I am not going to go into all of the other details here. I think my colleagues get the picture, which is that the elected representatives of the District of Columbia, after an exhaustive review, made some decisions about criminal justice reform. I don't agree with every single one of them that they made, but I will tell you this: What they did is entirely defensible, and it certainly doesn't rise to the level of the U.S. Congress, for the first time in 30 years, bigfooting their decisions.

That is also the testimony we received from a number of attorneys general of our States. Everyone—including, I am proud to say, my attorney general, Anthony Brown, a former Member of the House—wrote to us all. They pointed out in their letter that the question of public safety is best left to those who are closest to the community and who are in the best position to decide these laws. They say: We know from experience that each of our jurisdictions is very different and at times requires different policy approaches.

A law that makes sense for one community may not make sense for another. If the State of Kentucky wants to have lower criminal penalties than the District of Columbia, that is their decision. As I said, based on today's action, maybe I will get up tomorrow morning and introduce a bill to change the criminal penalties in the State of Kentucky.

The bottom line is this: The people who live in the District of Columbia deserve the same right as the people who live in every other part of our country—the right to self-determination and democracy. That is what they did in passing this new law, and we should not be substituting our judgment for that of the duly-elected representatives of the people of the District of Columbia.

I now yield to the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. BOOKER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I want to just say that I respect and am grateful for the generosity of the chairman, the Senator from Oregon, for allowing me to slip in and say some remarks.

I want to thank Senator VAN HOLLEN for his incredible leadership on this issue.

I have the distinction of being the only one of the 100 Senators who was actually born in Washington, DC. This is the city my parents met in. This is the city they married in. My mom worked for the DC Public Schools. My father was one of the first Black salesmen hired in the entire DC region by the company IBM. I owe this city so much, and I am disappointed that there is nobody in this body who was officially elected to speak for this city.

Washington, DC, is suffering, as it has, from a violation of one of our most sacrosanct principles of the country, which is this idea that this democracy is rooted in the ideal of representative democracy, the separation of powers, and most certainly the idea that you can't have taxation without representation. In fact, DC residents pay more

per capita in Federal taxes than any other State, but yet they have no say in the Federal Government.

Madam President, 700,000 Americans, in one of the only expressions of representative democracy available to them, have 13 council people who were part of a process. As was said already by my colleague, the council members completed the monumental task of modernizing the 120-year-old DC Criminal Code to make it more consistent, clarifying conflicting provisions, and bringing it in line not just with current best practices reflected in the majority of States' criminal codes but in trying to address the urgencies of the moment wherein you have a city that is deeply concerned about the crime in its community.

DC's efforts are not unique. There are 37 States that have gone through similar processes—so-called red States, so-called blue States, and purple States.

The process was spearheaded, as my colleague said, by the independent DC Criminal Code Reform Commission, which was a nonpartisan agency that was very representative of prosecutors and victims' rights advocates. All of these nonpolitical people came and unanimously endorsed what we have before us today.

Now, the first time any partisan politician got involved was with the City Council just voting to confirm this nonpartisan body's unanimous recommendations. It was to that process that the Republican leader said: Oh, it looks like, with what they did, they are in need of adult supervision.

Think of how patronizing and paternalistic that is for this body, not being any part of this process, now suddenly saying they need adult supervision as if they are children.

The DC Criminal Code was about keeping DC safe. It is what the prosecutors involved said and what the U.S. Attorney's Office said: We need to do this to create a safer city because of the confusion in the code and the lack of having criminal penalties at all for certain crimes. All of these things opened up opportunities for DC not to have the security they wanted. So this was about DC's safety.

Unfortunately, it is now embroiled in scare tactics, where political, opportunistic actions are taking place to try to use this as a way to win political points. Even the media, for whom I have tremendous respect for its role, has been more keen on asking questions about the political analysis than actually the facts of what DC has done.

What DC has done in this bill is to actually create a tougher element on crime, tougher laws on crime. In looking at the totality of this bill, it is impossible to say that it isn't about making DC safer and having tougher penalties on crime.

My colleague went through some of this. It actually quadruples the maximum penalty for attempted murder, and it triples the maximum penalty for sexual assault because people in DC see those as serious crimes, and they want to seriously increase the consequences for them.

DC is pro-police officer, so what did they do? They doubled the maximum penalty for misdemeanor assaults on police officers, and they increased by 40 percent the maximum penalty for a felony assault on a police officer.

Washington, DC, knows that there is too much gun violence and that they need to take action against it, so it quadruples the maximum penalty for the possession of assault rifles, for ghost guns, for restricted explosive devices. I know the NRA doesn't want laws like this, but DC residents do. It doubles the maximum penalties for possession of a firearm or a bump stock—tougher laws on guns, more serious penalties.

DC's Criminal Code actually modernizes and creates new categories of offenses that aren't currently crimes. It creates new offenses for negligent homicide. It creates new offenses for reckless endangerment with a firearm. It creates new offenses by expanding liability for sexual assault, including for the sexual abuse of a minor. It expands liability for the possession of sexual images of children.

This is a city that came together and said: We want to protect our children. We want to protect sexual assault victims. We want to better protect our police officers. We want to better protect people from murder. But no. This body now, in a rush of politics, is going to prevent a city from protecting itself.

It actually increases the protections for domestic violence victims. It criminalizes strangulation as a felony, which is currently very difficult to even prosecute. In fact, every State but South Carolina has closed this loophole, but this body is going to stop them from doing it today. It criminalizes nonconsensual conduct as a felony and quadruples the maximum penalty. It helps the victims of domestic violence better obtain civil protection orders because the current law lacks clarity and makes it very hard to do this.

Let me say this again. By rejecting this law today, by voting against this, people, in the name of being tough on crime, are actually the people who are preventing a city from better protecting itself—from better protecting its children, its sexual assault victims, its police officers. I mean, think about that.

I have not, in my 10 years in the Senate, seen such a distortion of facts, such a misrepresentation of what something is. The RCCA sets new maximum penalties for armed carjackings—my friend talked about that—and their carjacking laws now have a maximum penalty higher than Georgia, Kansas, North Dakota, and Kentucky. Maybe we should do a unanimous consent request right now saying that Kentucky is too soft on crime because DC wants higher maximum penalties.

It sets new maximum penalties for unarmed carjackings higher than Georgia, higher than Iowa, higher than North Dakota, higher than Tennessee and Kentucky. The very Senators coming down here to criticize laws—Senators from Tennessee I have seen today, from Kentucky, from Iowa—actually, their States have lower maximum penalties than what DC is trying to do, but they are going to stop DC from doing it.

Armed robbery, the same thing—higher maximum penalties than North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio.

The same thing for unarmed robbery—higher than Kansas, higher than South Dakota, higher than Tennessee, the sponsor of this bill, and Kentucky.

Yes, they may be lowering the maximum penalty, but it is still higher than so many States of the Republicans pushing this bill and not speaking to the facts of it.

I am a former big-city mayor, and there are communities like Washington, DC, all over this country that are trying to fight crime. Many of them have significant numbers of African Americans as a percentage of their population who have higher rates of victimization. Those cities are grappling with this. They feel a sense of urgency.

That is why this bill actually is raising penalties, putting in new criminal statutes, and making sure that so many of their laws are tougher than even many of the red States, like Kentucky and Tennessee here.

That is what happens in a city that has elected representatives that know that their No. 1 job is to protect the community because those communities often are being more victimized than Senators and their families are in their States.

Give DC what we believe was a revolutionary idea then but not a revolutionary idea now, which is to let them protect themselves. Don't strip them of their ability to protect themselves. Don't take away their ability to protect their children. Don't take away their ability to create laws that protect their police officers. Don't take away their ability in this law to protect their citizens—700,000 residents who do not have a voice in this body, 700,000 residents who are about to have a law that will better protect them overturned because of politics, because of opportunism, because of the big divisions in our country that tear our Nation apart.

But DC is united in its fight for self-determination, for representation, for safety, and security. Those are the ideals that started America, and this body shouldn't interrupt a city trying to live its American ideals that we take for granted but they, obviously, today, are still fighting for.

I yield the floor, and I give my apologies to the great Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. I thank my colleague, and I thank both of my colleagues for their very, very powerful remarks.

NOMINATION OF DANIEL I. WERFEL

Madam President, the Senate this afternoon is going to vote on the nomination of Mr. Danny Werfel to serve as the next Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service.

I want to say that I believe Mr. Werfel is superbly qualified. He is a good-government nominee, and I urge my colleagues strongly to support him.

Mr. Werfel—and this is true of his professional life and at his hearing—has made it clear that he is going to make sure that the IRS does its job consistent with the law and that transparency will be a top priority for his service, which is focused on building trust.

This means a lot because Mr. Werfel has done that at the IRS before. He stepped up when President Obama asked him to serve as Acting Commissioner during a very challenging time a decade ago.

Now, the issues were different then. Danny Werfel came in after the public learned that the IRS had used some very sloppy methods of monitoring the political activities of tax-exempt groups. In the Finance Committee, particularly Chairman Hatch and myself, we did an extensive investigation, and we found that both left-leaning and right-leaning groups were affected.

While Mr. Werfel served in that acting role, he worked effectively with both sides of the Finance Committee. He helped right the ship and improve confidence in the IRS.

The late-Senator Hatch, who was certainly conservative but somebody who always valued fairness and professionalism, spoke to me several times and to our colleagues about his high regard for Danny Werfel. In my view, that is a big reason why Danny Werfel has bipartisan support today.

I have a few comments on the big initiatives he is going to lead when he is confirmed.

After a decade of Republican budget cuts, the Inflation Reduction Act finally gave the IRS the resources it needs to go after tax cheating by too many of the very wealthy and multinational corporations, and it is in a position to improve customer service for everybody else, the vast majority of Americans who follow the law.

I will start with customer service, where the IRS is making significant improvements. Let's go back a few years when the IRS was able to answer only 11 percent of the phone calls it was receiving. In 2022, it was 13 percent. This time last year, there was a backlog of 24 million unresolved tax returns. As of a few days ago, the IRS was answering 90 percent of phone calls. It has processed more than 99 percent of the returns filed so far this season. And the IRS has cut the backlog of individual returns by 92 percent.

Now, they have achieved that by spending about 1 percent of the IRA funding. In my view, that is a record that we ought to put a lot of focus on because, if it continues, it will be an historic return on investment. We expect it to continue. We are counting on Mr. Werfel to maintain that progress.

The long-term initiative is also stepping up the fight against, unfortunately, the fact that there are too many of those wealthy tax cheats and scofflaw corporations that rip off American taxpayers too easily today, and the Republican budget cuts over the years resulted in a double standard in tax enforcement. The IRS' ability to go after sophisticated wealthy tax cheats, who are employing armies of lawyers and accountants, was severely limited for years. The burden of tax audits shifted far too heavily onto working people and the middle class.

The reason that was the case is that for working people in Wisconsin and Oregon—nurses and firefighters and teachers—the government has most of the information about their lives. So it is very straightforward, if there is something to question there.

The wealthy tax cheats use their accountants and the lawyers to pay taxes very differently. Billionaires tend, to a great extent, to pay little or nothing for years on end because they structure their affairs to knock out their annual income.

Democrats have made clear from the very beginning that this isn't about increasing audits of people with incomes under $400,000. In fact, we wrote that limitation into the Inflation Reduction Act.

Republicans struck the language from the bill during the debate. Nevertheless, Secretary Yellen has ensured the Congress and everyone concerned know that the Treasury will stand by that commitment. The plan laying out how the IRA funding will be used is in the works.

I want to be clear this afternoon because I have been asked about this. Colleagues on the Finance Committee, of both political parties, are insisting that we get that report on how the funds are going to be used—that we get it soon.

Frankly, that is one of the reasons to support Danny Werfel this afternoon, because he is experienced in this deal. He stepped in for President Obama. We are convinced that he is going to follow that directive and focus on getting us the plan and ensure that the focus is on better service and on wealthy tax cheats and multinational corporations paying their fair share.

I think he is going to handle his position in a way that is transparent. He made it clear that he would be open to talking to Senators on both sides of the aisle and that he will strongly favor protections for confidentiality of taxpayer data. That is the kind of good-government approach that both sides of the aisle should support.

This is a highly qualified, highly experienced nominee. He is the right choice to lead the IRS. He has earned bipartisan support. A number of our colleagues, both in the committee and here on the floor on both sides of the aisle, support him. I would just urge my colleagues, this afternoon—I think we will vote in a couple of hours—to strongly support his nomination.

REMEMBERING BILL AND DOTTIE SCHONELY

Madam President, I want to rise today on behalf of all the people that I have the honor to represent to honor the late Bill Schonely, the Portland Trail Blazers' radio voice for the better part of three decades, and his late wife Dottie.

Bill passed in January, leaving a timeless legacy for all of us Blazer fans in ''Rip City,'' the name that Bill coined for my hometown.

Dottie passed last month, leaving her own legacy as an accomplished woman who radiated smarts and kindness to everybody she met in Oregon.

Bill and Dottie were the ultimate teammates, as the ''First Couple of Rip City.'' So perhaps it is fitting they could not be separated for long.

In fact, when Bill and I spoke last, before his passing in January, he made sure to ask me if I was doing my level best to protect Social Security. I have kept the message on my phone with his resonating voice saying: RON, what are you doing to protect Social Security and the Gray Panthers? I am really concerned about it. And make sure you also do it for Dottie as well.

That will be on my phone forever.

Like storied broadcasters Johnny Most for the Boston Celtics fans or Chick Hearn for Los Angeles Lakers fans, my friend Bill was much more than an NBA play-by-play guy for us Trail Blazers fans in Portland and throughout Oregon. As the Blazers' first broadcaster, starting with the team's inaugural season in 1970—that was a world long before ESPN or even before the team's games aired on local TV—Bill became the soundtrack for generations of Portland fans. He connected our State's first big-league franchise with Oregonians in every nook and cranny of Oregon.

I have logged lots of miles getting around Oregon for 1,040 open-to-all townhall meetings. In fact, I have got two more scheduled this weekend in Jefferson and Deschutes Counties in Central Oregon. But I bet Bill covered just as many miles as the Blazers' ambassador in every part of Oregon.

I can't tell you how many times I would show up at a radio station in a small Oregon town—you know, there are lots of those kinds of towns in Wisconsin—and I would see a photo of Bill there, from back in the day, when he was on a local golf course or some local community function. And any elected official in Oregon will tell you how fortunate we were that Bill Schonely never ran against any of us.

In addition to coining the phrase ''Rip City,'' which is forever tied with my hometown, Bill had an expansive basketball lexicon in his unofficial role as professor of basketball English for Blazers fans.

Unlike me, he had a baritone voice, and he taught all of us how rebounders

''climbed the golden ladder'' and how point guards dribbled ''lickety brindle up the middle.'' As a former player myself, I always nodded my head in agreement whenever Bill would intone, pausing theatrically with each word, ''You've got to make your free throws.''

So as Rip City prepares to say goodbye to Bill and Dottie at a public memorial service in Portland, in which I will be at on Monday the 13th, I will close with this:

Oregon is said to have ''Seven Wonders,'' including Mount Hood and Crater Lake. In my scorebook and the scorebooks of Blazer fans, ''The Schonz'' and Dottie are our State's ''Eighth Wonder.''

So today, on behalf of all Oregonians, I extend my condolences to all Bill and Dottie's loved ones. I will always remember both with a smile and be forever grateful that they leave so many wonderful memories as part of their unforgettable legacy for our community.

On behalf of all Oregonians, today, I close by simply saying: Thank you, Bill and Dottie Schonely.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I wanted to come down here because a single Senator in this Chamber, a colleague from Alabama, has put a blanket hold on every pending nominee and promotion of flag officers at the Department of Defense.

As far as we can tell—and this might be the intention of the Senator from Alabama; I don't know whether he knows this or not—there is no precedent for what the Senator from Alabama is doing. There is no precedent for what he has done. It has never been done, stopping the U.S. Senate from taking up promotions for uniformed military officers. These are promotions that happen to people as a group. These are flag officers at the Department of Defense that we have to ratify here in the Senate.

And we asked the Senate Armed Services—I couldn't believe it when I heard it. I couldn't believe it. But we asked the Senate Armed Services Committee if this had ever happened in the history of America, the history of the Senate; and the answer was, they have no record of that ever happening before.

And it is happening at an incredibly unusual and difficult time in the world's history with the biggest land war in Europe since the Second World War, China's saber-rattling in the Pacific. We just had an hours-long open session of the Intelligence Committee to hear the report from the head of the FBI, the head of the CIA, the head of the NSA, the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. All of these folks were coming together to say: This is what the threat looks like. This is the global threat that America faces—a geopolitical landscape more unsettled than at any point in my lifetime, Madam President.

My understanding is that the Senator from Alabama has placed this unprecedented blanket hold because he objects to the Department of Defense's new policies to help our servicemembers access reproductive care. And I will have more to say about that in a minute; but I don't think I should wait any longer to advance these personnel. We should get this done today.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination en bloc: Calendar Nos. 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The senior Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Reserving the right to object.

The Senator from Colorado may have good intentions, Madam President, but he is wrong on the facts.

I am holding the DOD nominations because the Secretary of Defense is trying to push through a massive expansion of taxpayer-subsidized abortions without going through this body, without going through Congress.

Three months ago, I informed Secretary Austin that if he tried to turn the DOD into an abortion travel agency, I would place a hold on all civilian flag and general officer nominees. Other than a couple of calls to my staff to ask whether I was serious, the DOD leadership has yet to call me directly and justify this action. In fact, they have not explained this decision to Congress despite multiple letters, more than a dozen from my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee.

Secretary Austin's new abortion policy is immoral and, arguably, illegal. If he wants to change the law, he needs to go through Congress.

The DOD refused to answer questions or justify this policy for months last year. When they finally answered our questions after another nominee hold, the policy was exposed for what it really is: nothing but a political charade to appease the left. These holds have no real impact on military readiness or operation. The military wasting time and resources to coordinate abortion trips hurts readiness, not the Senate using regular order to vote on nominees.

If my colleague cared about military readiness, maybe we would go after more of the ridiculous policies that have led to our lowest—our lowest—recruiting numbers in decades. But my hold does send a message that the Secretary is not—and I repeat—not above the law, and he cannot ignore lawmakers who are demanding his organization abide by the law.

I object, and I will continue to object to any nominees as long as this illegal new abortion policy is in place. I am holding the military accountable. Others are holding our national security hostage by forcing their agenda where it doesn't belong.

Americans want a military focused on a national defense. And that is what I am fighting for. For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The senior Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I appreciate the words of the Senator from Alabama and his conviction. I will say he said I am mistaken on the facts.

I think one thing you didn't hear was any dispute at all that this is the first time in American history that a U.S. Senator has held up the promotion of flag officers—the first time. It is the first time in American history that any of the more than 2,000 people that have served in this body—but less than 3,000 people—have seen fit to hold up the promotions of people at DOD. That is not a fact that is in dispute, Madam President, as we sit here today on the floor.

You know, I have spent a lot of time when I come down to this floor—and I am on the floor listening to people's speeches, or I am thinking about my own—thinking about the history of America. And broadly speaking—it has not always been true at every moment or at every juncture—but broadly speaking, the American story has been a story of expanding freedoms and expanding opportunity for the American people. It is the story of one generation after another putting their shoulder to the wheel to make our country more democratic, more fair, and more free.

It can be easy, when you are on this floor, to think about those victories as ancient history, as old as the marble in this Chamber. But it was only 100 years ago, our grandmothers' generation—our grandmothers' generation—when women in America didn't have the right to vote. That is just 100 years ago. It took 100 years for the people that were fighting for women to have the self-evident right to vote to vote, and they didn't get it until 100 years after they fought. And it was only 100 years ago that they got it.

It was only when I was born in the middle of the 1960s that we attempted, finally—finally—after the Civil War in the United States, after Reconstruction and then the redemption that came after that, after the Jim Crow

laws and the redlining that had happened in the United States of America—it was only after that that we finally tried to secure the rights of African-American citizens to vote, a promise that had been made after the Civil War was over and never fulfilled. I would argue it hasn't been fulfilled to this day.

By the way, when I was born in 1964—I was at the African American Museum the day before I got sworn into this body, this time with my family, and I said to one of my nephews—we were walking through the slavery exhibit—I said, I was born in 1964, which, to him, admittedly, that seemed like ancient history. But the year I was born was just 100 years since the people in this country still enslaved human beings. Just two short lifetimes divided when I was born from when we still enslaved human beings.

It was even more recent in our country's history—just 50 years ago, Madam President—before we secured the constitutional right to an abortion in Roe v. Wade, putting an end to the days when women in this Nation—when our mothers and our grandmothers—were forced into back-alley abortions in the United States of America, forced to carry pregnancies to term, and forced to live without any freedom to chart their own course about their lives or their families' lives. That was just 50 years ago when the Court in Roe v. Wade said there is a constitutional right at stake here; there is a constitutional right that we are going to protect here.

And in all of these cases, in my judgment, our fellow citizens have sought to broaden the horizon of freedom and equality in America. And our progress has never been in a straight line. The pages here should know that. We have always been in a battle. We have always been in a battle in this country between the highest ideals that have ever been expressed on the page by human hand, the words in the Constitution of the United States and the worst impulses in human history—the worst impulses in human history—in our case: human slavery and the genocide that was perpetrated on the Native American population that was here at a time when those incredible words were etched into the Constitution that are etched all over the walls of this beautiful building—a building, by the way, that itself, I say to the pages that are here, was built by enslaved human beings. And we are in that fight today.

Today, we face a decades-long campaign that stretches back, at least, to when Ronald Reagan was elected President. It is a battle that has been mostly invisible until recently to the American people, even though it has transformed American life. While that campaign had many objectives over its 40 or 50 years or so—those four decades—one of those objectives was to confirm a majority of Justices on the Supreme Court who subscribed to a radical constitutional interpretation called originalism, a legal document that was invented in the 1970s.

My colleague from Louisiana is here today. He is a distinguished lawyer. He might disagree with some things that I would say, but I was there at the origin of originalism. I was a lawyer trained a decade or so after this was something that was perpetrated by the Federalist Society and Anthony Scalia and the law-of-economics guys and Mark Feldstein and all these folks, as part of what they were trying to do with the Reagan revolution. And a huge part of that was originalism. It is the most amazing name. It is the most amazing name, I think, in political history. I don't think there has been greater branding in the history of mankind than ''originalism'' because it makes you think immediately: That is what the Founding Fathers must have set. It is their original intent, as if that could be divined across the decades, across the centuries, or across the ages, as if they even agreed with each other.

You don't have to go to a musical like ''Hamilton'' to see the disagreements that these people had with one another. That is the beauty of the founding of our Republic, which is to see the disagreements that they had with each other and the way they sorted through them and the compromises they made as a result of this disagreement—some of them, American tragedies that we live with to this day.

But they called it original. I just want the pages to know this and the law students that are out there today that might want to dispute this to just look up the history. There is a beginning of this. There is a beginning of this, and it does not start with John Marshall. It does not start with George Washington or Thomas Jefferson, who himself—Jefferson would be absolutely shocked to believe that there are people in the 21st century who think that we should be dictated to by the hand of the 18th century or the 17th century. There should be a revolution even less than in every generation.

If you had told me—I mean, we all knew about originalism when I was in law school. We certainly did. I did. We had professors who subscribed to it. Certainly, there are political people who subscribe to it. But if you had told me when I was in law school that I would live to see the day when a majority of the U.S. Supreme Court would subscribe to the originalist position of the Federalist Society, I would have said: That is not believable. That is preposterous.

I am not saying there wouldn't be people who wouldn't have fundamental constitutional disagreements with me on all kinds of things, but the idea that you would have a Court that would say originalism is where it is at? But that is what has happened, and it has been a 40-year campaign to do it.

I actually had a moment on the floor of this Senate once when I congratulated the leader of the Republican Party for having achieved his dream, having achieved his vision. I wasn't congratulating him because I agreed with him or that I felt positive about what he had done, but he had set out to carry that water, and he did it decade after decade after decade.

I said earlier that this wasn't really noticed by the American people, this battle. In many ways, it wasn't until 8 months ago. Eight months ago, we saw that majority take its most radical decision yet when it overturned Roe v. Wade, stripping the American people of a fundamental constitutional right to make their own reproductive choices—a right that Justices appointed by Republican and Democratic Presidents had upheld for half a century, for 50 years.

I have a colleague in this Chamber whom I love named JON TESTER, who is from Montana. He is a farmer. He is one of the last farmers in this place. He said to me—this was even before this happened—he said to me: My daughter is having to fight for things her mother never had to fight for because her grandmother won these freedoms. Her grandmother won these rights, and she won these freedoms and these rights when Roe v. Wade was decided half a century ago.

I read on the way home to Colorado—well, I guess in honesty, I read the decision—I am sure my friend from Louisiana read it earlier, too, when it got leaked by the Supreme Court somehow—something that should have never happened—something that should have never happened. That is when I first read Justice Alito's opinion. I had a chance, again, to read it on the plane back to Colorado, and I was hoping that it would be different because the opinion that I had first read as a draft opinion just dripped—dripped—with a cavalier dismissal of the right that it had destroyed. And when I reread it on the airplane, that is what I saw again.

Justice Alito's opinion doesn't even have the courage to grapple with the fundamental nature of the right it was stripping the American people of. It didn't contend with the simplest questions like what it would mean for millions of Americans, including for millions of American women like my three daughters.

Justices Breyer, Kagan, and Sotomayor expressed this in their dissent. They wrote:

> [The majority opinion lacked] any serious discussion of how its ruling will affect women. . . . It reveals how little it knows or cares about women's lives or about the suffering its decision will cause.

That is a quote of the dissent in that opinion.

Instead of grappling with the consequences of his ruling—which would have been, I am sure, painful even for Justice Alito to deal with, just as it is for women all over this country and their families to deal with the aftermath of this decision every single day since it has been rendered—Justice

Alito essentially wrote that if it wasn't a right in 1868, it is not a right today.

I mean, you have to give him credit. That is originalism, although he is not going back to the Constitution; he is going back to the 14th Amendment. If it wasn't a right in 1868, it is not a right today.

We ratified the 14th Amendment in 1868. That is the depth of the analysis in that opinion, which, if you were guided only by originalist ideology, I suppose that would be what you would say. The dissenting Justice pointed out that Justice Alito completely ignored that the men who ratified the 14th Amendment in 1868—and all of them, obviously, were men—did not perceive women as equals, did not recognize women's rights.

Quoting them now in the dissent:

> When the majority says we must read our foundational charter as viewed at the time of ratification . . . it consigns women to second-class citizenship.

Of course it does. Women had no right to vote. Black Americans had no right to vote. The dissent continued:

> Because laws in 1868 deprived women of any control over their bodies, the majority approves States doing so today. Because those laws prevented women from charting the course of their own lives, the majority says States can do the same again.

And that is exactly what we have seen with one State after another treating Dobbs as a green light to obliterate access to reproductive care for millions of American women and families. Many of us have spoken about how the ruling has harmed the privacy, the health, the freedom of our fellow Americans, and all of those are important.

Let me say also, this is a difficult issue in my State. I want the Senator from Alabama to know that and everybody to know that. It is a difficult issue for all of the families across America. It is difficult for anybody who has been through this. And I am certainly not cavalier about how difficult this decision is and the fact that different people have different points of view, different people have different religious perspectives, different people come from different parts of the country.

I thought about these things a lot over the years, and my conclusion is that it is best to leave this decision in the hands of a woman and her—well, whomever she chooses to consult—her doctor, her family. That is my opinion. I respect the opinion of other people who disagree about that. I realize that this is a heartfelt decision.

But there is a reason why people have been out on this floor and other places talking about the effect on freedom, the effect on the right to privacy, the effect on the health of our fellow citizens because it has an unbelievable effect on all of those dimensions.

But I don't think we have focused nearly enough on how the ruling will harm our national security, and that is what brings us here today. That is what brings us here today at this unprecedented moment, when a Member of this body, for the first time in American history, has said: No, I am not going to let a single person go through. I am not going to let any of these flag officers go through because I am upset with the policy that the DOD has pursued, that the DOD is pursuing a massive subsidy on abortion here, the abortion travel agency that the DOD has become. And because I don't like that—I am not accepting those characterizations of what the DOD is becoming—but because I don't like that, I am going to hold hostage the promotion of the flag officers at the Department of Defense.

Over a million men and women serve in our Armed Forces, supported by over 700,000 civilians in the Department of Defense. These are obviously moms and dads, sons and daughters who volunteer to risk their lives to protect ours. But when our men and women in uniform volunteer to serve, when they heed the call and they say, ''Sign me up,'' they don't get to decide where they serve. When our men and women in uniform volunteer to serve, they don't get to decide where they are going to serve; the Pentagon decides that. You can't sign up and say: Well, I would like to be in Colorado, or, well, I would like to be in Alabama, or I would like to be in a State where my reproductive healthcare is going to be covered or a State where it is not.

Before Dobbs was decided, our troops had at least some assurance that wherever the Pentagon sent them, they would have minimal access to reproductive care as a protected constitutional right. They knew that for 50 years—for 50 years, for 50 years—no matter where they served. That is no longer true. The Supreme Court stripped that right away, again, without even bothering to consider what it would mean for our troops based in States with no access to reproductive care. Justice Alito doesn't deal with that in his decision.

After Dobbs, one of the first calls I received was from a woman who once served as a senior officer in the Air Force. She immediately grasped how Dobbs is going to affect our military readiness. And that is what this is about—our military readiness. She understood, as, I would say, thousands of women in this country understood, how disruptive it is to force women in uniform to travel from their duty station to access care, to say nothing of the cost to her privacy when every single person in her unit finds out about it, knows about it, unlike any other medical procedure that we give people leave for, that people can get paid travel for. The privacy issues here are seismic, and the military readiness issues as a result are seismic, too.

Women are the fastest growing part of our military. They are about a fifth of our total force and over one-third of our civilian workforce. It is not hard to see why they might think twice before enlisting if they know they are going to be stationed somewhere that doesn't respect their reproductive freedom.

(Senator MURPHY assumed the Chair.)

The Senator from Alabama talked about how the DOD is having the worst recruiting they have had for generations. She is right. That is true. It is hard to see how this is going to help.

You don't have to take my word for it. A recent study from RAND concluded that Dobbs could increase attrition, decrease readiness, and hurt national security. And that is after the Pentagon had its worst recruiting season, as the Senator from Alabama suggested, since the Vietnam war.

In an attempt to deal with these issues 2 weeks ago, the Pentagon announced three new policies, and here is what they were.

By the way, I apologize to my colleagues who are here because I know you are here to give this other speech. I delayed for 24 hours or more, so I am going to just continue, and I will beg your forgiveness.

But these are the three things that have brought the Senate to a halt. These are the three things that have created an unprecedented objection to flag officers of the Department of Defense being approved in the common way that they have been approved in this body for 230 years.

The first of these policies authorizes travel allowances for servicemembers to access reproductive care if it is unavailable at their duty stations. That is important because they may not be able to afford to travel, which is why we pay for other procedures, like LASIK eye surgery or to remove a bunion, none of which seem to have gotten the objection of anybody in this body.

The second allows servicemembers to take absences without leave to access reproductive care. This recognizes, I think, the difficult choice a woman has to make in incredibly, profoundly challenging circumstances. LASIK surgeries aren't banned in Alabama or Connecticut.

The last policy extends the time before servicemembers have to tell their commanding officers about a pregnancy. It gives them just a little bit more time to deal with the shock that can come when somebody has an unexpected pregnancy and is trying to make a decision about what to do. This says that rather than get you in a position where you might find yourself feeling like you can't tell your superior officer the truth, this says take a little bit more time so you can think of it.

That is what these three provisions do, these guidelines do, these rules do, about giving the women in uniform the time and the privacy to decide if they want to carry a pregnancy to term or not—a decision that anybody on this floor, no matter what they think about this, surely can understand has become more complicated in the wake of Dobbs.

So I applaud the Secretary of Defense, Secretary Austin, for taking

these steps to protect our soldiers, our sailors, and our marines. He is in a difficult position. It is hard to do because, you know, I don't think many people were expecting that this would actually happen, and yet it has.

Instead of welcoming this leadership from the Secretary of Defense, some of my Republican colleagues have attacked these proposals. They call them—I am now not quoting the Senator from Alabama; I am quoting others who have written about this. They have called them ''disgusting.'' They have called them ''heavy-handed.'' They have called them ''disastrous.''

I could be wrong—I have certainly been wrong before—but I don't think the American people would consider it disgusting or disastrous that women in uniform don't have to dig into their own paycheck and use their limited leave to seek care that is unavailable because of where our government required them to deploy. I think fundamental fairness would say that is a reasonable reaction to the disruption that has been caused by the Supreme Court.

Now I am quoting the senior Senator from Alabama when I say:

> The Secretary of Defense is following through with his radical plan to facilitate thousands of abortions a year with taxpayer dollars, so I will follow through with my plan to hold all DOD civilian, flag, and general officer nominations that come before the U.S. Senate.

OK. Let's just hold up here for one second. Thousands. The Senator was down here the other day saying this is not a readiness problem because it is only 20 abortions that DOD paid for last year. Well, I don't know the facts of every one of those abortions. I do know the facts of the DOD policy with respect to abortion on paying for it, and that is in cases where there has been rape, incest, or the life of the mother is at stake. And maybe that is what those 20 were.

But the Senator from Alabama himself said that what we are talking about here in the context of the rule are what he calls thousands and thousands of abortions that he is saying are subsidized by DOD because the DOD is willing to pay for the travel of women to go from a State that has banned abortion to a State that hasn't. I don't see how—how could that not be a matter of readiness when you are talking about thousands of people?

The Senator from Alabama said:

> The American people want a military focused on national defense, not facilitating a progressive political agenda.

I could not agree more—could not agree more—with the Senator from Alabama. The American people want a military focused on national defense, and for that reason, that is why I find it so hard to imagine that the American people would tolerate any Senator holding up critical national security personnel to impose their ideology.

The Senator from Alabama correctly says that abortion is illegal in his State. I read the polling data that shows that 55 percent of Alabamians actually support a woman's right to choose. But that is neither here nor there. In terms of the law in Alabama, the Senator from Alabama is right about that—abortion is banned there. In Alabama, abortion is banned at any stage of a pregnancy. It has no exceptions for rape or for incest.

Under Alabama law, doctors can face up to 99 years in jail if they perform an abortion. Last month, an Alabama State legislator announced a bill to treat abortion as murder. The State's attorney general suggested using a chemical endangerment law—a law designed to protect kids from methamphetamine—to prosecute a woman for taking a pill to terminate her pregnancy. That is the law. That is the debate that is going on in Alabama.

I recognize that Alabama has made certain decisions about this issue that are different from the ones that Colorado has made. We were the first State in America to decriminalize abortion in 1967. That was the State of Colorado, a Western State, 5 years before Roe v. Wade was ever decided.

In Colorado, we believe these decisions belong between a woman and her family and her doctor, and we don't accept that the government should impose itself on that private decision. And of course, that is not just what I believe; it is not just what Colorado believes; that is what the large majority of the American people believe. That is what the American people believe.

I acknowledge that Alabama has made a different choice, but what I can't accept is that its Senator would impose that choice on every woman and family in our armed services who happened to be stationed in his State or any State that doesn't protect access to reproductive care, because it is not just Alabama. It is not just Alabama. Eighteen States have banned abortion. Nine of them—nine of them—have no exceptions for rape or incest.

Many States have only begun their war on a woman's right to choose. Just yesterday in Florida, which is home to 22 military bases—22 bases, where men and women in the United States who signed up to fight or to join our military have no choice about where they serve. Governor DeSantis committed just yesterday to sign a 6-week abortion ban. He may be unaware—I haven't talked to him about it. I don't know. He might be unaware that one in three women doesn't even know that she is pregnant until around 6 weeks—or maybe he does know that. I don't know which would be worse.

Texas is posting $10,000 bounties to any resident who successfully sues a doctor or nurse for performing an abortion after 6 weeks or even someone who just drives their friend or relative or neighbor to have a procedure—a procedure that for the last 50 years—until this radical, originalist majority came into the Court—for the last 50 years, for almost my entire lifetime, has been a constitutionally protected right in this country.

All of us who are in this Chamber can remember how, in the aftermath of Dobbs, State legislators all around the country wrote laws restricting the freedom of female citizens to travel from States like Texas or Alabama that had banned abortions to States like Colorado that had ratified a woman's right to choose.

Now we have Senators here who aren't content to merely deprive servicewomen of reproductive care if they are based in a State where abortion has been banned; they want to make it even harder to travel to another State to avail themselves of that care.

From the vantage point of my daughters, the nearly 6 million people who live in Colorado, and the vast majority of Americans who support a woman's right to choose, I think there is a real question here about whose position is radical.

When the military pays for servicemen to travel from one State to another if they need LASIK eye surgery or a sinus procedure or to remove a bunion on their foot, is it really radical to imagine that servicewomen should have the right to travel—to have the price of that travel defrayed so they can get reproductive care?

That is just the debate we are having. That says nothing about why we are actually here today, which is the vehicle that the Senator from Alabama is using to delay the vote of every pending nominee and promotion at the Department of Defense at a moment when we have the biggest land war in Europe since the Second World War and China saber-rattling in the Pacific.

If you told most Americans that a single Senator in this place was delaying every nomination and promotion at the DOD, all for the privilege of making it harder for servicewomen to travel for reproductive care or take leave for that care or shorten the time a woman has to make a choice about her reproductive health before she has to tell her commanding officer—and those are the facts of what these rules do. If you told Americans that is what was happening on the floor of the Senate, I don't think they would believe it. I don't think they would accept it. And maybe that is the reason why it has never happened. Coloradans wouldn't accept it.

Like the Senator from Alabama, we in Colorado are honored to host a strong military presence in our State, from the U.S. Air Force Academy to Fort Carson, to Schriever, to Peterson, and to Buckley and Space Command, and we are honored to protect the reproductive care for the men and women who protect us.

In the case of Space Command, we have a live example, I am sad to say, of how the Supreme Court's decision could harm our national security. I will not go through the whole story today. I will spare the Senators from Alabama and Louisiana and everybody else who is here this painful and, as I describe it, saddest story I know.

Here is the essential point: In the waning days of the last administration—I think Donald Trump, President Trump, had 9 days left—our top generals recommended Colorado as the top choice for Space Command's permanent headquarters, but President Trump overruled them and said it should go to Alabama. He later went on the radio and said: They all were against me. They all said it ought to go to Colorado, but I overruled them, and I said it should go to Alabama.

Now, look, I do not think that is how we should be making basing decisions in this Nation. Every single person who has looked at this Space Command issue knows what the generals recommended, and they know they were overruled by the President of the United States for his own political purposes. We need to make these decisions according to the national security interests of the United States, not in the political interests of a President.

That is why, over and over, I called on the Biden administration to restore integrity to this process and honor the generals' original recommendation. They should have made that decision 2 years ago after President Trump made this decision, in the last few days of his administration, overruling these generals, the experts who know where Space Command should be.

But my specific issue with Space Command has led me to a much broader concern as I have studied this issue. In the wake of Dobbs, we literally have no policy to account for the harm of moving a base from a State that protects access to reproductive care, like Colorado, to a State that does not, like Alabama. We are now living in a world where the Pentagon makes basing decisions according to criteria like the number of parking spaces or the quality of schools or the availability of childcare. All of those are relevant decisions, important decisions, questions to ask. But one question they are not asking is about basic reproductive healthcare in a country where it has been legal, where it has been a fundamental constitutional right for the last 50 years, that the majority of the American people and the majority of the people in Alabama supports.

They are not asking whether a State prosecutes women who seek an abortion or imprisons doctors for 99 years for performing abortions or turns residents into bounty hunters against women. It is ridiculous that they would be counting parking spaces and not reflecting on what this world looks like for the people in our armed services, especially women and their families, post Dobbs. I can't agree that the Pentagon should care about how much it costs to house a family when it makes basing decisions but not whether the family has the freedom to plan its future.

The Supreme Court, because of its ideology, may not have had the courage to grapple with the consequences of its ruling on our men and women in uniform and on our national security, but that doesn't give us the ability or give the Department of Defense reason to shirk its responsibility. We have to stand on the side of expanding rights and expanding opportunity for Americans, not restricting them.

So, today, I am calling on the Pentagon to codify the policies it announced last month and develop a new framework that accounts for access to reproductive care in its basing and its personnel decisions.

I call upon my colleague from Alabama to lift his holds so the Senate can advance these national security personnel, because if our men and women in uniform can spend every day defending our freedom, surely, we can defend theirs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I think we got a little offtrack here.

In getting back to the objection a little bit, I don't think there is anybody here who said it has anything to do with doing away with abortion. The Department of Defense has had, for years, a policy about abortion in the military. My problem is, they have changed it. And the last time I looked, the people who make the laws are not on the Supreme Court and not in the Pentagon—it is this place right here. We make the laws. They have done abortions for years in the military for rape, incest, and harm to the mom—through health. They want to change this to where a third party has said thousands and thousands would start getting abortions and not just military personnel but also their dependents.

This is about who is paying for this. The American taxpayers shouldn't be told they have to pay for abortions. That is not the way it is written. The military should not be paying for abortions. So, as we got offtrack there a little bit about what we were talking about, we are talking about a new policy based not on facts but on conjecture from the Department of Defense that they are going to do it on their own without coming through this body.

Now a little bit about SPACECOM, as the good Senator from Colorado brought up.

You know, it is unfortunate that Members from States that weren't really even running for SPACECOM headquarters are trying to tack on completely unrelated political issues to a fact-based decision. SPACECOM's and the DOD's abortion policies have nothing to do with each other. I don't recall abortion being part of the Air Force's selection process a couple of years ago when they called me and said: Coach, we are going to put SPACECOM in Huntsville, AL. The decision to put SPACECOM in Huntsville was based on facts and facts alone and evidence of what was best for the military and for our country and our national defense. That is the reason they chose it. That decision was then reconfirmed by multiple independent studies over the last couple of years.

The DOD's inspector general and the GAO confirmed that Huntsville was the No. 1 location for SPACECOM based on things like workforce, existing infrastructure, education, and the cost of living. Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville is, far and away, the best place for SPACECOM. This is not my opinion. It is fact. It is fact from several studies. Attempts to change that with progressive talking points are shameful and purely political. It is really a shame.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, first of all, I would say, with respect to my colleague from Alabama, I appreciate his arguments here.

He first says that he clearly doesn't have the ability to do this; that, somehow, this is up to Congress to pass a law to make sure that servicemembers who need to travel for reproductive healthcare have it paid for them, not the abortion, by the way, which is what the Senator from Alabama said—that is inaccurate—but the travel is his argument.

The reality is that the DOD, it is clear, can pay for servicemembers' travel for LASIK eye surgery, but current law doesn't say that. It can pay to have a bunion removed, but current law doesn't say that either. All of that has happened without complaint from this body because it makes sense that the DOD has the discretion to provide the care it believes its servicemembers require. And they are making those regulations as part of the law that they have been granted from our branch of government to make sure they care for our servicemembers. I think that is point 1.

Point 2, the Senator from Alabama talked about, you know, this being about who is paying for abortion. This is not about who is paying for abortion. This is about those three changes to the law I mentioned earlier. I won't go into them because I know my colleagues are going to lose their minds over my staying here. But those are the three things. One is travel. One is, you know, being able to take a little bit of a longer time to talk to your supervisor, and those kinds of things. So it is not about paying for abortions.

Although, I will say that the Senator from Alabama has another piece of legislation that he has introduced that objects not to the DOD but to the VA. He says this is radical. The VA has said: We have noticed that our policies that allow us to pay for abortion when the life of the mother is at stake don't also include exceptions for rape and incest, and we are going to add those exceptions for rape and incest. The Senator from Alabama has brought that to the floor and said he wants to have a vote.

I want to have a vote on that too. I can't wait to see how every single Senator in this Chamber stands on the Senator from Alabama's position that

having the VA add cases of rape and incest to the exception to allow it to pay for abortion is not somehow abortion-on-demand or abortion—as some people say, abortion after people have already had the child but is simply adding two things that probably 80 percent of the American people agree with.

On the last point, on Space Command's being decided on the facts, let me tell you something. Here are the facts as I understand them: The generals said they thought Space Command should stay in Colorado. The generals and the Secretary of the Air Force went to the White House with the recommendation of Colorado. The President of the United States, Donald Trump, overturned that recommendation on their advice. He went on the radio—the Rick & Bubba Show, I think it is called—in Alabama, where he said: Everybody was for Colorado, and everybody was against me on Alabama, but I made the decision to send it to Alabama.

Those are the facts on Space Command. And it is not off-topic. You know, it is not off-topic. That was a political decision that should never have been made. If the politics had not entered into that decision, the generals would have gotten their way, and Space Command would be in Colorado, and we wouldn't be having the conversation we are having today because no one in Colorado would be having their abortion rights stripped from them and being sent to another State that has banned abortion, where doctors can go to jail for 99 years because they perform an abortion, where laws that are meant to bring down folks who traffic in methamphetamine are being threatened to be used against women who use a chemical version of abortion.

This is not a complaint I have with the Senator from Alabama. This is my complaint with the White House. You should have dealt with this 2 years ago. And now I hope this administration will deal with, in the wake of Dobbs, this daily gray area that is tearing at the emotions and the well-being of members of our Armed Forces, who don't get to decide where they are stationed.

Alabama can have whatever law it wants. That is not up for me to decide. I respect that there are differences in this country, but people in this body have a duty and a responsibility to the men and women of the armed services, and we have a duty and responsibility to fulfill our duty and responsibility, which is not to hold up the promotion of flag officers at the Department of Defense because I have a position that is different from what others may think. That is what I think.

I yield to the Senator from Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues from Colorado and Alabama for a very interesting and robust debate, but I would like to change the subject slightly.

GERMANY

Mr. President, Germany and America are dear friends, and friends tell each other the truth.

On the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said that Germany plans to continue supporting Ukraine ''as strongly and as long [as possible and] as necessary.''

I regret to observe that based on where we are today, that would certainly be a change of pace. By all measures, Germany's so-called strong support is more lamb than lion. The numbers don't lie. Germany's current spending to help Ukraine by share of gross domestic product—if you compare the spending of one country to another, it is not fair to use raw numbers because some countries are wealthier than others. So if you look at the current spending by our friends in Germany to help Ukraine, by share of gross domestic product, Germany wouldn't even be in the top 10 nations in terms of financial support for Ukraine. And those are just the numbers.

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and the United Kingdom have all outspent Germany by share of gross domestic product. Our neighbors in Canada have outspent Germany, too, both in raw dollars and by share of GDP. And the same is certainly true of the American people. The American people have spent roughly double—double—what our friends in Germany have spent in Ukraine, fighting for freedom, by share of domestic gross product.

With an entire ocean and most of Europe between America and Ukraine, Americans are wondering why the United States and Canada have dug deeper to deter Russian aggression than Germany has. That is a fair question.

Germany, as we all know—and I am very proud of them for this—is the economic leader of Europe. Germany has the fourth largest economy in the world. Germany has the fourth largest economy in the world. But the fact is—friends tell friends the truth—that Germany is failing to pull its weight in Ukraine. And if we look back on the past year, it is very clear that Germany's support of Ukraine has been heavy on words and short on action. And I hate to have to say that.

Somehow, Germany's leadership has lost the urgency it had when Putin began his march into Ukraine. At that time, if we think back a year, Germany could not have been in a more vulnerable position. The Bundeswehr, Germany's armed forces, were dilapidated.

At the end of the Cold War, Germany had nearly 500,000 soldiers. Roughly 3 percent of its spending by GDP was allocated to Germany's defense. When Putin invaded Ukraine, Germany's military was roughly one-third of that size, about 183,000 soldiers, and spending on defense by our friends in Germany had plummeted to 1.3 percent of gross domestic product.

Its airplanes couldn't fly. Its tanks were unusable. Its bloated military bureaucracy appeared to be the only thing the German Government properly maintained.

Were it not for the United States of America, Putin would be in Paris. But we stepped up, and so did others. God bless them.

It wasn't just Germany's armed forces that were unprepared for Putin's invasion. Germany's energy grid relied on Russian natural gas, as we both know, Mr. President. For several decades—this goes back many years—Germany became increasingly reliant on Russia's energy. Germany appeared to believe, foolishly—''naively,'' maybe, is a better word—that its energy trade with Putin would yield friendship. Instead, it yielded dependency.

In this trade, these weren't some cupcakes that friends were exchanging as neighbors. What we are talking about here is the very security and dependability of the fourth largest economy in the history of the world—or, rather, in the current history of the world—and its power grid. Germany placed its power grid in Russia's hands, and Putin knew that. Putin knew that Germany's energy dependency would make it a lot easier for him to march into Ukraine, not harder. Everybody knew it.

Now, with winter coming, I want to give our friends in Germany a lot of credit. Germany did have some urgency in correcting its energy. Germany built LNG terminals to expand its gas reserves. The United States sold energy to our friends in Germany. We were happy to do it.

Germany expanded its renewable energy efforts. It still has not embraced nuclear energy, as I hope it will, but Germany did expand its renewable energy efforts. It has now as a goal reaching 80 percent renewable by 2030, and that is good.

But there is just one problem. Even that effort could leave Germany exposed to reliance on an adversary because, according to a report from the International Energy Agency, China is on track to be responsible for 95 percent of the global production of solar panels. China currently makes up 80 percent of the world's supply. If it is not careful, Germany may realize the new boss is the same as the old boss.

But that same urgency that our friends in Germany showed to address the power grid is nowhere to be found on the military front—nowhere.

In the wake of Putin's rapid invasion, Chancellor Scholz made big promises. He called it a turning point in German history. He said defense spending is going to increase to 2 percent. He said he was going to create an extra military fund valued at $107 billion. He said his military was going to increase by 30,000 women and men by 2025. I regret that Germany's urgency seems to have disappeared.

Military spending has barely nudged above 1.5 percent, still short of the 2

percent commitment that Germany made to NATO.

Germany did purchase 35 American F–35 fighter jets. Do you know when they are going to be ready? 2027.

Experts much smarter than me doubt that Germany will reach its 30,000 promised new troops by the date that it said it would.

The truth is—the cold, hard, unvarnished truth—since the invasion began, Germany has been slow to provide weapons to Ukraine. Friends tell friends the truth. Germany only agreed to send its Leopard 2 tanks after weeks of haggling with President Biden, during which Chancellor Scholz refused to send the tanks—his own tanks—unless the United States also committed to sending its M1 Abrams, after all we had done and will continue to do. Even when offering up so little, the German Chancellor demanded the United States of America do more.

One year ago, as Putin's invasion commenced, Chancellor Scholz vowed to ''invest much more in the security of our country'' and ''guarantee a secure energy supply.''

On the energy front, Putin turned off the gas, and our friends in Germany, demonstrating extraordinary ingenuity, managed to pivot. But on the defense front, Germany has failed to show any serious steps to grow its military. The fourth largest economy in the world has fallen short in its support for Ukraine.

Promises to recruit more troops, spend more money, and reinvigorate its Bundeswehr—they are nice, but those are only words. Germany seems to acknowledge that the barbarians are at the gate. I don't know how it could be any clearer. So why aren't our friends in Germany willing to act? I just don't understand it.

In every way—in every way—Putin poses a larger threat to Germany than he does to the United States. That is saying a lot because Putin poses a threat to the United States. But he is a much larger threat to our friends in Germany. Yet the United States of America, the people of this country, have outspent Germany sevenfold in helping our friends in Ukraine. It is not right.

Mr. President, you and I both know that what you do—not what you say, what you do—is what you believe, and everything else is just cottage cheese.

Talk is cheap, and, in this case, it is literally cheaper than funding the Bundeswehr. But Germany's natural gas was also cheap, and that didn't end very well.

If Germany wants to be a leader in Europe—and, gosh, I hope they do—it needs to lead. That starts with footing the bill for its own defense—we are willing to share that burden, but the American people can't do it alone—and it starts with helping Ukraine.

We have wasted a year. It is long past time for our friends in Germany to step up and meet the defense promises it made when Putin invaded.

I end as I began: Germany and America are dear, dear friends, and friends tell friends the truth.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, across the country, people are experiencing the ramifications and women are feeling the pain of Roe v. Wade being overturned and having lost fundamental rights and freedoms overnight.

In my home State of Wisconsin, women are living with dire, real-life consequences. Two constituents, Erica and Scott, have been trying to get pregnant for years—something many Americans can relate to—and, finally, they were successful.

But 13 weeks into her pregnancy, Erica learned the heartbreaking news that the fetus had a rare condition that caused the skull not to fully develop and the fetus could not survive—an absolute nightmare for expecting parents.

Instead of being able to get immediate care and mourn their loss, Erica and Scott had to figure out the logistics of how to get the healthcare they needed—an abortion—out of State. Let me say that again. Expecting parents learned that they lost the baby they had tried years to conceive, and instead of being able to mourn their loss, they had to navigate a complicated legal and medical landscape and play travel agent.

They had a challenge even to get somebody on the phone and struggled to find an appointment sooner than 2 to 3 weeks out. In the end, Erica was forced to stay pregnant for a week with a fetus that she knew could not survive.

She said:

> Every day I was still pregnant was just an ongoing reminder of our loss.

Sadly, Erica is not alone. One Wisconsin woman bled for more than 10 days from an incomplete miscarriage after emergency room staff said they would not treat her. Another, whose water broke at 17 weeks, was sent home without the abortion care she needed, only to return 2 days later with a life-threatening infection.

All of this is because Wisconsinites have really been sent back to the year 1849. What do I mean by that? In 1849, Wisconsin's 1-year-old legislature banned abortion, making it a felony to provide abortion care in almost all circumstances. At the time of the vote, exactly zero women were present to debate that misguided law, let alone vote for or against it. In fact, it would be 70 years before women even had the right to vote.

Yet, 174 years later, an activist Supreme Court ripped away the constitutional rights of millions of Americans, and, last year, this abortion ban in Wisconsin that predates the Civil War went back into effect, denying hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites the right and freedom to control their bodies.

This archaic law has doctors and medical professionals afraid to administer the lifesaving care they are trained to provide for fear that they might be prosecuted. In fact, lawyers are now deciding what care can and cannot be provided. This law is leaving women with no good options and wondering how, in 2023, they could have found themselves in a position with fewer rights than their mothers and their grandmothers.

Women who have the means and the ability can seek care out of State, sometimes traveling hundreds of miles and often being forced to take off time from work. Some others are being forced to self-administer medication abortions without medical supervision. Those who cannot afford the cost of travel and lodging, childcare, or time off work—a reality for so many Americans, especially women of color and those in rural areas—are being forced to carry pregnancies that they did not choose.

Wisconsinites are not alone, unfortunately. Across the country, 14 other States have already implemented near total bans on abortion, leaving one in three American women without access to a safe and legal abortion.

And anti-choice extremists in States across the country are continuing their crusade. They are continuing to try to take away bodily autonomy by pushing bills that include medically unnecessary restrictions that limit access to abortion care. This all flies in the face of an overwhelming majority of Americans who support women having control over their own bodies and their futures and their families.

That is why I, alongside a record number of my colleagues, am proud to be leading the introduction of the Women's Health Protection Act. This legislation would protect the right to perform and access abortion care, free from arbitrary waiting periods, biased and scientifically inaccurate counseling requirements, mandatory ultrasounds, and absolute bans on abortion earlier in pregnancy.

Our legislation makes sure that the life and health of the mother are paramount, just as it was prior to Roe being struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court and as the American people overwhelmingly support.

The Women's Health Protection Act would return the life-altering decision to have a baby to women and their doctors, without interference from politicians.

For Wisconsinites like Erica, whose rights and freedoms have been stripped away, this bill is not just a political exercise; it is a necessary response to a very real crisis.

Having the freedom to control your healthcare, your body, and your future, free from government interference, is a fundamental right, but in Wisconsin, it is no longer a reality. It is time to pass the Women's Health Protection Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise today, on International Women's Day, in support of the Women's Health Protection Act. I would like to thank Senator BALDWIN for her leadership, from my neighboring State of Wisconsin; Senator BLUMENTHAL for his longtime leadership of this bill; as well as Senator MURRAY and so many others, including yourself, Madam President, for your work on this. I also wanted to mention Erin Chapman, of our Judiciary team, who is here with me, who has worked on this as well, and my colleague TINA SMITH, who is the only Senator to have worked at Planned Parenthood in the U.S. Senate.

Last year, the Supreme Court issued a ruling shredding nearly five decades of precedent protecting a women's right to make her own healthcare decisions, against the wishes of 70 to 80 percent of Americans who believe this is a decision that should be made between a woman, her family, and her doctor.

In this past year, we heard that majority loud and clear in States where access to reproductive healthcare was directly on the ballot. From Montana and Michigan to Kentucky and Kansas, voters turned out to protect a woman's right to choose. It was almost as if those who authored some of these resolutions—like in Kansas—that tried to limit a woman's right forgot that women were going to show up and vote; and in Kansas they did, in record numbers, right in the middle of the prairie.

This doesn't come down to red States or blue States or purple States. As you know, this is about freedom. As voters across the country have made clear, it is unacceptable for women to be left to the mercy of a patchwork of State laws governing their ability to access reproductive care, leaving them, as Senator BALDWIN just pointed out, with fewer rights than their moms and grandmas. That is right; my daughter has fewer rights right now than her mom and her grandma did.

And you think about what has been happening. You think about the heartbreaking story of that 10-year-old girl in Ohio who had to go to Indiana after being a victim of rape and had to go to Indiana just to get her healthcare. I remember when that story came out. People, including news organizations—some of them said it was a hoax, and then they had to go back. They had to go back and apologize to that little girl because it wasn't a hoax. It really happened. And those are the stories we are, sadly, seeing across the country.

So what can we do in the face of this threat to women's health and freedom? All three branches of government have a responsibility to protect people's rights. And if one branch doesn't do its job, then the other branch is supposed to step in. That is why we are introducing this bill. Congress must act to codify the principles of Roe v. Wade into law, and we have the opportunity and the obligation to do that with the Women's Health Protection Act.

We have updated this bill to make clear Congress's intent to restore the rights the Supreme Court took away in the Dobbs decision. The bill also protects a woman's right to travel to another State to receive reproductive healthcare, something that I know you, Madam President, have been leading on during this past year.

All of this comes down to one question, and I will end with this: Who—who—should get to make these personal decisions for women: a woman herself or politicians?

I think the answer is clear. I do not think that women making these decisions want to see our Republican colleagues in the waiting room. That is why I urge every Senator to get behind the majority of Americans who support a woman's right to choose and support the Women's Health Protection Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, I rise today to express my strong support for the Women's Health Protection Act, to restore abortion access to women all across our country.

Now, I first want to address what the Court did in Dobbs, a truly astonishing and tragic decision. What the Court did is, for the first time, take away a constitutional right—in this case, a right that women had enjoyed to make their own decisions about reproductive choice, something that the Court had enshrined in Roe v. Wade.

The whole history of making a more perfect Union in this country has been about expanding that we all are created equal, that we all have rights under the law that will be protected. And the Supreme Court, in the Dobbs decision, reversed that, where the Court played this destructive role of taking away the constitutional right that our women in this country have enjoyed.

The reasoning in that case, referred to by Justice Thomas, suggested that if there wasn't a right that was enumerated very specifically in the Constitution at the time it was written, then that right cannot be protected. It really implies, according to that reasoning, that interracial marriage could be struck down, that contraception should be struck down.

So the decision that the Court made in Dobbs and the reasoning in Dobbs is a real threat to the privacy rights that each and every American enjoys to make decisions about their own autonomy.

We have reacted around the country, with some States stepping up to protect abortion rights and other States enacting significant abortion restrictions. So what has happened with the Court decision in Dobbs is that we have created this immense division. For 50 years, all the women in this country had a right to make their decision and respect the decision that another woman made. That might be to terminate a pregnancy; it might be to take that pregnancy to term. But that was an individual decision that the individual woman had to make herself, in consultation with whomever it is she chose to consult.

It created the opportunity for unity and for acceptance by respecting the individual nature of that decision and the individual right of that person affected to make that decision, not to have a decision made, as Senator KLOBUCHAR mentioned, by politicians.

Now, in Vermont, we voted across the State to constitutionally protect the right of a woman to make her own decision. So we enjoy, in Vermont, on a bipartisan basis—something that was supported by our Republican Governor as well as all our constitutional officers—we have protected the right of a woman to choose.

When I talk to Vermont women, as happy as they are that Vermont stepped up to protect their right to make their decision, they believe, as I do, that any woman's right should not be based on the ZIP Code they live in. It should be universal.

The Women's Health Protection Act makes it the right of every woman in every ZIP Code to make her own personal decision. By the way, that creates unity because it is not telling a person what decision they should make; it is accepting their right to make the decision and respecting the decision they make.

Now, women have been the leaders in this—and rightly so—because the women in this country have been most affected, but men have a very big responsibility to stand up in solidarity with our women, who have a right to protect their own bodily autonomy and to make their decision.

What we have seen with this patchwork of laws is not just confusion but peril and anxiety. It is peril and anxiety for a woman who may run afoul of that State law made by politicians. It has also created enormous uncertainty and anxiety for our providers who have to navigate whether the decision they have to make about providing a service is legal, and whatever decision they make can be challenged by some citizen seeking a bounty to hold that person to account for essentially stepping forward and providing services to a woman that they are entitled to receive.

So the Women's Health Protection Act is absolutely essential—both to protect the individual right of that woman to make her own decision, and it is also essential for us to create unity rather than division on something that is so essential, so personal, and so important.

So, along with my colleagues who are speaking on behalf of this legislation today, I urge all of our colleagues in the Senate to support this bill and protect and preserve the right of women in this country to make the decision that they deem best for them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I join my colleagues this afternoon who come to the floor and speak about the introduction of the Women's Health Protection Act and codifying access to reproductive freedom for women in America.

It has been a little over 8 months since a radical Supreme Court overturned the 50-year-old landmark ruling guaranteeing the right to privacy and the right to obtain an abortion.

I want to take this time to highlight the impacts that this decision has had, not just on our country but even in my State, in the State of Washington.

We in Washington voted in 1991 to codify abortion as a legal right. We did that by a vote of the people. But we still need to worry about this issue because the problems that are causing the erosion of abortion rights in some parts of the United States are even causing hardship in our State.

Abortion clinics in Washington are facing rising caseloads and rising costs. Planned Parenthood in Spokane reported that in January, their clinics saw a 75-percent increase in the number of Idaho patients who were traveling across the line to get abortions. Physicians are rightly concerned that they could be arrested or sued for providing reproductive care to patients from abortion-restrictive States.

Pregnant women have it worst of all. If they go to a reproductive clinic for whatever reason, they can face a gauntlet of protesters. Yes, there are protesters right outside the Planned Parenthood clinic in Spokane. They are trying to set up fake clinics with fake names to divert women into their facilities instead of the actual care that they need.

I will note that it wasn't that long ago—just a few years ago—that the Planned Parenthood clinic was bombed in Whitman County, just south of Spokane. So these issues are a problem.

We even have had healthcare officials tell us that Washingtonians trying to get access to the morning-after pill had to go to four different pharmacies, only to find that it was not available. This drug has been an FDA-approved drug for decades, but all of a sudden, in Washington, it is not available.

Since this ruling was released last summer, 24 States have enacted near-total bans or stringent restrictions on the ability to get an abortion. People are still getting pregnant, and they are coming to Washington to exercise that opportunity, and we want to make sure we have a healthcare system that can deliver.

You know, employers are starting to avoid these abortion-restrictive States. I don't know if someone has thought through this issue. But I recently spoke to the cofounder of a very successful aviation company that just had one of the best demonstrations of the future of aviation. They are building a new facility, and he told me point blank he won't even consider locating in a State that doesn't provide reproductive freedom. He said he couldn't imagine having to ask an employee, who was enjoying that right in the State they live in now, to transfer to a State where that freedom was lost. He said it is absurd.

We know that people are aggressively trying to restrict access to abortion. They are aggressively pursuing even more anti-choice policies, such as restricting the use of the FDA-approved abortion drug even though 5.6 million patients in the United States have used that drug successfully since the year 2000.

It is plain to see that they are not going to stop, and that is why we are introducing this legislation and continuing the fight and awareness for reproductive health for women in the United States of America. We must put an end to these practices by passing the Women's Health Protection Act, which would make this a decision left up to women and their families and allow the future to be decided by them and not the interference of our government.

Madam President, I know you know—because you have been a law enforcement officer in the State you represent—you know the challenges of having individuals' privacies protected. This now is up to us to make sure we are protecting these rights and protecting women's access to reproductive freedom.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I am pleased to be on the floor today with my colleagues expressing my strong support for protecting women's access to basic healthcare and reproductive rights.

Since the Supreme Court's decision in Dobbs, we have seen our worst fears realized. A wave of abortion bans have been passed by Republican State legislatures and signed by Republican Governors. These bans put at risk, as we have heard so eloquently from those who have spoken, the health of women across this country.

We have to look no further than my home State of New Hampshire, where our Republican Governor has ensured that women are banned from accessing an abortion after 24 weeks. Our doctors face jail time for helping women access an abortion. Our family planning providers can't make ends meet because elected officials continually block access to Federal and State funding that is vital to ensuring that vulnerable populations have access to care. That care includes basic reproductive education, breast cancer screenings, and sexually transmitted disease treatment—all of which are at risk because those family planning clinics are in financial difficulty because the Republican legislature and the Republican Governor continue to deny them funding.

Just today, Republican representatives in New Hampshire's State Legislature are considering new abortion bans—bans that are so early that most women don't even know they are pregnant. These bans don't include exceptions even for rape or incest.

The Women's Health Protection Act ensures that a woman's access to care is not unnecessarily restricted by where she lives. I want to thank Senators BALDWIN and BLUMENTHAL, Senator MURRAY, and so many others who have been such strong supporters over the years for their leadership in drafting this legislation.

I know you know, Madam President, and certainly all women know that one of the most important personal decisions a woman faces in her lifetime is if and when to start a family. That decision should be made by a woman with her family, with her medical provider, and with whomever else she wants to include in that decision, but it should not be made for her by her State representative, by her Governor, by a Member of Congress, by her President, and certainly not by any unelected jurist. That decision belongs to a woman and a woman alone. It is time for us to restore that right to women all across this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I am proud but I am also saddened and angry to be here introducing a measure that should never be necessary in the United States of America.

The Women's Health Protection Act will, yes, offer protection to women who need and deserve it, but it is only because of a hideously misguided decision of the U.S. Supreme Court that we are here today.

When I first introduced this measure 10 years ago, the thought of overruling Roe v. Wade was unimaginable. It was a figment of fear dismissed by realistic scholars and advocates. It was unthinkable. And here we are.

The U.S. Supreme Court has handed down a death sentence to women across America. It has overturned 50 years of precedent, which I know well because I was a law clerk to the U.S. Supreme Court Justice who wrote that opinion in the year afterward.

We thought then—and so did most people in America—we have dealt with this issue, we have disposed of it, and it is done in terms of juris prudence. But this measure is now necessary to protect the rights of all people to seek the healthcare they need and deserve.

I will tell you why I believe this measure should be passed. I trust women. I trust women to make decisions about their own future. I trust women more than I do elected officials or judges or government bureaucrats to decide what is right for them individually.

This measure is necessary to stop all of the bans, prohibitions, and medically unnecessary restrictions that

have no purpose except to cut off care and stigmatize women seeking healthcare services and the dedicated healthcare providers who serve them.

Now, I have a message to the men of America. This fight is yours, too. This isn't a women's issue. This is an American issue. It is a family issue. And if you think you are spared the conscience and conviction that should require you to stand up and speak out, you are wrong. This issue is yours, too.

We have seen horror stories just in the month since Dobbs. You heard one from my colleague Senator BALDWIN. I have a similar one—Amanda Zurawski in Texas, who sadly learned that her baby would not survive, but doctors would not treat her as she might have done in other States. They told her to go home. She almost died of sepsis. They brought her back to the hospital and rushed her to intensive care.

Her husband Josh learned that, as a result, they might never have children. He said:

> Amanda almost died. That's not pro-life. Amanda will have challenges having more kids. That is not pro-life. He called it ''barbaric.'' That is the Texas law—barbaric, inhuman.

Protecting access to abortion through the Women's Health Protection Act would not only help people like Amanda—women—it would help families. It would help countless people who simply choose access to abortion care because it is right for them and for their families, for other children who are already part of those families. A woman simply should not be forced to carry a pregnancy to term because some government bureaucrat decides she should.

There is a kind of dirty little secret here, and that is that Black, Latina, indigenous, and other people of color have always faced inexcusable inequities in healthcare access and outcomes due to longstanding systemic discrimination and racism and oppression. The result of it is the practical effect of these abortion restrictions and needless requirements fall disproportionately on them and communities of color.

This point is so important because it goes to the heart of the Women's Health Protection Act. At its core, this bill is about justice. It is about reproductive justice. It was a term that was conceptualized in 1994 by a group of Black women who rightfully saw a national need to highlight and focus on women, families, and communities. Abortion bans and restrictions continue to force women in communities of color who don't wish to carry and deny them the care they need and deserve in moments when their healthcare is at risk.

This bill is critical for communities that are disproportionately harmed by the bans and medically unnecessary restrictions that the Women's Health Protection Act would prohibit. It supports those who face the greatest barriers to care.

I want to, finally, thank in this fight some of the healthcare providers, advocates, lawyers, and staff who have been on the frontline in these past 10 years—people like Jackie Blank, Sara Outterson, and Liz Wagner of the Center for Reproductive Rights; Monica Edwards at URGE; Dr. Jamila Perritt at Physicians for Reproductive Choice; Amy Williams Navarro at NARAL; Karen Stone and Nina Serrianne at Planned Parenthood; Leila Abolfazli at the National Women's Law Center; and so many across the country, including, in Connecticut, Amanda Skinner and Gretchen Raffa at Planned Parenthood, and Liz Gustafson at NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut.

Make no mistake, this fight will continue. The Women's Health Protection Act will pass. It may not be in the next couple of weeks or couple of months—maybe not even in this session—but it will pass because the conscience of America demands it. That is why referenda have won across the country on this issue. That is why voters went to the polls and showed with their feet where they stand. And that is why we need to fight rulings from the courts, with hard-right Republican judges who have declared a war on women.

As soon as next week, a judge in Texas may rule that mifepristone, the most common form of abortion care in this country, is illegal despite 20 years of safe, effective use with approval of the FDA of that drug. A nationwide ban will affect women in Connecticut if he does it.

We have seen also that Walgreens will not sell or make available mifepristone in 21 States whose State attorneys general have threatened to sue Walgreens if it makes that drug available. They have succumbed to bullying. They said to those attorneys general: OK, women lose; you win.

I urge consumers to vote with their feet and do their business elsewhere and show where they stand.

I am proud to be here with my colleagues to continue this fight for the Women's Health Protection Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, I want to thank Senators Murray, Baldwin, Blumenthal, and so many of the others who have spoken on this issue. It is so vital to our country, to the women of our country, and to all of us in this country.

For nearly 50 years, Roe v. Wade safeguarded Americans' fundamental right to choose. From the moment Roe was decided in 1973, the most extreme elements of the Republican Party made it their mission to reverse Roe and eliminate the freedom of choice.

Last summer, tragically, that doomsday scenario became true when the MAGA Supreme Court overturned Roe and declared that there was no constitutional right to access abortion. Eight months later, the consequences of the Court's decision have been severe. One in three women has lost abortion access, and over 17 million individuals can no longer access the full range of reproductive care.

The MAGA Supreme Court's decision means our children will grow up in a world where they have fewer liberties than previous generations.

Today, as I mentioned, Senators Baldwin and Blumenthal, along with many others of us, are reintroducing a salve to this terrible injustice: the Women's Health Protection Act.

This legislation only dropped this morning, but Senate Democrats already have a record number of cosponsors, 49 in total. Let me say that again. The legislation only dropped this morning, but Senate Democrats already have a record number of cosponsors, 49 in total. This is the most united Senate Democrats have ever been on pro-choice legislation, while Republicans remain hell-bent on eliminating women's choice.

After Americans rejected MAGA Republicans' anti-choice agenda last fall, you would think they would have gotten the message, but they have not. Today, 14 States have enacted near-total abortion bans. Florida Republicans, meanwhile, introduced a bill this week to ban abortions after just 6 weeks, before many women even know they are pregnant.

How can you say the Florida bill is anything but cruel and inhumane?

And for those who think Republicans' abortion hostility is about States' rights, nearly every Republican in the Senate sponsored and voted in favor of a nationwide abortion ban. That is what this is all about. Republicans, deep down, want to ban abortions for everyone, everywhere.

As bad as all this is, the worst injustice is that those who suffer most are often low-income Americans, rural Americans, people of color, LGBTQ Americans, particularly the trans community, and especially Black Americans. In fact, research shows that States with the harshest abortion bans have some of the highest rates of Black maternal death, as much as 38 percent higher in States with abortion restrictions. There is only one word to describe this: shameful. It is a stain, a blot, a blemish on America's soil.

So passing the Women's Health Protection Act is the right thing to do for our country.

I want to thank all of the Senators who helped lead this bill—the women Members of our leadership and all of our women Senators and so many others, including Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and many more who worked so hard on this legislation. I will work with them to push this bill forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am delighted to follow Leader SCHUMER, for whom this has been such an important issue. I am confident that we will gather our caucus together to be as effective as we can.

Today is International Women's Day, but this year it is shadowed by the freedom that women have lost in America to make their own choices and to shape their own lives. A radical Supreme Court captured by deep-pocketed special interests has shredded this constitutional right. It is a whole separate story how that happened, how big dark money interests went into back rooms at the Federalist Society, handpicked Supreme Court Justices, put them on the Court, spent millions and millions of dollars orchestrating all of that and putting TV ads on behind them—all run through phony front groups—and now instruct them what to do through a whole bunch of other phony front groups, also dark money funded, that go in as amici curiae and present these arguments in orchestrated flotillas to the Court—a separate issue but a very unfortunate situation behind this horrible decision.

What I want to talk about is how hurtful and harmful this is when things go wrong. Everybody hopes and prays that their pregnancy will be successful and there will be a healthy birth. But it is not uncommon in a pregnancy for things to go wrong. And when things go wrong, these extreme abortion restrictions put the doctors and the patient into impossible and wrong situations.

We hear about doctors who have postponed care until a patient's health or pregnancy complication had deteriorated so much that their life was in actual immediate danger.

You could have predicted it. You could have taken the prudent course, but the shadow of these criminal penalties—this assault on women's freedom—has made doctors postpone that decision, and it does, in fact, put patients' lives at risk.

There are committees that have been set up to determine whether a doctor making a decision about a woman's care should be allowed to proceed. You have to go through the hospital committee because of the risk of liability. Sometimes these things happen fast and sometimes people feel very privately about them. And the idea that this has to go to a committee is both a cause for delay and a huge lack of privacy for the women and the family involved.

So in Texas, oncologists have said they wait for pregnant women with cancer to get sicker before they treat them. Imagine being on the receiving end of that.

Some doctors have reported that they are unable to get other professionals to come and assist them with procedures because the other professionals are frightened of liability. And that, too, fouls up the ability of the patient to get care—even the forensic nurses who care for sexual assault victims.

So you are battered and you are raped, and the police respond and the EMTs respond, and they take you to the emergency room. There are forensic nurses who provide specified care for sexual assault victims. They do the rape kit. They know how to deal with patients who are still very traumatized. And they usually also provide morning after contraception, right?

The woman has been raped. Why would you not do that?

Now, they are anxious about doing that for fear that it will be considered an abortion drug.

That woman who has been through that experience deserves far better than to have politics intrude into her care on that terrible night. It is not just me saying this. An emergency physician in Houston who was the chair of the board of the American College of Emergency Physicians said:

> We're no longer basing our judgment on the clinical needs of the woman, we're basing it on what we understand the legal situation to be.

The President of the American Medical Association says:

> This is happening every day, all the time in these [freedom-burdened] states.

He says that ''some others have said that these are incredibly rare situations.'' He says: No, that is not true. ''This is happening every day, all the time in these states.''

I had a grim meeting with a group of OB–GYN doctors who practice in Rhode Island who are hearing from colleagues in States that have been burdened by this freedom being removed from women in those States, that their professional colleagues, fellow doctors, are beside themselves at the way this has interfered in their practice, particularly at those most dangerous time, when a pregnancy is in trouble and the woman needs the full attention of the doctor and the care that is determined based on her medical needs, not on something that some Republican legislature hobbled together.

So it is really important for us to get together and pass the Women's Health Protection Act. I want to thank all those who have shown so much leadership getting us to this day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Madam President, I rise today to join Senator BALDWIN and Senator BLUMENTHAL and all of my colleagues who are speaking in support of the Women's Health Protection Act. And I want to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his eloquence just now in describing the real life and death consequences of the Dobbs decision.

I want to thank advocates from Planned Parenthood, NARAL, and other organizations who have been tirelessly pushing for this legislation and standing up and speaking out for reproductive freedom. The grave threat to the health and freedom of women all across our country makes clear that it is more important than ever for Senators, regardless of political parties, to come together and support this critical legislation. Nothing less than the freedom of American women and the future of our democracy itself depends on us doing so.

For more than two centuries, each successive generation of Americans has enjoyed more freedoms than the last. By extending the promise of our democracy to all Americans, our country has only become stronger. But the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade brought that story of progress to an abrupt halt, taking away a fundamental freedom from millions of women—a freedom that most have known for their entire lives.

Now, when women across the country raised the alarm following the Supreme Court's decision, there were those who suggested that we were overreacting. They suggested that life for most women would continue as it did before. Well, it has become very, very clear that those who espoused that view were wrong.

Since the Supreme Court's decision, legislatures across the country have passed abortion bans into law. Just last week, Wyoming's Legislature passed a new law which will ban abortion in all trimesters, in nearly all cases, and would threaten doctors who perform abortions with jail time. Other States have imposed even harsher criminal penalties. This has had a chilling effect on women's healthcare providers and countless women can no longer access reproductive care that they need.

Partisan politicians who believe women are incapable of making their own critical healthcare decisions have made clear that their ultimate goal is to ban abortion in all 50 States. In statehouses and here in Washington, these partisan politicians have demonstrated that they are not only committed to dismantling women's healthcare but that they do not believe that women have the capacity or conscience to make their own personal decisions.

Like many of you, in the last 10 months, I have heard from women at rallies, in letters, and in quiet conversations who are fearful of these attacks on reproductive freedom. The question before this Senate is whether or not we believe that we have an obligation to listen to their voices, whether or not our government should be accountable to the people, including women. What is at stake is the principle that American women are free and equal citizens in our democracy and that they should be able to chart their own futures. That is why I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting the Women's Health Protection Act, which would once again protect a woman's fundamental freedom in every part of the country.

We can't stand idly by as women across America have become second-class citizens. We should stand united in the belief that our daughters deserve the same freedoms as everyone else.

If we want to ensure that our country remains a place where the promise of our democracy belongs to all, where our daughters are free to make their own choices and reach their fullest potential, where we remain a government

by, of, and for the people, then we must listen to American women and support the Women's Health Protection Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I rise with my colleagues today to continue to fight for women in every part of our country to once again be able to make their own healthcare decisions because ever since Republicans succeeded in their decades-long effort to overturn Roe v. Wade and drag our country back a half a century and rip away the right to abortion for women across the country, we have heard one horror story after another: women left suffering, waiting for the care that they need; doctors worried that they could face jail time for doing what is best for their patients; abortion providers who are overwhelmed by patients who are having to wait weeks for limited appointments and travel hundreds of miles for care.

Republicans have ushered in a crisis. It is a nightmare for women, for patients, and for doctors alike. And make no mistake, it is a choice extreme Republicans have made.

They fought for decades to overturn Roe. They passed the dangerous abortion bans that are causing this pain for women and families, and they are choosing to continue their nonstop efforts to strip women of control over their own bodies. Every day, extreme Republican politicians come out with some new awful idea to make women's lives worse.

Here in Congress, Senate Republicans introduced a national abortion ban last year. This Congress, one of the first bills the Republican House voted on was a Federal abortion ban. In just the few months since Roe was overturned, extreme abortion bans have gone into effect in 14 of our States, stripping over 20 million women of reproductive age of the ability to get abortion care in their own State.

And, by the way, transgender and nonbinary patients who already face so many challenges getting the healthcare they need in this country are being harmed by these bans as well. We are talking about truly cruel bans that set bounties for information about anyone who gets an abortion or helps provide one and bans that even lack exceptions for rape or incest or the life and well-being of the mom.

Republican bans have tripled the average travel time for patients to get the abortion care they need since Roe was overturned. And they have been especially challenging for communities that already face barriers for the care they need: patients with tight budgets who cannot afford to pay for travel and lodging hundreds of miles away from where they live; Black women who already suffer much higher maternal mortality rates; patients in rural and Tribal areas who aren't close to providers to begin with; and patients with disabilities, to just name a few.

Now they are going further, seeking to pass new bans to try to get around State court rulings and laws to get around the fact that their own constituents backed the right to abortion in statewide votes just last year. When extreme Republicans can't convince the American people to get on board with their extreme agenda, they have shown that they will try to force it on women across the country with threats and intimidation and outrageous lawsuits.

Extreme Republican attorneys general, for example, are suing the Biden administration because they told pharmacists they can't discriminate against pregnant patients and because they made it clear when a woman's life is at stake, doctors are required to provide lifesaving abortion care. And, of course, there is the extreme Republican lawsuit that seeks to take away an important abortion medication for patients nationwide—nationwide—effectively creating a nationwide ban on the most common way patients get an abortion. Twenty-two Republican attorneys general and, by the way, 67 Republicans right here in Congress have filed a brief supporting that lawsuit, supporting overriding experts at FDA to take a safe, effective abortion medication away from women nationwide, to take it away from my constituents in Washington State.

People across the country have already made it crystal clear they will not stand for Republicans' extreme agenda. In fact, last November, abortion rights won in every single place they were on the ballot—every single place they were on the ballot.

Democrats won't stand for Republican attacks either. We are committed right here to being a firewall in the Senate against the House Republicans' extreme attacks on abortion. We refuse to accept a future where our daughters and granddaughters have fewer rights than we did.

We refuse to accept that any patient's right to control their own body depends on a State that they live in or the money in their bank account. That is why today Democrats are reintroducing the Women's Health Protection Act because the Dobbs decision was not the beginning of this fight, and it was not the end—far from it. We have to restore Roe for women in every corner of our country, and that is exactly what this bill does. It follows the Constitution and nearly half a century of precedent and gives patients the right to get an abortion and doctors the right to provide that care no matter where they are in America.

Some Republicans want us to just get used to women being forced to stay pregnant, no matter their circumstance, no matter what it means for their health or their family or their hope for the future. Some Republicans are hoping that this will all become normal.

Well, I have got news for them. Never, never will that happen. We will not be quiet. We will not give up. We are going to keep coming back as many times as it takes to end this chaos and return control of women's bodies to women. I promise, every single time we have to come back to this floor to lay bare the horrors of these extreme abortion bans they are inflicting on women and patients in this country, we will get louder.

So I urge all my Republican colleagues, start listening to the American people, start acknowledging the pain that these abortion bans are causing. Let's pass this critical bill to make things right.

I can't say that I expect them to listen to us, but I can guarantee you, if they don't, we will be back.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I rise in strong support of the Women's Health Protection Act.

This legislation needs to be a centerpiece in the battle to defend privacy rights in America. This is the third week I have stood on the Senate floor to talk about this extraordinary assault on privacy and bodily independence that is taking place in America, and it started, of course, with the horrendous Dobbs decision.

When that decision came down, Republicans all over America said that this was going to be a matter of State's rights. They weren't telling the truth to the American people.

Shortly after the decision, there was a full-court press by Republicans at the local level, State level, and, yes, the national level to claw back the rights of women and deny access to reproductive care. Months after the Dobbs decision, a bill to enact a 6-week abortion ban, to ban abortion before most women even know they are pregnant, was introduced in this body.

That was a national ban—every single State—every single State. So much for State's rights.

Anti-abortion activists are not only working Senate Republicans, they are working the court system as well. I call it court washing. It goes way beyond the issue—and I know we have got an expert lawyer in the Chair. It goes way beyond so-called judge shopping that everybody has heard about in the past. It is not simply a matter of looking at a judge's long record of soundly reasoned opinions and hoping for an outcome.

Republicans—particularly talking about this Texas case, this one in Amarillo, TX. Republicans picked him because he was a lifelong rightwing activist who was planted in a district court to deliver the decision they wanted, the verdict that they have been scheming to deliver. We are talking about banning mifepristone nationwide, a drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration. This is something I care about deeply because I held the first congressional hearing on the role of the FDA, particularly with

mifepristone. It has been safe and effective, and it has been the law of the land for years and years. If you throw that out, you take away women's independence, and the government puts itself front and center in the exam room and in the private decisions about whether and when to start a family.

As women grapple with restrictive State laws that take away their right to privacy and threaten their health, they are also facing a crisis of digital privacy and—what I call—the threat of uterus surveillance.

We have long been concerned about location data leaching from phone apps and how ripe for abuse it is. In States where extremists have restricted or banned abortion, the whole issue of women having their personal data weaponized against them is now front and center. Shady data brokers have already tracked women to and from Planned Parenthood health centers and have sold their information, basically, to anybody who has got a credit card. In States where abortion is illegal, anything women say or read online can be used against them. Researching birth control online, updating a period tracking app, or even carrying a phone into a doctor's office may become weaponized against you. It could be evidence for the prosecution—the most personal and private data about women's bodies and their health. Just imagine how much worse it could get if more States pass draconian laws or Republicans get their nationwide ban.

That is why we are here to pass this legislation: to ensure that every woman in every State is in a position to make private medical decisions, where that woman is in the driver's seat with respect to her privacy and her independence. To do otherwise is going to keep healthcare providers from doing their jobs. To do otherwise is going to mean more delaying care for women and more bullying pharmacies out of providing medications that are completely legal and FDA-approved.

These providers ought to be able to do their jobs based on science. That is what the FDA decision was all about. It wasn't a political decision. It wasn't made here on the floor of the U.S. Senate and having people go back and forth about their opinions. It was an FDA decision based on science. These policies are common sense, and they are popular.

I am going to close with just a couple of quick points.

Once women lose the ability to make private healthcare choices about their reproductive healthcare, I think we ought to make sure everybody understands that there will be women who will die.

I think we need to understand that what this is about is whether freedom is going to mean the same thing for women as it does for men. Women do not have the same privacy rights right now. They don't have the same freedom. If women are subjected to uterus surveillance, they don't have true freedom. If Republican politicians dictate what goes on in an exam room, they don't have true freedom. If women can't control their own bodies and make their own decisions about when and whether to get pregnant, they don't have true freedom. If women are forced to give birth—and in some cases, Republicans want to force women to give birth even after cases of rape and incest—those women do not have true freedom.

So if there is one word—one word—that this debate is all about for women as to what is at stake, that one word is ''freedom,'' and our legislation ensures they will have it. I urge colleagues to support it.

I yield the floor.

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

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise today, on International Women's Day, to urge my Republican colleagues to join us in protecting our individual rights and freedoms and to support the Women's Health Protection Act.

You have heard from a lot of us on the floor today, and we are going to repeat certain things, but these are things that bear repeating because this issue of abortion is all about who gets to decide. Is it the individual or a bunch of politicians? You can see where I am coming from. When the rightwing, ideologically driven Supreme Court overturned nearly 50 years of precedent of abolishing an individual's right to get an abortion, that was just the beginning. The Dobbs decision opened the doors for extremist Republicans who have made clear they will stop at nothing to control our bodies.

It hasn't even been a year since the Supreme Court upended our right to bodily autonomy, and, already, abortion is entirely banned in 12 States, meaning more than 20 percent of the U.S. population lives in States where abortion is illegal. There are 21 States that have enacted 36 bills to restrict or ban abortion; and in 12 States, constitutional amendments have been proposed to limit abortion access. Just this week, Florida Republicans filed a 6-week abortion ban—6 weeks—which is before many women are even aware they are pregnant.

After the Dobbs decision, the Republicans claimed abortion would be dealt with in the States as States' rights. This is what we in Hawaii would call a shibai argument. Clearly, abortion has never been about States' rights. So their unrelenting efforts to limit bodily autonomy is about taking away the very individual rights and freedoms that Republicans claim to care so much about.

Beyond State legislatures, Republicans in the Senate have introduced a nationwide abortion ban. Any day now, we are waiting for one extremist, Trump-appointed Federal judge in Texas to decide whether to institute a nationwide ban on mifepristone, which is the safe and effective medication that Americans have relied on for more than 20 years—for more than two decades—and that accounts for more than half of the abortions in our country.

Regardless of this decision in Texas, after threats from GOP Attorneys General from 20—20—conservative States, Walgreens stated they would no longer dispense medication abortion pills in numerous States, including in States where medical abortion remains legal, although they now appear to be walking that back after provoking a public outcry. What is next—banning contraception? There are even Republican State lawmakers who are introducing bills to allow the death penalty—the death penalty—for women who have abortions.

There is no end to what extremist Republicans will do to control our bodies. Whether you live in States like Hawaii, California, or New York, or in States where Republican legislatures have already passed laws, our freedom is at risk. Our bodily autonomy is at risk. For pregnant people across the country, that means their health, and even their lives, are at stake.

Pregnancies carry many risks, and the United States already has the highest maternal mortality rate of any developed country. It is unbelievable that a country like the United States has the highest maternal mortality rate in the world. These risks are even greater for women of color, women with disabilities, and transgender and gender nonconforming individuals. People will die without access to safe, legal abortions. A recent study found, if Republicans institute a nationwide abortion ban, maternal deaths will rise by 24 percent across the country.

So, today, I urge my colleagues to stop pandering to the political extremism in our country and join us in passing the Women's Health Protection Act to codify the right to an abortion in Federal law and protect all people across the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am really proud to join today with my colleagues to speak on behalf of American women of the fundamental rights of all pregnant persons and our freedom to make our own healthcare decisions.

Thanks to a radically conservative Supreme Court, reproductive freedom is no longer a constitutional right in the United States for any American. Roe v. Wade protected our freedoms for 50 years, until it didn't, and now today's young women have fewer freedoms than their mothers and their grandmothers ever did. And we are furious. Do you want to know how furious?

In Michigan, we turned our anger into action. In November, we had the largest voter turnout for a midterm election ever. One of the measures on the ballot enshrined the right to reproductive freedom in our State's constitution. It passed by a strong 13-point

margin, because Michiganders understand that health decisions should be made by individual people, not by judges and not by politicians.

Unfortunately, a lot of folks didn't get the message. Republicans in Congress have pushed for a nationwide abortion ban. State legislatures across the country are making it harder and harder for people in their States to receive reproductive care. There are 24 States that have already banned abortion or probably will soon, and any day now, a Federal judge—one man in Texas—let me repeat that. One man in Texas is expected to hand down a ruling that could ban a medication that has been used to safely end pregnancies for 23 years. That decision would prevent patients from getting the healthcare they need even in States where abortion is legal.

That is why it is so incredibly important that we pass a law that says, once and for all, that women in America have the freedom to make our own healthcare decisions. That is just what the Women's Health Protection Act will do, and I am very proud to join my colleagues in introducing this bill.

It will protect all Americans from State laws that limit access to abortion services. Right now, your freedom to make your own healthcare decisions depends on the ZIP code you happen to live in, and that is simply wrong. Women in Michigan and Mississippi and Montana all deserve to make decisions about our own healthcare, our own lives—not extreme Republican lawmakers, not extreme members of the Supreme Court, not one extreme judge in Texas. It is critical that we pass the Women's Health Protection Act now. Our freedom depends on it.

Let's be clear. We will continue to fight until our reproductive freedom as Americans is restored.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I have had the opportunity now to listen to all of my colleagues as they rightfully come to the floor here to, really, talk about the erosion of women's rights in this country by the far-right extreme.

I have to thank Senators BALDWIN and BLUMENTHAL and so many of my colleagues—Senator MURRAY and so many—who have been on the forefront of protecting women's rights and freedoms.

Let's not mistake this. This is about women's freedom. That is what this is about. It has been less than a year since the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, and it has been a dark time for women in America since then, because, by dismissing 50 years of precedent that protected women's freedom, the Supreme Court emboldened far-right Republicans to go after women's rights in increasingly extreme ways. One of the first things some of these Republican leaders did in Congress after the Dobbs decision was to work on legislation to ban abortion nationwide. Until they can pass that legislation denying States their ability to keep abortion legal, they will continue their attacks on reproductive freedoms and make it as difficult as possible for women to access essential reproductive healthcare.

In Texas, Arizona, Wisconsin, and other States with strict abortion bans, doctors who provide women with reproductive care could be prosecuted, heavily fined, or imprisoned—and in some cases, all three. These States have threatened to revoke providers' medical licenses, putting their politics over what is best for patient health.

For women, confusion and fear over abortion bans have led to denied access to necessary and potentially lifesaving reproductive care. Imagine the distress, the burden these women and their families carry. Pregnancy decisions are deeply personal. It is not a legal debate up for discussion in the courts.

We must do everything we can to ensure that women have the tools they need so they can decide what is best for their lives, for their health, and for their families.

Since the Court overturned Roe, women have begun traveling, as you have heard today, to pro-choice States like Nevada for the abortion care they need, but that is not enough because anti-choice policymakers are working on ways to take that freedom away. States' rights aren't enough.

Their latest attack on women's rights is through a lawsuit to restrict nationwide access to the abortion pill, even for women in States where medication abortion is one of the few legal options left.

Extremist Republicans' war on reproductive freedom didn't stop with overturning Roe, it didn't stop with punishing doctors, and it won't stop with going after medication abortion.

Let's get one thing clear: For the far right, this is about controlling women.

I trust women, and so do a majority of Americans, including Nevadans. Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe women should have the right to make their own choices about their reproductive care, and I stand with them. That is why I am proud to join my colleagues today to reintroduce the Women's Health Protection Act.

As you have heard, this bill defends women against the extreme politicians who are working to strip away those rights, guaranteeing that women can seek the vital reproductive care they need without having to answer to the government.

Under this bill, women would see an end to abortion bans and burdensome restrictions to accessing abortion. Women would be able to get the healthcare they need without being subjected to medically unnecessary ultrasounds, excessive waiting periods, and other obstacles that far-right politicians have put in their path. Women and their families would be able to plan for their futures on their own terms.

The alternative is to watch a minority of extremists continue to strip away women's rights across the country. We must protect a woman's right to choose and pass the Women's Health Protection Act.

I will say one final thing, and I would hope my colleagues on the other side would listen to this. We have heard conversations about the impact that this issue has had on this past election cycle. I am proof. I am back here because not just Democrats but Republicans and Independents, nonpartisans in my State, care about this issue. They care about the rights of women and their freedom to make this decision, and a majority of Americans do as well.

That is why it is important for all of my colleagues—I don't care what aisle you sit in; I don't care what party you are—or you are not a party; the goal here is, when we come to this Congress, when we stand here together and we try to solve the problems that matter to this country, we are listening to the American people, and we are not letting a minority determine, and we are not about taking away the freedoms and rights of people in this country, including women, and turning them into second-class citizens. That is not who we are.

I invite my colleagues at all times—I don't care where you are, what party you stand with, where you are—to stand with women in this country. This is such an important issue. Pay attention to the American public and what is at stake here. I ask you to support us with the Women's Health Protection Act.

I yield the floor.

H.J. RES. 26

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, the joint resolution we are considering tramples on the right of DC citizens to manage their own affairs, plain and simple. In fact, it is so intrusive, it provides a compelling argument for DC statehood.

DC statehood is long overdue. There is no justification for the denial of rights and representation for the 700,000 citizens of the District of Columbia. They deserve to have their voices heard in our democracy; they deserve true self-governance and the right to have a say in the policies that will affect their lives.

Our Nation's Capital is home to more than 700,000 fellow Americans who, despite our Nation's founding mantra—''no taxation without representation''—pay their share of taxes without full voting representation in either Chamber of Congress. In fact, despite paying more in Federal taxes per capita than citizens of any of the 50 States, DC residents have no say in how those taxes are actually spent.

This isn't a Republican or Democratic issue; it is an American issue because the lack of fair representation for DC residents is clearly inconsistent with the values on which this country was founded. It is therefore incumbent upon all of us who enjoy the right and

the privilege of full voting rights and representation to take up the cause of our fellow citizens in the District of Columbia.

We must use our voices to call out this historic injustice and right this wrong.

DC has more residents than two States, Wyoming and Vermont. It has a population comparable to Alaska and Delaware. DC pays more in Federal taxes than 23 States. Yet it has no representation here in the Senate. Along with my colleagues who make up the informal ''National Capital Area'' delegation, I have worked over the years to advance the District's interests given its proximity to the two States and significant cross-border commuting and business activity.

Statehood for DC is not about taking away the power and representation of residents of other States. This is not and should never be interpreted as a zero-sum game. Instead, what we have here is a situation that clearly conflicts with our democratic ideals.

The District includes people of all backgrounds. However unique the District might be, its residents are hard-working people who do not differ from other Americans in their basic entitlement to representation. Taxation without representation is a compelling argument for statehood. It should be enough to move Congress to act. Instead, we are regressing here.

Rubbing salt into the wound of this intrusion is the fact that proponents of the joint resolution deliberately mischaracterize what the Criminal Code revision does, or fails to do. The Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022—the RCCA—comprehensively revises DC's Criminal Code, which had not been updated since its creation in 1901. We may agree or disagree with some of its provisions, but it is a matter that should be left to the elected officials of the District.

Congress has passed joint resolutions disapproving DC legislation on three occasions; the last time occurred in 1991. A resolution of disapproval has not received a floor vote in either Chamber since 2015.

In recent years, it appears that our friends across the aisle have introduced joint resolutions of disapproval to undermine DC self-governance as a means for advancing partisan policy narratives around controversial topics such as crime, COVID–19 vaccinations, reproductive health, and harm reduction programs such as needle exchange.

Although DC Mayor Muriel Bowser vetoed the council's Criminal Code revision—the Council voted 12–1 to override the veto—she also indicated her staunch opposition to Congress intervening in the city's affairs. I agree with Mayor Bowser.

The District's Attorney General, Brian L. Schwalb, sent a letter to the Senate on February 23, 2023, in which he eloquently stated:

> Ironically, many who have expressed support for overriding these two D.C. local laws have long espoused the virtues of freedom from federal government interference and respect for states' rights . . . I am well aware of the Constitutional power granted to Congress in Article I, Section 8, Clause 17. However, merely because Congress has the power to act does not mean that it should exercise that power. Particularly given Congress' stated intent when passing the Home Rule Act to empower the District ''to the greatest extent possible'' with the responsibility of ''legislating upon essentially local District matters,'' I urge the Senate to reject calls for disapproval of D.C. local laws, and instead, to stand up for democratic values, stand against disenfranchisement, and stand with the residents of our Nation's capital.

I agree with Attorney General Schwalb. I deeply regret that Congress is intervening in the affairs of people who have no representation, especially here in the Senate, and I urge my colleagues to defeat this misguided measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, the Senate will soon take up my resolution to nullify the Revised Criminal Code Act recently passed by the DC Council—a measure that becomes more central every day as the harrowing reports of lawlessness and deadly violence in our Nation's Capital steadily accumulate.

Carjackings in DC have increased for 5 consecutive years and have more than tripled in the past 3 years. For the first time in 20 years, DC has experienced back-to-back years with more than 200 homicides. Car thefts are up 111 percent this year. It has gotten so bad that the city recently announced that it is giving away free steering-wheel locks to owners of frequently stolen cars here in the District. Instead, how about just enacting laws that stop crime in the first place?

Sadly, violent crime has become an epidemic in our Nation's Capital, where our constituents, Americans from across the country, and people from around the world come to live, come to work, and come to visit, from schoolchildren to World War II veterans. Yet, unbelievably, despite escalating crime and palpable unease from all who visit or live in DC, the DC Council recently passed legislation to reduce penalties and eliminate minimum sentences for violent criminal offenses, including carjackings, robberies, and even homicides.

DC's crime bill also dramatically expands jury trials in misdemeanor cases, which may sound good to a law school classroom but in practice will overwhelm the system and force dropped charges and crippling delays in countless criminal cases integral to preserving order and public safety. The DC crime bill reduces penalties on violent crime in the midst of a violent crime wave. It is the opposite of good policy and will make the crime wave even worse. It sends the wrong message—that DC is not serious about fighting crime.

DC's own police chief recently concluded that one of the main reasons for rising crime in the District, especially among youth, is the perception among criminals that they will suffer no consequence. Yet the council proposes to reduce the consequences even further.

Make no mistake, this DC crime bill will deliver the wrong results. Under these soft-on-crime policies, public safety will deteriorate further.

This is common sense to most people. It should be no surprise, then, that Mayor Bowser recently vetoed the DC crime bill just this January. She said:

> This bill does not make us safer.

I couldn't agree more.

Yet, putting woke ideology over public safety, the DC Council overrode the Mayor's veto. That is why I am bringing forth this resolution to block the DC crime bill.

Washington is a Federal district, and the Constitution puts Congress in charge of governing it. This makes sense. Countless Americans from all over the country visit our Nation's Capital each week to meet with their Federal representatives and to enjoy our national history. Congress has a constitutional obligation to make sure these visitors can walk down the sidewalk or enjoy a meal without fear of becoming victims.

This resolution passed with significant bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, and I am confident that an even larger bipartisan majority of this body will support it tonight. Numerous law enforcement groups, including the DC Police Union, are supportive. Polling shows that 72 percent of DC residents believe that the DC crime bill sends the wrong message.

A few weeks ago, the White House put out a statement of policy opposing my resolution—based on the President's support for DC Statehood, I presume—but last week, the President indicated he would, in fact, support my resolution. I am glad the President has recognized that Congress has a legitimate, constitutional role in reviewing and in rejecting DC's harmful legislation.

To this point, given the now-widespread recognition that this is a bad bill, imagine if Congress did not have the authority under the Constitution and the DC Home Rule Act to block DC laws. This dangerous bill would become law.

Apparently seeing the writing on the wall this week, the chairman of the DC Council cooked up a desperate and legally baseless ploy to ''un-submit'' the bill to Congress in an attempt to avoid a vote of disapproval. But the DC Home Rule Act is clear: There is no valid action of this nature. No matter how hard they try, the council cannot avoid accountability for passing this disastrous, dangerous, soft-on-crime bill.

Violent crime has become an epidemic in America. This resolution is a referendum on it. Do you want to decrease jail time for violent criminals? Do you want to prioritize the interests of law-abiding citizens or the interests of criminals? This will be one of the

only opportunities during this Congress for this body to send a broad message on violent crime—a message that may impact the safety and security of Americans throughout our Nation.

I appreciate that many of my colleagues have cosponsored or indicated their support for this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it tonight.

Stopping violent crime should not be a Republican or Democrat objective; it should be a commonsense one. I hope the Senate sends that message today by adopting this resolution and by sending it to the President's desk.

I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. HAGERTY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

The result was announced—yeas 81, nays 14, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 49 Leg.]

YEAS—81

Baldwin	Grassley	Padilla
Barrasso	Hagerty	Paul
Bennet	Hassan	Peters
Blackburn	Hawley	Ricketts
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Romney
Boozman	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Braun	Hoeven	Rounds
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Brown	Johnson	Schatz
Budd	Kaine	Schmitt
Cantwell	Kelly	Schumer
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Casey	King	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Collins	Lankford	Sinema
Coons	Lee	Smith
Cornyn	Luján	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Lummis	Sullivan
Cotton	Manchin	Tester
Cramer	Marshall	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	Menendez	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Vance
Ernst	Mullin	Warner
Fischer	Murkowski	Wicker
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Graham	Ossoff	Young

NAYS—14

Booker	Markey	Van Hollen
Cardin	Merkley	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Welch
Durbin	Reed	Whitehouse
Hirono	Sanders	

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Warnock

NOT VOTING—4

Carper	Fetterman
Feinstein	Risch

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 26) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The Senator from South Dakota.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY RULES OF PROCEDURE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, on March 8, 2023, the Joint Committee on the Library organized, elected a chair, a vice chair, and adopted committee rules for the 118th Congress. Members of the Joint Committee on the Library elected Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR as chair and Representative BRYAN STEIL as vice chair. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the committee rules be printed in the RECORD.

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

JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY RULES FOR THE 118TH CONGRESS

TITLE I—MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Regular meetings may be called by the Chair, with the concurrence of the Vice Chair, as may be deemed necessary or pursuant to the provision of paragraph 3 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

2. Meetings of the committee, including meetings to conduct hearings, shall be open to the public, except that a meeting or series of meetings by the committee on the same subject for a period of no more than 14 calendar days may be closed to the public on a motion made and seconded to go into closed session to discuss only whether the matters enumerated in subparagraphs (A) through (F) would require the meeting to be closed followed immediately by a recorded vote in open session by a majority of the members of the committee when it is determined that the matters to be discussed or the testimony to be taken at such meeting or meetings—

(A) will disclose matters necessary to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or the confidential conduct of the foreign relations of the United States;

(B) will relate solely to matters of the committee staff personnel or internal staff management or procedures;

(C) will tend to charge an individual with crime or misconduct, to disgrace or injure the professional standing of an individual, or otherwise to expose an individual to public contempt or obloquy, or will represent a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy of an individual;

(D) will disclose the identity of any informer or law enforcement agent or will disclose any information relating to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense that is required to be kept secret in the interest of effective law enforcement;

(E) will disclose information relating to the trade secrets or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to a given person if—

(1) an Act of Congress requires the information to be kept confidential by Government officers and employees; or

(2) the information has been obtained by the Government on a confidential basis, other than through an application by such person for a specific Government financial or other benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the competitive position of such person; or

(F) may divulge matters required to be kept confidential under the provisions of law or Government regulation. (Paragraph 5(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.)

3. Written notices of committee meetings will normally be sent by the committee's staff director to all members at least 3 days in advance. In addition, the committee staff will email or telephone reminders of committee meetings to all members of the committee or to the appropriate staff assistants in their offices.

4. A copy of the committee's intended agenda enumerating separate items of committee business will normally be sent to all members of the committee by the staff director at least 1 day in advance of all meetings. This does not preclude any member of the committee from raising appropriate nonagenda topics.

5. Any witness who is to appear before the committee in any hearing shall file with the clerk of the committee at least 3 business days before the date of his or her appearance, a written statement of his or her proposed testimony and an executive summary thereof, in such form as the Chair may direct, unless the Chair waived such a requirement for good cause.

TITLE II—QUORUMS

1. Pursuant to paragraph 7(a)(1) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules, 4 members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

2. Pursuant to paragraph 7(a)(2) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules, 2 members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony; provided, however, once a quorum is established, any one member can continue to take such testimony.

3. Under no circumstance may proxies be considered for the establishment of a quorum.

TITLE III—VOTING

1. Voting in the committee on any issue will normally be by voice vote.

2. If a third of the members present so demand, a recorded vote will be taken on any question by roll call.

3. The results of roll call votes taken in any meeting upon a measure, or any amendment thereto, shall be stated in the committee report on that measure unless previously announced by the committee, and such report or announcement shall include a tabulation of the votes cast in favor and the votes cast in opposition to each measure and amendment by each member of the committee. (Paragraph 7(b) and (c) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules.)

TITLE IV—DELEGATION AND AUTHORITY TO THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

1. The Chair and Vice Chair are authorized to sign all necessary vouchers and routine papers for which the committee's approval is required and to decide on the committee's behalf on all routine business.

2. The Chair is authorized to engage commercial reporters for the preparation of transcripts of committee meetings and hearings.

3. The Chair is authorized to issue, on behalf of the committee, regulations normally

promulgated by the committee at the beginning of each session.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, regrettably I am necessarily absent on passage of H.J. Res. 26 as I am attending the funeral of a former Governor. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted in support of the resolution.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, due to the passing of my mother, Betty Lou Collins Merkley, I was not able to travel back to Washington, DC, last week to be present on the Senate floor for several votes. However, I would like it stated for the record how I would have voted had I been present.

On February 28, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 26, confirmation of Jamar K. Walker to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia. Mr. Walker has a distinguished career in both private practice, as well as in public service as a former Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia where he prosecuted a wide range of cases including bribery, money laundering, wire and, bank fraud, foreign corrupt practices, and securities fraud as part of the Financial Crimes and Public Corruption Unit. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On February 28, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 28, confirmation of Jamal N. Whitehead to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Washington. With years of experience in commercial litigation, as a trial attorney with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Civil Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington, Mr. Whitehead is eminently qualified for a seat on the Federal bench.

As the National Employment Lawyers Association said in their letter supporting his nomination, ''Mr. Whitehead is a highly qualified attorney who would bring his background representing all sides of employment law disputes and would provide perspective that is very much needed on the federal bench. His work for employers, workers, and the government offer the kind of experience necessary to serve knowledgably and fairly as a federal judge.''

It is for these reasons that Mr. Whitehead was unanimously rated ''well qualified'' by the American Bar Association and received bipartisan support in the Judiciary Committee. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On February 28, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 30, confirmation of Araceli Martinez-Olguin to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California. Ms. Martinez-Olguin's entire career has been dedicated to protecting civil and human rights. At the American Civil Liberties Union's—ACLU—Women's Rights Project she represented women of underserved communities with employment and education civil rights cases. At the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project, she researched and advocated for victims of human trafficking and assisted in drafting the reauthorization of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

Ms. Martinez-Olguin also worked with Legal Aid at Work in their National Origin, Immigration, and Language Rights Program, where she strived to guarantee the civil rights of immigrant workers, particularly under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and also investigated federally funded education institutions for civil rights violations in the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. And since 2018, Ms. Martinez-Olguin has worked as a supervising attorney at the National Immigration Law Center—NILC—focusing on enforcing constitutional and statutory provisions to protect immigrants' civil and workplace rights.

As only the second Latina to serve on this court, ''The confirmation of Ms. Martinez-Olguin would be an important step towards ensuring that our federal courts reflect and represent the diversity of our nation,'' in the words of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On March 1, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 32, confirmation of Judge Margaret R. Guzman to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Massachusetts. Judge Guzman has amassed an impressive record over the course of her legal career. Over the course of her 13 years as a public defender with Massachusetts' Committee for Public Counsel Services and then 4 more in private practice, she tried more than 175 case to verdict, judgment, or final decision representing clients who could not afford an attorney, helping them navigate the complex criminal legal system.

In 2009, she was appointed to be an associate justice of the District Court on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Trial Court, and since 2017, Judge Guzman has been the first justice and a district court judge on the Ayer District Court in Middlesex County, MA. Over the course of her years on the bench, Judge Guzman has presided over more than 1,000 cases which have gone to verdict or judgment. And as the first Hispanic Judge to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, a State where nearly 900,000 adults identify as Hispanic or Latino, Judge Guzman will bring critical life experience to this seat. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On March 1, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 35, passage of H.J. Res. 30—providing for congressional disapproval of the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Prudence and Loyalty in Selecting Plan Investments and Exercising Shareholder Rights.'' This is the latest in ongoing efforts to stymie efforts to take on the climate crisis which is the greatest threat that humankind has ever faced.

Passage would nullify a Labor Department rule which says plan fiduciaries may, but not must, consider climate chaos and other environment, social, and governance—ESG—factors when they make investment decisions, with respect to employee benefit plans. Rules like these are important because a growing number of Americans are increasingly concerned about the future of our planet and they don't want to be supporting businesses or industries that might be contributing in any way to climate chaos. Investors are also concerned about the risks of investing in fossil fuel companies at a time when the future of these companies remains uncertain.

But supporters of this resolution don't want them to even want fiduciaries to have the option to weigh these significant considerations when making decisions about investments or shareholder rights. This is an attack on investors' rights in service of propping up the fossil fuel industry. Therefore, had I been in attendance, I would have voted nay.

On March 2, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 37, confirmation of Colleen R. Lawless to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of Illinois. For 10 years, Judge Lawless represented plaintiffs in State and Federal courts on a wide range of civil litigation issues from employment discrimination to medical malpractice to family law. In one case, Judge Lawless represented a woman suing her insurance company as she sought coverage for a stay in a medical facility that the insurance company denied. And in another, she represented an African-American water maintenance worker who sued the city of Decatur for discrimination after he was terminated for refusing to sign an agreement that gave him a lower pay but allowed him to bypass civil service selection rules.

In 2019, Judge Lawless was appointed to serve as an associate circuit judge on the Illinois 7th Judicial Circuit Court, where she is currently assigned to the domestic relations division. Over the last 4 years, Judge Lawless has presided over 125 domestic relations bench trials alongside numerous proceedings implicating mental health commitments, small claims, evictions, traffic infractions, and emergency protection orders.

She has been unanimously rated as ''well qualified'' by the American Bar Association, received support from several State circuit court judges and justices, as well as the Sojourn Shelter and Services, a not-for-profit corporation founded to help eliminate domestic violence through service, leadership, and education which serves five central Illinois counties, and received strong bipartisan support when her nomination was voted out of committee. Therefore, had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On March 2, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 39, confirmation of Jonathan

James Canada Grey to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. Since 2021, Judge Grey has served as a magistrate judge for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, where he has written opinions in roughly 40 cases.

Prior to that, Judge Grey worked in private practice at a law firm where he focused on labor and employment matters in Federal, State, and local courts, as well as before administrative agencies. He went on to serve as an Assistant United States Attorney for both the Southern District of Ohio and the Eastern District of Michigan, where Judge Grey briefed and argued dozens of dispositive and nondispositive motions and also led several substantial investigations in cases that spanned multiple States and countries.

While serving as an AUSA in the Southern District of Ohio, Judge Grey led diversity programs and anti-domestic violence initiatives—including instituting his office's practice of prosecuting people who illegally possessed firearms after having been convicted of a domestic violence offense. Judge Grey has amassed a stellar record, received a unanimous ''well qualified'' rating from the American Bar Association, and was voted out of the Judiciary with strong bipartisan support. Therefore, had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KIWANIS CLUB OF CHEYENNE

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne. This is a hands-on service organization making a profound impact on the development of Wyoming's youth. The club is committed in every way to the betterment of the community.

On March 10, 2023 the Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne will celebrate its 100th anniversary at the Little America Hotel and Conference Center in Cheyenne. Seven years after the official recognition of Kiwanis International, the Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne was formed on January 27, 1922. The international mission to serve the needs of area children extended to Cheyenne. Sixty-five men gathered at the Plains Hotel, electing William Bradford Ross as their first president. Ross was elected Governor of Wyoming within a year from the club's charter date.

One of the club's first major accomplishments was the creation of Kiwanis Park, a notable landmark in Cheyenne. In 1922, the city solicited help from local service clubs to build parks in the vicinity of Cheyenne's lakes. To this day, club volunteers care for the park. The Kiwanis Club remained involved in the lake area by helping to establish the Kiwanis Community House. This is a large, multi-purpose meeting space in what remains of the Cheyenne park system. The house is used for meetings, reunions, weddings, and small trade shows. The city opened a new park in east Cheyenne in 2021. The park was adopted by the Kiwanis Club, with members committed to both labor and financing. On June 27, 2022, the Cheyenne City Council voted to name the park ''Kiwanis Park.''

The Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne strives to ''develop by precept and example, a more intelligent, aggressive, and serviceable citizenship by providing World Class leadership development for the young people of our community.'' That dedication to Wyoming's youth encompasses a variety of programs. The Stars of Tomorrow talent show showcases the incredible skills of Wyoming's youth. Key Club provides adolescents with opportunities to develop leadership skills, build character, and participate in service projects within the community.

The needs of Cheyenne's youth were also addressed with the establishment of a ''student's fund.'' For many years this scholarship program helped area high school students attend the University of Wyoming. The club participates in the Friday Food Bag program ensuring all Laramie County students have dependable access to nutritious food during weekends. Other youth organizations and individuals to benefit from Kiwanis Club support include the Future Farmers of America—now known as FFA—Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts, the City's Youth Alternative Program, orphaned boys, and underprivileged children through the vocational guidance committee.

Since their beginning, the Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne has never stopped its charitable outreach. Their positive impacts on the community keep growing. While assisting youth is their main focus, the club helps other groups as well. Their outreach extends to those with disabilities. The Kiwanis Aktion Club, the only service club for adults with disabilities, helps members become ''competent, capable and caring leaders'' through service-oriented projects. The Kiwanis Club's financial support was pivotal in the early days of Magic City Enterprises. This company helps disabled individuals learn, develop and retain necessary skills to live successfully.

A cornerstone of Cheyenne Frontier Days since 1952 is the delicious pancake breakfasts served to locals and tourists. This includes the famous ''chuck'' of the pancake over the cook's shoulder. This past year, Kiwanis Club members and volunteers dedicated their time to prepare 19,285 pancakes free of charge in 1 week. This level of sheer commitment to the community by the members and volunteers of the club exemplifies the strong character and selflessness of all participating club members. The club's outreach is expansive and impressive. Not only are the needs of Wyoming's youth met, but the needs of the Cheyenne community are guaranteed to be addressed with resolute dedication.

The Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne is led by:

Renee Brower
President
Laura Drake
Secretary
Debbie LaFaso
Treasurer
Margaret Cox
President Elect
Larry Walters
1st Vice President
Lisa Trimble
2nd Vice President
Pamela Freeman
Assistant Secretary
Kim Lovett
Assistant Treasurer
Samuel Weinstein
Past President
Rhianna Brand
Board Member
George Costopoulos
Board Member
Scott Royce
Board Member
Richard Russell
Board Member
Rich Wessenberg
Board Member
Patrick Brady
Board Member
Denise Newell
Board Member
Deborah Dancik-Paxton
Board Member
Melissa Stutz
Board Member
Travis Vogel
Board Member

It is an honor for me to rise in recognition of this significant milestone for the Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne. Bobbi joins me in extending our congratulations to the Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne on their 100th anniversary.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:46 a.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. 502. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs repays members of the Armed Forces for certain contributions made by such members towards Post–9/11 Educational Assistance, and for other purposes.

H.R. 815. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements relating to the eligibility of veterans to receive reimbursement for emergency treatment furnished through the Veterans Community Care program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1123. An act to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a report examining the cybersecurity of mobile service networks, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1226. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for the electronic request of certain records, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1123. An act to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a report examining the cybersecurity of mobile

service networks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 1226. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for the electronic request of certain records, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 701. A bill to protect a person's ability to determine whether to continue or end a pregnancy, and to protect a health care provider's ability to provide abortion services.

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–635. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Alignment of Canned Meat and Canned Product Requirements'' (RIN0572–AC62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–636. A communication from the Director of the Regulations Management Division, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Policy on Audits of RUS Awardees'' (RIN0572–AC61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–637. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Penthiopyrad; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 10474–01–OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–638. A communication from the Director, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2023–02, Introduction'' (FAC 2023–02) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–639. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Libya that was declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–640. 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 12957 with respect to Hong Kong; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–641. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalty Amounts for 2023'' (RIN2501–AE07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–642. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Acceptance of Private Flood Insurance for FHA-Insured Mortgages'' (RIN2502–AJ43) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–643. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016: Implementation of Sections 102, 103, and 104'' (RIN2577–AD03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–644. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (Regulation X); Digital Mortgage Comparison-Shopping Platforms and Related Payments to Operators'' (12 CFR Part 1024) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–645. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Legislative Affairs, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Annual Performance Plan and Report, and Budget Overview (FY 2023)'' received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–646. A communication from the Congressional Assistant, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulations Implementing the Adjustable Interest Rate (LIBOR) Act'' (RIN7100–AG34) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–647. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Shortening the Securities Transaction Settlement Cycle'' (RIN3235–AN02) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–648. A communication from the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''U.S. Geological Survey Critical Mineral Resource Assessments''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–649. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program: Consumer Refrigeration and Miscellaneous Refrigeration Products'' (RIN1904–AF42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–650. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''EPA Clean School Bus Program: Second Report to Congress, Fiscal Year 2022''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–651. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Sacramento Mountains Checkerspot Butterfly'' (RIN1018–BG01) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–652. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Northern Long-Eared Bat; Delay of Effective Date'' (RIN1018–BG14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–653. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Lesser Prairie-Chicken; Threatened Status With Section 4(d) Rule for the Northern Distinct Population Segment and Endangered Status for the Southern Distinct Population Segment; Delay of Effective Date'' (RIN1018–BB27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–654. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for Florida Bristle Fern'' (RIN1018–BE12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–655. A communication from the Biologist of the Branch of Recovery and Conservation Planning, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Technical Correction for 62 Wildlife and Plant Species on the Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants'' (RIN1018–BG77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–656. 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) 1.87 Rev 2, 'Acceptability of ASME Code Section III, Division 5, ''High Temperature Reactors'' '' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–657. 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) 5.71 Rev 1, 'Cyber Security Programs for Nuclear Power Reactors' '' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–658. 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) 1.156 Rev 2, 'Qualification

of Connection Assembles For Production and Utilization Facilities'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–659. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Voluntary Consensus Standards Update; Formaldehyde Emission Standards for Composite Wood Products'' ((RIN2070–AK94) (FRL No. 8452–01–OCSPP)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–660. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Definition of Chemical Process Plants Under State PSD Regulations and Operating Permit Program'' (FRL No. 9965–02–R5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–661. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''NPDES Small MS4 Urbanized Area Clarification; Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule'' ((RIN2040–AG27) (FRL No. 10123–05–OW)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–662. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Alton Township 2010 SO2 Attainment Plan'' (FRL No. 10489–02–R5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–663. A communication from the 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: Miscellaneous Coating Manufacturing Technology Review'' ((RIN2060–AV38) (FRL No. 6934.1–02–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–664. A communication from the 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: Coal- and Oil-Fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units - Revocation of the 2020 Reconsideration, and Affirmation of the Appropriate and Necessary Supplemental Finding'' ((RIN2060–AV12) (FRL No. 6716.2–02–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment:

S. 316. A bill to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Eric M. Garcetti, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of India.

Nominee: Eric Michael Garcetti

Post: Ambassador to the Republic of India

(The following is a list of members of my immediate family. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

California Democratic Party, $125, 04/16/2021, Nominee; DNC Services Corp/DNC, $82.97, 09/12/2020, Nominee; DNC Services Corp/DNC, $182.97, 09/12/2020, Nominee; Biden Victory Fund, $182.97, 09/12/2020, Nominee; Biden Victory Fund, $82.97, 09/12/2020, Nominee; Biden for president, $2,800, 09/01/2020, Nominee; ACTBLUE, $25, 09/01/2020, Nominee; ACTBLUE, $120, 05/09/2020, Nominee; Deborah Ross for Congress, $500, 04/29/2020, Nominee; Biden for President, $2,800, 02/08/2020, Nominee; ACTBLUE, $192, 07/09/2019, Nominee; Sydney Kamlager Congress, $500, 10/14/2022, Spouse; Lindsey Horvath for Supervisor, $1500, 08/18/2022, Spouse; Lindsey Horvath for Supervisor, $1500, 05/15/2022, Spouse; ACTBLUE, $100, 03/02/2022, Spouse; CORY 2020, $2,800, 12/29/2019, Spouse; DNC Services Corp/DNC, $1,000, 05/15/2019, Spouse; Stonewall Dem Club FED PAC, $1,500, 07/16/2018, Spouse; Loraine Lundquist for City Council, $800, 08/06/2019, Spouse; Stella T. Maloyan for City Council, $800, 05/28/2019, Spouse; Heather Repenning for LAUSD Board 2019-General, $1,000, 04/30/2019, Spouse.

Geeta Rao Gupta, of Virginia, to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues.

Nominee: Geeta Rao Gupta.

Post: Ambassador at Large, Global Women's Issues, Department of State.

(The following is a list of members of my immediate family. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributor: Self.

Amount, Date, and Donee:

$100, 10/20/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/16/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/16/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/16/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 08/23/2021, ACTBLUE; $250, 08/19/2021, ACTBLUE; $250, 07/30/2021, ACTBLUE; $250, 07/29/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 06/28/2021, ACTBLUE; $50, 06/16/2021, ACTBLUE;

$25, 06/16/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 05/19/2021, ACTBLUE; $500, 05/18/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 05/05/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 04/30/2021, ACTBLUE; $250, 03/31/2021, ACTBLUE; $250, 03/18/2021, ACTBLUE; $100, 01/19/2021, ACTBLUE; $5 12/23/2020, ACTBLUE; $50, 12/23/2020, ACTBLUE;

$100, 11/13/2020, Warnock for Georgia; $100, 11/13/2020, ACTBLUE; $250, 11/12/2020, Georgia Senate Victory Fund; $125, 11/12/2020, Warnock for Georgia; $125, 11/12/2020, Jon Ossoff for Senate; $62.50, 11/09/2020, Warnock for Georgia; $62.50, 11/09/2020, Jon Ossoff for Senate; $62.50, 11/09/2020, ACTBLUE; $62.50, 11/09/2020, ACTBLUE; $62.50, 11/09/2020, ACTBLUE;

$62.50, 11/09/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 11/02/2020, Jamie Harrison for Senate; $50, 11/02/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 11/02/2020, ACTBLUE; $50, 10/29/2020, Biden for President; $50, 10/29/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 10/27/2020, ACTBLUE; $50, 10/27/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 10/26/2020, Biden for President; $100, 10/26/2020, ACTBLUE;

$25, 10/16/2020, Biden for President; $25, 10/16/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 10/07/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/30/2020, ACTBLUE; $50, 09/24/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/22/2020, Biden for President; $100, 09/22/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/22/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/22/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/22/2020, ACTBLUE;

$100, 09/22/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 09/22/2020, ACTBLUE; $250, 09/17/2020, Carolyn for Congress; $10.81, 08/28/2020, Biden for President; $100, 08/13/2020, Biden for President; $100, 08/13/2020, ACTBLUE; $50, 08/11/2020, Biden for President; $50, 08/11/2020, ACTBLUE; $200 08/10/2020, Spanberger for Congress; $25, 07/31/2020, Biden for President;

$25, 07/30/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 07/30/2020, ACTBLUE; $15, 07/26/2020, ACTBLUE; $15, 07/26/2020, Biden for President; $25, 07/25/2020, ACTBLUE; $25, 07/25/2020, Biden for President; $250, 07/20/2020, Spanberger for Congress; $100, 07/19/2020, Biden for President; $50, 07/13/2020, Elaine for Congress; $50, 07/13/2020, ACTBLUE;

$100, 06/24/2020, ACTBLUE; $200 06/21/2020, Elaine for Congress; $250, 06/04/2020, Elaine for Congress; $50, 05/31/2020, ACTBLUE; $10, 05/20/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 05/20/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 05/20/2020, Biden for President; $100, 04/28/2020, Biden for President; $100, 04/28/2020, ACTBLUE; $5, 03/11/2020, ACTBLUE;

$100, 03/11/2020, ACTBLUE; $100, 02/07/2020, ACTBLUE; $50, 02/07/2020, ACTBLUE; $250, 02/04/2020, Janessa Goldbeck for Congress; $50, 01/14/2020, ACTBLUE; $50, 12/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 12/14/2019, DSCC; $100, 12/10/2019, ACTBLUE; $100, 12/10/2019, Janessa Goldbeck for Congress; $100, 11/20/2019, ACTBLUE;

$100, 11/20/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 11/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 11/14/2019, DSCC; $50, 10/14/2019, DSCC; $50, 10/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $250, 09/20/2019, Janessa Goldbeck for Congress; $50, 09/14/2019, DSCC; $50, 09/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 08/14/2019, DSCC; $50, 08/14/2019, ACTBLUE;

$50, 07/14/2019, DSCC; $50, 07/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 06/14/2019, DSCC; $50, 06/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 05/14/2019, DSCC; $50, 05/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 04/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 03/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 02/14/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 02/01/2019, ACTBLUE; $50, 01/14/2019, ACTBLUE.

Contributor: Arvind Gupta, Spouse.

Amount, Date, and Donee:

$5, 10/14/2022, ACTBLUE; $50, 10/14/2022, ACTBLUE; $25, 10/12/2022, ACTBLUE; $3, 10/12/2022, ACTBLUE; $3, 06/15/2022, ACTBLUE; $3, 06/15/2022, ACTBLUE; $25, 06/15/2022, ACTBLUE; $25, 06/15/2022, ACTBLUE; $25, 05/26/2022, ACTBLUE; $5, 05/26/2022, ACTBLUE; $25, 05/05/2022, ACTBLUE; $75, 05/05/2022, ACTBLUE; $10, 05/05/2022, ACTBLUE; $25, 10/12/2021, ACTBLUE.

Arvind Gupta, Spouse.

Michael Alan Ratney, of Massachusetts, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Nominee: Michael Ratney.

Post: Saudi Arabia.

(The following is a list of members of my immediate family. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

Self: None.

Spouse: Karen Sasahara: $16.66, 11/18/2020, Andy Kim for Congress; $16.67, 11/18/2020, Jon Ossoff for Congress; $16.67, 11/18/2020, Raphael Warnock for Congress; $100.00, 7/31/2021, Andy Kim for Congress; $100.00, 11/17/2022, ActBlue.

Stephanie Sanders Sullivan, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Representative of the United States of America

to the African Union, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

Nominee: Stephanie Sanders Sullivan.

Post: U.S. Mission to the African Union.

(The following is a list of members of my immediate family. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

Myself: None.

John Henry Sullivan (husband): Cash, $200, 06/09/2022, Pennsylvania Democratic Party; Cash, $200, 08/29/2021, Pennsylvania Democratic Party; Cash, $50, 10/25/2020, Democratic National Committee; Cash, $50, 09/29/2020, Act Blue (Biden for President); Cash, $50, 08/05/2020, Democratic National Committee. In Kind (Volunteer work), 30 hours, Oct/Nov 2022, Pennsylvania Democrats; 40 hours Oct/Nov 2020, Pennsylvania Democrats (Democratic Party/Biden campaign.

Richard R. Verma, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.

Richard L.A. Weiner, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

L. Felice Gorordo, of Florida, to be United States Alternate Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years.

Leopoldo Martinez Nucete, of Virginia, to be United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank for a term of three years.

By Mr. TESTER for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

*Joshua David Jacobs, of Washington, to be Under Secretary for Benefits of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 694. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on heavy trucks and trailers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 695. A bill to repeal the provisions of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that impose new information reporting requirements with respect to digital asset transfers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TUBERVILLE (for himself, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. VANCE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. LEE):

S. 696. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to suspend the entry of aliens in order to achieve operational control of the border, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RISCH:

S. 697. A bill to amend the Agricultural Act of 2014 to modify the treatment of revenue from timber sale contracts and certain payments made by counties to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior under good neighbor agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 698. A bill to direct the Secretary of State to designate certain Mexican drug cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, and to submit a report to Congress justifying such designations in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 699. A bill to amend title VI of the Social Security Act to expand foster parent training and authorize new appropriations to support the obtainment of a driver's license; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 700. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to allow all eligible voters to vote by mail in Federal elections, to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to provide for automatic voter registration; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. WARREN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KELLY, Mr. KING, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. SMITH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 701. A bill to protect a person's ability to determine whether to continue or end a pregnancy, and to protect a health care provider's ability to provide abortion services; read the first time.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. KELLY):

S. 702. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Secretary of Agriculture to maintain the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 703. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make improvements to the redistribution of residency slots under the Medicare program after a hospital closes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 704. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for interest-free deferment on student loans for borrowers serving in a medical or dental internship or residency program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 705. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize a loan repayment program to encourage specialty medicine physicians to serve in rural communities experiencing a shortage of specialty medicine physicians, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 706. A bill to withdraw the National Forest System land in the Ruby Mountains subdistrict of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and the National Wildlife Refuge System land in Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Elko and White Pine Counties, Nevada, from operation under the mineral leasing laws; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. WARREN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KING, Mr. PADILLA, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 707. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to allow for the retirement of certain animals used in Federal research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina):

S. 708. A bill to improve outcomes for Medicaid beneficiaries with major depressive disorder or other mental health conditions; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. BRAUN):

S. 709. A bill to improve performance and accountability in the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 710. A bill to prohibit an employer from terminating the coverage of an employee under a group health plan while the employer is engaged in a lock-out or while the employee is engaged in a lawful strike, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BUDD (for himself, Mr. KELLY, Mr. TILLIS, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 711. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the invaluable service that working dogs provide to society; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. CARPER, Mr. THUNE, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 712. A bill to identify and address barriers to coverage of remote physiologic devices under State Medicaid programs to improve maternal and child health outcomes for pregnant and postpartum women; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 713. A bill to amend section 3624 of title 18, United States Code, to require carjackers to serve their prison sentences; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 714. A bill to require that any debt limit increase or suspension be balanced by equal spending cuts over the next decade; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 715. A bill to require the Executive Office of the President to provide an inflation

estimate with respect to Executive orders with a significant effect on the annual gross budget, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. BUDD, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 716. A bill to extend title 42 expulsion authority, to resume border wall system construction, to preserve the exclusive authority of immigration judges over asylum claims, and to codify the Migrant Protection Protocols; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 717. A bill to improve plain writing and public experience, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BRAUN:

S. 718. A bill to establish the Federal Rainy Day Fund to control emergency spending; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 719. A bill to amend the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 to establish a precision agriculture loan program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 720. A bill to leverage incentives for the adoption of precision agriculture equipment and technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. HYDE–SMITH (for herself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 721. A bill to permit policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program to elect to have previous premium rates remain in effect until the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency satisfies certain conditions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 722. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit certain expenses associated with obtaining or maintaining recognized postsecondary credentials to be treated as qualified higher education expenses for purposes of 529 accounts; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BOOKER, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 723. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of prescription digital therapeutics under such titles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. 724. A bill to protect children against sexual abuse and exploitation, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

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

S. 725. A bill to amend the Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act of 2016 to apply to members of the Coast Guard when the Coast Guard is not operating as a service in the Department of the Navy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. HAWLEY, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. LEE, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S.J. Res. 18. A joint resolution disapproving of the rule submitted by the Department of Homeland Security relating to ''Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. HICKENLOOPER):

S. Res. 96. A resolution celebrating the extraordinary accomplishments and vital role of women business owners in the United States; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. Res. 97. A resolution expressing concern about economic and security conditions in Mexico and reaffirming the interest of the United States in mutually beneficial relations with Mexico based on shared interests on security, economic prosperity, and democratic values, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. Res. 98. A resolution declaring March 8, 2023, as ''National Emily Warner & Women Airline Pilots Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. Res. 99. A resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BUDD (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. Res. 100. A resolution to honor the life and death of James Thomas Broyhill, former Senator for the State of North Carolina; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 91

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 91, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

S. 184

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 184, a bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

S. 217

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 217, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a special rule for certain casualty losses of uncut timber.

S. 305

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 305, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States Marine Corps, and to support programs at the Marine Corps Heritage Center.

S. 344

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 344, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to prohibit the Securities and Exchange Commission from requiring an issuer to disclose information relating to certain greenhouse gas emissions, and for other purposes.

S. 427

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 427, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Labor from constraining the range or type of investments that may be offered to participants and beneficiaries of individual retirement accounts who exercise control over the assets in such accounts.

S. 444

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 444, a bill to require any convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response reached by the World Health Assembly to be subject to Senate ratification.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to strengthen the use of patient-experience data within the benefit-risk framework for approval of new drugs.

S. 545

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 545, a bill to protect the rights of passengers with disabilities in air transportation, and for other purposes.

S. 547

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 547, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the First Rhode Island Regiment, in recognition of their dedicated service during the Revolutionary War.

S. 597

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Georgia

(Mr. WARNOCK) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) were added as cosponsors of S. 597, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 610

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 610, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to modify the frequency of board of directors meetings, and for other purposes.

S. 613

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 613, a bill to provide that for purposes of determining compliance with title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 in athletics, sex shall be recognized based solely on a person's reproductive biology and genetics at birth.

S. 651

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 651, a bill to establish the Office of the Special Inspector General for Ukraine Assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 686

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 686, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to review and prohibit certain transactions between persons in the United States and foreign adversaries, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 72

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 72, a resolution recognizing Russian actions in Ukraine as a genocide.

S. RES. 74

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 74, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

S. RES. 91

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 91, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the value of a tax agreement with Taiwan.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. WARREN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KING, Mr. PADILLA, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 707. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to allow for the retirement of certain animals used in Federal research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise with my colleague from Michigan, Senator PETERS, to introduce the Animal Freedom from Testing, Experiments, and Research Act, known as the AFTER Act, to promote the adoption or retirement of animals used for research by Federal Agencies.

In fiscal year 2021, the Federal Government experimented on approximately 45,000 regulated animals for research purposes. These experiments occurred across 14 different Federal Agencies. The animals used were mainly cats, dogs, monkeys, and rabbits. Tracking these animals following experimentation is challenging. In many instances, sadly, animals no longer needed for research are killed since many Agencies lack formal retirement or adoption policies. Recent peer-reviewed studies indicate that research animals that are adopted, however, often thrive in their new environments.

In 2013, led by Senators Harkin, Alexander, CANTWELL and myself, the Senate passed the CHIMP Act, which allowed for the retirement of hundreds of primates that were formerly used in National Institute of Health, NIH, experiments. In addition, the Department of Defense DOD, Veterans Affairs, VA, Federal Drug Administration, and NIH recently enacted successful animal retirement policies. While I am encouraged by the Senate's past work on primates and the recent policies developed by a few Federal Agencies, there are many other Federal Agencies, including the Agriculture Department, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency, that lack formal policies for animals used in experiments.

The AFTER Act would build on successful policies at DOD, VA, and NIH by directing all Federal Agencies to promulgate regulations that would facilitate the retirement of laboratory animals. The bill would provide flexibility for each Agency to devise its own policy, with the goal of ensuring that such animals, whenever possible, are retired and not killed. Additionally, the AFTER Act would require that animals be evaluated by a licensed veterinarian and pronounced both mentally and physically healthy before leaving an Agency. This will help ensure a smooth transition to a new environment.

Our legislation would also encourage Federal Agencies to work with nonprofit organizations to help place retired animals in sanctuaries and shelters across the country, not just those closest to the research facility. This would allow State like Maine, which does not have Federal research labs that use animals, to play a role in retiring these animals and providing homes for them.

Mr. President, animals that are suitable for adoption or retirement should not be killed by our Federal Government. The AFTER Act would provide the necessary direction Federal Agencies need in order to move forward with developing retirement policies. I urge all of my colleagues to join in support of this important bipartisan legislation, the Animal Freedom from Testing, Experiments, and Research Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 96—CELEBRATING THE EXTRAORDINARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND VITAL ROLE OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. HICKENLOOPER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 96

Whereas there are over 13,000,000 women-owned businesses in the United States;

Whereas women-owned businesses—

(1) employ more than 10,900,000 people in the United States;

(2) generate nearly $1,900,000,000,000 in revenue annually;

(3) have grown at nearly twice the national average; and

(4) have grown from 4.6 percent to 42 percent of all businesses in the United States between 1972 and 2019; and

Whereas women entrepreneurs founded nearly 40 percent of new businesses in 2021: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the vital role of women-owned businesses to the economy of the United States;

(2) commends the exceptional entrepreneurial spirit of women business owners in the United States; and

(3) celebrates women entrepreneurs in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 97—EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT ECONOMIC AND SECURITY CONDITIONS IN MEXICO AND REAFFIRMING THE INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONS WITH MEXICO BASED ON SHARED INTERESTS ON SECURITY, ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, AND DEMOCRATIC VALUES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 97

Whereas December 12, 2022, marked the 200th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Mexico;

Whereas, over the course of 200 years, the Governments and people of the United States and Mexico have developed deep cultural, economic, and diplomatic relations that have been instrumental in creating prosperity in both countries and throughout the hemisphere;

Whereas, according to the United States Trade Representative and the Department of Commerce, United States goods and services trade with Mexico totaled an estimated $677,300,000,000 in 2019, and United States exports of goods and services to Mexico supported an estimated 1,200,000 jobs in 2015;

Whereas, according to the 2022 United States Department of State's Investment Climate Statement on Mexico, the United States is Mexico's top source of foreign direct investment with a stock of $184,900,000,000;

Whereas, in 2021, the United States exported $25,000,000,000 in agriculture products to Mexico and imported $38,700,000,000 in agriculture products from Mexico;

Whereas the government of President Lopez Obrador has pursued major legal and regulatory measures that pose significant risks and uncertainty to cross-border trade, including denying 14 biotechnology applications since May 2018, front-of-packing labeling requirements imposed in November 2020, unilateral certification requirements on all United States organic exports to Mexico imposed in December 2020, the December 31, 2020, Presidential Decree to phase out the use of glyphosate and genetically modified corn for human consumption, the February 2021 Electricity Industry Law, and the May 2021 Hydrocarbons Law;

Whereas the government of President Lopez Obrador has suspended import permits for more than 80 energy companies, has ended permits for energy import facilities, which puts United States investment at risk, and is advancing a constitutional reform bill that would dissolve the power market in Mexico, eliminate independent regulators, and cancel contracts and permits granted to private companies;

Whereas arbitrary and punitive actions against United States businesses operating in Mexico by the government of President Lopez Obrador, such as the recent shutdown of a limestone quarry owned by a United States company that is a critical component of the construction aggregates supply chain for the southeast United States, are damaging the economic relationship between the United States and Mexico, disrupting North American supply chains, and threatening to undermine the confidence of United States businesses in Mexico as a viable and predictable marketplace and destination for investment;

Whereas United States law enforcement encountered over 2,378,944 migrants attempting to enter the United States illegally through the southern border with Mexico in 2022, reaching an all-time high of 251,978 encounters in December 2022, and have encountered over 156,000 migrants in January 2023;

Whereas United States Border Patrol has documented a rise in the number of convicted criminals attempting to enter the United States illegally, including over 3,000 since October 2022, 12,028 in fiscal year 2022, 10,763 in fiscal year 2021, and 2,438 in fiscal year 2020;

Whereas U.S. Customs and Border Protection operational statistics showed fentanyl seizures at the United States southern border increased 66.86 percent in January 2023, compared to January 2022, with over a 907 percent increase from January 2020;

Whereas U.S. Customs and Border Protection has reported an approximately 207 percent increase in the amount of illicit fentanyl seized at the southwest border since fiscal year 2020, and the Drug Enforcement Administration reported the seizure of 379,000,000 potentially deadly doses of fentanyl in 2022;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported a record of 107,000 overdose deaths in the United States in 2022, with more than 71,400 (66.5 percent) of those attributed to synthetic opioids, a substantial amount of which are illicitly produced in Mexico using precursor chemicals imported from the People's Republic of China and mixed or reshipped by the Sinaloa and Jalisco New Generation (CJNG) drug cartels;

Whereas reports from the United States Northern Command indicate that Mexican cartels now control 30 to 35 percent of Mexican territory, with Mexico's midterm elections in June 2021 being the most violent on record driven by cartel violence and attempts to thwart the democratic process;

Whereas more than 80 politicians were killed prior to the June 2021 midterm elections in Mexico, with the Mexican cartels claiming responsibility for the killings of at least 35 candidates, according to several reports;

Whereas, according to the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors of the Brookings Institution, Mexico registered almost 34,000 murders in 2022 near an all-time high, representing 27 murders per 100,000 and primarily attributable to ties related to transnational criminal organizations, while the effective prosecution rate for homicides remains around 2 percent;

Whereas, according to the Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors, the rivalry between the Sinaloa Cartel and CJNG Cartel has violently spread to Colombia, one of the United States' closest allies in the Western Hemisphere, with CJNG deploying drone-mounted bombs to seize territory and Sinaloa taking over both the legal and illegal economies of the territories in dispute;

Whereas, in 2021, the government of President Obrador disbanded a select Mexican anti-narcotics unit that, for a quarter of a century, worked hand-in-hand with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to tackle organized crime;

Whereas President Obrador has spearheaded legal and regulatory measures to reduce or eliminate the independence of Mexican autonomous institutions and regulators, including the Federal Economic Competition Commission, the Federal Institute for Telecommunications, the Energy Regulatory Commission, and the National Electoral Institute;

Whereas, at a March 2022 hearing of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, United States Northern Command Commander, General Glen D. VanHerck, testified that ''the largest portion of [Russian intelligence personnel] in the world is in Mexico right now'' and ''they keep an eye very closely on their opportunities to have influence on U.S. opportunities and access'';

Whereas Mexico voted in the United Nation's General Assembly to condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, while abstaining from suspending Russia as a permanent observer of the Organization of American States and from expelling Russia from the United Nations Human Rights Council;

Whereas President Obrador has increasingly turned to the People's Republic of China to finance controversial infrastructure projects, including the Dos Bocas Refinery and the Maya Train, while the People's Republic of China's State Power Investment Corporation (SPIC) acquired Mexican renewables power company Zuma Energy during a time when private corporations were fleeing the sector; and

Whereas Mexico remains one of the world's most dangerous countries for journalists and media workers, with 2022 marking the deadliest year on record with 19 deaths: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the interest of the United States in mutually beneficial relations with Mexico based on shared interests on security, economic prosperity, and democratic values;

(2) reaffirms support for stronger economic relations with Mexico, including to strengthen the resiliency of critical supply chains in North America and the Western Hemisphere in general;

(3) expresses deep concerns about the worsening investment climate in Mexico, and calls on the President to take meaningful actions to defend United States economic interests in Mexico and uphold the integrity of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA);

(4) urges the President to address the humanitarian and security crisis at the border with Mexico by—

(A) establishing effective immigration controls in the United States;

(B) targeting United States foreign assistance efforts to strengthen border security and migration management capacities in the region; and

(C) leveraging existing bilateral extradition treaties and the Palermo Protocols to prosecute transnational criminal actors facilitating illegal migration to the United States;

(5) reaffirms the urgent need for the Government of Mexico to implement a detailed and well-resourced strategy to combat the growing sophistication of transnational criminal organizations in its territory, and reduce the production and trafficking of illicit narcotics and precursor chemicals being used for the manufacture of synthetic opioids in its territory, including by—

(A) increasing information sharing between Mexican authorities and the DEA on seizures of fentanyl and precursor chemicals in Mexico;

(B) partnering with the United States to jointly dismantle and take down clandestine labs across Mexico; and

(C) prioritizing the arrest and extradition of more individuals with drug-related charges to the United States; and

(6) urges the Government of Mexico to uphold its domestic and international commitments to legal, safe, and orderly immigration, uphold its obligations under the USMCA, respect the independence of autonomous regulatory institutions, and guard against the negative influence of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation in North America and the Western Hemisphere in general.

SENATE RESOLUTION 98—DECLARING MARCH 8, 2023, AS ''NATIONAL EMILY WARNER & WOMEN AIRLINE PILOTS DAY''

Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 98

Whereas Emily Howell Warner (referred to in this preamble as ''Emily Warner'') of the

State of Colorado is a celebrated female airline pilot with a proud legacy of promoting gender equality in all professions;

Whereas, 50 years ago, Emily Warner shattered the glass ceiling of the airline flight deck in the United States when she was hired by Frontier Airlines to be the first modern female airline pilot, opening the sky for other female airline pilots;

Whereas, in 1974, Emily Warner became the first female member of the Air Line Pilots Association, International;

Whereas, in 1976, Emily Warner became first female airline captain in the United States;

Whereas Emily Warner was a founding member of—

(1) the Colorado Pilots Association;

(2) the International Society of Women Airline Pilots;

(3) the Friends of the Granby/Grand County Airport;

Whereas the Frontier Airlines uniform worn by Emily Warner hangs in the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum;

Whereas, in 1994, Emily Warner was honored by Colorado Legislature Resolution 94–29, entitled ''Honoring Captain Emily Warner of the Achievements in Aviation History'';

Whereas Emily Warner has been inducted into the Women in Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame, the National Women's Hall of Fame, the National Aviation Hall of Fame, the Irish-American Hall of Fame, the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame, and the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame;

Whereas, in 2015, the Granby/Grand County Airport was renamed Emily Warner Field to honor the many contributions of Emily Warner to aviation;

Whereas roughly 6 percent of airline pilots in the United States are women; and

Whereas honoring the legacy of Emily Warner of breaking barriers for women in aviation requires continued dedication and commitments to ensuring greater representation of women in the airline pilot workforce and in all aviation careers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate does hereby declare March 8, 2023, as ''National Emily Warner & Women Airline Pilots Day''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 99—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 99

Whereas, as of March 2023, there are approximately 3,990,000,000 women and girls in the world, making up ½ of the world's population;

Whereas women and girls around the world—

(1) have fundamental human rights;

(2) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families and driving positive change in their communities;

(3) contribute substantially to food security, economic growth, the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the sustainability of peace and stability;

(4) are affected in different and often disproportionate ways by global, country, and community circumstances, including economic downturns, global health concerns, conflict, and migration; and

(5) must have meaningful protections and opportunities to more fully participate in and lead the political, social, and economic lives of their communities and countries;

Whereas the advancement and empowerment of women and girls around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States and is critical to the achievement of global peace, prosperity, and sustainability;

Whereas, on October 6, 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. 2152j et seq.) was enacted into law, which includes requirements for a government-wide ''Women, Peace, and Security Strategy'' to promote and strengthen the participation of women in peace negotiations and conflict prevention overseas, enhanced training for relevant United States Government personnel, and follow-up evaluations of the effectiveness of the strategy;

Whereas the United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security, dated June 2019, recognizes that—

(1) the ''[s]ocial and political marginalization of women strongly correlates with the likelihood that a country will experience conflict'';

(2) there is a ''tremendous amount of untapped potential among the world's women and girls to identify, recommend, and implement effective solutions to conflict'', and there are ''benefits derived from creating opportunities for women and girls to serve as agents of peace via political, economic, and social empowerment''; and

(3) barriers to the meaningful participation of women and girls in conflict prevention and resolution efforts ''include under-representation in political leadership, pervasive violence against women and girls, and persistent inequality in many societies'';

Whereas, according to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (commonly referred to as ''UN Women''), peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women and women's groups play a meaningful role in the negotiation process;

Whereas, according to a study by the International Peace Institute, a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas, according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and meaningful participation of women in criminal justice professions and security forces vastly enhances the effectiveness of the resulting workforces;

Whereas, despite the contributions of women to society, hundreds of millions of women and girls around the world continue to be denied the right to participate freely in civic and economic life, lack fundamental legal protections, and remain vulnerable to exploitation and abuse;

Whereas, every year, approximately 12,000,000 girls are married before they reach the age of 18, which means that—

(1) nearly 33,000 girls are married every day; or

(2) nearly 23 girls are married every minute;

Whereas, despite global progress, it is predicted that by 2030 more than 150,000,000 more girls will marry before reaching the age of 18, and approximately 2,400,000 girls who are married before reaching the age of 18 are under the age of 15;

Whereas girls living in countries affected by conflict or other humanitarian crises are often the most vulnerable to child marriage, and 9 of the 10 countries with the highest rates of child marriage are considered fragile or extremely fragile;

Whereas, on August 15, 2021, the Taliban entered Kabul, Afghanistan, and toppled the elected government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, resulting in de facto Taliban rule over the people of Afghanistan;

Whereas the Taliban continues to restrict the ability of women and girls to exist in Afghan society, including by—

(1) prohibiting girls from going to school past sixth grade, including banning women from attending university;

(2) limiting the employment that women can pursue outside of their households;

(3) mandating that women cover their heads and faces in public and punishing those who wear brightly colored clothing;

(4) restricting the independent movement of women and girls;

(5) closing domestic abuse shelters, sometimes forcing residents to return to their abusive families;

(6) preventing women aid workers from operating in Afghanistan, thus restricting operations in support of humanitarian assistance for all Afghans;

(7) jailing women human rights defenders; and

(8) limiting access to women's healthcare, including preventative and emergency services, and requiring a male chaperone at most clinics and hospitals;

Whereas, according to the United Nation's Children's Fund (commonly referred to as ''UNICEF'')—

(1) approximately ¼ of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have been victims of some form of physical violence;

(2) approximately 120,000,000 girls worldwide, about 1 in 10, have experienced forced sexual acts; and

(3) an estimated 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas the overall level of violence against women is a better predictor of the peacefulness of a country, the compliance of a country with international treaty obligations, and the relations of a country with neighboring countries than indicators measuring the level of democracy, level of wealth, or level of institutionalization of the country;

Whereas women around the world remain vastly underrepresented in government positions, as women account for only 25.6 percent of national parliamentarians and 21 percent of government ministers;

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve strong and lasting economic growth, self-reliance, and political and social stability;

Whereas, although the United Nations Millennium Project reached the goal of achieving gender parity in primary education in most countries in 2015, the COVID–19 global pandemic has deepened gender inequality in education and more work remains to be done to achieve gender equality in primary and secondary education, particularly in secondary education worldwide as gender gaps persist and widen, by addressing—

(1) discriminatory practices;

(2) harmful cultural and social norms;

(3) inadequate sanitation facilities, including facilities to manage menstruation;

(4) child, early, and forced marriage;

(5) poverty;

(6) food insecurity and malnutrition;

(7) early pregnancy and motherhood;

(8) conflict and insecurity; and

(9) other factors that favor boys or devalue girls' education;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—

(1) approximately 118,500,000 girls between the ages of 6 and 17 remain out of school;

(2) girls living in countries affected by conflict are 2.5 times more likely to be out of primary school than boys;

(3) girls are twice as likely as boys to never set foot in a classroom; and

(4) up to 30 percent of girls who drop out of school do so because of adolescent pregnancy or child marriage;

Whereas women around the world face a variety of constraints that severely limit their economic participation and productivity and remain underrepresented in the labor force;

Whereas, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations—

(1) agriculture and food systems are a major source of livelihoods, particularly for rural women;

(2) wage and productivity gaps persist in agriculture and food systems, despite the crucial role that women play in those sectors;

(3) the work of women in agriculture and food systems is more likely than that of men to be part-time, irregular, informal, vulnerable, labor-intensive, and low-skilled;

(4) in countries reporting on Sustainable Development Goal 5.a.1, more men than women are owners or have rights to agricultural land;

(5) the gender gap in food insecurity is growing and has reached 4.3 percentage points, with more women experiencing severe and moderate food insecurity in all regions than men; and

(6) the empowerment of women can have important benefits for agricultural productivity, nutrition, and food security;

Whereas the economic empowerment of women is inextricably linked to a myriad of other internationally recognized human rights that are essential to the ability of women to thrive as economic actors, including—

(1) living lives free of violence and exploitation;

(2) achieving the highest possible standard of health and well-being;

(3) enjoying full legal and human rights, such as access to registration, identification, and citizenship documents, and freedom of movement;

(4) access to formal and informal education;

(5) access to, and equal protection under, land and property rights;

(6) access to fundamental labor rights;

(7) the implementation of policies to address disproportionate care burdens; and

(8) receiving business and management skills and leadership opportunities;

Whereas the Millennium Challenge Corporation (commonly referred to as the ''MCC''), an independent United States foreign assistance agency, recognizes that inequality and the exclusion of women from economic opportunities can inhibit efforts to promote economic growth and reduce poverty and decrease a country's economic growth trajectory, which is why the gender policy of the MCC requires gender inequalities to be identified and considered in every stage of agreements with participating countries;

Whereas, according to the World Health Organization, global maternal mortality decreased by approximately 38 percent from 2000 to 2017, yet approximately 810 women and girls continue to die from preventable causes relating to pregnancy or childbirth each day, and 94 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries, putting the global community off-track to meeting Sustainable Development Goal 3.1 for reducing maternal deaths;

Whereas the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports that women and girls comprise approximately ½ of the 78,900,000 refugees and internally displaced or stateless individuals in the world;

Whereas the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022, has resulted in a disproportionate number of women and children seeking safety outside of Ukraine;

Whereas those women and girls, like women and girls in all humanitarian emergencies, including those subject to forced displacement, face increased and exacerbated vulnerabilities to—

(1) gender-based violence, including rape, child marriage, domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation and assault;

(2) disruptions in education and livelihood;

(3) lack of access to health services; and

(4) food insecurity and malnutrition;

Whereas malnutrition poses a variety of threats to women and girls specifically, as malnutrition can weaken their immune systems, making them more susceptible to infections, and affects their capacity to survive childbirth, and children born of malnourished women and girls are more likely to have cognitive impairments and higher risk of disease throughout their lives;

Whereas it is imperative—

(1) to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and girls; and

(2) to afford women and girls every opportunity to be equal members of their communities; and

Whereas March 8, 2023, is recognized as International Women's Day, a global day—

(1) to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women in the past, present, and future; and

(2) to recognize the obstacles that women face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women's Day;

(2) recognizes that the fundamental human rights of women and girls have intrinsic value that affect the quality of life of women and girls;

(3) recognizes that the empowerment of women and girls is inextricably linked to the potential of a country to generate—

(A) economic growth and self-reliance;

(B) sustainable peace and democracy; and

(C) inclusive security;

(4) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women human rights defenders, activists, and civil society leaders, who have worked throughout history to ensure that women and girls are guaranteed equality and fundamental human rights;

(5) applauds the women around the world who stand against oppression in any form and fight for a better future, especially in Ukraine, Iran, and Afghanistan;

(6) recognizes the unique cultural, historical, and religious differences throughout the world and urges the United States Government to act with respect and understanding toward legitimate differences when promoting any policies;

(7) reaffirms the commitment—

(A) to end discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(B) to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of women and girls;

(C) to pursue policies that guarantee the fundamental human rights of women and girls worldwide; and

(D) to promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of society and community, including conflict prevention, protection, peacemaking, and peacebuilding;

(8) supports sustainable, measurable, and global development that seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and

(9) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 100—TO HONOR THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JAMES THOMAS BROYHILL, FORMER SENATOR FOR THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mr. BUDD (for himself and Mr. TILLIS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 100

Whereas James T. Broyhill was born in Lenoir, North Carolina, on August 19, 1927, and attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill;

Whereas James T. Broyhill served as a prominent civic leader in Lenoir, North Carolina, and served in several roles at the furniture company of his father;

Whereas James T. Broyhill served in the House of Representatives from 1963 to 1986, establishing a reputation for impeccable constituent services;

Whereas, during his distinguished career in the House of Representatives, James T. Broyhill was the leading force behind the creation of the Consumer Product Safety Commission;

Whereas legislation introduced by James T. Broyhill designating the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail was enacted in September 1980;

Whereas, on June 29, 1986, James T. Broyhill was appointed by the Governor of North Carolina, Jim Martin, to the Senate, where he served until November 4, 1986;

Whereas, after his service in the Senate, James T. Broyhill served as chairman of the North Carolina Economic Development Commission, and then as the Secretary of Commerce of North Carolina before retiring from political life in 1991; and

Whereas the community work of James T. Broyhill included serving as chairman and member of the Appalachian State University Board of Trustees, a member of the Board of Visitors of the Bowman Gray/Baptist Hospital Medical Center, a member of the Board of Visitors of the Babcock Graduate School of Management at Wake Forest University, and a member of the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Food Bank: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate—

(A) has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of James T. Broyhill, former Member of the Senate;

(B) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of James T. Broyhill; and

(2) when the Senate adjourns today, it stands adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late James T. Broyhill.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I have 17 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 AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 2 p.m., to continue a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 10 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 8, 2023, at 2:30 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 8, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a joint hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, to conduct a business meeting.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct an open hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 12 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY

The Joint Committee on the Library is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct an organizational meeting.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING

The Joint Committee on Printing is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 2:35 p.m., to conduct an organizational meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hybrid hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEAR EAST, SOUTH ASIA, CENTRAL ASIA, AND COUNTERTERRORISM

The Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PRIVACY, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE LAW

The Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology, and the Law of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Parker Duncan, a staff assistant in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

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

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I appreciate the recognition more than you know. I would like to ask unanimous consent that a detailee of the Senate Judiciary Committee—that would be one Douglas Miller—be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 118th Congress.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I would ask unanimous consent that the following members of my team be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the Congress: Marta Silva, Sophie Song, Robert Walsh, Jacob Medvitz, and Veronique Bourassa.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 650

Mr. ROUNDS. Madam President, I rise today to ask a unanimous consent request on S. 650. This is a bill that I have introduced with Senator HIRONO that would extend the Federal Communications Commission's spectrum auction authority until the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2023.

Currently, this authority is set to expire tomorrow night. Our legislation would prevent this expiration and allow the Department of Defense and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to focus on a statutorily required study which is to be completed by September of this year. This will define DOD spectrum requirements and articulate the risks should the Department lose access to portions of the 3.1 to 3.45 gigahertz frequencies that are home to systems that are used to defend our country from attack.

The extension of this authorization until September 30 would allow time for the DOD and the NTIA to complete their study which, as I say, is expected in September.

We cannot allow potential authorizing spectrum legislation to affect any decision making related to the lower 3 gigahertz band before the DOD and the NTIA release their study, which is expected, as I say, in September.

The FCC's spectrum auction authority was previously extended less than just 3 months ago. Unfortunately, each time this auction authority expires at short and arbitrary intervals, we find additional language being proposed that would modify the current process by which any sharing of this spectrum would be determined. The Department of Defense finds itself responding to proposals that include offering up for auction critical bands of spectrum before this study has been completed.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 requires the Department of Defense to conclude the spectrum study by September 2023. Importantly, the study mandates examination of the feasibility of DOD sharing the 3.1 to 3.45 gigahertz band of spectrum, which is a very limited resource with the industry.

The extension which I call up today would make certain that the analysis of the study is completed before taking action or before actions could be taken which may potentially harm the national security of the United States.

While the development of 5G networks is important to both the economic prosperity and national security of the United States, the premature auction of spectrum must not jeopardize the systems that depend on radars and other critical sensors to protect our troops and our citizens from air or missile attacks.

Many of the reasons that make an extension until the end of the fiscal year vital simply can't be discussed here on the Senate floor because they need to be taken in a classified setting.

Over the past several months, I hosted a series of classified and unclassified briefings for my colleagues, their congressional staff members, the telecom industry, and the defense industry. These briefings were delivered by both the Department of Defense and the NTIA.

I think we all want to see the FCC's spectrum auction authority extended, and I am offering a solution that extends that auction authority and protects the national security of our country. I would hope that the industry and those who support the continuation of 5G would agree that an extension until the end of the year would be very appropriate.

With that, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S. 650 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, 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 Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, reserving the right to object, the Senator is working very diligently to achieve a goal that all of us share. The basic question right now is going to be whether to have a 60-day extension that has been agreed to by the House or to have an extension, as the Senator is proposing, until the end of the fiscal year.

The bottom line—and it is the judgment of many—is that sticking with the 60-day extension is beneficial to achieving the goal of having the parties who are now negotiating come to a longer term resolution even beyond the end of the fiscal year. We have got to extend, ultimately, the spectrum authority beyond 60 days or beyond the end of the fiscal year. We really have to extend it for a much greater period of time in order to achieve the goals that are shared between all of us.

Senator ROUNDS' bill, of course, as I mentioned, would extend things until September 30. We think that is going to take pressure off negotiators, and we have some confidence that if we keep that 60-day status, we are going to get to that long-term goal.

Further, the House has made it clear that they are not going to take up any bill that moves the date to September 30. So that is just the reality we have to deal with. Others may agree with Senator ROUNDS to push it to September 30, but the best information we have is that the other body has no intention of taking up that bill. If that were the case and we were to pass a bill extending to September 30 but the House doesn't take it up, then the spectrum authority expires, and that is bad for everybody. It sends the wrong signal, obviously, as well, to our allies and our competitors.

We just can't afford to risk a lapse of authority. Given the reality of the time constraints we are under, even if the Senate were to pass Senator ROUNDS' bill, we would have a situation where it would be rejected by the House—that is our best judgment—and there would be a lapse in authority, which would be very threatening to the well-being of all of us concerned.

So, on that basis, I offer this objection to the unanimous consent request of my colleague from South Dakota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. ROUNDS. Madam President, I would like to thank my colleague from Vermont for his comments.

I think we all want the same thing. We want the auction authority to be able to move forward. I do believe that it is very appropriate because there are negotiations which are ongoing, but none of them can be completed until the report, the study, is completed on September 30.

If we did a short-term extension, we would simply be back here again. But once again, the Department of Defense finds itself in a position to where once again they are being asked to modify the appeals process in this existing statute, which we already have on the books, and we find ourselves under, as the Senator from Vermont indicates, a very serious time constraint to try to get this done within 60 days.

My question is, If 60 days is good enough, wouldn't it be better to go until the end of the year when we would actually have the data available to make a good decision about whether or not there is the availability of additional spectrum for a sharing or a sale that could be used, perhaps, for 5G, but at the same time, we could be assured would not impact our national defense priorities?

With that, I thank my colleague from Vermont.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 1108

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 1108, to extend the Federal Communications Commission's authority to auction spectrum.

Congress has never let the FCC's spectrum auction authority lapse before, and we can't do it now. As I noted in my earlier comments, spectrum is critical to our modern communications system—something that, actually, Senator ROUNDS has spoken so eloquently to—so we have to keep it going. We need an FCC and an NTIA that respect all Federal incumbent uses of spectrum, especially those uses that protect our national security. Again, I acknowledge the comments of Senator ROUNDS.

As we consider the reauthorization of the FCC's auction authority, it is important to recognize we are entering a really new era in the United States' spectrum strategy. This new strategy has to be comprehensive to ensure our remaining spectrum is put to its highest and best use, and we must ensure we don't impact or interfere with our national security as we try to get further benefits from the civilian sector for spectrum utilization.

H.R. 1108's 2-month extension would allow for the further development of this comprehensive approach. As I mentioned earlier, folks are really working on that, and we don't want to take the pressure off. We want to keep the pedal to the metal and see if they can reach an agreement.

Importantly, H.R. 1108's 2-month extension does not slow down or otherwise limit the Department of Defense's study of the lower 3 gigahertz band under the bipartisan infrastructure law. I just want to reiterate that. The DOD can continue with its study. It will remain on track to complete its study by September 30.

This extension also doesn't change the requirement that any reallocation decisions for the band must wait until after the DOD finishes its study. So there is consensus here that we have to make certain the DOD's national security equities are front and center.

What this extension would do is to ensure that the critical work of our Agencies and wireless ecosystem does continue undisrupted.

Maintaining the FCC's auction authority will allow Congress to work quickly toward developing forward-thinking spectrum policy that both protects our national security and encourages the development of new technologies.

It is very important, especially now that time is of the essence, for us to develop our own spectrum strategy and stay ahead of our competitors. So every month that we stall on a comprehensive spectrum bill is more time for our rivals to get ahead of us.

For all of those reasons, I am asking my colleagues to support H.R. 1108's 2-month extension of the FCC's auction authority as my colleagues and I work toward a comprehensive spectrum legislation package to ensure that the United States continues to lead in spectrum innovation and policy.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1108, which was received from the House and is at the desk; further, 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 South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I appreciate my friend and colleague from Vermont and his offer.

My concern is that the spectrum study, which the Senator has acknowledged, will not be done until September 30. There is no reasonable explanation as to why we would not be able to extend until September 30 the auction capabilities that are available at the present time.

However, there is an appeals process which is very important to the Department of Defense, and every time we have a discussion about the process

moving forward, the risk of an appeals process modifying or being changed is incorporated or at least is being proposed.

For those of us who are very concerned about the ability to protect the very clear and important portions of the spectrum that the Department of Defense utilizes, it is important that there be no modifications to any appeals process between now and September 30. Until such time as we have that available to us, it is simply not appropriate, I believe, to allow for an existing modification or new legislation to be proposed that does not take that into account.

Once again, I don't want to see this lapse either—I would love to see it moved on—but I cannot think of a reason we would not be able to extend the existing auction capabilities of the FCC, the NTIA, and so forth and still protect the spectrum capabilities of the Department of Defense until September 30, at which time the complete report will be available. Until such time, I believe that it would be inappropriate to, once again, have the risk of modifications to any appeals process and any additional legislation that might be included in a further extension.

Therefore, with all due respect, I must object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, just to remark, here is the dilemma we have. Much of what the Senator from South Dakota is saying I agree with, but we have two things that are relevant on a very practical level.

One is the pressure that continues to be brought to bear on the negotiators with the 60-day extension to get a final agreement, which would solve the problems that all of us face and are of concern to the Senator from South Dakota.

The second is a political one. It has been conveyed to us very clearly that the House will not take up anything beyond the 60-day extension. We may think they are wrong, but they have the authority to reject an extension beyond the 60 days. That would result in a lapse in spectrum authority, which would be devastating to all of us and all of the goals we are striving to achieve.

So that is the practical question we face.

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

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

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4355(a), appoints the following Senator to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Military Academy: The Honorable JONI ERNST of Iowa, At Large.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 701

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

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 701) to protect a person's ability to determine whether to continue or end a pregnancy, and to protect a health care provider's ability to provide abortion services.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

PREVENTING CHILD SEX ABUSE ACT OF 2023

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 724, which is at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 724) to protect children against sexual abuse and exploitation, and for other purposes.

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

Ms. HASSAN. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (S. 724) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 724

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Preventing Child Sex Abuse Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

The sense of Congress is the following:

(1) The safety of children should be a top priority for public officials and communities in the United States.

(2) According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, an individual in the United States is sexually assaulted every 68 seconds. And every 9 minutes, that victim is a child. Meanwhile, only 25 out of every 1,000 perpetrators will end up in prison.

(3) The effects of child sexual abuse can be long-lasting and affect the victim's mental health.

(4) Victims are more likely than non-victims to experience the following mental health challenges:

(A) Victims are about 4 times more likely to develop symptoms of drug abuse.

(B) Victims are about 4 times more likely to experience post-traumatic stress disorder as adults.

(C) Victims are about 3 times more likely to experience a major depressive episode as adults.

(5) The criminal justice system should and has acted as an important line of defense to protect children and hold perpetrators accountable.

(6) However, the horrific crimes perpetuated by Larry Nassar demonstrate firsthand the loopholes that still exist in the criminal justice system. While Larry Nassar was found guilty of several State-level offenses, he was not charged federally for his illicit sexual contact with minors, despite crossing State and international borders to commit this conduct.

(7) The Department of Justice has also identified a growing trend of Americans who use charitable or missionary work in a foreign country as a cover for sexual abuse of children.

(8) It is the intent of Congress to prohibit Americans from engaging in sexual abuse or exploitation of minors under the guise of work, including volunteer work, with an organization that affects interstate or foreign commerce, such as an international charity.

(9) Federal law does not require that an abuser's intention to engage in sexual abuse be a primary, significant, dominant, or motivating purpose of the travel.

(10) Child sexual abuse does not require physical contact between the abuser and the child. This is especially true as perpetrators turn increasingly to internet platforms, online chat rooms, and webcams to commit child sexual abuse.

(11) However, a decision of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit found the use of a webcam to engage in sexually provocative activity with a minor did not qualify as ''sexual activity''.

(12) Congress can address this issue by amending the definition of the term ''sexual activity'' to clarify that it does not require interpersonal, physical contact.

(13) It is the duty of Congress to provide clearer guidance to ensure that those who commit crimes against children are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

SEC. 3. INTERSTATE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.

Section 2423 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking ''with a motivating purpose of engaging in any illicit sexual conduct with another person'' and inserting ''with intent to engage in any illicit sexual conduct with another person'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (e), (f), (g), and (i), respectively;

(3) in subsection (e), as so redesignated, by striking ''with a motivating purpose of engaging in any illicit sexual conduct'' and inserting ''with intent to engage in any illicit sexual conduct''; and

(4) by inserting after subsection (g), as so redesignated, the following:

''(h) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—As used in this section, the term 'intent' shall be construed as any intention to engage in illicit sexual conduct at the time of the travel.''.

SEC. 4. ABUSE UNDER THE GUISE OF CHARITY.

Section 2423 of title 18, United States Code, as amended by section 3 of this Act, is amended—

(1) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

''(d) ILLICIT SEXUAL CONDUCT IN CONNECTION WITH CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS.—Any citizen of the United States or alien admitted for permanent residence who—

''(1) is an officer, director, employee, or agent of an organization that affects interstate or foreign commerce;

''(2) makes use of the mails or any means or instrumentality of interstate or foreign commerce through the connection or affiliation of the person with such organization; and

''(3) commits an act in furtherance of illicit sexual conduct through the connection or affiliation of the person with such organization,

shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not more than 30 years, or both.'';

(2) in subsection (f), as so redesignated, by striking ''or (d)'' and inserting ''(d), or (e)''; and

(3) in subsection (i), as so redesignated, by striking ''(f)(2)'' and inserting ''(g)(2)''.

SEC. 5. SEXUAL ACTIVITY WITH MINORS.

Section 2427 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''does not require interpersonal physical contact, and'' before ''includes''.

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JAMES THOMAS BROYHILL, FORMER SENATOR FOR THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 100, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 100) to honor the life and death of James Thomas Broyhill, former Senator for the State of North Carolina.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. HASSAN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 100) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2023

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned under the provisions of S. Res. 100 until 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 9; 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 following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Werfel nomination postcloture; further, that all postcloture time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination followed by confirmation of the Simmons nomination; further, that following disposition of the Simmons nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the Kahn nomination and at 1:45 p.m. vote on confirmation of that 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 actions.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator SULLIVAN.

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

The Senator from Alaska.

WILLOW PROJECT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I am coming to the floor for the final time to give remarks about the Willow Project. I will explain it a little bit in my remarks.

The President is getting ready to make a decision—a huge decision—on a big project in Alaska—really, an inflection point for our State's future. He is likely to make that decision any day. So I am just going to come down and kind of wrap up the arguments that we have been making.

I really want to thank a number of folks: Senator MURKOWSKI, of course, who, with me—we have been focused on this issue for 2 years, the entire time of the Biden administration—2 years, arguments every day, including a meeting with the President last week, last Thursday; Congresswoman PELTOLA, who has done a really strong job in this regard, particularly in the meeting last week with the President. Some of my Democratic colleagues have been weighing in on this project. I really appreciate that. I know it takes a lot of courage.

I am going to talk about some of the far-left lower 48 environmental groups that don't support it based on nothing—no facts, no data. But stand up to them, go to the White House and say: Come on, Mr. President. Come on, Biden administration. You have to make sure Alaska has this.

So my Democrat colleagues, I am not going to name you. I don't want to get you in trouble or anything, but thank you. I really, really appreciate this.

As I mentioned, we had a meeting with the President last week, and, at the beginning of the meeting, in addition to handing the President a unanimous resolution from the entire Alaska Legislature—the entire State senate, the entire State house; Democrats, Republicans, Independents; Native, non-Native—all passed a resolution saying to the Biden administration: Please support the Willow Project.

There were three pads. I handed that to the President. I also handed him this map that describes really the context, as I said to the President, of what is happening in Alaska under this administration.

I was respectful. We were in the Oval Office. Of course, you are going to be respectful with the President and his team. The Oval Office is a very historic place, obviously. But I said, respectfully: Mr. President, in every region of the State, every industry—oil, gas, mining, hunting, fishing; you name it—there have been 45 Executive orders and Executive actions—it is now 46; there has been another one since the meeting we had last week—looking to shut down Alaska. It is exhausting, to be honest. No other State is getting that kind of attention.

I walked through some of these, but I just, again, respectfully, wanted the President to know, and that is it. Every time we meet with senior White House officials and say—these are the days we have met with senior White House officials—''Hey, how about a ceasefire?'' we just get more, more.

There is no other State in the country getting this kind of attention. It is unwanted attention. As I have told many of my Democratic colleagues, hey, if a Republican administration came after you like this, singling your State out, putting thousands of people out of work, and you came to me and said, ''Hey, Dan, could you help me?'' I would help you. Every Democrat here knows I would help you. So I appreciate the help that we are getting.

That was the context of the meeting. Again, it was respectful. We appreciated it. We had over an hour with the President and his team. He is a busy, busy man, the leader of the free world. So we appreciated that.

(Ms. HASSAN assumed the Chair.)

I was also recently down in Houston at this very big energy conference called CERAWeek. To be honest, it is not an exaggeration to say that all eyes are on the Willow Project because, essentially, the question that is being posed in our energy sector is this. There was a very good Wall Street Journal editorial last week calling the Willow Project the test for Biden. This editorial lead by saying that the ''President . . . says the only barrier to more U.S. oil production is recalcitrant'' companies.

OK, a lot of us don't believe that, by the way. So here is an opportunity to say: Is that true or not? Because if the Biden administration—the President—approves Willow tonight, ConocoPhillips will start moving people to build it tomorrow. We are ready. The State is ready. The private sector is ready.

So I think that is the key question, and it was the key question down in

CERAWeek, the biggest energy conference probably in the world, with almost 8,000 attendees.

This is a really important question, not just for Alaska but for America.

I think the key arguments here are, given the President's priorities, what the President emphasizes, what he and his administration talk about. The Willow Project is actually exactly the kind of project President Biden and his team should support because it reinforces so many things that they talk about and care about.

Let me just mention four of those.

No. 1, which, of course, is really important, is that this project has the highest environmental standards of any major energy project in the world, by far. It is not even a close call. How do we know this? Because the Biden administration's own environmental impact statement, which came out a month ago, says this. It says this.

The Trump administration passed this project in their environmental reviews with flying colors. Then, it was five pads. The Biden administration's EIS, or environmental impact statement, took it down to three. We didn't really like that, but that is about the minimum it could go. And they explained in this administration's own environmental impact statement—the scientists, the career staff were saying things like that the greenhouse gas emissions would be ''minimal,'' not a climate bomb like these lower 48 far-left groups keep talking about—minimal.

Here is the number: Emissions from this project, according to President Biden's own environmental impact statement, 0.15 percent, the 2019 emission levels. And they call it ''minimal.''

They also said if you don't do the Willow Project, the market substitution analysis in the Biden administration's own EIS says that, then, we will likely—we, America—have to go to other countries—Saudi Arabia, Venezuela—to get oil, and their environmental records and standards are so bad that the emissions globally from not doing this project will actually rise.

That is in the EIS.

I have talked about the high standards for Alaska with regard to the high standards in the world and the impacts on the environment.

By the way, this project is next to existing infrastructure. So you don't have to build a lot of infrastructure. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline, just plug it in.

This has the highest environmental standards in the world. How do I know that? Because the Biden administration's environmental impact statement lays it out in about 1,500 pages. That is one very important argument that fits with the Biden administration's priorities.

Let me give you another one. The Biden administration frequently talks about racial equity, racial justice, environmental justice for people of color, indigenous people. They talk about that all the time. The indigenous people in my State overwhelmingly support this project. There are a few people—and that happens in every State, in every country—who are opposed. They are getting a lot of press, by the way. But the vast majority of the people, the First Nations' people, the Alaska Native people in our State, strongly support this.

We held a press conference last week here in the Capitol. Some of the most famous Alaska Native leaders in our State's history flew thousands of miles just to be here to support this.

So all this rhetoric from the administration on racial equity, racial justice is going to be very empty if they say: Do you know what? We are going to choose the Center for Biological Diversity and Greenpeace's priorities in the lower 48 over the priorities of the people who live there.

I want to go into this a little bit deeper. This is a quote from the Voice of the Arctic Inupiat. This is a group of Tribes and Native leaders, a really broad-based group of the people who live where this project would be. Here is a quote from Nagruk Harcharek:

> Outside activist groups opposing Willow have drowned out local perspective—

That is for sure—

> and are actively working to supersede the views of the Alaska Native people.

That is for sure.

> This is not environmental justice or any kind of justice. It is a direct attack on Alaska Native self-determination.

Some of our Native leaders last week were saying: Do you know what really is infuriating? These lower 48 environmental groups that are all driving the opposition of this project, are trying to tell Alaska Natives who have lived in Alaska for thousands and thousands of years how to live and what is good for them.

Do you know what some of our Native leaders are starting to call this? The second wave of colonialism, eco-colonialism. Condescending lower 48 environmental groups that don't know anything about Alaska are coming up to our State and telling the Native people how to live—eco-colonialism. By the way, that topic came up in the Oval Office meeting.

The administration is going to listen to lower 48 environmental groups that condescendingly tell Alaska Native people how to live? That is certainly not racial equity. That is certainly not racial justice. That is the definition of eco-colonialism, and I hope that they are not going to go there.

One other area, another great group of Americans, whom I love to talk about on the floor who support this project, are the great men and women who build things in America. There has been no better champion of that in the entire country than the president of the Laborers, my good friend, Terry O'Sullivan, who, just 2 days ago, wrote another letter to the President. He has been such a great advocate. The Laborers are the greatest construction union in America.

This project will create 2,500 jobs, 75 percent of which are union jobs, building trade jobs.

Madam President, I would like to submit for the RECORD another great letter from Terry O'Sullivan. This one is dated March 6, 2023, to the President of the United States. I ask unanimous consent to have the letter printed in the RECORD.

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

MARCH 6, 2023.

President JOSEPH R. BIDEN,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT BIDEN: I write to once again express my support for the ConocoPhillips' Willow Project and express concern over recent reports on the Administration's upcoming decision. Recent reports indicate that Administration officials are considering approving the project however limiting its scope to only two (2) of the proposed Pads currently under consideration. I want to be clear, a limited approval like this is, in fact, a rejection of the project.

Proponents of this approach are displaying the kind of con-game that has American voters and LIUNA members turning away established political norms and embracing the hyper-partisan extremism that our country seems to be lurching toward uncontrollably.

Alaska's Willow Project will develop a domestic source for the United States' energy portfolio, benefit local communities, and put skilled union laborers to work. The project will be built primarily through U.S.-sourced materials and create over 1,800 union construction jobs with long-term, family-sustaining careers for Alaskan workers, a state with the fourth-highest unemployment rate in the country.

The project's peak production of over 180,000 barrels per day of responsibly produced domestic oil will reduce our Nation's dependence on foreign energy supplies which often come from nations that are only nominal allies or are hostile to the interests of the United States. Additionally, our imported oil comes from countries or regions of the world with some of the worst human rights violations and where environmental standards are either sub-par or lacking altogether.

Experienced union workers are trained for the exacting, detailed work needed to ensure compliance with Willow's strict environmental protection requirements to safeguard the Alaskan tundra and its wildlife. After years of collaboration between ConocoPhillips, government agencies, Alaska Native corporations, communities and the public, the comprehensive project plans ensure Willow will be produced with the strongest environmental and social standards.

With roughly 75% of Willow's North Slope installation work hours slated to occur over five years, this union workforce will continue to grow, creating family-sustaining careers with good pay and benefits. In the North Slope, schools, clinics, and essential services are almost entirely funded by oil and gas production. Willow will generate over $10 billion in public revenue, and 50% of federal royalties will go towards local grants there to improve public resources for North Slope communities and the indigenous population that live there.

With significant stakeholder input and a lengthy and exhaustive review process completed, it is clear that this project is widely supported in the State of Alaska and the local communities that share the land with this project. It is time to listen to local leaders, workers, and residents and reject the game-playing that press reports indicate is happening behind the scenes in the Administration.

Your personal commitment to American workers has been exemplary. Please do not allow the opinions of those who are against domestic energy production and are indifferent to American workers, steer you in the wrong direction on this important decision. If the Administration decides to limit the scope of the approval, it will be a decision to kill this project. LIUNA members, their families, and the citizens of Alaska will understand this fact.

I implore you to keep your commitment to a rational energy policy that allows for the responsible development of domestic energy resources while the Nation transitions to a lower-emission economy.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

TERRY O'SULLIVAN,
General President.

Mr. SULLIVAN. So I am just going to read a few lines from this letter. But Terry O'Sullivan is a very astute man. He has seen what is happening in Washington this past couple of weeks.

Here is what he said:

Administration officials are considering . . . limiting [Willow's] scope to only two of the proposed Pads.

By the way, there is no environmental analysis of that at all in the EIS in the Trump administration or the Biden administration. So if they do that, it won't be based on any science, any data.

I want to be clear—

Said Terry O'Sullivan—

a limited approval like this [of two pads] is, in fact, a rejection of the project.

This is what we have told the President. This is what we have told his team many, many times. They know that.

Proponents of this approach are displaying the kind of con-game that has American voters and LIUNA—

That is the laborers—

members turning away [from] established political norms.

So this great American, Terry O'Sullivan, he is a working man. He leads working men and women. He is saying: Don't play these games. Two pads is a denial. That was our respectful message last week.

What else did Terry O'Sullivan have to say in his final letter to the President?

It is time to listen to local leaders [check] workers [for sure] and residents and reject the game-playing that the press reports indicate is happening behind the scenes in the Administration.

[K]eep your commitments [Biden administration] to a rational energy policy that allows for the responsible development of domestic energy resources while the Nation transitions to a lower-emission economy.

Terry O'Sullivan, once again, Madam President, weighing in. I can't thank him enough, Sean McGarvey, the building trades.

By the way, when we held this press conference last week, every union in Alaska supports this project. The trades, of course, but all the public unions, every single union, 100 percent.

Now, again, this administration likes to talk about: Hey, we really care about the working men and women, the men and women who build things, the unions. OK. OK. Let's see where you are on Willow.

Finally, Madam President, I want to talk about an issue that, again, came up in the Oval Office, and that is just the foreign policy ramifications of this upcoming decision.

We are in a new era of authoritarian aggression that I talk about a lot. The brutal dictators Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, and this guy Maduro in Venezuela, they are on the march. But the one thing they fear almost more than anything is American energy power. Read the reporting. Xi Jinping is scared to death, the dictator of Beijing, scared to death of American energy power. So is Putin, by the way.

So in the last 2 years—because, like I said, Senator MURKOWSKI and I have been raising this issue about daily—I have asked in dozens of hearings on the Armed Services Committee, military experts, Biden administration officials, Biden administration military members: Do you think it matters and do you think it is good for our national security if we have more energy in a project like this?

By the way, Willow, at max production, will produce about 200,000 barrels a day.

Every single official in this administration who deals with national security, for 2 years—for 2 years—has said yes. Not one has said no.

Now, I am not going to name names. I don't want to get anybody in trouble. But it is obvious. This is one of the great strengths of our Nation. And our adversaries—the dictator in Moscow and the dictator in Beijing—fear it.

So why do I have this slide up? There is something going on right now that is unbelievable. And every time I have asked anybody and I have raised it with anybody in this administration, they look at me with a blank stare and don't answer my question.

My question is this. This administration came in; they wanted to limit the production of American energy. I fully disagree with that approach, but what happened?

Well, the predictable result happened. If you limit supply, prices go up. So prices on energy have gone up on working families for the last 2 years like this. We all know it. Inflation like this.

So what have they been doing? They have been going overseas begging other countries to produce more oil and then poured it into America. Now, why on Earth would you do that when you can do it here?

So the latest and greatest—they did it in Saudi Arabia. They were rejected, by the way. They were flirting with Iran. My goodness, the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, and you are flirting with those guys, with the blood of American soldiers on their hands? Ridiculous. But they went to Venezuela after the election, and they said: Let's lift sanctions on you.

So we are now importing over 100,000 barrels a day from Venezuela. Can you believe that? That is a fact. Venezuela pollutes—in its processes to produce oil, it is a production and greenhouse gas emission process that is 18 times—with an ''x'' times—more polluting than in America and certainly way more polluting—probably 30 times more than the great State of Alaska's Willow Project.

So if you really care about the environment, why did you just lift sanctions on one of the dirtiest producers in the world? They are a terrorist regime. They have a horrible human rights record, a horrible worker rights record, a well-known U.S. adversary, and we are already importing 100,000 barrels a day from them—just started. And we don't want to produce in Alaska, with the highest standards in the world on the environment and workers?

So when I ask the question why would we do that and not let us produce in the great State of Alaska, like I said, I have never gotten an answer to that question. So, hopefully, the answer is going to be: Well, we are going to help the great State of Alaska with this Willow Project.

Do it because, right now, Madam President, with regard to energy policy, my State is being treated worse than a terrorist regime. And that is not hyperbole. That is a fact.

So in my final appeal before this decision is made, respectfully asking this administration: This is exactly the kind of project that we think should be easily supported by this administration, given their priorities—the highest standards in the world on the environment, no doubt about it; the lowest greenhouse gas emissions—negligible, according to the President's own EIS; racial equity; racial justice.

The Native people of Alaska want this. Listen to them. Don't listen to the ecoterrorists down in the lower 48, coastal elites who don't know anything about Alaska and are trying to tell the Native people how to live their lives—insulting, by the way. Don't listen to the ecoterrorists. Listen to the great union members like Terry O'Sullivan, all of whose members support and help enhance the national security of America with strong energy policy in the great State of Alaska.

I hope the Biden administration does the right thing. So many of my colleagues have helped. I want to thank Senator MURKOWSKI again for her relentless, relentless advocacy on this with me.

We will see. Big stuff for America. Giant stuff for my State. I hope they do the right thing for our country, for our workers, for the Native people, for our national security.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, pursuant to S. Res. 100, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 9, and does so as a further mark of respect to the late James Thomas Broyhill, former Senator from North Carolina.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:08 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 9, 2023, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate March 8, 2023:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

PATRICE H. KUNESH, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF THE ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE HONORABLE MAYOR MARY ANNE WARDLOW

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend Borough of Lawnside resident Mayor Mary Ann Wardlow.

Mayor Mary Ann Wardlow is the first woman to be elected Mayor in the Borough of Lawnside and has served the people of the Borough of Lawnside for more than 25 years. She was taught to protect and care for her community as if they were family. A virtue passed down through generations of her family that planted the seeds of service within her life at a young age. Some of her earliest forms of service began during her time in the Girl Scouts where she volunteered as a child.

Over the span of the last 46 years, Mayor Wardlow has resided in the Borough of Lawnside with her husband Earl Wardlow where they raised a family. During her 27 years of service to the Borough of Lawnside as a member of the Borough Council, Mayor Wardlow sat on several council committees as well as the board of the Mount Peace Cemetery.

Mayor Wardlow's history is written with examples of collaboration with her fellow council members and the integral role she played in securing funding for community projects such as the borough's Wayne R. Bryant Senior Citizens Recreational building and public works. Under her leadership, the Borough of Lawnside has successfully enlarged their Department of Public Works, built-upon their Police Department and obtained voter support of the community's children. In the face of food insecurity, Mayor Mary Anne Wardlow was able to court ShopRite following the closing of supermarket company Pathmark's location in the borough.

Today, Mayor Mary Ann Wardlow tries diligently to live up to the image that her mother had planted into her heart as a child. Throughout her career, she has played an integral role in registration of thousands of voters and continues to serve those around her in a way she herself would wish to be represented. Her strong advocacy and work to promote the access and right for people to vote will surely be acknowledged and referenced for the future generations of public servants in Camden County.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring and commending Mayor Mary Anne Wardlow of the Borough of Lawnside, New Jersey, a resident dedicated to her community and who has thoroughly served them to the best of her ability.

HONORING ANTHONY LOWE, JR., A LIFE OF JOY GONE TOO SOON

HON. SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Anthony Lowe, Jr., a doting father, uncle, brother, son, and friend, who was tragically killed earlier this year at the hands of the Huntington Park Police. Today, I stand here to honor Mr. Lowe's life and the joy he brought to his loved ones and to the South Los Angeles community.

The center of Mr. Lowe's life was family. He was a loving, caring father to his children and never hesitated to crack a joke to cheer them up. Mr. Lowe was committed to keeping his family strong. Whether he was helping his nieces and nephews with their schoolwork or taking his children to the park, Mr. Lowe was always there to support his family and friends. He spread his infectious joy easily, always laughing, dancing, and bringing positive energy to those around him.

Mr. Lowe was close with his mother and sisters. He looked out for others and jumped at the chance to helped loved ones. His laughter and kindness are what I hope he will be remembered by.

We should be celebrating Mr. Lowe's sincere love for his family and friends and his devotion to his children. Instead, we must confront the tragedy of his death at the hands of our police.

Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to recognize the life of Anthony Lowe ended under these circumstances. Today, I rise to honor the memory of Mr. Lowe and to reaffirm my commitment to working to eliminate police brutality and injustice.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VOTE AT HOME ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Oregon has led the nation in defending the right to vote, which is the very cornerstone of our democracy. Vote at home laws have been extremely successful at increasing voter turnout all while upholding strong security standards. That is why today I introduced the Vote at Home Act.

This legislation will bring Oregon's model nationwide and strengthen the fundamental right to vote that is so central to our democratic process. Nearly 50 percent of voters used a vote-at-home ballot in the November 2020 election, an all-time high in federal races. It is time to build on the innovative electoral reforms expanding access to the right to vote.

The Vote at Home Act updates the Vote by Mail Act, which I first introduced with Senator Wyden in 2017, to promote the ability of voters to vote by mail, expand options for casting ballots, fund the U.S. Postal Service by covering the costs associated with mailing ballots both to and from voters in federal elections, and enact automatic voter registration. Under this legislation, all registered voters would receive ballots in the mail weeks before Election Day, allowing them to carefully research candidates and issues ahead of Election Day to inform their vote. States would be required to ensure that each citizen who provides identifying information to the state motor vehicle authority is automatically registered to vote. Voters are given 21 days to opt out if they do not wish to be registered to vote.

This crucial legislation is a nation-wide effort and is endorsed by voting rights groups including Common Cause, Fair Fight Action, Demand Progress, End Citizens United, Sojourners, Stand Up America, and People for the American Way.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to enact this legislation and finally establish access to voting at home nationwide.

HONORING SPELLING BEE CHAMPION ROBERTO ORTIZ

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the winner of the 35th annual Rio Grande Valley Regional Spelling Bee, Roberto ''Robbie'' Ortiz from Brownsville's Incarnate Word Academy.

In a contest that determines who would represent the Rio Grande Valley in the Scripps National Spelling Bee right here in Washington, D.C. this May, Robbie Ortiz outlasted 41 other spellers to bring home the regional championship and trophy.

While the Ortiz family is no stranger to the Rio Grande Valley Regional Spelling Bee, as his sister had previously finished in 2nd place, it was the correct spelling of ''bastion'' and ''crustaceans'' that confirmed his win. I want to take this time to thank all the other contestants, parents, and educators that made this event possible, as well as the second-place finisher, Diego Reyna Oviedo, from IDEA College Preparatory-McAllen, and third place finisher, Luke Holt, of Port Isabel Junior High.

It takes tremendous dedication, preparation, and training to win a competition like this, and I am thrilled that his hard work paid off and came to fruition with this victory. I cannot wait to see everything that Robbie accomplishes next.

I look forward to welcoming Robbie to Washington in May, and I can say with certainty that I, along with the entire Rio Grande Valley, will be behind him.

APPRECIATING AMERICAN ALLY CZECH REPUBLIC

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker as the incoming chairman of the Helsinki Commission Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, I was grateful for the delegation led by out-going Chairman STEVE COHEN as a bi-partisan delegation to Prague, Czech Republic.

Welcomed by U.S. Embassy Senior Officer Grant Morrow the delegation met Prime Minister Peter Fiala learning the Czech Republic was among the first to send defensive weapons to Ukraine to stop war criminal Putin. While meeting with Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky there was gratitude for the Czech Republic being a determined friend of Taiwan enduring opposition from the Chinese Communist Party.

America is represented by dynamic Ambassador Bijan Sabet and his wife Lauren. His unique Iranian-Korean heritage is a tribute to success in America. A visit to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty was inspiring to meet journalists bringing truth to people oppressed in Europe and Asia, which had been so successful for Cold War victory liberating dozens of countries from communism.

The progress of the Czech Republic was underscored by Delegation Member LLOYD DOGGETT who toured Communist Czechoslovakia in 1986. He explained Prague then was drab, sad, and depressing in contrast to now a vibrant, capitalist modern capital. It is amazing that the Czech Republic and Slovakia are examples of post-communist opportunity for all families to achieve to the highest of their abilities.

The Czech Republic is a valued American ally as democracies with Rule of Law confront authoritarians with Rule of Gun.

SUPPORTING INCREASED FUNDING FOR TRIPLE-NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER SCREENING

HON. LUCY McBATH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of increased funding for screening and treatment of triple negative breast cancer. As both a mother and a two-time breast cancer survivor, this work is very personal to me.

Twice, I learned from my doctor that I had cancer. Twice, I went through a rigorous treatment plan. Twice, I've been fortunate enough to call myself a survivor. And I thank God because I am one of the lucky ones. I had access to great health insurance. I was blessed to have a health insurance plan and receive top-notch care. At no point was I forced to wonder if I could afford my treatment. I was able to focus on the strength of my family, the grace of God, and my battle with cancer.

However, women with triple-negative breast cancer often face a worse prognosis and limited treatment options. This is why we need to increase funding for screening and treatment of this disease. We need to find better ways to detect it early and to develop new treatments that will give women with triple-negative breast cancer a fighting chance.

But funding for research is not enough. We also need to ensure equity and access to treatment for all women with breast cancer, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. Women from marginalized communities often face barriers to accessing care, and we must work to break down those barriers.

No woman should have to fight breast cancer alone, and no woman should be denied the care she needs because of where she comes from or how much money she makes. We must come together as a community to ensure that all women have access to the care and treatment they need.

I urge my fellow lawmakers to join me in supporting increased funding for triple-negative breast cancer screening and ensuring equity and access to care for all women with breast cancer. Together, we can make a difference and save lives.

HONORING THE HONORABLE MASTER SERGEANT GEORGE D. CATHIE

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend Winslow Township resident The Honorable Master Sergeant George D. Cathie Winslow Town Hall Honoree.

Originally born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Master Sergeant George D. Cathie has resided in Sicklerville, New Jersey for more than forty years. A veteran of the United States Army, he served 24 years total; 6 years of active duty from 1961 to 1967 followed by 18 years of active reserve. Over the span of 27 years Master Sergeant George D. Cathie worked for Philadelphia Gas Works stepping into different roles such as a Gas Maker, Foreman Worker, Forman Gas Supply, and Shift Superintendent.

Master Sergeant George D. Cathie served in Vietnam for 6 years and was in the first unit to encounter combat in Vietnam, known as the Big Red One. He served as a First Sergeant of the Intelligence and Surveillance Company of the Military Intelligence Battalion. He was honorably discharged after reaching the rank of Master Sergeant or E–8 and during his active duty service he was stationed at Fort Riley Kansas, Fort Bragg and Fort Dix. During his final 18 years of active reserve, he was stationed at Camp Pedricktown Army Air Defense Command Post.

Master Sergeant George D. Cathie was a recipient of fifteen medals and ribbons during his time in the Army, including the Army Service Ribbon, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the National Defense Ribbon and many more throughout his years of service.

During his time in the service Master Sergeant George D. Cathie received specialized training as a Licensed Radio Telephone Operator, Second Class. In 1995 he began the Electronics Service Technician Certification program at Lincoln Technical Institute in Pennsauken Township, New Jersey from and completed in 1996. Master Sergeant George D. Cathie also earned an Associates Degree of Science at the University of New York, as well as Camden County College.

Today, Master Sergeant George D. Cathie is an active member of Sergeant Ron Stewart VFW Post No. 303 and resides in Winslow Township, New Jersey with his wife Cassandra Cathie. He is the father of 3 children, Kimberly Cathie-Williamson who served 7 years in the United States Army; George D. Cathie Jr. who served 4 years in United States Marine Corps; and Tracy Land. He has been heavily impacted by his brother Gerald who served 4 years in the United States Navy as well as his grandchildren Jarrel, Brandy, Danielle, Chantel and Marcel; Jarrel also having served in the United States Army for 2 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring and commending Master Sergeant George D. Cathie of Winslow Township, New Jersey, a resident dedicated to his family, community, country, and those who have bravely served and protected the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL TERCH

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Lieutenant Michael Terch for his 25 years of service with the Garden City Fire Department in Michigan's 12th District Strong.

Lieutenant Terch began his career with Garden City in 1998 when he split his time working for multiple municipal fire departments until he joined the Garden City Fire Department as a full-time firefighter and paramedic. Lieutenant Terch was promoted to Engineer in 2012 and to Lieutenant in 2019. In 2020 he completed the EMS Fire Staff and Command class.

In addition to his service to the public, Lieutenant Terch served on the IAFF Local 1911 Union board in many roles over the years. He has served as a trustee, secretary, and 9 years as the union president having been elected twice. He is the founding member of the union's charity golf outing that ran successfully for 17 years and has been involved with the IAFF MDA's Fill the Boot charity event.

Please join me in recognizing Lieutenant Michael Terch for his 25 years of outstanding service to the people of Garden City in Michigan's 12th District Strong as we wish him well on his next endeavor.

HONORING THE DEPARTURE OF AMBASSADOR ARTHUR SINODINOS

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the occasion of the departure of a true friend to the United States, the Honorable

Australian Ambassador Arthur Sinodinos. On March 18, 2023, Mr. Sinodinos is to step down as Australian Ambassador to the United States after more than three years of service in this role. He has been an extraordinary public servant who has strengthened the bridge between the United States and our Indo-Pacific ally through 2 U.S. administrations and a global pandemic.

Mr. Sinodinos history in public service extends far beyond his time as Australian Ambassador. Upon his graduation from the University of New Castle in 1979, he immediately picked up work in the federal civil service of the Albanese government, transitioning between rising roles in both the Department of Finance and Treasury. Throughout these years, Mr. Sinodinos had proven his skill in both policy and process, and he ultimately joined the Howard Administration as Chief of Staff upon Prime Minister John Howard's election in 1996. Notably, Mr. Sinodinos worked as the senior advisor to the leader of Australia's Liberal Party near through to the conclusion of Prime Minister Howard's tenure, leaving the government in 2006.

After a brief stint in the private sector, Mr. Sinodinos joined the Australian Senate in 2011, representing his home state of New South Wales. He earned reelection to the Senate in 2013, and worked in several cabinet positions throughout this tenure of public service including Minister of Industry, Innovation and Science. Though he was one of the stronger voices in the Liberal Party, Mr. Sinodinos maintained a respected reputation across both sides of the aisle until his time in the Senate ended in 2019.

That brings us to 2020, Mr. Speaker, when Mr. Sinodinos was appointed to the position of Australian Ambassador. With more than 4 decades of experience advancing the interests of the Australian people, a more suitable person could not have been chosen to strengthen the already immense partnership formed between our 2 democratic nations.

As co-chair of the Friends of Australia Caucus, Chairman and more recently Ranking Member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, I have had the opportunity to work closely with Ambassador Sinodinos on a number of bilateral priorities, including leading a bipartisan group of members to advocate for closer digital trade partnerships between the United States and Australia.

Our degree of coordination exploded into a new era in 2021, with the joint announcement of the Australia-United Kingdom-United States (AUKUS) alliance, geared toward ensuring security and the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region. Upon the formation of this alliance, here in Congress we also established the bipartisan AUKUS Working Group to highlight legislative opportunities that will prioritize the efficacy of the alignment. Ambassador Sinodinos has been a tenacious advocate throughout each of our endeavors together, and was tremendous in supporting our legislative priorities on AUKUS including the first ever legislative action to allow Australian submariners to attend Nuclear Power School in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Sinodinos' presence in the United States has been a testament to the unique bond between our nation and Australia. It will be absolutely critical that those who follow in his footsteps engage with the same degree of sincerity and hard work. As Mr. Sinodinos, his wife, Elizabeth, and their three children embark on the next chapter of their lives, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in thanking them for their long line of service.

HONORING KEENAN DARNELL ANDERSON, A LIFE LOST TOO SOON

HON. SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Keenan Darnell Anderson. Mr. Anderson was a father, a life partner to his fiancée, a teacher, and a proud Angeleno. Mr. Anderson was taken from us earlier this year by the brutality and violence of the LAPD. Today, we stand here to honor Mr. Anderson's life, legacy, and contributions to his family and his city.

Mr. Anderson grew up in Los Angeles and from a young age, demonstrated his commitment to his family across Southern California. He was known as the "life of the party," always livening up family cookouts and picnics. Mr. Anderson was a linchpin of his close-knit family. From the time that he was young, Mr. Anderson knew he wanted to dedicate his life to helping others. In college, he focused this dedication on a career in law enforcement, double majoring in criminal justice and sociology. Later, he translated this desire to do good for the world into educating, earning a graduate degree in education.

Mr. Anderson's passion for teaching led him to dedicate his career to educating his community's youth. As a teacher, he taught English to juniors and seniors in high school and even chaired the English department. Mr. Anderson was also invested in the creativity of his students, teaching drama classes that served as an introduction to the arts to many Angeleno youth. He was also a charismatic member of his church where he led family game nights and injected his infectious energy and enthusiasm.

At the time of his untimely death, Mr. Anderson had just moved to Washington, D.C. to teach at Digital Pioneers Academy. Washington, D.C. will forever miss out on the contributions, energy, and inspiration he could have brought to the young people here.

Washington, D.C. students are not the only ones that will forever miss Mr. Anderson. He is survived by his fiancée, Domonique, to whom he was deeply devoted, and his 5 year-old son, Syncere. Mr. Anderson doted on his son, proud to be a father and proud to have his son by side. Mr. Anderson's wrongful murder robbed Syncere of years with his father. On February 7, 2023, Domonique joined me as my guest at the State of the Union, where we continued to highlight the unjust and tragic death of this doting and dedicated father, partner, friend, educator, and member of my community.

Today, we should be celebrating Mr. Anderson's great achievements as a father and a teacher, and the strength and resilience he imbued in his communities. Instead, we must confront the tragedy of his murder at the hands of the LAPD.

Mr. Speaker, this commemoration of the life of Keenan Anderson, a life gone too soon, adds yet another name to America's tainted legacy of violence against the Black community at the hands of individuals charged with protecting and serving. I honor the memory of Mr. Anderson and commit to working to eliminate the inhumane violence and brutality that took him from us too soon.

HONORING AND CELEBRATING DR. ANTONIA PANTOJA

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on International's Women Day to honor and celebrate in memoriam Dr. Antonia Pantoja, a Puerto Rican educator, social worker, organizer, prolific author, and resilient social justice activist. Her contributions to the Puerto Rican community and American society are immeasurable.

From a humble upbringing on the outskirts of San Juan, Barrio Obrero, Puerto Rico—Dr. Pantoja emerged as one of the most vocal and passionate advocates for the Puerto Rican Diaspora, inspiring and guiding emerging leaders in New York City since the 1960's. Believing that education and cultural pride were crucial to healing and lifting the community out of poverty, she committed her life to the difficult and necessary awakening of public consciousness. She was a key figure in the fight to resolve the educational and social injustices plaguing the Puerto Rican community in New York. Her contributions were many and include the establishment of bilingual and culturally relevant education in New York and across the U.S.

Despite growing up impoverished, she was a determined student and grateful for the opportunity to pursue her education. She received a teaching certificate from the University of Puerto Rico in 1942.

In 1944, at the age of 22, she emigrated to New York City to further her education. She landed her first job as a wartime welder where she quickly helped form a union that negotiated better work conditions for employees. The seeds of grass-roots activism, that she learned from her grandfather, a union organizer for a tobacco company, would become part of the basic tools for her future work.

Antonia graduated from Hunter College (1952) with a bachelor's degree in Sociology. She went on to earn a Master's Degree from Columbia University School of Social Work (1954) and her Ph.D. from Union Graduate School in Cincinnati, Ohio (1973).

Early organizing work led to the founding of the Hispanic American Youth Association (HAYA) in 1957 to address the unmet education, healthcare, and employment needs of her community. Shortly thereafter, the organization was renamed the Puerto Rican Association of Community Affairs (PRACA) to address the unique plight of the Puerto Rican Diaspora.

In 1961, Dr. Antonia Pantoja and a group of Puerto Rican educators and professionals created ASPIRA to address the exceedingly high drop-out rate and low educational attainment of Puerto Rican youth. Sparked by the high dropout rates and low educational attainment of Puerto Rican children, Dr. Pantoja worked

with ASPIRA of New York to sue the NYC Board of Education (1974). They were successful, and the resulting consent decree is considered a major landmark in the establishment of bilingual education in the United States.

Dr. Pantoja helped establish some of the most influential stateside organizations of the time including the National Puerto Rican Forum (1957), ASPIRA (1961), Universidad Boricua, the precursor of Boricua College (1970), and the Graduate School for Community Development (1978) in San Diego. In addition, she established Producir (1984) and Provivienda (1985) in Puerto Rico. The Graduate School for Community Development incorporated her more comprehensive and well formulated understanding of community development and the need to include economic development, art and culture in the development of community. Utilizing these experiences, she then, with her partner, Dr. Wilhelmina Perry, worked with local residents to develop an organization that had a strong economic component to foster local businesses among the women and the farmers. This organization was formed in a rural mountain town in Canovanas, Puerto Rico. Provivienda, a second corporation emanating from Producir, further focused these ideas on low-income housing in Puerto Rico.

Since its formation over 62 years ago, ASPIRA has grown from a small nonprofit agency in New York City to a national association with statewide Associate organizations in Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, South, North Carolina, and the ASPIRA Association Office in Washington, D.C. as well as in Puerto Rico.

ASPIRA continues to build on Dr. Pantoja's legacy of leadership development and movement building providing extensive cradle-to-career resources for Latina/o youth in communities across the United States. In 1996, she was recognized with the Nation's highest civilian honor by President Clinton when she became the first Puerto Rican woman to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Dr. Antonia Pantoja died of cancer in New York City on May 24, 2002. She was survived by her longtime partner, Dr. Wilhelmina Perry. May we celebrate the countless lives she touched and the myriad ways she helped improve New York.

RECOGNIZING THE VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY'S WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Virginia Wesleyan University Women's Soccer Team on their incredible season.

This year, the team finished fourth in the NCAA Division 3 National Tournament. This was the Marlins' second trip to the Final Four in school history and the first trip since 2006. With an overall record of 18 wins, three losses, and four ties, the Virginia Wesleyan Women's Soccer Team was the only unranked team to make the tournament this season.

Featuring three All-Region players, two NCAA All-Tournament players, and one Third Team All American player, the Marlins earned their spot in the Final Four with a combination of impressive talent and unrelenting hard work. The Marlins left it all out on the field and should be proud of their accomplishment. As a female athlete myself, I congratulate them on their amazing season and wish them all the best moving forward.

Again, congratulations to all the Virginia Wesleyan University Women's Soccer Team players, coaches, and fans on a historic and impressive season. Go Marlins.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AMEND THE FRANK LoBIONDO COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018 TO DIRECT THE COMMANDANT OF THE COAST GUARD TO PROVIDE CERTAIN DATA RELATED TO WATER QUALITY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce legislation to direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to make available to state regulators information pertaining to ballast water management systems with a "Type Approval Certificate" issued by the U.S. Coast Guard. I would like to thank the California State Lands Commission for their meaningful contributions and collaboration on this shared priority.

Routine access to this information is critical to California's Marine Invasive Species Program, administered by the California State Lands Commission. It would also enable California and other states to assess the performance of U.S. Coast Guard-approved ballast water management systems. The nonproprietary information yielded from this assessment will inform policy recommendations to reduce the risk of the introduction or proliferation of invasive or nuisance species in state waters.

Federal law requires vessels to use a U.S. Coast Guard-approved ballast water management system to meet ballast water discharge standards. The U.S. Coast Guard collects important data on the efficacy of ballast water management systems to meet federal discharge standards as part of their type approval process. These data represent the most current and thorough data on the performance of these ballast water management technologies.

In 2018, Congress passed the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (VIDA), requiring the U.S. EPA to create uniform national performance standards for discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel, including ballast water. Once implemented, VIDA regulations preempt States' authority to enact more stringent standards for ballast water and other vessel discharges. However, states are authorized under that same 2018 federal law to inspect vessels and enforce the federal ballast water management requirements. States were also given explicit authority to petition the U.S. EPA and U.S. Coast Guard to adopt stricter standards if available data supports doing so. VIDA also authorizes states to sample ballast water from arriving vessels to obtain information relevant to any future petition.

However, the California State Lands Commission and similar state regulators cannot perform this work—carrying out their legal responsibilities for state waterways—without ready access from the U.S. Coast Guard to information and datasets on the water quality characteristics and biological organism concentrations from post-treatment water discharged from ballasts water management systems. To date, the State of California has been denied access to this critical public information from the U.S. Coast Guard despite filing a formal request and subsequent appeal under the federal Freedom of Information Act.

This legislation would fix this problem and require the U.S. Coast Guard to provide ballast water management system data, including information about the biological efficacy of approved systems, to states upon request. Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of the House to join me in cosponsoring this legislation.

CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF PATRICK EIDING

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Congressman BRENDAN BOYLE of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District and Congressman DWIGHT EVANS of Pennsylvania's 3rd Congressional District, rise today to celebrate the retirement of Philadelphia Council AFL–CIO President, Patrick Eiding.

Over the course 21 years, Patrick Eiding has served the Philadelphia Council AFL–CIO to the best of his ability. First elected in January 2002, Patrick served a total of 5 full terms as the organization's President of the Council.

Prior to his tenure leading the Philadelphia AFL–CIO, Patrick Eiding served for over 25 years as the Business Manager and Financial Secretary of the Insulators and Asbestos Workers Local 14 where he oversaw both Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Southern New Jersey.

Throughout his career, Patrick Eiding successfully moved up through the leadership structure within the organization. Beyond his service to the Philadelphia Council AFL–CIO, Eiding serves as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Philadelphia Building Trades Council; a member of the Executive Council of the Pennsylvania AFL–CIO; and sits on the General Board of the National AFL–CIO where he represents the Central Labor Councils located in the northeast region of the United States.

He has been a strong advocate for the interest and concerns of working-class families while serving as a member of the union, board, and commissions for several organizations. Some of which include the Philadelphia Area Labor Management Committee, the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and several more.

Today, Patrick Eiding continues to serve as the newly appointed member of the Philadelphia Works Incorporated and actively participates as a commissioner on the city planning commission of Philadelphia.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join Congressman BOYLE, Congressman EVANS, and me, in honoring and commending Patrick Eiding of the Philadelphia Council AFL–CIO, as we celebrate his retirement and dedication to serving the organization and their many working families throughout his career.

RECOGNIZING NICHOLAS SCHROEDER

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Nicholas Schroeder, a firefighter with Garden City, Michigan Fire Department on his promotion to Lieutenant.

Nicholas Schroeder has served the Garden City Fire Department since November of 2013. He decided to pursue a career in public service after graduating from Gabriel Richard Riverview High School in 2010. He attended Schoolcraft College for emergency medical technician (EMT) and paramedic training, as well as the fire academy. He worked in the private sector after completion of his training, and at the age of 21, he joined the Garden City Fire Department as a firefighter-paramedic.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Nicholas has served on multiple committees and taken numerous trainings, most notably the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, Fire Investigation 1 & 2 with the Michigan State Police, and firefighter safety and survival. After a competitive testing process, completing pump operations training, and working in the capacity of acting engineer, Garden City and the 12th Congressional District are proud to congratulate Nicholas on his exceptional training and experiences to take on this new role. Not only has Nicolas been dedicated to public service for our district, he also enjoys spending time with his family, including wife Chelsey and twin daughters.

Please join me in recognizing Nicholas Schroeder for his outstanding service to the people of Garden City in Michigan's 12th District Strong as we congratulate him on his new role.

CELEBRATING THE APPOINTMENT OF FRANK WHITE III TO CEO OF THE KANSAS CITY AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, it is with immense pride that I rise today to recognize and celebrate the appointment of Frank White III as the new Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) CEO, via a unanimous vote by the KCATA Board of Commissioners. An experienced leader, innovative thinker, and dedicated professional, it is clear why Frank has been given such profound responsibility.

Frank's journey with KCATA began in 2016 as a Senior Marketing Manager, where his dedication to the Agency and the community it serves was recognized by many. He rose through the ranks to achieve positions such as Chief Marketing Officer, a role in which he earned three first place American Public Transportation Association AdWheel Awards; Director of Strategic Planning and Development; and vice president of RideKC Development Corporation. Frank continued to grow within the industry and in 2019 he graduated from the Eno Transportation Senior Executive Program, a prestigious transportation leadership development program.

Frank stands out as a trailblazer in the community and opens a new door as the first African American CEO in the storied history of KCATA. His work is crucial to the local economy and essential to the everyday lives of thousands in the Missouri-Kansas bi-state area. He continues to prepare us for the future, working to make the public transportation system more efficient and effective for current and future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in congratulating Frank White III in his new position of CEO of the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority. Having known Frank for many years, his recent accomplishments come as no surprise to me. Frank holds himself to a standard of excellence that is contagious to those around him—one of the many qualities that make him a great leader. The future of KCATA and the livelihoods of thousands in the bi-state area are in good hands.

REMEMBERING LEE LARKEY

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Lee Larkey, of Avon, Minnesota, who passed away on December 15, 2022.

Lee was born in Great Falls, Montana on July 15, 1939. Though he was born in Montana, Lee was a faithful and devoted Minnesotan who dedicated his life to the service of others. After graduating from St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota in 1961, Lee joined the United States Air Force. During his time in the service, he rose to the rank of Captain and was honorably discharged in November of 1972.

Following his time in the Air Force, Lee began work as a Revenue Agent for the Internal Revenue Service. After his retirement, he continued to help friends and family prepare tax returns and negotiate resolutions to difficult tax cases.

Lee spent countless hours championing the pro-life movement through his involvement with Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life. At the Minnesota State Capitol and at the U.S. Capitol, Lee advocated on behalf of the unborn and fought for the rights of the most vulnerable in our society. He was also an active member of the Republican Party at the state and local levels. Members of our office will remember Lee as an engaged constituent and a passionate advocate for limited government and fiscal responsibility.

Outside of politics, Lee enjoyed spending time in his garden with his wife, where they grew a variety of herbs and vegetables together. He was also an active beekeeper, raising bees and selling their honey through his business, Honey Hut.

Lee dedicated his life to the service of his country, his family, friends, and community. He will be dearly missed by all who knew him. On behalf of Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District, we offer our sincerest condolences to Bernadette and the rest of the Larkey family, and pray that Lee's memory will comfort their family during this difficult time.

HONORING THE ASHLAND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MEMBER AWARD WINNERS

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce in Ashland, Ohio, will hold its annual awards banquet this Thursday, March 9. I am honored to commend to the House this year's recipients, who were selected based on business performance, customer service, community involvement, and promotion of Ashland County:

Small Business of the Year: The South Street Grille, Sean and Carly Little, owners.

Manufacturing/Industrial Business of the Year: Cowen Truck Line, Tim Cowen, President.

Professional Services Business of the Year: Directions Credit Union, Jill Comer, Branch Manager.

Health and Medical Services Organization of the Year: Brethren Care Village, Mindy Scurlock, Chief Executive Officer.

Non-Profit and Social Services Organization of the Year: Appleseed Community Mental Health Center, Jerry Strausbaugh, Executive Director.

Hospitality and Recreation Services Business of the Year: The Salvation Army Kroc Center—Ashland, Billy and Annalise Francis, Officers.

In addition, these four area young professionals have been selected as winners of the 4 Under 40 Award for their leadership potential and commitment to long-term career excellence:

Brianna Noel, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones.

Angela Ringler, President, Advantage Marketing.

Brittaney Reep, Chief Financial Officer, Ashland County Community Foundation.

Stephen Knowlton, Integrator and Director of Innovation, Spire.

On behalf of the people of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District, I am pleased to join in the accolades for all of these distinguished professionals and thank them for their dedication to Ashland.

HONORING THE 100 YEAR HISTORY OF CURWOOD CASTLE

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a full century since the construction of a legendary landmark on the banks of

the Shiawassee River in Michigan's 7th Congressional district, which today is known as Curwood Castle. It was March 14, 1923 when the great American author James Oliver Curwood broke ground on an impressive structure to serve as his writing studio. While Owosso, Michigan may not be the first place you'd expect to find a replica of a French chateau, I am so thankful Mr. Curwood felt most inspired by his beloved boyhood home and chose to build his beautiful treasure there.

At the time, Curwood was one of the most popular authors in the world, having just published his 24th novel, with dozens of Hollywood movies based on his stories. His best-selling adventure and wilderness stories were largely molded by his travels in Canada, the Hudson Bay area, the Yukon, and Alaska. But after a tour of Europe the author came home, inspired to write a different tale by building a castle similar to the ones he'd seen in the French countryside.

As a father of three children, Curwood longed for a quiet place where he could write and host guests. His mother sold him the piece of land next to his childhood home for one dollar, and with the help of Lansing architect Harold Child, Curwood designed a glistening yellow Norman-style chateau and adorned the facade of the building with rocks as a tribute to the piles of rocks he and his brother had made as children. Unfortunately, Curwood died just four years after his masterpiece was completed, but the building lives on as a testament to his creativity and love of adventure.

In addition to his prolific writing career, Curwood was a passionate environmentalist and served on the Michigan Conservation Commission. It's not surprising then that he wished for this beautiful building to have new life after his passing, and that he bestowed the castle to the city of Owosso in his will. Over the years, the castle served as a youth center and even housed the Owosso Public Schools Board of Education, but since 1970 it has been open to the public as a museum highlighting the career and legacy of James Oliver Curwood. Every year in early June, this beautiful castle serves as the center of Owosso's Curwood Festival, drawing thousands of visitors to this small community in mid-Michigan to celebrate the life and works of its cherished son, in the place he created.

In it's 100 year history, Curwood Castle has been many things: a writer's retreat; a Hollywood office; and the site of fabulous parties. Today it stands as a singular architectural treasure, the legacy of a remarkable life and a reminder of glorious days gone by. It has been inscribed in the National Register of Historic Places, and only fitting that I recognize its significance here today. Long may this Michigan castle stand.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RESOLUTION OBSERVING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF JOHN LESLIE ''WES'' MONTGOMERY AND COMMEMORATING HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO JAZZ MUSIC

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, it is with the great Hoosier pride and joy that I rise today to introduce a resolution clebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of John Leslie ''Wes'' Montgomery.

Wes Montgomery was born in my hometown of Indianapolis, Indiana on March 6, 1923 to Frances and Tom Montgomery. He was naturally gifted in the musical arts and demonstrated his talents on the 4- and 6-string guitar in his youth. He was a self-taught musician who learned to play the guitar by listening to recordings of another jazz genius, guitarist Charlie Christian. Wes Montgomery developed a unique and innovative finger style playing technique by using the thumb to play base notes simultaneously with the melodic lines. This wonderful style helped to propel his success as a renowned jazz guitarist.

His musical gifts and performances became famous in jazz clubs in Indianapolis and he was recruited to tour with the Lionel Hampton Orchestra. In 1957, he joined his brothers Buddy and Monk to perform with other bands, and later released the album, the ''Wes Montgomery Trio'' and ''The Incredible Guitar of Wes Montgomery''. One of his biggest hits and most beloved albums was ''A Day in the Life'', which was rated the premier album on the Billboard Jazz Album chart, 2nd on the Billboard R&B Albums chart and 13th on the Billboard 200 chart.

Sadly, we lost this incredibly bright star far too soon, when he died at his home in Indianapolis on June 15. 1968, at the age of 45. But his music and his legacy still shine in our hearts and wherever his music is played. His beautiful and heartfelt music inspired generations of other musicians, and it continues to fill us with joy today.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this resolution to honor a Hoosier and an American music legend. I urge the House to support this resolution.

APPRECIATING AMERICA ALLY ITALY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as the incoming chairman of the Helsinki Commission Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, I was grateful for the delegation led by outgoing Chairman STEVE COHEN as a bi-partisan delegation to Rome.

Welcomed by U.S. charge d'affairs Shawn Crowley, we immediately met with valued former Congressman, now Ambassador to the Holy See, Joe Donnelly, who with wife Jill, represent America well. At the Palazzo Chigi Diplomatic Advisor to the Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Ambassador Francesco Talo reviewed the new government's support of the independence of Ukraine. Prime Minister Meloni was on the way to Kyiv.

Meeting with Undersecretary of the State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Georgio Silli confirmed the courageous Meloni government recognizes the Chinese Communist Party is a systemic rival of authoritarians opposed to democracies.

My affection for Italy is personal in that my son Add, was an orthopedic surgeon at U.S. Naval Hospital Naples for three years, where his wife Lauren, learned Italian cooking and grandchildren, Addison, Houston, and Emily Ruth learned perfect Italian with Addison later studying architecture in Genoa with Clemson University.

The visit to Ancient Rome was a humbling reminder of our shared heritage so crucial for the development of Western Civilization. Appreciating Roman influence on America is enhanced by the more than 20 million Italian Americans who are vital for the bright future of America.

Italy is a cherished American ally as democracies with Rule of Law confront authoritarians with Rule of Gun.

COMMENDING MASTER SERGEANT MICHEAL H. SCULLY

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend Pennsauken Township resident Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully.

Originally born in Jamaica, Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully emigrated to the United States, living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania until 1997, when he moved briefly to Collingswood, New Jersey. Not long after his arrival in Collingswood, Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully purchased a home in Pennsauken Township, New Jersey in the neighborhood of Del-Air, where he has resided for more than 20 years. Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully joined the United States Air Force in 1994 where he served for twenty-seven years before being honorably discharged in 2021.

During his 27 years of service, Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully served in the Aircraft Maintenance group as an Electrical and Environmental systems Craftsman or Master Technician. He was stationed at Willow Grove Joint Air Base in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for 15 years. He spent his final 12 years in the service stationed at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. Throughout his time in the armed services Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully was able to see places such as Australia, Japan, Guam, Hawaii, and Poland, as well as operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which between the two he has been 8 times.

Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully is the recipient of 37 medals and ribbons, including the Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Naval Commendation Medal, Afghanistan and Iraq Campaign Medal, as well as the Global War on Terrorism Medal and several more.

Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully has been a brother of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity

Incorporated since 1996 and is a proud member and commander of the Veteran of Foreign Wars Post 1270 in Pennsauken Township. Through his membership to both organizations, he has helped to promote, educate, clothe, and shelter the youth as well as dedicate time to serve the veterans of Pennsauken Township.

Today, Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully works for the Department of Defense as an ISO inspector with the Defense Contract Management Agency. He lives with his wife Uraina Scully and is the father of his son Micheal and daughter Raven, who also served in the United States Army.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring and commending Master Sergeant Micheal H. Scully of Pennsauken Township, New Jersey, a resident dedicated to his community, country, and those who have bravely served and defended the United States of America.

HONORING JACQUELYNN HAWTHORNE

HON. SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the extraordinary Jacquelynn Hawthorne, who devoted her career and life to serving the people of Los Angeles. Ms. Hawthorne constantly sought to help those around her through her public service in local government, her volunteer work in civic life, and her leadership in her church. Today, we are honoring the indelible mark she left on her family, friends, and her fellow Angelenos.

Ms. Hawthorne was a true product of Los Angeles. Growing up, she attended Los Angeles public schools, then went on to LA City College, UCLA, and Pepperdine University. Ms. Hawthorne married her college sweetheart, Addison Hawthorne. Together, they had three children: Addison, Valery, and Hillary.

Thriving in her professional life, Ms. Hawthorne worked for 28 years for Los Angeles County, where she retired as chief of the agency's Health Care Systems Development Division. Throughout her tenure, she modernized the county's Health Services and Mental Health and Public Health Departments, ensuring that crucial services could reach all Angelenos in the digital age. Through her hard work directing project managers in designing, implementing, and maintaining online systems, she became a mentor to many at the Health Department.

Ms. Hawthorne threw herself into volunteer service and community action outside of work, seeking to give back in every aspect of her life. She served as president of United Methodist Ministries and was a board member of Vision for Voices. Believing in the good that local government could do, she served on the Los Angeles Commission on Community and Family Services, was a delegate for Assembly District 55, and was a member of then-Congresswoman Karen Bass Congressional Leadership Council.

Serving and strengthening Los Angeles' Black community was of the utmost importance to Ms. Hawthorne. She was a proud lifelong member of the NAACP, a founding member of the African American Public Policy Institute, and president of the Los Angeles African American Political Action Committee. Ms. Hawthorne served as a mentor and friend to countless Angelenos and inspired many to follow in her footsteps of community service.

Perhaps the strongest force in Ms. Hawthorne's life was that of her faith. She was a proud member of Crenshaw United Methodist Church, where she was a soprano in their choir. She traveled the world singing and even performed for the pope. Ms. Hawthorne's favorite scripture is ever present as we celebrate and remember her remarkable life. She was fast to recognize Micah 6:8—"And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God"—as her guiding light.

On behalf of my constituents in Los Angeles, I share my condolences to Ms. Hawthorne's daughter, her extended family, and her friends. As we recognize Ms. Hawthorne, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring her rich life and legacy.

RECOGNIZING PATRICK RENNER

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize Garden City firefighter Patrick Renner in honor of his promotion to engineer.

Firefighter Renner joined the Garden City Fire Department as a Firefighter and Paramedic in January of 2017. He prepared for the Engineer position by completing training for Fire Pump Operator and Driver Operator. He also completed the necessary training to stand in as an acting Engineer. Over the course of his career, Firefighter Renner has completed training courses, including Firefighter Safety and Survival, Rapid Intervention Training, Reading Smoke, Machine Rescue, Trench Rescue, and Fire Investigation. He has stepped up to mentor the newest members of the Department and serves on the Department's Fire Committee, researching gear and equipment needs.

A graduate of Southgate High School in 2005, Patrick Renner completed his EMT–B and EMT–P certifications and graduated from the Fire Academy at Wayne County Community College. Outside of his work, he enjoys spending time with his wife Melissa, and their 4 year old son, Jason.

Please join me in congratulating Patrick Renner on his promotion to Engineer as we thank him for his service to the people of Garden City in Michigan's 12th District Strong.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

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

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 9, 2023 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 14

4:45 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine United States Space Force programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2024 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

MARCH 15

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ronald T. Keohane, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Nickolas Guertin, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, both of the Department of Defense.
SD–G50

10 a.m.
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine implementing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, focusing on perspectives on the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act.
SD–406

Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine protecting public safety after *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen*.
SH–216

10:15 a.m.
Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2024.
SD–608

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Karen Sasahara, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Elizabeth Rood, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to Turkmenistan, and Martina Anna Tkadlec Strong, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, all of the Department of State.
SD–419

3 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2024 for the Congressional Budget Office, the Government Accountability Office, and the Government Publishing Office.
SD–138

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine military and civilian personnel programs in the Department of Defense in review of the

Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2024 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

3:30 p.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the future path of VA's Electronic Health Record Modernization program.

SD–106

MARCH 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2024.

SD–215

MARCH 22

10 a.m.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine Moderna considering quadrupling the price of the COVID vaccine.

SH–216

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate passed H.J. Res. 26, disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S677–S726

Measures Introduced: Thirty-two bills and six resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 694–725, S.J. Res. 18, and S. Res. 96–100. **Pages S714–15**

Measures Reported:

S. 316, to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq. **Page S713**

Measures Passed:

Disapproving the Action of the District of Columbia Council: By 81 yeas to 14 nays, 1 responding present (Vote No. 49), Senate passed H.J. Res. 26, disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022. **Pages S680–S709**

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

Senate agreed to the motion to discharge the joint resolution from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. **Page S680**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to consideration of the joint resolution. **Page S680**

Preventing Child Sex Abuse Act: Senate passed S. 724, to protect children against sexual abuse and exploitation. **Pages S722–23**

Honoring former Senator James Thomas Broyhill: Senate agreed to S. Res. 100, to honor the life and death of James Thomas Broyhill, former Senator for the State of North Carolina. **Page S723**

Appointments:

Board of Visitors of the U.S. Military Academy: The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4355(a), appointed the following Senator to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Military Academy: Senator Ernst, At Large. **Page S722**

Werfel Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Daniel I. Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue. **Page S680**

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

By 51 yeas to 44 nays (Vote No. EX. 48), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S680**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, at approximately 10 a.m., on Thursday, March 9, 2023; that all post-cloture time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m., and Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination, followed by a vote on confirmation of the nomination of James Edward Simmons, Jr., of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California; that following disposition of the nomination of James Edward Simmons, Jr., Senate resume consideration of the nomination of Maria Araujo Kahn, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, and at 1:45 p.m., Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination of Maria Araujo Kahn. **Page S723**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 57 yeas to 35 nays (Vote No. EX. 47), Patrice H. Kunesh, of Minnesota, to be Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans, Department of Health and Human Services. **Pages S677–80**

Messages from the House: **Page S711**

Measures Referred: **Pages S711–12**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S712**

Executive Communications: **Pages S712–13**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S713–14**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S715–16**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S716–19**

Additional Statements:

Authorities for Committees to Meet: Pages S719–20

Privileges of the Floor: Page S720

Record Votes: Three record votes were taken today. (Total—49) Pages S680, S709

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned, as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late James Thomas Broyhill, former Senator for the State of North Carolina, in accordance with S. Res. 100, at 8:08 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 9, 2023. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S723.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

CFTC OVERSIGHT

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, after receiving testimony from Rostin Behnam, Chairman, Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

PREVENTING AND ENDING HOMELESSNESS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development concluded a hearing to examine the Federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness, after receiving testimony from Jeff Olivet, Executive Director, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Los Angeles, California; and Richard Cho, Senior Advisor for Housing and Services, Department of Housing and Urban Development.

ECONOMIC COSTS OF WILDFIRES

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the economic costs of wildfires, after receiving testimony from Veronica Serna, Mora County Commissioner, District 1, Mora, New Mexico; David Burt, DeltaTerra Capital, Natick, Massachusetts; Michael Wara, Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment Climate and Energy Policy Program, Stanford, California; Morgan Varner, Tall Timbers, Tallahassee, Florida; and Nicolas Loris, C3 Solutions, Falls Church, Virginia.

AIRCRAFT, CERTIFICATION, SAFETY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine implementation of the Aircraft, Certification, Safety, and Accountability Act, after receiving testimony from Billy Nolen, Acting Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 316, to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq;

S. 509, to provide resources for United States nationals unlawfully or wrongfully detained abroad; and

The nominations of Stephanie Sanders Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Representative to the African Union, with the rank and status of Ambassador, Michael Alan Ratney, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Geeta Rao Gupta, of Virginia, to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues, Eric M. Garcetti, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of India, and Richard R. Verma, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, all of the Department of State, L. Felice Gorordo, of Florida, to be Alternate Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Richard L.A. Weiner, of the District of Columbia, to be Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Leopoldo Martinez Nucete, of Virginia, to be Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

CENTRAL ASIA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism concluded a hearing to examine geopolitical competition and energy security in Central Asia, after receiving testimony from Donald Lu, Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs, and Geoffrey Pyatt, Assistant Secretary for Energy Resources, both of the Department of State.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine artificial intelligence, focusing on risks and opportunities, after receiving testimony from Alexandra Reeve Givens, Center for Democracy and Technology, Washington, D.C.; Suresh Venkatasubramanian, Brown University Center for Technological Responsibility, Providence, Rhode Island; and Jason Matheny, RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, California.

RIGHT OF WORKERS

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine defending the right of workers to organize unions free from

illegal corporate union-busting, after receiving testimony from Elizabeth H. Shuler, AFL–CIO, Mary Kay Henry, Service Employees International Union, Sean M. O'Brien, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, and John F. Ring, Morgan, Lewis and Bockius LLP, former Chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, all of Washington, D.C.; and Mark A. Mix, National Right to Work Committee, Springfield, VA.

NATIVE COMMUNITIES' PRIORITIES

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine Native communities' priorities for the 118th Congress, after receiving testimony from Carmen Lindsey, Chair, Board of Trustees Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Honolulu, Hawaii; Shannon Holsey, National Congress of American Indians, Rico Frias, Native American Financial Officers Association, and Tesia Zientek, National Indian Education Assistance, all of Washington, D.C.; Thomas Lozano, National American Indian Housing Council, Oroville, California; Nicole Borromeo, Alaska Federation of Natives, Anchorage; and Kari Jo Lawrence, Intertribal Agriculture Council, Billings, Montana.

PLATFORM ACCOUNTABILITY

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology, and the Law concluded a hearing to examine platform accountability, focusing on Gonzalez and reform, after receiving testimony from Mary Anne Franks, University of Miami Cyber Civil Rights Initiative, Miami, Florida; Hany Farid, University of California, Berkeley; Jennifer Bennett, Gupta Wessler PLLC, San Francisco, California; Andrew Sullivan, Internet Society, Reston, Virginia; and Eric Schnapper, University of Washington School of Law, Seattle.

NOMINATION

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Dilawar Syed, of California, to be Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Joshua David Jacobs, of Washington, to be Under Secretary for Benefits of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

WORLDWIDE THREATS

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee concluded open and closed hearings to examine worldwide threats, after receiving testimony from Avril Haines, Director, Office of the Director of National Intelligence; William J. Burns, Director, Central Intelligence Agency; Christopher Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice; General Paul Nakasone, Director, National Security Agency; and Lieutenant General Scott D. Berrier, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of Defense.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 44 public bills, H.R. 1434–1477; and 10 resolutions, H.J. Res. 41; and H. Res. 205–213 were introduced. **Pages H1204–06**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1208–09**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 197, providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eighteenth Congress, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–8). **Page H1204**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Greene (GA) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1155**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:32 a.m. and reconvened at 12 p.m. **Page H1159**

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 205, electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives and ranking a Member on a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives. **Page H1161**

Unanimous Consent—Consideration of H. Con. Res. 21: Agreed by unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider House Concurrent Resolution 21 in the House if called up by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs or his designee; that the concurrent resolution be considered as read; that the previous question be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution to adoption without intervening motion except for one hour of debate

equally divided among and controlled by Representative McCaul, Representative Meeks, and Representative Gaetz or their respective designees; and that the provisions of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution, 50 U.S.C. 1546, shall not apply to House Concurrent Resolution 20. **Page H1161**

Recess: The House recessed at 5:19 p.m. and reconvened at 5:31 p.m. **Page H1194**

Directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria: The House failed to agree to H. Con. Res. 21, directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria, by a yea-and-nay vote of 103 yeas to 321 nays, Roll No. 136.

Pages H1173–80, H1194–95

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House failed to agree to suspend the rules and pass the following measure. Consideration began Tuesday, March 7th.

Department of Veterans Affairs Creation of On-Site Treatment Systems Affording Veterans Improvements and Numerous General Safety Enhancements Act: H.R. 753, amended, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use on-site regulated medical waste treatment systems at certain Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 426 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 137. **Pages H1195–96**

Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act: The House considered H.R. 140, to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit Federal employees from advocating for censorship of viewpoints in their official capacity. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, March 9th.

Pages H1180–94, H1196–98

Agreed to:

Clyde amendment (No. 1 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that requires the Attorney General to submit an annual report to Congress evaluating the compliance of the Federal Government with the Protecting Free Speech from Government Interference Act;

Pages H1186–87

Comer amendment (No. 2 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that makes technical edits and adds a conforming clarification for the authorities of the Office of the Special Counsel to ensure that the Act's monetary civil penalties under new section 7382(c)(2) can be fully enforced; **Pages H1187–88**

Bishop (NC) amendment (No. 3 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that ensures that law enforcement can only take action against unlawful speech;

Pages H1188–89

Good amendment (No. 5 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that clarifies enforcement of obscene matters not protected by the First Amendment; **Page H1191**

Ogles amendment (No. 7 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that revises the disciplinary action consisting of removal, reduction in grade, debarment from federal employment for a period not to exceed 10 years, suspension, or reprimand; and **Pages H1193–94**

Ogles amendment (No. 8 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that revises the civil penalty for senior government officials to be $50,000. **Page H1194**

Rejected:

Perry amendment (No. 4 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that sought to ensure that federal employees entering into collective bargaining agreements using taxpayer funded time (Section 7131) are prohibited from engaging in censorship of private entities (by a recorded vote of 207 ayes to 223 noes, Roll No. 138); and **Pages H1189–91, H1196–97**

Jackson Lee amendment (No. 6 printed in H. Rept. 118–7) that sought to strike section 2(e) (by a recorded vote of 209 ayes to 221 noes, Roll No. 139). **Pages H1192–93, H1197**

H. Res. 199, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 140), the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 25) and the bill (S. 619) was agreed to, as amended, by a recorded vote of 216 ayes to 206 noes, Roll No. 135, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 217 yeas to 205 nays, Roll No. 134. **Pages H1161–73**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and three recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1171–72, H1172–73, H1195, H1195–96, H1196–97, and H1197.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Committee Meetings

A REVIEW OF TITLE VIII: FORESTRY STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Forestry held a hearing entitled ''A Review of Title VIII: Forestry Stakeholder Perspectives''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE PUBLIC WITNESS DAY 1

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a hearing entitled ''American Indian and Alaska Native Public Witness Day 1''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights. Testimony was heard from Patrick N. Findlay, Executive Director, Office of Congressional Workplace Rights.

MEMBER DAY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies held a hearing entitled ''Member Day''. Testimony was heard from Representative Landsman.

APPROPRIATIONS—CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the Congressional Budget Office. Testimony was heard from Phillip L. Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

MEMBER DAY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held a hearing entitled ''Member Day''. Testimony was heard from Representatives Radewagen, Omar, Sherman, and Manning.

AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE PUBLIC WITNESS DAY 1

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a hearing entitled ''American Indian and Alaska Native Public Witness Day 1''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. MILITARY POSTURE AND NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Military Posture and National Security Challenges in North and South America''. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Defense officials: Melissa G. Dalton, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs, Office of the Secretary of Defense; General Glen D. VanHerck, Commander, U.S. Northern Command; and General Laura J. Richardson, Commander, U.S. Southern Command.

FY24 STRATEGIC FORCES POSTURE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing entitled ''FY24 Strategic Forces Posture''. Testimony was heard from John Plumb, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense; General Anthony Cotton, Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Air Force; General James Dickinson, Commander, U.S. Space Command, U.S. Army; and General Glen D. VanHerck, Commander, U.S. Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, U.S. Air Force.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Education and Workforce: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 734, the ''Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2023''; and H.R. 5, the ''Parents Bill of Rights Act''.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a markup on H.R. 1338, the ''Satellite and Telecommunications Streamlining Act''; H.R. 675, the ''Secure Space Act of 2023''; H.R. 1339, the ''Precision Agriculture Satellite Connectivity Act''; H.R. 682, the ''Launch Communications Act''; H.R. 1353, the ''Advanced, Local Emergency Response Telecommunications Parity Act''; H.R. 1345, the ''NTIA Policy and Cybersecurity Coordination Act''; H.R. 1354, the ''Information and Communication Technology Strategy Act''; H.R. 1370, the ''Communications Security Advisory Act of 2023''; H.R. 1360, the ''American Cybersecurity Literacy Act''; H.R. 1340, the ''Open RAN Outreach Act''; H.R. 1343, the ''ITS Codification Act''; H.R. 1377, the ''Promoting U.S. Wireless Leadership Act''; and H.R. 1341, the ''Spectrum Coordination Act''. H.R. 675 and H.R. 682 were forwarded to the full Committee, as amended. H.R. 1338, H.R. 1339, H.R. 1353, H.R. 1345, H.R. 1354, H.R. 1370, H.R. 1360, H.R. 1340, H.R. 1343, H.R. 1377, and H.R. 1341 were forwarded to the full Committee, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a markup on H.R. 501, the ''Block, Report, and Suspend Suspicious Shipments Act''; H.R. 498, the ''9–8–8 Lifeline Cybersecurity Responsibility Act''; H.R. 485, the ''Protecting Health Care for All Patients Act of 2023''; H.R. 467, the ''Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl Act''; and H.R. 801, the ''Securing the Border for Public Health Act of 2023''. H.R. 501 and H.R. 801 were forwarded to the full Committee, without amendment. H.R. 498, H.R. 485, and H.R. 467 were forwarded to the full Committee, as amended.

THE FEDERAL RESERVE'S SEMI-ANNUAL MONETARY POLICY REPORT

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Federal Reserve's Semi-Annual Monetary Policy Report''. Testimony was heard from Jerome Powell, Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

HOLDING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTABLE FOR WASTEFUL SPENDING AND REGULATORY OVERREACH

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Holding the Biden Administration Accountable for Wasteful Spending and Regulatory Overreach''. Testimony was heard from Mark Bialek, Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau; Richard Delmar, Acting Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of the Treasury; and Rebecca Sharek, Deputy Inspector General for Audits, Evaluations, and Special Projects, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

DURING AND AFTER THE FALL OF KABUL: EXAMINING THE ADMINISTRATION'S EMERGENCY EVACUATION FROM AFGHANISTAN

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''During and After the Fall of Kabul: Examining the Administration's Emergency Evacuation from Afghanistan''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MEMBER DAY: COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Member Day: Committee on House Administration''. Testimony was heard from Representatives Bucshon, Krishnamoorthi, Cohen, Armstrong, Spanberger, Roy, Jayapal, Tlaib, and Tenney.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a markup on H. Res. 197, providing for the Expenses of Certain Committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eighteenth Congress, and other Committee business. Committee Resolutions on House Intern Allocation, Franked Mail Allowances, MRA Revised Formula, and the Committee's Budget Views and Estimates were adopted. H. Res. 197 was ordered reported, as amended.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND STRATEGIC COMPETITION WITH CHINA: PART I

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property and the Internet held a hearing entitled ''Intellectual Property and Strategic Competition with China: Part I''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PROMOTING CONSERVATION WITH A PURPOSE ON AMERICA'S FEDERAL LANDS AND FORESTS

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing entitled ''Promoting Conservation with a Purpose on America's Federal Lands and Forests''. Testimony was heard from Joel Ferry, Executive Director, Department of Natural Resources, Utah; and public witnesses.

BENEFITS AND ACCESS: THE NECESSITY FOR MULTIPLE USE OF WATER RESOURCES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a hearing entitled ''Benefits and Access: The Necessity for Multiple Use of Water Resources''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

INVESTIGATING THE ORIGINS OF COVID–19

Committee on Oversight and Accountability: Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic held a hearing entitled ''Investigating the Origins of COVID–19''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FORCE MULTIPLIERS: EXAMINING THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO DISRUPT TRANSNATIONAL CRIME AT THE BORDER AND BEYOND

Committee on Oversight and Accountability: Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs held a hearing entitled ''Force Multipliers: Examining the Need for Additional Resources to Disrupt Transnational Crime at the Border and Beyond''. Testimony was heard from Diane J. Sabatino, Deputy Executive Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; and Anthony Salisbury, Deputy Executive Associate Director, Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security.

BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL: WHY DEPLETING THE STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE IS NOT A SOLUTION TO AMERICA'S ENERGY PROBLEM, PART I

Committee on Oversight and Accountability: Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs held a hearing entitled ''Burning the Midnight Oil: Why Depleting the Strategic Petroleum Reserve is Not a Solution to America's Energy Problem, Part I''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ADVANCES IN AI: ARE WE READY FOR A TECH REVOLUTION?

Committee on Oversight and Accountability: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation held a hearing entitled ''Advances in AI: Are We Ready for a Tech Revolution?''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

INNOVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION: THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S ROLE IN THE U.S. RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Innovation Through Collaboration: The Department of Energy's Role in the U.S. Research Ecosystem''. Testimony was heard from Harriet Kung, Deputy Director for Science Programs, Office of Science, Department of Energy; James L. Reuter, Associate Administrator for Space Technology Mission Directorate, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; Michael C. Morgan, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce; and Sean L. Jones, Assistant Director for Directorate of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, National Science Foundation.

SMALL BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPACTS OF THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION'S WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES (WOTUS) RULE

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Small Business Perspectives on the Impacts of the Biden Administration's Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PIPELINE SAFETY: REVIEWING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PIPES ACT OF 2020 AND EXAMINING FUTURE SAFETY NEEDS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials held a hearing entitled ''Pipeline Safety: Reviewing Implementation of the PIPES Act of 2020 and Examining Future Safety Needs''. Testimony was heard from Tristan Brown, Deputy Administrator, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation.

Joint Meetings

BUSINESS MEETING

Joint Committee on the Library: Committee designated the Chair and Vice Chair, and adopted its rules of procedure for the 118th Congress.

BUSINESS MEETING

Joint Committee on Printing: Committee designated the Chair and Vice Chair, and adopted its rules of procedure for the 118th Congress.

LEGISLATIVE PRESENTATIONS: VFW, JWV, WWP, TAPS, MOAA, AMVETS, GSW, MOPH, BVA, NACVSO

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs concluded a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and multiple veterans service organizations, after receiving testimony from Timothy M. Borland, Ryan Gallucci, Patrick Murray, Michael Figlioli, and Deborah Johnson, all of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; Colonel Nelson L. Mellitz, USAF (Ret.), Jewish War Veterans of the USA; Lieutenant General Michael S. Linnington, USA (Ret.), Wounded Warrior Project; Bonnie Carroll, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Cory Titus, Military Officers Association of America; Don McLean, AMVETS; Tamra Sipes, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.; Christopher Vedvick, Military Order of the Purple Heart of the U.S.A.; Joseph D. McNeil, Sr., Blinded Veterans Association; and Michael McLaughlin, National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2023

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine United States Strategic Command and United States Space Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2024 and the Future Years Defense Program; to be immediately followed by a closed session in SVC–217, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine the nuclear fuel cycle, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine protecting public health and the environment in the wake of the Norfolk Southern train derailment and chemical release in East Palestine, Ohio, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development, to hold hearings to examine USAID localization, focusing on challenges, opportunities, and next steps to further development initiatives on the local level, 10:30 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider the nominations of Michael Arthur Delaney, of New Hampshire, to be United States Circuit Judge for the First Circuit, Monica Ramirez Almadani, and Wesley L. Hsu, both to be a United States District Judge for the Central District of California, Charnelle Bjelkengren, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington, Matthew P. Brookman, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Indiana, Jeffrey Irvine Cummings, and LaShonda A. Hunt, both to be a United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, Michael Farbiarz, and Robert Kirsch, both to be a United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, Marian F. Gaston, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California, Orelia Eleta Merchant, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, and Damien M. Diggs, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas, Stephen K. Eberle, to be United States Marshal for the Western District of Pennsylvania, William R. Hart, to be United States Marshal for the District of New Hampshire, Justin L. Martinez, to be United States Marshal for the District of Utah, and Roy W. Minter, Jr., to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Georgia, all of the Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Special Committee on Aging: to hold hearings to examine uplifting families, workers, and older adults, focusing on supporting communities of care, 10:30 a.m., SD–106.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, business meeting on Budget Views and Estimates Letter of the Committee on Agriculture for Fiscal Year 2024, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Rising Risks: Managing Volatility in Global Commodity Derivatives Markets'', 10:10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing entitled ''American Indian and Alaska Native Public Witness Day 2'', 9 a.m., 2008 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, budget hearing on the Government Publishing Office, 9:30 a.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, oversight hearing on the Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing entitled ''American Indian and Alaska Native Public Witness Day 2'', 1 p.m., 2008 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing entitled ''Member Day'', 2 p.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs, oversight hearing on the U.S. Agency for Global Media, 2:30 p.m., 2360–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Cyber, Information Technologies, and Innovation, hearing entitled ''Defense in a Digital Era: Artificial Intelligence, Information Technology, and Securing the Department of Defense'', 9:30 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Personnel, hearing entitled ''Senior Enlisted Leader Perspective'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Intelligence and Special Operations, hearing entitled ''U.S. Special Operations Forces and Command—Challenges and Resource Priorities for Fiscal Year 2024'', 1 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 750, the ''Chinese-owned Applications Using The Information of Our Nation Act of 2023''; H.R. 784, the ''Internet Application Integrity and Disclosure Act''; H.R. 742, the ''Telling Everyone the Location of data Leaving the U.S. Act''; H.R. 813, the ''Global Investment in American Jobs Act of 2023''; H.R. 752, the ''Securing Semiconductor Supply Chains Act of 2023''; H.R. 1068, the ''Securing America's Critical Minerals Supply Act''; H.R. 1121, the ''Protecting American Energy Production Act''; H.R. 1085, the ''Researching Efficient Federal Improvements for Necessary Energy Refining Act''; H.R. 1058, the ''Promoting Cross-border Energy Infrastructure Act''; H. Con. Res. 14, a resolution expressing disapproval of the revocation by President Biden of the Presidential permit for the Keystone XL pipeline; H. Con. Res. 17, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Federal Government should not impose any restrictions on the export of crude oil or other petroleum products; H.R. 1130, the ''Unlocking Our Domestic LNG Potential Act''; H.R. 1115, the ''Promoting Interagency Coordination for Review of Natural Gas Pipelines Act''; H.R. 1070, a bill to amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to treat the owner or operator of a critical energy resource facility as having been issued an interim permit for the treatment, storage, and disposal, of hazardous waste, and for other purposes; H.R. 1131, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to authorize the use of flexible air permitting with respect to certain critical energy resource facilities, and for other purposes; H.R. 1140, a bill to authorize the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to waive application of certain requirements with respect to processing and refining of a critical energy resource at a critical energy resource facility, and for other purposes; H.R. 1158, the ''Elimination of Future Technology Delays Act''; H.R. 1141, the ''Natural Gas Tax Repeal Act''; H.R. 1023, a bill to repeal section 134 of the Clean Air Act, relating to the greenhouse gas

reduction fund; and H.R. 1155, the ''Keeping America's Refineries Act'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Capital Markets, hearing entitled ''U.S. Public Markets Built for the 21st Century: Exploring Reforms to Make Our Public Markets Attractive for Small and Emerging Companies Raising Capital'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Monetary Policy of the Committee on Financial Services, hearing entitled ''Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: Ripe for Reform'', 10 a.m., 2220 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Digital Assets, Financial Technology and Inclusion, hearing entitled ''Coincidence or Coordinated? The Administration's Attack on the Digital Asset Ecosystem'', 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia, hearing entitled ''Expanding the Abraham Accords'', 2 p.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism, Law Enforcement, and Intelligence, hearing entitled ''Confronting Threats Posed by the Chinese Communist Party to the U.S. Homeland'', 9 a.m., 310 Cannon.

Committee on House Administration, Subcommittee on Modernization, business meeting on legislation on Providing for the Expenses of Certain Committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eighteenth Congress and other committee business, 3 p.m., 1310 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Modernization, hearing entitled ''A View of House Modernization: Perspectives from the CAO'', 3:10 p.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government, hearing entitled ''Hearing on the Weaponization of the Federal Government'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Responsiveness and Accountability to Oversight, hearing entitled ''Hearing on Compliance with Committee Oversight'', 2 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1335, the ''Transparency, Accountability, Permitting, and Production of American Resources Act'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Oversight of Our Nation's Largest Employer: Reviewing the U.S. Office of Personnel Management'', 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health Care and Financial Services, hearing entitled ''Inflation: A Preventable Crisis'', 2 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Government Operations and the Federal Workforce, hearing entitled ''Waste, Fraud, and Abuse Go Viral: Inspectors General on Curing the Disease'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, hearing entitled ''The Federal Aviation Administration's Flight Plan: Examining the Agency's Research and Development Programs and Future Plans'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing entitled ''FAA Reauthorization: Securing the Future of General Aviation'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled ''Examining the Future of Workforce Protections for Servicemembers'', 10:30 a.m., 390 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Accountability at VA: Leadership Decisions Impacting its Employees and Veterans'', 3 p.m., 390 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 187, the ''Default Prevention Act'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, begin hearing entitled ''Annual World Wide Threats Hearing'', 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Full Committee, continue hearing entitled ''Annual World Wide Threats Hearing'', 1 p.m., HVC–304. This hearing is closed.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to hold hearings to examine countering Russia's terroristic mercenaries, 10 a.m., 2020, Rayburn Building.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, March 9

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Daniel I. Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue, post-cloture. At 11:30 a.m., Senate will vote on confirmation of the nominations of Daniel I. Werfel, and Edward Simmons, Jr., of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California. At 1:45 p.m., Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination of Maria Araujo Kahn, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, March 9

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Complete consideration of H.R. 140—Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act. Consideration of H.J. Res. 27—Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States' ''.

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