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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, on yesterday, we commemorated the end of American slavery. We were reminded by the violence in our land of the truth of John 8:34, which states:

[E]veryone who sins is a slave of sin.

Free us from fear, self, others, and sin. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, and deliver us from the chains of hatred and prejudice. As we remember Juneteenth, may we offer ourselves to become slaves of righteousness.

Lord, help our lawmakers and everyone they serve to discover the holiness to which You call us, as we experience the eternal freedom to be found in living for Your glory.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Julie Rikelman, of Massachusetts, to be United States Circuit Judge for the First Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, on housekeeping, I ask unanimous consent that the filing deadline for first-degree amendments to treaty document No. 112–8 be at 5 p.m. today.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, a remarkable change is taking hold in our country and around the world due to artificial intelligence. The public is now more conscious of this technology than ever before. And thanks to recent advancements in machine learning and neural networks, AI's impact in the coming years will be world-altering.

Tomorrow morning, I will speak at the Center for Strategic and International Studies on how Congress can begin acting on AI in earnest. I will share my ideas about a comprehensive framework Congress can use to supercharge AI innovation in a safe and responsible way. Because AI is moving so fast, it is so complex, and so outside Congress's expertise, I will talk about some steps we must take to stay ahead of AI's rapid development.

Many of AI's impacts are truly exciting. It will reshape how we fight disease, tackle hunger, manage our lives, enrich our minds, and ensure peace. But we cannot ignore AI's many dangers: AI will dramatically disrupt our workforce, could lead to massive and sophisticated misinformation and weapons, could jaundice our elections and democratic system, and there is the danger that we may prove incapable of managing this technology at all.

Congress cannot behave like ostriches in the sand when it comes to AI. Some might think it is better to ignore this issue or hope someone else figures it out because it is so complex, but ignoring AI is untenable for Congress.

In the 21st century, elected representatives must treat AI with the same level of seriousness as national security, job creation, and our civil liberties, because AI will touch on these issues and many, many more.

I want to thank my colleagues from both sides of the aisle who are already putting AI front and center, including our little team of Senators HEINRICH, YOUNG, and ROUNDS, as well as Chairman CANTWELL, PETERS, KLOBUCHAR, WARNER, and DURBIN, as well as their ranking Republican Members. I want to commend colleagues from both sides of the aisle who have spoken out on AI's challenges, including Senators BENNET, THUNE, BLUMENTHAL, and many others.

We must prepare for the age of AI together—both parties working with goodwill bipartisan cooperation. That is the only way our efforts will succeed in the ways it should.

NOMINATIONS

Madam President, now on nominations, later today, the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Julie Rikelman to serve as circuit court judge for the First Circuit.

For years, Ms. Rikelman has had a hand in some of the most important legal fights over women's rights and civil liberties. She was the attorney who defended the Mississippi clinic in the Dobbs case that ultimately overturned Roe.

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

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Few lawyers have fought harder, smarter, and more effectively to protect women's rights in America than Ms. Rikelman. On the bench, I am confident she will serve with excellence to uphold the Constitution.

Appointments to the circuit court are essential. The lion's share of all Federal cases are decided at the circuit court level, so it is necessary these vacancies are swiftly filled with exceptional nominees like Ms. Rikelman.

This week, the Senate will also advance the nomination of Natasha Merle to be a district judge in the Eastern District of New York. With Ms. Merle's confirmation, the Senate will reach a major milestone: 100 district judges confirmed by Senate Democrats under President Biden.

Many of these 100 judges have knocked down longstanding barriers to the halls of justice: the first Muslim district judge, the first women of color to be district judges in Maryland and Oregon, the first openly LGBTQ judge in Puerto Rico. The list could go on and on.

District judges are an important reason why our Federal judiciary is far more balanced, far more diverse, and far more experienced than the one we just had a few years ago. So hitting this milestone of 100 district judges is very significant. Senate Democrats will continue moving forward on more judges in the weeks and months to come.

TAX CONVENTION WITH CHILE

Madam President, now on the Chile tax treaty, tomorrow, the Senate will vote to advance a crucial treaty impacting America's clean energy and business relationships between Chile and the United States.

A lot is at stake in our treaty with Chile, including America's global competitiveness and the future of our clean energy transition. This United States-Chile treaty is very similar to other treaties we have with more than 60 countries around the world, many of which support U.S. jobs and business growth. So I hope this treaty passes the Senate very quickly.

Chile is one corner of the so-called Lithium Triangle, home to the world's largest lithium reserves and currently the second largest lithium producer. Lithium is a key ingredient for so many important and emerging technologies, from iPhones to EV batteries to energy storage. Nations around the world, including the United States are racing to source these precious materials.

But right now, American companies are at a significant disadvantage. Because the United States doesn't have a tax treaty in place with Chile, they face double taxation and other barriers to investment and trade. Countries like China have an edge on us. It is an unnecessary roadblock to a fruitful and economically prosperous partnership between Chile and the United States.

Ratifying the Chile tax treaty would quickly remedy this issue. This treaty has been in the works for over a decade. It now has strong bipartisan support, and now is the time to finally get it across the finish line.

I am pleased that we are finally moving the treaty forward on the floor this week. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—Senators MENENDEZ and RISCH and many others—for their work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, Senate Democrats continue to dutifully advance the Biden administration's radical nominees.

This week, the Senate will decide whether to give yet another leftwing lawyer a lifetime appointment to the Federal bench: Natasha Merle, who is an activist lawyer with a penchant for staking out extreme and inflammatory positions that are thoroughly divorced from reality. For example, she attacked widely popular election integrity measures, claiming ''it's inconsistent to denounce White supremacy but not repudiate voter ID laws.''

Alongside the self-proclaimed ''wild-eyed leftist'' Democrats just confirmed to the bench last week, Ms. Merle went after the State of Alabama for daring to verify the identities of people who cast ballots in elections. Meanwhile, Ms. Merle has found time to attack what she calls ''unfounded yet repeated public assertions that there is a widespread lack of respect for law enforcement'' and criticize efforts to promote law and order as ''an illegal attempt to advance a false narrative that law enforcement was being attacked.''

Well, Madam President, President Biden's first year in office saw the largest number of law enforcement deaths in the line of duty in 20 years. But Ms. Merle doesn't appear to like grappling with facts that don't suit her narrative. Normally, a record like this would be shockingly disqualifying, but under the Biden administration, it is not an outlier. It is an essential qualification.

Unfortunately, the President's affinity for radical nominees applies to folks already on the job as well. Last week, Democrats on the EPW Committee rammed through the nomination of Jeffery Baran to another term as Commissioner at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Mr. Baran already has an extensive record as the NRC's resident liberal obstructionist. While his colleagues collaborate on regulatory frameworks that encourage safe and efficient energy production, this nominee prides himself on being a stick in the mud.

Even leading climate activists understand that Mr. Baran's dedication to hindering nuclear development ''harm[s] the environment in the process.'' They know that reducing carbon emissions means embracing safe nuclear energy. Mr. Baran, however, does not.

At every opportunity, this nominee has opposed commonsense efforts to revise regulations and keep pace with the smaller and more affordable nuclear technologies of the future. He has shown that his blanket antinuclear approach is both a tired relic and an active obstruction to American prosperity.

So no wonder even some Senate Democrats are thinking twice about rubberstamping Mr. Baran's nomination. I would urge each of our colleagues to oppose it.

CHINA

Madam President, now on an entirely different matter, over the weekend, the Secretary of State traveled to Beijing and engaged senior Chinese officials, including President Xi, in meetings intended to reduce our differences. Managing and reducing tensions with America's adversaries is a typical responsibility, of course, for the Secretary of State. But this isn't necessarily an end in itself. It is a means of advancing other key interests.

Reports of the Secretary's meetings suggest Beijing blamed America for increasing tensions. Well, I certainly hope Secretary Blinken responded by holding up a mirror to the PRC.

Madam President, it is China that has increasingly threatened the people of Taiwan with military force. It is China that continues to test the limits of cyber espionage around the world. It is China that has stepped up threatening and unsafe interactions with U.S. vessels and aircraft operating legally in international waters. It is China that continues to do business with Iran, enriching the world's top state sponsor of terror. It is China that continues to provide cover for Russian aggression in Ukraine.

It is China that continues to wrongfully detain innocent foreign citizens, including Americans, while repressing its own citizens. And as just reported today, it is China that wants to build a military training facility in Cuba, 100 miles from U.S. soil.

China's conduct threatens stability across the Indo-Pacific. And it calls into question Beijing's willingness to behave responsibly, especially as the PRC rejected U.S. efforts to reestablish military-to-military communications to deescalate and prevent incidents.

These are the plain facts. One side is ramping up its provocative behavior. And this week, the Senate Armed Services Committee should reflect on Beijing's behavior as it considers the National Defense Authorization Act.

The NDAA is our primary opportunity to set Congress's national security priorities. It is a critical chance to

determine how America should deter and defend against growing threats from the PRC.

And it is the Congress's basic responsibility to establish appropriate funding levels for our Armed Forces. So our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee will be called upon to carefully consider the requirements identified by our commanders that have gone unfunded in President Biden's budget.

They should think about the steps that could improve our ability to project power into the Asia-Pacific or the assistance that could support vulnerable partners in that region.

So remember, threats of sanctions and stern diplomatic warnings don't deter Vladimir Putin in Ukraine. Words alone will not deter Chinese aggression in Asia. The Biden administration can continue to speak softly, but Congress must ensure that America carries a big stick.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO DAN SWANSON

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, over the past 17 years, a lot has changed in the Senate. Back in 2006, we counted two future Presidents in our ranks: Barack Obama and Joe Biden. The chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the Senate was the late Arlen Specter, back when he was a Republican, and I was the most junior member of that Judiciary Committee.

Well, today, I want to tell you about one thing that has not changed since those days, and that is the dedicated, diligent public service of a man who stood by my side every step of the way as I have gone from the Judiciary Committee's most junior member to serving as chair of the committee. That man's name is Dan Swanson.

Dan is the embodiment of wisdom, patience, kindness, dedication, and selfless public service. Sadly, this is his last week as general counsel for the Senate Judiciary Committee.

While Dan would never say it himself—he is just too humble—the truth is, he has made an indelible mark on the history of this Nation.

For nearly two decades, Dan has been my go-to man in addressing our Nation's most complicated and urgent challenges. In every one of those challenges, he has been guided by a love for the law and a belief that our government can and should help people.

When you consider his background, you can understand. Dan is the son of two teachers, and you can see their influence in the way he engages with others. No matter the time of day, he always finds time to talk through the details of statutes and case precedent, often from memory, and never—never—loses his temper or patience.

And just about any other staffer on the Judiciary Committee will tell you: Dan is the best teacher and mentor you could ever hope for. Moreover, his integrity and intellect are respected by Senators and staffers of both parties.

He is remarkably consistent. Growing up, he was always calm and kind. He always knew what he wanted to do. In fact, Dan's parents say he was just about 10 years old when he first told them he wanted to write laws when he grew up. While other kids were dreaming of being astronauts or athletes, Dan knew that his future was in the law.

Years later, he pursued that dream by going to Harvard Law School because he thought it would help him land a job in the Senate Judiciary Committee. He then had the courage and determination to leave a well-paying job at a prestigious law firm and accept a job as a legislative correspondent in my office. Within weeks of joining, we realized Dan Swanson was indispensable. And soon enough, we were directing the hardest assignments of all to his desk. No matter how complicated the topic, Dan always mastered it quickly. Frankly, Dan's legislative legacy is too long to list in a single speech, but let me tell you about a few notable accomplishments.

Dan is the mastermind behind what is known in banking circles as the dreaded ''Durbin amendment,'' a financial reform that has saved consumers and retailers billions of dollars by setting limits on the so-called interchange fees which banks charge merchants every time you swipe a debit card.

I had never heard of a swipe fee or an interchange fee. And I stumbled into a meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee presided over by then-Chairman Arlen Specter, where he described the process where retailers across America were forced into signing agreements with the major banks and credit card companies, Visa and Mastercard—agreements, which many times they never even had a chance to read. It was a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. And in many ways, it still is.

The notion is, if you are a restaurant or shop or a chain of stores and you want to use Visa and Mastercard for your customers, you have to pay what they demand, the so-called interchange or swipe fee.

It turns out, for most of these retailers, it is the third most expensive item of business. The labor costs, of course, and, of course, the basics of food in the restaurant or the supplies that are needed in stores, but the third most expensive thing, which retailers face day in and day out, are these interchange fees or swipe fees charged by the big banks and the big credit card companies.

Can you imagine taking on that industry, trying to force through reform? I couldn't do it. I couldn't do it without him. Dan Swanson understood. He reached the point where he mastered that particular area of the law to the point where we offered a change in the way we do business in America when it comes to debit cards.

It was a long process. We had to offer an amendment on the floor in the banking reform bill. And Dan, every step of the way, was my guide as to what we could achieve.

We changed the law, and we reduced the costs to the retailers and to merchants and restauranteurs of using those debit cards for that purpose. I don't have many friends in the big banking industry as a result of it, but I can tell you, we made the big banks pay $8 billion a year that they otherwise would have collected in these swipe fees. And by not collecting them, consumers and retailers were the winners. My lead advocate in that area, my expert in that area, was Dan Swanson. He understood it, and he did it so well.

He also helped save countless lives from gun violence, a topic on which he has been my top adviser. Just last year, he joined the group that wrote the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the most important gun safety reform to pass Congress in nearly 30 years.

And Dan Swanson has also been my point person on the Federal judicial nominees for my State of Illinois. He even helped create the bipartisan process we use in our State to select candidates to recommend for Presidential judicial nominations.

Dan has overseen the confirmation process for all but two of the Federal judges currently serving in the entire State of Illinois. And the judges he has helped reach the Federal bench bring not only strong credentials and experience, they have brought vital new perspectives.

With Dan's help, this Senate has confirmed the first women to serve as judges in the Central and Southern Districts of Illinois, the first Black and Asian American judges to serve in those districts as well as the Seventh Circuit. And he was instrumental in the confirmation of the first African-American woman on the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.

Throughout his more than 17 years of service in my office, Dan has not only changed America for the better, he has also experienced some changes of his own.

Dan does not like to be in the spotlight. But 10 years ago—I love this story—he and his wife Priva made a splash in the Washington Post. They were on their way to the hospital for the birth of their second child, but they didn't make it in time. Little Arya was born in her parents' car. She arrived a few years after her big sister Maya, who was born in more traditional circumstances.

So while our team regrets losing Dan, I know there are two little girls, along with their mom, who are going to enjoy a summer of quality with dad, which is just up around the corner. I hope the four of them have a chance to head up to Vermont soon with Dan's parents Alan and Donna, as well as his brother Allie, to take long walks in nature, watch the Bronx Bombers play, and enjoy countless helpings of Dan's favorite: Jell-O and pie.

A writer I admire once observed:

With the lives that we live and the choices we make . . . let our goal be to give the world more than we take.

Dan, you have given everything you can possibly give to public service, and I have been a beneficiary. I am grateful. America is grateful. Thanks, Dan Swanson.

I yield the floor.

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

UNIONS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, tomorrow morning, the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee will be marking up three landmark pieces of legislation which will make it easier for workers to form unions, it will guarantee up to 7 paid sick days for every worker in America, and it will make sure that women in our country finally receive equal pay for equal work.

If these bills are signed into law, they would represent the most significant set of labor reforms in the modern history of our country and significantly improve the lives of many millions of American workers.

We are living in a moment where corporate America and the 1 percent have more economic and political power than they have ever had in the history of our country. The time is long overdue for Congress to stand up for the working families of our Nation—60 percent of whom live paycheck to paycheck—and not just wealthy campaign contributors and lobbyists.

Let us be clear. The American people are sick and tired of the unprecedented level of corporate greed they see every single day, and they are tired of the outrageous and illegal union-busting that is taking place throughout this country. They are sick and tired of CEOs making nearly 400 times more than the average worker—unheard of in American history. CEOs of major corporations now make 400 times more than their average employee. The American people are sick and tired of billions in stock buybacks going to the people on top, while millions of Americans today are struggling hard to put food on the table and pay their rent.

The American people want justice, and that is what we are going to begin doing tomorrow in the HELP Committee.

The American people look around them, and they see more income and wealth inequality in America today than ever before. Three people on top have more have wealth than the bottom half of American society—165 million Americans. Three people here, 165 million people, and that gap is growing wider.

While the people on top do phenomenally well, over 18 million families in our country are paying more than half of their limited incomes on housing, which is soaring in many parts of the country, and some 600,000 Americans are homeless.

American workers want to know why—why it is that despite huge advancements in technology and worker productivity, the average worker in America today makes about $50 a week less than he or she made some 50 years ago after adjusting for inflation. In other words, the very rich are getting richer, and the average worker is going nowhere in a hurry.

Now, there are a number of reasons—many, many reasons—why the gap between the very, very rich and everybody else is growing wider and many reasons why wages have remained stagnant. One of the reasons, of course, is that we have a Federal minimum wage today, a starvation wage, of $7.25 an hour—a wage that has lost nearly 30 percent of its purchasing power over the last 14 years.

Raising the minimum wage is something the HELP Committee is going to address in the near future, but probably above and beyond the need to raise the minimum wage, the most important reason that real wages are lower today in America than they were 50 years ago is the fact that corporate America and the billionaire class have been waging a war against the right of working people to exercise their constitutional privilege to form unions, constitutional right to form a union, freedom of assembly. As a result of that aggressive war against union organizing, trade union membership today is at its lowest level in the modern history of America.

In our country today, 71 percent of the American people approve of labor unions. Labor unions today are more popular than they have been in a very long time. Yet, despite that, only 6 percent of private sector workers belong to a union.

Tomorrow, the HELP Committee will be asking why, at a time of record-breaking corporate profits, why are multibillionaires and CEOs of large corporations doing everything they possibly can to deny the working people of this country the right to join a union. Why? Why in their never-ending greed are they doing all kinds of illegal actions to prevent workers from forming unions and negotiating for decent wages and benefits?

The answer to that question really is not that complicated. Corporate America understands what most people in this country understand, which is that when workers join a union, they earn better wages, they receive better benefits, and they work with better working conditions. In fact, union workers today earn nearly 20 percent more on average than nonunion workers. Corporate America also understands that 64 percent of union workers have a defined benefit pension plan that guarantees an income in retirement, compared to just 11 percent of nonunion workers. Corporate America understands that union workers are half as likely to be victims of health and safety violations compared to nonunion workers.

For all of these reasons—the fact that union workers do better than nonunion workers, have better working conditions, better benefits—all of these reasons and more are why we are seeing a significant uptick in union organizing in America today. In fact, it is higher than we have seen in many decades. Workers understand that when they stand together in solidarity and can negotiate a decent contract, they are going to do a lot better than when they have to go begging to their employer.

So what we are seeing today is more and more union organizing at blue-collar jobs. A couple of months ago, a factory in rural Georgia organized a steelworkers local. We are seeing it at white-collar jobs all over this country. We are seeing it on college campuses.

Furthermore, very interestingly, as healthcare becomes more corporatized in America, we are seeing more and more nurses form unions. We are even seeing doctors form unions. At the University of Vermont Medical Center, among many others, resident doctors voted overwhelmingly to form a union.

With that growth in union organizing, what we are also seeing in this country is a vicious corporate response, and that is that major corporations all across this country are taking unprecedented and illegal actions against employees who are fighting for economic justice. That is why major corporations like Starbucks and Amazon and others have spent hundreds of millions of dollars on union-busting campaigns and anti-union law firms. They hire these fancy consultants at outrageous prices because at the end of the day, they would rather spend millions and millions of dollars trying to prevent workers from forming a union than pay those very same workers decent wages and decent benefits.

Part of the corporate strategy is the reality that over half of all employers in America threaten to close or relocate their businesses if workers vote to form a union. Imagine that. You work for a company for years. You want to form a union, and then your employer says: If you form that union, we are going to China; we are going to Mexico; we are going to leave this State.

That is why, when workers become interested in forming a union, they almost always will be forced to attend closed-door meetings to hear anti-union propaganda. What employers do is bring people into a room, they have all of their executives there, and they tell them how terrible a union would be and the consequences to them if they formed a union.

As Human Rights Watch has said, ''Freedom of association is a right under severe, often buckling pressure when workers in the United States try to exercise it.'' In other words, yes, in America, you have the constitutional right of freedom of assembly. You have the constitutional right to form a union. But if you exercise that right, all kinds of corporate power will be thrown at you to prevent you from succeeding.

Here is something that really is quite incredible: Even when workers overcome all of these incredible obstacles

and when they win their union elections, 63 percent of workers who vote to form a union do not get a union contract a year later. So what corporations do is they do everything they can to stop workers from forming a union. Then, if by some miracle workers vote to form a union, what corporations do is stall and stall and throw all kinds of legal minutia into the process to delay a first contract.

Incredibly, on average, because of corporate obstructionism, it takes 465 days on average to sign a first contract after a union wins an election. Imagine that—well over a year after you win the election can you actually get a contract. One-third of successful organizing campaigns cannot get a contract in the first 3 years after a union victory. That is what corporate obstructionism is about, and that is what corporate greed is about.

All of that is unacceptable. That should not be happening in the United States, and starting tomorrow, the HELP Committee will fight to change that reality by passing the Protecting Workers Right to Organize Act, otherwise known as the PRO Act.

The PRO Act will make it easier for workers to exercise their constitutional right to form a union free from fear, intimidation, or coercion by their corporate bosses.

Look, not every worker in America wants to form a union, and that is part of what freedom in America is about; but if you do want to form a union, you should not be hit with illegal activities to prevent you from doing so. This legislation will make it easier for workers to collectively bargain for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. It will finally hold corporate CEOs accountable for the unprecedented level of illegal union busting that is taking place all over this country.

Under the PRO Act, corporations will finally be held accountable for violating Federal labor law.

Mr. President, incredibly, in America today, corporations are charged with breaking labor law in more than 40 percent of all union elections. And yet—and this is the important point—the penalties for this illegal behavior are virtually nonexistent. In other words, you can break the law with impunity. Pathetically—pathetically—far too many corporations have made the calculated decision that it is much more profitable and beneficial to their bottom line to break the law than to follow the law. Ordinary people follow the law. Average people follow the law—not large corporations. As they have figured out, you can break the law, you can stall this thing out forever, and nothing is going to happen to you.

In fact, the financial penalty for corporations retaliating against pro-union workers in America, today, under current law, is zero—no penalty at all. That will change under the PRO Act. Under this legislation, corporations will be fined up to $50,000 for violations of the National Labor Relations Act and up to $100,000 for each repeated violation. In other words—shock of all shock—large, profitable corporations will have to obey the law. I know that is a very radical concept in America today, but that is what I think should be happening.

Under the PRO Act, we will ban captive audience meetings that are designed to intimidate, coerce, and threaten workers who support forming a union. Under the PRO Act, we will make sure that all workers have a first contract within 1 year after winning a union election to binding arbitration. In other words, it should not take years to work out a first contract. This is nothing more than a stalling tactic on the part of the corporate world.

Under this legislation, we will ban, once and for all, the permanent replacement of workers who go on strike. No longer will companies be able to hire replacement workers or withhold benefits from workers who go on strike to improve their wages and working conditions.

Mr. President, this legislation will override so-called ''right to work'' laws that have eliminated the ability of unions to collect dues from those who benefit from union contracts. This legislation will end the ability of corporations to misclassify workers as independent contractors or label ordinary workers as supervisors to prevent them from organizing.

And yet, Mr. President, that is not all that the HELP Committee will be doing tomorrow. The second bill that we will be marking up is the Healthy Families Act, which will end, once and for all, the international embarrassment of the United States of America being the only major country on Earth not to guarantee paid sick days to workers. This legislation would guarantee that every worker in America receives up to 7 paid sick days from their employers.

You know, we hear a lot of talk here in this town about family values. Everybody is deeply concerned, presumably, about family values. So let me be clear: When a wife is diagnosed with cancer and a husband cannot get time off of work in order to take care of her or spend time with her when she is struggling with cancer, that is not a family value. That is, in fact, an attack on everything that a family is supposed to stand for.

When a working mom is forced to send her sick child to school because she cannot afford to stay home with that child, that is not a family value. That is also an attack on everything that a family is supposed to stand for.

I don't think it is a terribly radical suggestion that in the wealthiest country in the history of the world, in 2023, people should not get fired because they stay home with sick children.

Let us be clear: The United States of America is the only major country on Earth that does not guarantee 1 single day of paid sick days—not one.

In Germany, workers are entitled to a total of 6 weeks of sick days at 100 percent of their salary. In France, workers are entitled to a total of 90 days of paid sick leave at 50 percent of their salary. In Denmark, workers are entitled to at least 30 days of paid sick leave capped at about $638 per week. In Canada, workers are entitled to 10 paid sick days at 100 percent of their salary and are eligible to receive 26 weeks of paid sick benefits at up to 55 percent of their salary. That is what Germany does, France does, Canada does—countries all over the world do.

In the United States of America, the wealthiest country in the history of the world, workers are entitled—workers are guaranteed a total of zero paid sick days. That's the reality, and that, my friends, has got to change. Last place is no place for the United States of America. We can't go around telling people we are the greatest country on Earth and be the only major country that doesn't guarantee 1 day of paid sick leave.

It is time for the United States of America to join the rest of the industrialized world and guarantee at least 7 paid sick days to every worker in America. And in doing that, we will still be way behind most of the industrialized countries.

Just a few months ago, the American people learned about what railworkers in this country were going through and the fact that they, as workers doing difficult, dangerous work, often in inclement weather, were not guaranteed one single day of paid sick leave—and we had a big discussion on that. I offered an amendment on that issue, which failed. But I am happy to tell you that as a result of a strong grassroots trade union movement and, I think, the railroad companies getting a sense of how the American people feel—that is beginning to change.

Today, unlike a few months ago, over 50,000 railworkers are now guaranteed up to 7 days of paid sick leave. And I have the feeling that in the weeks and months to come, more and more railroad workers will get that benefit. We need to build on that momentum by guaranteeing 7 paid sick days, not just to rail workers, but to every worker in America.

Last but not least, the third bill that the HELP Committee will be voting on tomorrow is the Paycheck Fairness Act introduced by Senator MURRAY. This legislation would end the absurdity—the unfairness—of women in America being paid just 84 cents on the dollar compared to men. As bad as that figure is, 16 percent less for women than for men, it is even worse—much worse—for women of color. In America today, Asian women make just 80 cents for every dollar a man earns; for black women, it is just 67 cents; and for Hispanic women and Native American women, it is just 57 cents.

So, I don't think it is too much to ask in this country that people be paid equal pay for equal work, no matter

who you are. And the truth is, of course, the current situation does not have to be that way.

In Belgium, another industrialized country, the gender wage gap is just 1.2 percent. Women make virtually the same amount as men do. In Spain, Norway, and Denmark, the gender wage gap is 5 percent or less—women make 95 percent of what men make. Across the European Union, the gap is just 10.6 percent, and in the United States, it is 16 percent.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would close this gap by guaranteeing equal pay for equal work and making it easier for women to come together to file and win lawsuits against unscrupulous employers who commit wage discrimination.

These bills are not only good policies, they are precisely what the American people want. According to the last polls I have seen, 87 percent of the American people support guaranteeing paid sick leave to every worker in our country; 84 percent of the American people support equal pay for equal work; and 59 percent of the American people support the PRO Act.

The bottom line is that most Americans understand we live in a rigged economy. People on top are doing phenomenally well—have never done better. Ordinary workers are struggling to put food on the table, to purchase the healthcare they need, to take care of their families, to send their kids to college, to take some time off for a vacation. That is not what America is supposed to be about.

Tomorrow, the HELP Committee begins the difficult and long journey of beginning to bring justice to the working class of this country and tell the CEOs and the corporate executives and the 1 percent that they cannot have it all, that this economy has got to work for working people and not just for the people on top.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF JULIE RIKELMAN

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination of Julie Rikelman to serve as a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Based on a recommendation of a bipartisan advisory committee on Massachusetts judicial nominations in Massachusetts, Senator MARKEY and I were pleased to recommend Julie Rikelman to the President for this important role on the Federal bench. She received bipartisan support from the Senate during her cloture vote last week, and I expect the same will be true shortly, when we vote on her confirmation to the First Circuit.

Julie Rikelman is an accomplished lawyer who has significant experience in both private practice and public interest and whose career demonstrates an unwavering commitment to the rule of law.

Ms. Rikelman's commitment to the rule of law and the Constitution is informed by her personal experience fleeing religious persecution. In the late 1970s, she and her family came to the United States from Ukraine as Jewish refugees seeking equal opportunity denied to them in the former Soviet Union.

Ms. Rikelman went on to graduate from Harvard College and Harvard Law School. After law school, she clerked for Justice Dana Fabe on the Alaska Supreme Court and then Judge Morton Ira Greenberg on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

Following a 2-year stint as a Blackmun fellow at the Center for Reproductive Rights, Ms. Rikelman entered private practice—first, as an associate at Feldman & Orlansky and then as senior associate at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP. In 2006, she joined NBC Universal as litigation counsel before being promoted to senior litigation counsel in 2008 and vice president of litigation in 2011. She has worked on issues related to securities, breach of contract, employment discrimination, intellectual property, and constitutional law matters.

In 2011, Ms. Rikelman returned to the Center for Reproductive Rights as a senior staff attorney. One year later, she was appointed U.S. litigation director, and, in that role, she argued two cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ms. Rikelman's exceptional qualifications are bolstered by the support she has received from lawyers in public and private practice, from prosecutors, from defenders, from academics, and from former judges representing a range of political perspectives.

Whether appointed by Republicans or Democrats, her supporters ''share a strong belief that Ms. Rikelman is a lawyer of uncommon talent and ability, broad experience, sound and fair-minded judgment, and unquestioned integrity.'' Her former NBC Universal and Simpson Thacher Bartlett colleagues describe her as ''thoughtful'' and ''open-minded'' and observed that she ''carefully considered every argument without prejudgment and without regard to her personal views.''

There it is—fairminded, experienced, thoughtful, and exceptionally talented. These are the qualities a Federal judge should possess, and these are the qualities that Julie Rikelman has exhibited throughout her career.

In addition, her personal and professional experiences will bring important diversity to our Federal bench and underlie her respect for the rule of law.

Finally, it is important to note, now more than ever, that we have judges on the Federal bench who deeply understand reproductive rights law, and Ms. Rikelman's experience in this area makes her an exceptionally qualified nominee.

I have every confidence that Julie Rikelman will continue to uphold the rule of law and our Constitution as a First Circuit judge.

I want to thank our bipartisan advisory committee in Massachusetts for all of the work they did to identify and recommend candidates like Julie Rikelman, and I want to thank President Biden for nominating her to this position.

I urge my colleagues to support the confirmation of Julie Rikelman, a supremely qualified candidate who will bring her commitment to delivering equal justice under the law to the First Circuit Court of Appeals.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, this week marks the 1-year anniversary of the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision overturning Roe v. Wade. This disastrous decision has sown chaos and confusion across the country and led to dozens of States restricting or banning abortion care.

Republicans are obsessed with banning abortion nationwide, and they are using every vehicle possible to advance their radical anti-abortion agenda.

Tomorrow, my colleagues and I on the Armed Services Committee will begin our markup of the fiscal year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act. The NDAA is an annual bill that sets our Nation's defense policy. Despite our differences, Congress has come together to pass an NDAA on a bipartisan basis every year for the last 62 years.

While Republicans and Democrats may disagree about military policy, we have always kept the readiness of our forces above politics. From combating threats abroad to rebuilding DOD infrastructure at home, we have no shortage of important issues to work through in this year's bill, but right now my Republican colleagues are threatening to derail the bill by injecting anti-abortion provisions into a bill that has nothing to do with abortion.

After the Supreme Court's disastrous Dobbs decision, the Department of Defense clarified their travel policy to enable servicemembers stationed in States with abortion restrictions to travel in order to receive reproductive care. This updated travel policy in no way, shape, or form authorizes the DOD to pay for abortion care. There is no language in these provisions that pays for abortion. They simply allow servicemembers to access care they would otherwise be able to access but for being stationed in States that do not allow such care.

My Republican colleagues are hellbent on outlawing abortion nationwide and exerting control over servicemembers' freedom by preventing their travel to receive healthcare. Amending the NDAA is just one way to impose their will on the Department of Defense.

In another example, one of my Republican colleagues on the committee currently has a hold on more than 250 general and flag officer promotions within the Department of Defense because he objects to the DOD's travel policy and wants to make a point

about his displeasure. The Secretary of Defense as well as Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force have all testified that these holds impact our national security.

Radical Republicans are pandering to their MAGA base, and the American people will pay the price. While the Republicans continue their anti-abortion crusade, we should be working to craft an NDAA that addresses the real challenges our servicemembers face and gives them the resources they need to continue protecting our Nation, including access to healthcare.

That is what I will be focused on when we begin our markup tomorrow, and I urge my Republican colleagues to join us in this important task in the NDAA markup that will begin tomorrow. Our servicemembers and the American people are counting on us to get this job done.

I yield the floor.

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

INFLATION

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, for almost 3 years now, the American people have watched the Biden administration and their Democratic allies in Congress burn through trillions of dollars of their hard-earned money.

Early on in the administration, when one of their radical proposals made its way to the Senate floor, I would hear from Tennesseans wanting to know whom the Democrats expected to actually pay the bill for these programs. But as time has gone by, the Democrats confirmed, as they have every time they have been in power, that their plan was to keep squeezing taxpayers for as much money as possible, for as long as possible. Indeed, the Federal Government has a ceaseless, nonending appetite for taxpayers' money.

I don't think I have to tell you how discouraging this is for Tennesseans. It is confirmation that their President knows what is happening to them but he just does not care. They are in pursuit of a goal. They see this as a means to an end.

Now, when I am at home in Tennessee, as I was this weekend, people don't ask me where all the money went because they know the Democrats have wasted it on handouts and Green New Deal schemes—trillions of dollars down the drain. All they want to know is when is this going to stop.

They can't plan ahead. They can't save for special occasions. Even something as simple as a holiday cookout has slipped out of reach for so many families. Independence Day is coming up, but what should be an exciting time for everyone has turned into a source of stress because, in 1 year—1 year—the price of a bag of chips, up 7.9 percent; ice cream and popsicles, 8 percent more; potato salad will cost 7.1 percent more this year, and that is only accounting for the cost of the potatoes. Hot dogs and hamburgers have gone up, but when you account for the almost 16-percent hike on ketchup and mustard, a 9.4-percent hike on lettuce, the 13-percent hike on pickles, and a ridiculous 12.5-percent hike on the bun to put it all on, you can cross your main course off the menu also.

There is no reason why a meal like this should suddenly be out of reach of many families, but it is, and it is not just due to the price of the hamburger bun. That is just something that really is adding insult to injury.

Since Joe Biden became President, grocery prices have increased 20 percent, which is something every single person serving in Congress has seen in action. You cannot deny this. Any trip to the grocery store tells the story.

Energy bills have gone up 36 percent since Joe Biden and the Democrats took power. Rent is up 15 percent; clothes, 12 percent more. A tank of gas is up 51 percent, and a used car to put that gas in is going to cost you 33 percent more today than it did last June.

To counteract all of this, the Fed has raised interest rates at the fastest pace since the 1980s, which has in turn destroyed access to consumer credit and made it harder for small businesses to take out the loans they need to grow.

The problem isn't limited to a holiday celebration; our President and the Democrats have made life too expensive to afford every single day of the year.

Needless to say, spending has been out of control for over a decade. Regardless of what this administration believes, we cannot spend our way to prosperity. It does not happen. But we can directly trace this crippling inflation back to the reckless spending policies of this administration. So let's take a look at some of the things they have chosen to prioritize over the good of the country and the good of the people.

They used the 6,825-page Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 to set a new precedent for wasteful spending that, frankly, continues to baffle most Tennesseans. This bill, which no one had the opportunity to read, included billions in pure waste and authorized over $1.82 trillion in total discretionary spending authority.

To make matters worse, the Inflation Reduction Act, which passed last August, gave the Internal Revenue Service $80 billion for—guess what—more IRS agents. They estimate that the resulting increase in harassment will take $204 billion from hard-working taxpayers who are already struggling to make ends meet.

The IRA also included $386 billion for Joe Biden's radical climate agenda, including $27 billion for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, the sole purpose of which is to increase the power of the EPA; $3 billion in environmental and climate justice block grants; and an extension of the Affordable Care Act's premium tax credits.

This is hundreds of billions of dollars going to pet projects of the left, while Americans are struggling to put food on the table.

But the spending won't stop there. Earlier this year, President Biden released a pledge to make things worse. It is in the form of his 2024 budget request. This exorbitant wish list proved that he has no desire to get our national debt under control. It included annual budget deficits ranging between 4.6 and 6.8 percent above the baseline. He also included trillions in tax increases and added even more funding to the IRS. He doubled the tax on capital gains; increased the corporate income tax rate to 28 percent, which is the second highest rate in the developed world; and then made sure the IRS could find ways to take even more money—not exactly a taxpayer-friendly approach.

This path is not sustainable and will only lead to our children and grandchildren bearing the full brunt of our massive national debt burden. In my opinion, this is immoral.

This is why every Congress I introduce legislation to cut spending by 1, 2, and 5 percent all across the board. These small changes would make a big difference and help us return to a path of fiscal stability and fiscal sanity.

The Consumer Price Index rose 4 percent in May. Incredibly enough, the Biden administration celebrated this as a win, which leads me to believe they are still counting on the American people somehow ignoring what a mess they made in continuing to fork over the money.

Let's be clear. Four percent inflation is still double the target rate. This is not a win. It is not normal. The day Joe Biden came into office, inflation was at 1.4 percent.

Now, what this does do, it does guarantee that Tennesseans will face yet another month of groceries that are too expensive to afford and unsustainable spending on programs they did not vote for and do not want.

If we were to pass a 1-percent across-the-board cut to Federal spending, then there is a chance we can reverse this trend and ease the impossible burden that the Biden administration has placed on the American people. But if we continue to ignore the problem and spend even more money, that will lead us even further down the path to economic collapse.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 7 minutes and that Senator GRASSLEY be permitted to speak for 5 minutes prior to the scheduled vote.

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

ABORTION

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I have come to the floor today with a simple question: When exactly was the moment when military women like me no longer had the right to bodily autonomy?

Our Nation was just fine with me using my body as I saw fit when I chose

to use it to fight wars on its behalf. It was all right with me using it as I wish when I decided to risk every drop of blood in this body to fly a Black Hawk into combat. It was even OK with me losing parts of this body, leaving parts of it strewn across a battlefield in Iraq in defense of this great Nation. In fact, people thanked me for my service, for making that incredibly personal choice about my own being, my own life. I know the same is true for many of the other female servicemembers and veterans who have made the similar decision to serve our Nation.

So my question is, Precisely when do the folks pushing anti-choice policies think that we American women no longer have the basic human right to make our own decisions about our own health?

I ask because over the past year since the Supreme Court announced its Dobbs ruling, we have faced an onslaught of anti-woman, anti-choice bills that would effectively turn women into second-class citizens, rendering them incapable of adjudicating matters related to their own bodies, transforming them from people with autonomy into mere vessels subject to the political whims of lawmakers whose beliefs tend more toward insurrectionist than feminist, lawmakers who think making America great again equates to sapping away women's rights again.

This week is no exception because this week my colleagues across the aisle, led by my fellow veteran, Senator ERNST, are trying to hold our annual Defense bill negotiations hostage in an attempt to force through an extremist amendment that would overturn existing DOD policy—an amendment that would keep troops and their families who are stationed at military bases in anti-choice States from getting the resources they need to travel elsewhere to get basic reproductive healthcare.

You know, our servicemembers often move every 2 or 3 years. They don't get to choose where they are stationed. They receive orders to be somewhere. Then they pack up their rucksacks and go. And I have seen estimates that about 40 percent are assigned to bases in States that now have draconian reproductive rights laws.

If Senator ERNST's amendment to the NDAA becomes law, thousands of military women will be stripped of their right to bodily autonomy just because they have chosen to serve their country. Think about how shameful that is. Think about how disgraceful it is that so many of the same so-called leaders who applaud these women for choosing to put themselves in harm's way overseas are trying to wrest control over their bodies away from them when they are back on U.S. soil.

Think about how astounding it is that the folks backing this kind of policy seem ignorant to the hypocrisy laden in the idea that the greatest democracy in the world—a nation born out of a fight against governmental overreach and that takes pride in self-determination—would actually strip away the right to personal freedom from the very citizens who have sworn an oath to protect others' rights, to keep others free.

When I fought in Iraq, at the beginning of our rotation, it was so early on in the war that full logistics were not yet set up. We were still living in tents and had no personal hygiene facilities other than the wet wipes we would get in care packages.

So when it came time for me to deploy, Army doctors issued me birth control patches so I could control my menstrual cycle since for the first 2 months I was set to be downrange, there would be no female sanitary support. In other words, because I wouldn't be able to get tampons, pads, or the like for those early days yet still needed to fly my missions, it advantaged the military for me to control my reproductive cycle. I was happy to do it because it was for the good of the Army, the good of the mission, and thus the good of this Nation that I love more than life itself.

But looking back, especially after this week, my takeaway is that our country was just fine with me seeking reproductive care when it suited them but only when it suited them because today we live in an America whose representatives waver even on the basic question of whether women should have access to the kind of care they readily supplied me when it fit their needs.

To me, this Republican amendment effectively punishes women for their willingness to put on the uniform. The policy is both morally corrupt and militarily shortsighted, as how could it not impact the future recruitment and retention of our Armed Forces if women understand that if they wear our Nation's colors, that if they follow orders and are stationed at whatever base they are told to report to, their fundamental rights may remain forever out of reach?

Yes, we are talking about abortions here certainly, but this amendment my colleagues are so focused on passing also impacts a range of other basic life-saving and sometimes even life-creating reproductive care, including fertility treatments, both for those who have worn the uniform and for the partners of those who serve, or the urgent medical services needed in the tragic event they miscarry a child they do want.

So when I hear my colleagues on the other side of the aisle champion this policy, what I hear them say is that they either don't understand or don't care about the very real, severe effects that servicemembers and dependents could face if they can't access reproductive care.

What I hear them say is that they want to force female servicemembers to give birth whether they want to or not, whether they are ready to or not, regardless of the burden, the cost, the implications for their careers and, more importantly, their lives.

What I hear them say is that they don't believe that the readiness of women servicemembers affects our military's readiness, that they don't think recruiting women is important for the future of our military, that they don't care about the contribution women make to our Armed Forces, that they don't value the service of women, point blank.

Ultimately, sadly, that means they don't care about solving our military's recruiting challenges as much as they do about getting on the good side of anti-choice billionaires who bankroll campaigns. That is offensive and hypocritical.

These proposals are misogynistic and sadistic. These proposals are craven and cowardly. In other words, it is a perfect snapshot of today's self-interested, self-defeating GOP.

Look, we Democrats on the Senate Armed Services Committee have used every negotiation tactic under the Sun to try to stop our Republican colleagues from crashing down the entire Defense bill negotiations with this one poison pill. But let me be clear. We cannot pass a Defense funding bill if this amendment is hidden deep in its fine print. We have even offered to hold a separate vote on this same exact policy as a stand-alone bill—a solution that would both protect this week's larger NDAA process while also letting the rest of the Senate have a say on this single piece of legislation. But Republicans have decried this offer, calling it a ploy. It is not a ploy. We are giving them the vote they say they want.

They don't want a solution. They don't want fairness. They just want to scream and shout. They want to show off to the most fringe parts of their base, knowing that in a few days they will somehow contort reality and blame Democrats even when they are well aware that their own political agenda is at fault for Congress failing to pass this critical national defense legislation.

Just as I made my own decision about my body when I signed up to fly Black Hawks in Iraq, I am making my choice today to use my voice to say ''enough.''

We must not allow Republicans to score political points by restricting the personal freedom of the very people who have dedicated their lives to defending that most fundamental, most American ideal.

Our female servicemembers, veterans, and military families, deserve access to healthcare, regardless of what part of the country they happen to be stationed in. They deserve to have full control over their bodies here at home, just as they did when they were carrying rucksacks and M4s on those bodies overseas.

To my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, if you care about the

strength of our military, if you care about defending our freedoms that have defined America since the first drop of ink was written on our Constitution, then you will vote against this amendment. Please do not abandon the women who have done so much to keep our Union safe. Please do not repay our heroes for their sacrifices by telling them what they can and cannot do with their bodies they put at risk time and again to protect our country.

Please, as you sit at your fancy desks under this hallowed, historic dome, ask yourself if you are so desperate for a pat on the back from FOX News that you would be willing to vote to strip away the rights these women have spent their lives protecting. I certainly could not live with that decision—with that vote. I hope the same is true for each of my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF JULIE RIKELMAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Julie Rikelman to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. She is a highly skilled litigator with almost 25 years of experience in private practice, as in-house counsel, and in public interest law.

After graduating from Harvard College and Harvard Law School, Ms. Rikelman clerked for Justice Dana Fabe on the Alaska Supreme Court and Judge Morton Greenberg on the Third Circuit. Ms. Rikelman then began her legal career as a Blackmun Fellow at the Center for Reproductive Rights—CRR—litigating reproductive rights cases around the country. In private practice, Ms. Rikelman has handled a wide range of civil and criminal cases, at both the trial and appellate level, including securities fraud, commercial breach of contract, State antitrust law, and election law. As an in-house attorney at NBC Universal, Ms. Rikelman litigated a variety of matters in Federal and State courts—including defamation, intellectual property, and employment discrimination. In 2011, Ms. Rikelman returned to CRR to take on a more senior role litigating cases, as well as spearheading case strategy.

Over the course of her career, Ms. Rikelman has proven to be a skilled trial attorney and an accomplished appellate practitioner, arguing multiple appeals, including two before the U.S. Supreme Court. The American Bar Association unanimously rated Ms. Rikelman ''well qualified,'' and she has the strong support of her home State Senators: Ms. WARREN and Mr. MARKEY. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting Ms. Rikelman's nomination.

VOTE ON RIKELMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Rikelman nomination?

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 166 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—43

Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Ricketts
Braun	Hagerty	Romney
Britt	Hawley	Rounds
Budd	Hoeven	Schmitt
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Kennedy	Thune
Cotton	Lankford	Tillis
Cramer	Lee	Tuberville
Crapo	Lummis	Vance
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Mullin	

NOT VOTING—6

Barrasso	Murphy	Rubio
Fetterman	Risch	Scott (SC)

The nomination was confirmed.

(Mr. MARKEY assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. WARNOCK assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. KELLY). The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider with respect to the Rikelman nomination be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations en bloc: Calendar No. 46 through No. 52, No. 82 through No. 107, No. 110 through No. 113, No. 130 through No. 139, No. 180 through No. 205, No. 224 through No. 234, No. 236 through No. 246; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; that the motions to reconsider to 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, this is now the sixth time that I have been on this floor asking for unanimous consent so that the U.S. Senate can do its job to ratify, to approve the nominations of flag officers' promotions at the Department of Defense.

That is something that we have done as a matter of course in the U.S. Senate for the last 230 years. No Senator in the history of the United States has ever prevented the Senate from proceeding with these nominations of flag officers.

I certainly don't have to tell the Presiding Officer how important these promotions are, how critical they are. And observer after observer after observer has said that it is in the national security interest of the United States, not surprisingly, for this Senate to confirm these promotions, to ratify these promotions.

We are compromising our national security when one Senator out of the whole 100 people decides that they are going to do something that no Senator has ever done in the history of the United States. No Senator has ever put a blanket hold on the promotions of flag officers, and there is a good reason for that, because if people are willing to play politics with that, they are playing politics with our national security. If they are willing to play politics with that, they are playing politics with the expectations of people who have spent an entire career defending the national security of this country, serving the public, serving in the Department of Defense, and who now have been promoted to a position of trust and responsibility.

By the way, this doesn't just affect those people who are getting that promotion. It also affects the people who are below them who can't get the promotion that now is no longer vacant because they are stuck in the job that they are in.

And I am shocked that somebody here would do this and pretend that this is just common: You know, this is the Senate. This is the way the Senate functions. This the way the Senate, as my colleague from Alabama has said, just does its business.

This is not how the Senate ever does its business. It is not how the Department of Defense does its business. And it, particularly, I think, should be particularly grieving to the American people because of the reasons the Senator from Alabama is doing what he is doing.

Tonight, we are here on basically the 1-year anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade in the Dobbs decision. If you told me when I was in law school that a majority of the Supreme Court would join the majority opinion by Justice Alito that would say, if it wasn't a right or a freedom in 1868, it is not a freedom today—if you told me that was the basis on which they were going to strip a fundamental freedom from the American people, I would have said that will never happen; it is never going to happen.

That is what is happening, and that is the result of a 50-year crusade to overturn a woman's right to choose in the United States of America. It is the first time since Reconstruction that we have given up a fundamental right here. It is first time since Reconstruction that we have been stripped of our fundamental rights and our freedoms have been diminished, that they have grown smaller in the hands of a 50-year campaign that was waged to put four people on the Supreme Court—a majority on the Supreme Court—who subscribe to the best named doctrine I have ever heard named in American political history or anybody's political history, and that is the doctrine of originalism, a doctrine that was dressed up to create a scenario or a legal set of arguments that somehow there were a group of people in this society with such mystical powers that they were capable—unlike anybody else in America, they would be capable of divining the originality intent of the Founding Fathers, putting aside the fact, tonight, that everybody in this Chamber who studied the Constitution even for 10 minutes knows that the Founders had fundamental disagreements among themselves and that the Constitution itself was a product of these fundamental differences—not their fundamental consensus but the fundamental differences. There was consensus on some issues. There was compromise on other issues.

But I dwell on that for a moment just to say, especially to people around here—maybe the age of the pages in the Senate—that you shouldn't give this theory of legal interpretation any great weight just because they dressed it up and called it something called originalism or they said somehow they could divine what the Founding Fathers said.

Fundamentally, what it came down to in the case of the Supreme Court was that because abortion wasn't a freedom, as they said, in 1868—a country where women didn't even have the right to vote in the United States yet—that it was not going to be a freedom today, and they stripped the American people of this freedom.

And there are people on this floor, people, you know, in the other party who spent 50 years trying to create a Supreme Court like this, basically since Ronald Reagan was our President. I think Ronald Reagan would be shocked by the extreme nature of the opinion that was rendered by Justice Alito, but who knows.

What we do know is this has been a 50-year campaign that has been waged. And the second that the Supreme Court did what they have been shooting for the last 50 years, what they started to say was: Don't worry about it. It is not a big deal. This is just reverting to States' rights. This fundamental constitutional right, this fundamental constitutional freedom, it is just being reverted to the States.

What has happened since then? Twenty States have banned abortion since that decision was made or restricted access. Nine of those States have no exceptions for rape or incest, like the State of Alabama, I think, which has an exception for the life of the mother.

So there is a lot to worry about in this decision. There is a lot to worry about for our men and women in uniform.

Before Dobbs, women in the military had at least some assurance that wherever the Pentagon sent them, they would have minimal access to reproductive care, a protected constitutional right, a protected freedom. That is no longer the case.

One of the very first calls I got after Dobbs was decided was from a woman whom I know in Colorado who was an Air Force officer. She was a pilot. She told me her personal story, and then she said: I don't understand how they could have possibly made the decision they made because this is a fundamental readiness issue.

Well, they didn't have to deal with that. They didn't have to deal with that fundamental issue of readiness. They didn't have to deal with the fundamental fact of how people every single day would be dealing with the loss of this right or the loss of this freedom because nothing in their interpretive doctrine requires them to do that. It only requires them to ask: Was it a freedom in 1868? Not a freedom today.

And in response to this shocking development—and it is shocking. You know, if you are the age of the pages who are here, if you are my daughter's age—my oldest daughter is 23 years old—you are wondering how it is possible. We were having this conversation the other day. We were driving by a billboard in Colorado advertising some stuff in Colorado. Amazing thing that we could be, on the one hand, legalizing marijuana in this country and on the other hand, banning abortion. If you told me that when I was a teenager in America, I would have said: What are you smoking? That is impossible. That is impossible, and that is where we are.

What the Supreme Court did in this case is fundamentally unpopular with the American people. The American people are angry that this has happened. It didn't happen by accident. This is a war that has been waged on a woman's right to choose. It is a war that has been waged for that doctrine of originalism.

And a lot of people and a lot of institutions in America are having to make adjustments in the wake of this shocking development, and the Pentagon is one of those places.

In the wake of the Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade, the Pentagon extended two policies that already exists for servicemembers if a medical procedure is not available near their duty station. One was the travel allowance. If you are not—if you can't get that knee operated on close to your duty station, we are going to pay you to travel. That is what the rules say today.

By the way, that is not a law that Congress passed. That is the DOD making regulations, which is how this works, to ensure that people serving our country are able to get the medical care that they need. We say: You know what, you will have to travel and because you have to travel to do this, we are going to give you paid leave to do that, to go get that knee surgery.

And what the DOD said in the wake of the Dobbs decision reversing Roe v. Wade is that if you are doing that because you made a decision to seek reproductive healthcare, you made a decision to have an abortion, we are going to apply the same rules to you that we apply for these other surgeries. We are not going to treat you differently. We are going to treat you exactly the same. That is what we are going to do. And if you need to travel because it is not available, you can do it.

So if you live in a State like Alabama, where my colleague who is blocking every single appointment or promotion in the DOD, where he lives—where, if you are a doctor and you perform an abortion, you can go to jail for 99 years—if you are living in a State like Alabama where abortion is banned, and there are very limited exceptions, if any exception, that you can go somewhere else to do it or the DOD will actually pay for you to go, and the DOD will give you paid leave. That is true whether you are seeking women's reproductive healthcare or you are going for knee surgery. But knee surgery isn't banned in 20 States in this country.

And there was one other thing that the Department of Defense said. They said: You know what, in the case of a pregnancy, you can tell your commanding officer, you can tell your command 20 weeks after you learned of your pregnancy. You don't have to tell people right away because things might happen in the early stages of pregnancy or you might make a decision to have an abortion in that time. This was an attempt by DOD to harmonize the rules at DOD for healthcare with the changes of the Supreme Court. It would be difficult, in my mind, at least, to imagine a more modest set of changes to the rules by DOD.

I thought about what could be more modest than saying: OK. If we are going to pay people who are getting

knee surgery or pay them paid leave, then we are going to do this for everybody else—for women who need reproductive healthcare. If we are going to pay people to travel for these other things, then we are going to let people travel.

I would think most people who have disagreements about abortion in this country might say: Well, that is fair. People have the right to be able to make this decision on their own—or they should have the right to make this decision on their own—and we shouldn't discriminate against people just because we might have a disagreement about abortion.

One thing this set of rules does not do in any shape or form is pay for an abortion. The Senator from Alabama has almost admitted as much on this floor. He said it is sort of tantamount to that. It is sort of this, and Senator LEE from Utah was saying it is sort of, but they know that it is not. That is not what the rules do. That is a debate that we are going to need to have here, but that is not what is happening here. What is happening here is the rules, as I stated.

The Senator from Alabama was so enraged by this, so infuriated by this, so angered by this, that he has now put a blanket hold on 249 military promotions to unwind those rules, to change those rules, to force the DOD to retreat and for the DOD to say: OK. From here on out, here is what we are going to do. We will pay for your travel for every single operation that you can't get at your duty station except if you are a woman who is seeking reproductive healthcare. If you are a woman who is going to have an abortion, we are going to discriminate against you. We are going to treat you differently than anybody else for every other purpose.

And we are going to give you paid leave because we understand that it is inconvenient to have to go somewhere else from your duty station. By the way, you haven't asked to be at that duty station. We are going to give you paid leave except if you are going because of reproductive healthcare, in which case, we are going to discriminate against women and say, uniquely: You do not get paid leave. And, I guess, you have to inform your commanding officer—somebody does—that you are pregnant sooner than the 20 weeks.

That is the world that the Senator from Alabama is trying to pursue here on this floor by holding every single military promotion, every flag officer promotion in the United States of America when Putin is invading Ukraine and China is sailing their shiny new navy all over the South China Sea. And I know he knows. He can't think it is a good idea.

He has come out here and said: Don't worry about it. There are acting people who are doing those jobs. Don't worry about it. The generals don't actually make decisions. It is the enlisted people who are doing all the work. Don't worry about it. Somehow this is going to help with the recruiting quagmire that he has pointed out.

I don't think, by the way, it is going to help with the recruiting quagmire that he has talked about out here; that women who are thinking about joining the military are going to know that their life, their lives, are in the hands of politicians in Washington, DC. Their very lives are in their hands. Their destiny is in their hands. And DOD can send them to a place where abortion is banned and doctors go to jail for 99 years if they perform an abortion or they might be lucky enough to serve in a place like Colorado where we codified Roe v. Wade anyway. We are the first State in America to do it.

And I don't have to tell the Presiding Officer, who, by the way, served and has been on the Armed Services Committee, how important these jobs are we are talking about: the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General C.Q. Brown; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Chief of the National Security Agency; the next military representative to NATO. You think that is an important job?

Soon this hold is going to include the next Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Army Chief of Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations, putting our national security at risk.

Mr. President, I asked unanimous consent at the outset of tonight's proceedings if we could have unanimous consent on a number of these promotions.

I ask unanimous consent that those names and ranks and positions be printed in the RECORD.

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

MILITARY NOMINATIONS

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #46—Col. Leigh A. Swanson to be Brigadier General

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #47—Maj. Gen. Sean A. Gainey to be Lieutenant General; Exec. Cal. #48—Maj. Gen. Heidi J. Hoyle to be Lieutenant General; Exec. Cal. #49—Brig. Gen. Laurence S. Linton to be Major General; Exec. Cal. #50—Brig. Gen. Stacy M. Babcock to be Major General and Col. Peggy R. McManus to be Brigadier General

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #51—Maj. Gen. Andrew J. Gebara to be Lieutenant General

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #52—Maj. Gen. Robert M. Collins to be Lieutenant General

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #82—to be Brigadier General: Col. David J. Berkland; Col. Amy S. Bumgarner; Col. Ivory D. Carter; Col. Raja J. Chari; Col. Jason E. Carrothers; Col. John B. Creel; Col. Nicholas B. Evans; Col. Bridget V. Gigliotti; Col. Christopher B. Hammond; Col. Leslie F. Hauck, III; Col. Kurt C. Helphinstine; Col. Abraham L. Jackson; Col. Benjamin R. Jonsson; Col. Joy M. Kaczor; Col. Christopher J. Leonard; Col. Christopher E. Menuey; Col. David S. Miller; Col. Jeffrey A. Philips; Col. Erik N. Quigley; Col. Michael S. Rowe; Col. Derek M. Salmi; Col. Kayle M. Stevens; Col. Jose E. Sumangil; Col. Terence G. Taylor; Col. Jason D. Voorheis; Col. Michael O. Walters; Col. Adrienne L. Williams

Exec. Cal. #83—Col. Corey A. Simmons to be Brigadier General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #84—Rear Adm. George M. Wikoff to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #85—Rear Adm. Frederick W. Kacher to be Vice Admiral

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #86—to be Brigadier General: Col. Sean M. Carpenter; Col. Mary K. Haddad; Col. James L. Hartle; Col. Aaron J. Heick; Col. Joseph D. Janik; Col. Michael T. McGinley; Col. Kevin J. Merrill; Col. Tara E. Nolan; Col. Roderick C. Owens; Col. Mark D. Richey; Col. Norman B. Shaw, Jr.

Exec. Cal. #87—to be Brigadier General: Col. Kristin A. Hillery; Col. Michelle L. Wagner

Exec. Cal. #88—to be Major General: Brig. Gen. Elizabeth E. Arledge; Brig. Gen. Robert M. Blake; Brig. Gen. Vanessa J. Dornhoefer; Brig. Gen. Christopher A. Freeman; Brig. Gen. David P. Garfield; Brig. Gen. Mitchell A. Hanson; Brig. Gen. Jody A. Merritt; Brig: Gen. Adrian K. White; Brig. Gen. William W. Whittenberger, Jr.; Brig. Gen. Christopher F. Yancy

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #89—Col. Carlos M. Caceres to be Brigadier General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #90—Rear Adm. Shoshana S. Chatfield—to be Vice Admiral

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #91—Col. William F. Wilkerson to be Brigadier General

Exec. Cal. #92—Col. Evelyn E. Laptook to be Brigadier General

Exec. Cal. #93—Brig. Gen. Ronald R. Ragin to be Major General

Exec. Cal. #94—to be Brigadier General: Col. Brandon C. Anderson; Col. Beth A. Behn; Col. Matthew W. Braman; Col. Kenneth J. Burgess; Col. Thomas E. Burke; Col. Chad C. Chalfont; Col. Kendall J. Clarke; Col. Patrick M. Costello; Col. Rory A. Crooks; Col. Troy M. Denomy; Col. Sara E. Dudley; Col. Joseph E. Escandon; Col. Alric L. Francis; Col. George C. Hackler; Col. William C. Hannan, Jr.; Col. Peter G. Hart; Col. Gregory L. Holden; Col. Paul D. Howard; Col. James G. Kent; Col. Curtis W. King; Col. John P. Lloyd; Col. Shannon M. Lucas; Col. Landis C. Maddox; Col. Kareem P. Montague; Col. John B. Mountford; Col. David C. Phillips; Col. Kenneth N. Reed; Col. John W. Sannes; Col. Andrew O. Saslav; Col. Charlone E. Stallworth; Col. Jennifer S. Walkawicz; Col. Camilla A. White; Col. Scott D. Wilkinson; Col. Jeremy S. Wilson; Col. Scott C. Woodward; Col. Joseph W. Wortham, II; Col. David J. Zinn

IN THE MARINE CORPS

Exec. Cal. #95—to be Brigadier General: Col. David R. Everly; Col. Kelvin W. Gallman; Col. Adolfo Garcia, Jr.; Col. Matthew T. Good; Col. Trevor Hall; Col. Richard D. Joyce; Col. Omar J. Randall; Col. Robert S. Weiler

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #96—to be Rear Admiral (lower half): Capt. Walter D. Brafford; Capt. Robert J. Hawkins

Exec. Cal. #97—to be Rear Admiral (lower half): Capt. Amy N. Bauernschmidt; Capt. Michael B. Devore; Capt. Thomas A. Donovan; Capt. Frederic C. Goldhammer; Capt. Ian L. Johnson; Capt. Neil A. Koprowski; Capt. Paul J. Lanzilotta; Capt. Joshua Lasky; Capt. Donald W. Marks; Capt. Craig

T. Mattingly; Capt. Andrew T. Miller; Capt. Lincoln M. Reifsteck; Capt. Frank A. Rhodes, IV; Capt. Thomas E. Shultz; Capt. Todd E. Whalen; Capt. Forrest O. Young

Exec. Cal. #98—to be Rear Admiral (lower half): Capt. Brian J. Anderson; Capt. Julie M. Treanor

Exec. Cal. #99—to be Rear Admiral: Rear Adm. (lh) Casey J. Moton; Rear Adm. (lh) Stephen R. Tedford

Exec. Cal. #100—Rear Adm. (lh) Rick Freedman to be Rear Admiral:

Exec. Cal. #101—Rear Adm. (lh) Kenneth W. Epps to be Rear Admiral:

Exec. Cal. #102—to be Rear Admiral: Rear Adm. (lh) Stephen D. Barnett; Rear Adm. (lh) Michael W. Baze; Rear Adm. (lh) Richard T. Brophy, Jr.; Rear Adm. (lh) Joseph F. Cahill, III; Rear Adm. (lh) Brian L. Davies; Rear Adm. (lh) Michael P. Donnelly; Rear Adm. (lh) Daniel P. Martin; Rear Adm. (lh) Richard E. Seif, Jr.; Rear Adm. (lh) Paul C. Spedero, Jr.; Rear Adm. (lh) Derek A. Trinque; Rear Adm. (lh) Dennis Velez; Rear Adm. (lh) Darryl L. Walker; Rear Adm. (lh) Jeromy B. Williams

Exec. Cal. #103—Capt. Frank G. Schlereth, III to be Rear Admiral (lower half):

Exec. Cal. #104—to be Rear Admiral (lower half): Capt. Joshua C. Himes; Capt. Kurtis A. Mole

Exec. Cal. #105—to be Rear Admiral (lower half): Capt. Thomas J. Dickinson; Capt. Kevin R. Smith; Capt. Todd S. Weeks; Capt. Dianna Wolfson

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #106—to be Major General: Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Harrell; Brig. Gen. Jeannine M. Ryder

IN THE MARINE CORPS

Exec. Cal. #107—Lt. Gen. James W. Bierman, Jr. to be Lieutenant General

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #110—To be Major General: Brig. Gen. Curtis R. Bass; Brig. Gen. Kenyon K. Bell; Brig. Gen. Charles D. Bolton; Brig. Gen. Larry R. Broadwell, Jr.; Brig. Gen. Scott A. Cain; Brig. Gen. Sean M. Choquette; Brig. Gen. Roy W. Collins; Brig. Gen. John R. Edwards; Brig. Gen. Jason T. Hinds; Brig. Gen. Justin R. Hoffman; Brig. Gen. Stacy J. Huser; Brig. Gen. Matteo G. Martemucci; Brig. Gen. David A. Mineau; Brig. Gen. Paul D. Moga; Brig. Gen. Ty W. Neuman; Brig. Gen. Christopher J. Niemi; Brig. Gen. Brandon D. Parker; Brig. Gen. Michael T. Rawls; Brig. Gen. Patrick S. Ryder; Brig. Gen. David G. Shoemaker; Brig. Gen. Rebecca J. Sonkiss; Brig. Gen. Claude K. Tudor, Jr.; Brig. Gen. Dale R. White

IN THE MARINE CORPS

Exec. Cal. #111—Maj. Gen. Bradford J. Gering to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #112—Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Masiello to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #113—Rear Adm. James P. Downey to be Vice Admiral

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #130—Maj. Gen. John W. Brennan, Jr. to be Lieutenant General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #131—Vice Adm. Karl O. Thomas to be Vice Admiral

IN THE MARINE CORPS

Exec. Cal. #132—Lt. Gen. Michael S. Cederholm to be Lieutenant General

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #133—Brig. Gen. Derin S. Durham to be Major General

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #134—to be Brigadier General Col. Brandi B. Peasley; Col. John D. Rhodes Col. Earl C. Sparks, IV

Exec. Cal. #135—Brig. Gen. William Green, Jr. to be Major General

Exec. Cal. #136—Maj. Gen. Mark T. Simerly to be Lieutenant General

IN THE MARINE CORPS

Exec. Cal. #137—Maj. Gen. Ryan P. Heritage to be Lieutenant General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #138—Vice Adm. Craig A. Clapperton to be Vice Admiral

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #139—Col. Brian R. Moore to be Brigadier General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #180—Vice Adm. Daniel W. Dwyer to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #181—Rear Adm. Daniel L. Cheever to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #182—Rear Adm. (lh) Darin K. Via to be Rear Admiral

Exec. Cal. #183—Rear Adm. (lh) Darin K. Via to be Rear Admiral (lower half)

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #184—Lt. Gen. Scott L. Pleus to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #185—Brig. Gen. Dale R. White to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #186—Maj. Gen. David A. Harris, Jr. to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #187—Maj. Gen. David R. Iverson to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #188—Lt. Gen. Kevin B. Schneider to be General

Exec. Cal. #189—Maj. Gen. Laura L. Lenderman to be Lieutenant General

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Calz. #190—Maj. Gen. David M. Hodne to be Lieutenant General

IN THE MARINE CORPS

Exec. Cal. #191—Maj. Gen. Roger B. Turner, Jr. to be Lieutenant General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #192—Rear Adm. Yvette M. Davids to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #193—Rear Adm. Brendan R. McLane to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #194—Rear Adm. John E. Gumbleton to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #195—Rear Adm. Christopher S. Gray to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #196—Vice Adm. Charles B. Cooper, II to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #197—Rear Adm. James E. Pitts to be Vice Admiral

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #198—Gen. Kenneth S. Wilsbach to be General

Exec. Cal. #199—Maj. Gen. Linda S. Hurry to be Lieutenant General

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #200—Brig. Gen. Miguel A. Mendez to be Major General

Exec. Cal. #201—Col. Marlene K. Markotan to be Brigadier General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #202—Vice Adm. William J. Houston to be Admiral

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #203—Col. David M. Castaneda to be Brigadier General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #204—Rear Adm. Robert M. Gaucher to be Vice Admiral

Exec. Cal. #205—Rear Adm. Douglas G. Perry to be Vice Admiral

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #224—Maj. Gen. Karl H. Gingrich to be Lieutenant General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #225—to be Rear Admiral Rear Adm. (lh) Kenneth R. Blackmon; Rear Adm. (lh) Marc S. Lederer; Rear Adm. (lh) Robert C. Nowakowski;

Exec. Cal. #226—to be Rear Admiral (Lower Half) Capt. Jeffrey A. Jurgemeyer; Capt. Richard S. Lofgren; Capt. Michael S. Mattis; Capt. Richard W. Meyer; Capt. Bryon T. Smith; Capt. Michael R. Vanpoots

Exec. Cal. #227—Capt. John E. Byington to be Rear Admiral (lower half)

Exec. Cal. #228—Capt. John A. Robinson, III to be Rear Admiral (lower half)

Exec. Cal. #229—Capt. David E. Ludwa to be Rear Admiral (lower half)

Exec. Cal. #230—Capt. Peter K. Muschinske to be Rear Admiral (lower half)

Exec. Cal. #231—Capt. Marc F. Williams to be Rear Admiral (lower half)

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #232—Lt. Gen. Andrew M. Rohling to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #233—Maj. Gen. John B. Richardson, IV to be Lieutenant General

IN THE NAVY

Exec. Cal. #234—Vice Adm. Jeffrey W. Hughes to be Vice Admiral

IN THE AIR FORCE

Exec. Cal. #236—Lt. Gen. Gregory M. Guillot to be General

Exec. Cal. #237—Maj. Gen. Heath A. Collins to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #238—Lt. Gen. Jeffrey A. Kruse to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #239—Maj. Gen. Michael G. Koscheski to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #240—Lt. Gen. Donna D. Shipton to be Lieutenant General

IN THE ARMY

Exec. Cal. #241—Maj. Gen. Anthony R. Hale to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #242—Lt. Gen. Laura A. Potter to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #243—Maj. Gen. William J, Hartman to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #244—Lt. Gen. John S. Kolasheski to be Lieutenant General

Exec. Cal. #245—Col. Matthew N. Gebhard to be Brigadier General

Exec. Cal. #246—Col. Katherine M. Braun to be Brigadier General.

Mr. BENNET. Former Defense Secretary Gates, who, by the way, for those who don't know, was appointed by George W. Bush, said that the Senator from Alabama has made the military ''a pawn.'' That is a guy who served in a Republican administration. We have had Secretaries of Defense from both sides of the aisle who said the Senator from Alabama is hurting our national defense, hurting our national security, is playing politics with our Department of Defense.

What is his justification again? Well, it is no different than what I already said. He uses different words. He says that the DOD has made—the Department of Defense—by making these rules, into an abortion travel agency. Those are his words: abortion travel agency. Well, that is not true.

We have already talked about the travel allowance and the absence without leave and more time to notify. I am sure there are some people—a handful of people in America—who couldn't see the wisdom in that, who would disagree with that. But I will bet you that the vast majority of people in this country, including people who have a different view on a woman's right to choose than I have, would say that women ought to

have the right, in the Department of Defense, to get travel paid for just like anybody else and to get paid leave and to be able to have 20 weeks to be able to tell their commanding officer that they are pregnant.

This is an effort to punish women who are seeking reproductive healthcare and forcing them, for reasons I don't understand, to tell their commanding officer the minute that they are pregnant.

This is reminiscent to me of the States after Dobbs—after the Court overturned Roe v. Wade—that started to look at bills to try to prevent women from traveling from States that had banned abortion to States that had made abortion legal.

It is kind of a shocking place for us to be in to hear people—a party—embrace freedom and talk about freedom all the time and still live in a place where we are talking about trying to ban Americans from traveling from one State to another or not allowing the Department of Defense to pay money or to use paid leave for women's reproductive healthcare the way they do for anything else.

I mean, I do believe strongly—I believe strongly in a woman's right to choose, and I believe it should be a decision that is made between a woman and her doctor. Most Americans agree with that. I know that there is profound moral disagreement on this question, and I respect that. But I think it is fair to say that the Senator from Alabama's position on this to not allow paid leave, to not allow paid travel, to not allow women to get 20 weeks before they have to tell their commanding officers that they are pregnant—the vast majority of Americans, I think, would agree that those rules are appropriate.

By the way, one of the other reasons the Senator from Alabama has objected to this is that he has said that if the Senate wanted those rules, it should have passed those rules. Well, the Senate doesn't write the rules like that. We didn't pass the rules that exist today that pay for people to be able to go get surgery or get paid leave in the military. Those are rules that the Department of Defense makes, having been delegated that authority by the Congress.

But, man, he is in a totally different place on this. He says that he is going to keep this hold until the Pentagon follows the law or Congress changes the law; that is the way we do it here in the Senate. That is a reference to what I was just talking about in terms of the rules.

By the way, this is not how we do this in the Senate. It is just not. It is not. And the evidence is that no one in the history of this body has ever done this—ever in the history of the country. Nobody has done this. Nobody has done it. And I would say that not only has nobody done it, nobody has done it and taken a political position that is so far outside the mainstream of conventional American politics.

I think the American people should be asking their Senators where they stand on this. There are only 100 people here. It is not hard to find our telephone numbers or our addresses. They should be asking them: Do you agree that we should be holding up every single flag officer's promotion because one Senator thinks that we shouldn't have paid leave or paid travel for women who need reproductive healthcare?

He says he is going to relent only when that is true. He is only going to relent when there is a DOD policy that pays for every other surgery that somebody could get, that has paid family leave for any other procedure that you could get, but bans that for abortion. That is an extreme position. That is an extreme position.

It is an extreme position to say that we are going to not allow people to have 20 weeks to make this decision.

There are no exceptions in Alabama for rape or incest. That may be part of the reason why he has the perspective he does. It is a State where, if you are a doctor and you perform an abortion, you could go to jail for 99 years. But that is not what the majority of Americans believe on this issue. It is not. It is not. I don't even think the majority of Alabamians believe that. But the majority of Americans certainly don't. The majority of Americans believe in a woman's right to choose. The majority of Americans believe that these questions are best decided between a woman and her doctor or her family and her faith if she has one.

That is what my State believes. We were the first State that decriminalized abortion before Roe was even decided and were the first State to codify a woman's right to choose. That is, I think, what freedom actually looks like.

Our State, Colorado, is the first State to codify Roe since the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. And other folks were saying: You don't need to worry about the States. Now one of the largest States in America—a large State where something like 65 percent of the people support a woman's right to choose—the Governor of that State, the State of Florida, has banned abortion after 6 weeks. He signed that law at 11 at night when nobody would be around to see the way he was trampling on the freedom of his constituents.

Most Americans, if they knew this debate was happening, would be shocked, I think, to hear that what we are trying to do here is prevent women from getting paid leave; that we are trying to prevent women from having paid travel; that we are trying to prevent women from having 20 weeks to tell their commanding officer. That is what the Senator from Alabama is saying, that until that happens—until we are preventing women from those things, until we are discriminating against women who are seeking reproductive healthcare—he is going to continue to hold all these nominations. Forever?

I don't know how anybody can take that position and say they stand for freedom, but that is the position the Senator from Alabama has taken. I hope he will reconsider what he is doing because of the damage it is causing our national security at a moment when, as I said, Putin has invaded Ukraine and China is pressing, you know, its advantages in various places around the world.

We need the Senator to lift these holds, and I am going to keep coming to the floor until he does.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT S. JACKSON, JR.

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, with my colleagues Senator JIM RISCH and Representative MIKE SIMPSON, we honor an outstanding Idahoan and great American, Robert S. Jackson, Jr., for his service to our country, fellow veterans, and community.

Robert ''Bob'' Jackson is an Idaho native who spent many years in the U.S. Navy, serving throughout the world on various aircraft carriers that traveled to Vietnam, Libya, Lebanon, and locations for Desert Shield/Storm. His numerous awards throughout his career include Sailor of the Year three times, Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, Silver Wreath with six stars, and Meritorious Unit Commendation.

Following his retirement in 1992, he found ways to assist local veterans, particularly with his administrative and organizational skills. He is well-respected in the State veterans community and has helped a number of projects advance smoothly with his input and expertise. His list of efforts is long and includes leadership positions with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW, State Convention posts, and MC responsibilities. He is also a proud father of four daughters and one

son and husband to Jennifer, who also volunteers with the VFW Ladies Auxiliary. In 2009, Bob's military service, commitment, and sacrifice were honored with the 2009 Spirit of Freedom Award.

Bob, like so many of his fellow veterans, did not stop serving others long after his military service ended. He has demonstrated again and again his devotion to our country and others through his admirable actions. Despite overwhelming health challenges, he continues to show us all how to face difficulty with courage and honor. It seems deeply fitting that folks are gathering just after the Fourth of July to honor this remarkable American, as he served nobly for so many years to protect the freedoms we celebrate on Independence Day. Bob, our hearts are with you as we thank you for your admirable service to our country and our great State.●

RECOGNIZING FAMILY HEALTH CHIROPRACTIC

● Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize Family Health Chiropractic of Sanborn, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Dr. Stacy Carlin founded Family Health Chiropractic in 2008 following her graduation from the Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport. The original location for her practice was in Waterloo, which she began after Dr. Carlin and her husband Patrick moved to Cedar Falls following graduation. In 2018, Patrick became the Hartley-Melvin Sanborn School District superintendent. Dr. Carlin opened the Sanborn location that year and traveled between the two locations until June 2019 when she sold the Waterloo practice. Family Health Chiropractic continues to operate at the former Vander Haag Museum building in Sanborn.

Dr. Carlin is a member of the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association—ICPA. In 2012, she became a certified specialist in pediatric and pregnancy care following 200 additional hours of training through the ICPA's Academy Council of Chiropractic Pediatrics—CACCP—and Webster Certification. Throughout her 15-year career, she has treated patients of all ages, including patients as young as newborns. Family Health Chiropractic is also a dedicated member of the Sanborn Chamber of Commerce and active in the O'Brien County community. Family Health Chiropractic hosted a ''Cookies with Santa'' event at the Sanborn Community Center and sponsored ''Safe Kids Day'' at the Sanborn Fire Station in 2022. The O'Brien County Economic Development Corporation spotlighted Family Health Chiropractic in September 2022 for their dedicated service to continuing economic growth in the county.

Family Health Chiropractic's commitment to providing care to patients of all needs in Northwest Iowa is clear. I want to congratulate Dr. Carlin, and the entire team at Family Health Chiropractic for their continued dedication to the field of chiropractic medicine in rural Iowa. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

RECOGNIZING CAMP BARNABAS

● Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the work being done by Camp Barnabas in Purdy, MO, a remarkable organization that provides summer camp opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Founded in 1994, Camp Barnabas has compassionately transformed the lives of nearly 100,000 individuals with special needs. When I had the opportunity to visit Camp Barnabas, I saw the tremendous amount of care and professionalism their staff exhibits to ensure that every camper gets to experience summer camp just like every other kid. Their ministry in Southwest Missouri touches countless lives and inspires positive experiences in an environment where everyone can thrive, no matter what hand life has dealt them.

As they undergo a ribbon cutting soon for their new water park, the camp will be offering another unique opportunity for these campers to have an incredible summer and make amazing memories. This new water park is designed to make sure individuals of all abilities can participate and includes an intentional space for sensory relief, a lazy river, splash pads, adaptive slides, and several wheelchair accessible features.

I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating the incredible work from Camp Barnabas and share in their excitement as they unveil their new water park features to provide more amazing summer camp experiences for their campers.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Kelly, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13219 OF JUNE 26, 2001, WITH RESPECT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS—PM 16

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001, under which additional steps were taken in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, and which was expanded in scope in Executive Order 14033 of June 8, 2021, is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2023.

The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity, and the situation in the Western Balkans, which stymies progress toward effective and democratic governance and full integration into transatlantic institutions, outlined in these Executive Orders, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13219 with respect to the Western Balkans.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 20, 2023.*

REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13466 OF JUNE 26, 2008, WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA—PM 17

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to North Korea that was declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, expanded in

scope in Executive Order 13551 of August 30, 2010, addressed further in Executive Order 13570 of April 18, 2011, further expanded in scope in Executive Order 13687 of January 2, 2015, and under which additional steps were taken in Executive Order 13722 of March 15, 2016, and Executive Order 13810 of September 20, 2017, is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2023.

The existence and risk of the proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula; the actions and policies of the Government of North Korea that destabilize the Korean Peninsula and imperil United States Armed Forces, allies, and trading partners in the region, including its pursuit of nuclear and missile programs; and other provocative, destabilizing, and repressive actions and policies of the Government of North Korea, continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States.

For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 with respect to North Korea.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 20, 2023*.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 4:28 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 277. An act 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.

H.R. 288. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to clarify the nature of judicial review of agency interpretations of statutory and regulatory provisions.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 288. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to clarify the nature of judicial review of agency interpretations of statutory and regulatory provisions; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 277. An act 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.

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. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

S. 2044. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish reference prices for prescription drugs for purposes of Federal health programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2045. A bill to improve air quality management and the safety of communities using the best available monitoring technology and data; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2046. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to eliminate certain charges under the TRICARE dental program for members of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2047. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to create a Department of Defense Military Housing Readiness Council to enhance oversight and accountability for deficiencies in military housing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. REED, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2048. A bill to repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, and provide for the discoverability and admissibility of gun trace information in civil proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. BRAUN):

S. 2049. A bill to prevent price gouging at the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 2050. A bill to promote ethics and prevent corruption in Department of Defense contracting and other activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

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

S. 2051. A bill to reauthorize the Missing Children's Assistance Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 2052. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to enforce any willing pharmacy requirements and establish safeguards to ensure patient access to pharmacies in Medicare part D, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. COONS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. SMITH, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WELCH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2053. A bill to protect freedom of travel and reproductive rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LEE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2054. A bill to ensure that the Department of Defense achieves a clean audit opinion on its financial statements; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2055. A bill to provide urgent acquisition and deployment authority for purposes of replenishing United States stockpiles; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2056. A bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to strengthen and expand restrictions on retired members and members of reserve components of the uniformed services accepting employment and compensation from foreign governments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 2057. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to deliver on foreign military sales to Taiwan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

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

S. 2058. A bill to amend the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 to modify the areas of focus for centers of excellence at 1890 Institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 2059. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to pharmaceutical companies of the People's Republic of China and certain cartels that traffic fentanyl into the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 2060. A bill to amend the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 to strengthen oversight over foreign investment in the United States agricultural industry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2061. A bill to require the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, to establish a task force to develop and implement strategies to deter, prevent, and combat the theft and trafficking of catalytic converters and other automobile parts that contain precious metals targeted by thieves; 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. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 258. A resolution reaffirming the importance of the United States promoting the safety, health, and well-being of refugees and displaced persons in the United States and around the world; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 185

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the program for direct housing loans made to Native American veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 344

At the request of Mr. WARNER, his name 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. 363

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 363, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the individuals and communities who volunteered or donated items to the North Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, during World War II from December 25, 1941, to April 1, 1946.

S. 414

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 414, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and to expand eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation paid to certain survivors of certain veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 546

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, his name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 546, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize law enforcement agencies to use COPS grants for recruitment activities, and for other purposes.

S. 760

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 760, a bill to amend the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 to authorize mandatory funding for the Healthy Food Financing Initiative.

S. 1036

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1036, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to streamline nutrition access for older adults and adults with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 1069

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1069, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to prohibit the manufacture, processing, use, and distribution in commerce of commercial asbestos and mixtures and articles containing commercial asbestos, and for other purposes.

S. 1141

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1141, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes.

S. 1409

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1409, a bill to protect the safety of children on the internet.

S. 1424

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1424, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to improve health care coverage under vision and dental plans, and for other purposes.

S. 1557

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1557, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes.

S. 1588

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1588, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to direct the forgiveness or offset of an overpayment of retired pay paid to a joint account for a period after the death of the retired member of the Armed Forces.

S. 1756

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1756, a bill to amend the Farm Credit Act of 1971 to support the commercial fishing industry.

S. 1766

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1766, a bill to require the Secretary of Defense to submit a report on overdoses among members of the Armed Forces.

S. 1803

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1803, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to revise payment for air ambulance services under the Medicare program.

S. 1811

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1811, a bill to ensure treatment in the military based on merit and performance, and for other purposes.

S. 1885

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1885, a bill to eliminate employment-based visa caps on abused, abandoned, and neglected children eligible for humanitarian status, and for other purposes.

S. 1919

At the request of Mr. BUDD, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1919, a bill to require the United States Governor of, and the United States Executive Director at, the International Monetary Fund to oppose an increase in the weight of the Chinese renminbi in the Special Drawing Rights basket of the Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 1953

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1953, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income amounts received from State-based catastrophe loss mitigation programs.

S. 1983

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1983, a bill to require non-Federal prison, correctional, and detention facilities holding Federal prisoners or detainees under a contract with the Federal Government to make the same information available to the public that Federal prisons and correctional facilities are required to make available.

S. 1985

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1985, a bill to prohibit the flying, draping, or other display of any flag other than the flag of the United States at public buildings, and for other purposes.

S. 2030

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2030, a bill to establish a United States Commission on Hate Crimes to study and make recommendations on the prevention of the

commission of hate crimes, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 31

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 31, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Federal 'Good Neighbor Plan' for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards''.

S. RES. 74

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor 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.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

S. 2051. A bill to reauthorize the Missing Children's Assistance Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

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

S. 2051

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 ''Missing Children's Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 403 of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (34 U.S.C. 11292) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) the term 'child sexual abuse material' has the meaning given the term 'child pornography' in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code;

''(6) the term 'child sexual exploitation' means the sexual victimization or abuse of a child;

''(7) the term 'sexting' means sending and receiving messages containing sexually explicit, nude, or partially nude images by cell phone or messaging application;

''(8) the term 'sextortion'—

''(A) means sexual exploitation in which coercion, a threat, or blackmail, is used to cause a child to—

''(i) provide child sexual abuse material; or

''(ii) agree to engage in sexual activity; and

''(B) may involve a threat to publicly disclose nude or sexual images of a child if the child does not comply with a demand to—

''(i) engage in conduct described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (A); or

''(ii) provide financial payment; and

''(9) the term 'sexually exploited child' means a child who has been victimized by any form of sexual exploitation, including—

''(A) the live-streaming, production, distribution, or possession of child sexual abuse material;

''(B) enticement for sexual abuse;

''(C) sexual molestation or abuse;

''(D) sextortion; and

''(E) child sex trafficking.''.

(2) DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR.—Section 404 of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (34 U.S.C. 11293) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(6)(E), by striking ''the tipline established'' and inserting ''the CyberTipline established''; and

(B) in subsection (b)(1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (i)—

(aa) by striking ''hotline by which'' and inserting ''call center to which''; and

(bb) by striking ''individuals may report'' and all that follows and inserting ''individuals may—

''(I) report child sexual exploitation and the location of any missing child; and

''(II) request information pertaining to procedures necessary to reunite such child with such child's parent;'';

(II) by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii); and

(III) by inserting after clause (i) the following:

''(ii) mange the AMBER Alert Secondary Distribution Program; and'';

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''with their families'' and inserting ''with their parents'';

(iii) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''to families'' and inserting ''to parents'';

(iv) by striking subparagraph (G) and inserting the following:

''(G) provide technical assistance and case-related resources, including—

''(i) referrals to—

''(I) child-serving professionals involved in helping to recover missing and exploited children; and

''(II) law enforcement officers in their efforts to identify, locate, and recover missing and exploited children; and

''(ii) searching public records databases and publicly accessible open source data to—

''(I) locate and identify potential abductors and offenders involved in attempted or actual abductions; and

''(II) identify, locate, and recover abducted children;'';

(v) in subparagraph (H), by inserting ''on long-term missing child cases'' after ''techniques to assist'';

(vi) by striking subparagraph (I) and inserting the following:

''(I) provide training, technical assistance, and information to—

''(i) nongovernmental organizations with respect to procedures and resources to conduct background checks on individuals working with children; and

''(ii) law enforcement agencies with respect to identifying and locating noncompliant sex offenders;'';

(vii) in subparagraph (J), by striking ''with their families'' and inserting ''with their parents'';

(viii) in subparagraph (K)—

(I) in clause (i)—

(aa) in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking ''tipline'' and inserting ''CyberTipline'';

(bb) in subclause (I)—

(AA) in item (aa), by striking ''child pornography'' and inserting ''child sexual abuse material''; and

(BB) in item (ee), by striking ''extra-familial''; and

(cc) in subclause (II)—

(AA) by striking ''tipline'' and inserting ''CyberTipline''; and

(BB) by adding ''and'' at the end;

(II) in clause (ii)—

(aa) by striking ''child pornography'' and inserting ''child sexual abuse material'';

(bb) by inserting ''and'' after ''other sexual crimes''; and

(cc) by striking ''; and'' at the end and inserting '', including by providing information on legal remedies available to such victims;''; and

(III) by striking clause (iii);

(ix) by redesignating subparagraphs (L) through (O) as subparagraphs (M) through (P), respectively;

(x) by inserting after subparagraph (K) the following:

''(L) provide support services, consultation, and assistance to missing and sexually exploited children, parents, their families, and child-serving professionals on—

''(i) recovery support, including counseling recommendations and community support;

''(ii) family and peer support;

''(iii) the removal of child sexual abuse material and sexually exploitive content depicting children from the internet, including by facilitating requests to providers (as defined in section 2258E of title 18, United States Code) to remove visual depictions of victims that—

''(I) constitute or are associated with child sexual abuse material; or

''(II) do not constitute child sexual abuse material but are sexually suggestive;'';

(xi) in subparagraph (M), as so redesignated—

(I) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting ''educational'' before ''information to families'';

(II) in clause (i)—

(aa) by striking ''child abduction and'' and inserting ''missing children and child''; and

(bb) by adding ''and'' at the end; and

(III) by striking clauses (ii) and (iii) and inserting the following:

''(ii) internet safety, including tips and strategies to promote safety for children using technology (including social media) and reduce risk relating to—

''(I) cyberbullying;

''(II) child sex trafficking;

''(III) youth-produced child sexual abuse material or sexting;

''(IV) sextortion; and

''(V) online enticement;'';

(xii) in subparagraph (N), as so redesignated, by inserting ''and preventing child sexual exploitation'' after ''recovering such children'';

(xiii) by striking subparagraph (O), as so redesignated, and inserting the following:

''(O) assist the efforts of law enforcement agencies and State child welfare agencies to—

''(i) coordinate on the reporting, documentation, and resolution of cases involving children missing from a State child welfare system; and

''(ii) respond to foster children missing from a State child welfare system; and''; and

(xiv) in subparagraph (P), as so redesignated, by inserting ''and recovery support services'' after ''technical assistance''.

(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 409(a) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (34 U.S.C. 11297(a)) is amended by striking ''$40,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2014 through 2023, up to $32,200,000'' and inserting ''$49,300,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028, up to $41,500,000''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on October 1, 2023.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 258—REAFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES PROMOTING THE SAFETY, HEALTH, AND WELL-BEING OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND AROUND THE WORLD

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 258

Whereas June 20, 2023, is an international day designated by the United Nations as ''World Refugee Day,'' to honor refugees around the globe and celebrate the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their homes to escape conflict or persecution due to their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group;

Whereas July 28, 2023, is the 72nd anniversary of the adoption of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, done at Geneva July 28, 1951, which defines the term ''refugee'' and outlines the rights of refugees and the legal obligations of nation states to protect such rights;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (referred to in this preamble as ''UNHCR'') has recently reported that—

(1) there are more than 108,000,000 displaced people who have been forced from their homes worldwide, which is more displaced people than at any other time in recorded history, including more than 35,200,000 refugees and 62,500,000 internally displaced persons;

(2) 67 percent of the world's refugees originate from just Syria, Ukraine, Afghanistan, or Venezuela;

(3) more than 50 percent of the population of Syria (at least 13,000,000 people) have been displaced since the beginning of the Syrian civil war in 2011, either exiting Syria across the international border or going to other areas within Syria, and this displacement crisis has been exacerbated by major earthquakes that struck Turkiye and Syria in early February 2023;

(4) more than 14,000,000 Ukrainian nationals and other third country nationals are currently displaced as a result of Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine;

(5) there are an estimated 5,700,000 Afghan refugees around the world, of whom more than 90 percent are hosted in either Iran or Pakistan, while an additional 3,500,000 Afghans are internally displaced, having fled their homes searching for refuge within Afghanistan;

(6) Latin America and the Caribbean currently host 84 percent of the more than 7,000,000 Venezuelan refugees and migrants globally, and the Americas currently host approximately 20,000,000 refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless people from around the world;

(7) more than 1,800,000 people are currently displaced due to the ongoing conflict in Sudan, and a large majority of such people are women and children who are traveling to neighboring countries; and

(8) 76 percent of all refugees worldwide are hosted in low and middle income countries and fewer than 1 percent of vulnerable refugees in need of resettlement have had such opportunity due to lack of sufficient resettlement places;

Whereas welcoming people from around the world who have been oppressed and persecuted is a central tenet of our great Nation, and the United States is home to a diverse population of refugees and immigrants who have added to the economic strengths and cultural richness of our communities;

Whereas since seeking asylum is a protected right under United States domestic and international law, the United States is legally obligated to contribute to the maintenance of a humane and functioning international asylum system;

Whereas the principle of non-refoulement is also a central tenet of the United States refugee and asylum systems, and thousands of people living in the United States who immigrated from countries around the world would be subject to harm if they were deported to their countries of origin due to widespread conflict or persecution in such countries;

Whereas the United States Refugee Admissions Program, which was established in 1980—

(1) is a lifesaving pillar of global humanitarian efforts;

(2) advances United States national security and foreign policy goals; and

(3) supports regional host countries;

Whereas resettlement is an essential part of a comprehensive strategy to respond to refugee crises, promote regional stability, and strengthen United States national security;

Whereas resettlement to the United States is available for the most vulnerable refugees who undergo rigorous security vetting and medical screening processes;

Whereas the United States supports the efforts of the UNHCR to increase protection for, and the global resettlement of, LGBTQI+ refugees overseas;

Whereas women and girls have an increased risk of sexual violence, exploitation, and trafficking while they are traveling to seek safe living conditions;

Whereas through the United States Refugee Resettlement Program—

(1) only 11,411 refugees arrived in the United States during fiscal year 2021, which is the lowest number of refugees for any fiscal year since the program began;

(2) only 25,465 refugees arrived in the United States during fiscal year 2022 despite an admissions goal of 125,000; and

(3) as of May 30, 2023, only 31,797 refugees had arrived in the United States during fiscal year 2023;

Whereas resettlement organizations, businesses, and other community and faith-based groups offer support for refugees who resettle in the United States;

Whereas, between 2005 and 2014, refugees who have resettled in the United States contributed an estimated $269,100,000,000 to the national economy, which far surpasses the $206,100,000,000 spent by the United States to assist refugees worldwide during such period; and

Whereas most refugees integrate and quickly become self-sufficient by joining the workforce, paying taxes, supporting local commerce, helping to fill labor shortages in critical industries, and creating new jobs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the urgency to establish and follow comprehensive, fair, and humane policies to address forced migration and refugee challenges;

(2) reaffirms the bipartisan commitment of the United States to promote the safety, health, and well-being of millions of refugees and asylum seekers, including the education of refugee children and displaced persons fleeing war, persecution, or torture in search of protection, peace, hope, and freedom;

(3) recognizes the many individuals who have risked their lives working, either individually or on behalf of nongovernmental organizations or international agencies, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (referred to in this resolution as ''UNHCR''), to provide lifesaving assistance and protection for people around the world who have been displaced from their homes;

(4) reaffirms the imperative to fully restore United States asylum protections enshrined in the Refugee Act of 1980 (Public Law 96–212) by rejecting harmful bans and restrictions that limit refugees' access to protections and due process at the United States border;

(5) reaffirms the importance of the United States Refugee Resettlement Program as a critical tool of the United States Government—

(A) to strengthen national and regional security; and

(B) to encourage international solidarity with host countries; and

(6) calls upon the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the United States Ambassador to the United Nations—

(A) to uphold the United States' international leadership role in responding to displacement crises with humanitarian assistance, and restoring its leadership role in the protection of vulnerable refugee populations that endure gender-based violence, human trafficking, persecution, and violence against religious minorities, forced conscription, genocide, and exploitation;

(B) to work in partnership with the international community to find solutions to existing conflicts, prevent new conflicts from emerging, and tackle the root causes of involuntary migration;

(C) to continue supporting the efforts of the UNHCR and advance the work of nongovernmental organizations to protect refugees and asylum seekers regardless of their country of origin, race, ethnicity, or religious beliefs;

(D) to continue to alleviate pressures, through humanitarian and development assistance, on frontline refugee host countries that absorb the majority of the world's refugees, while effectively advocating for refugee well-being, including access to education and livelihoods;

(E) to meaningfully include refugees and displaced populations in creating and achieving the policy solutions affecting them;

(F) to respond to the global refugee crisis by meeting robust refugee admissions goals;

(G) to actively participate in the Global Refugee Forum scheduled to take place in Geneva in December 2023 to advance United States goals and gain commitments from the global community to expand refugee protection; and

(H) to reaffirm the goals of ''World Refugee Day'' and reiterate the United States' strong commitment to protect refugees and asylum seekers who live without adequate material, social, or legal protections.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 136. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution of ratification for Treaty Doc. 112–8, The Convention between the Government of the United States of America and

the Government of the Republic of Chile for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed in Washington on February 4, 2010, with a Protocol signed the same day, as corrected by exchanges of notes effected February 25, 2011, and February 10 and 21, 2012, and a related agreement effected by exchange of notes (the ''related Agreement'') on February 4, 2010; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 137. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 136 submitted by Mr. SCHUMER and intended to be proposed to the resolution of ratification for Treaty Doc. 112–8, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 138. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution of ratification for Treaty Doc. 112–8, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 136. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution of ratification for Treaty Doc. 112–8, The Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Chile for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed in Washington on February 4, 2010, with a Protocol signed the same day, as corrected by exchanges of notes effected February 25, 2011, and February 10 and 21, 2012, and a related agreement effected by exchange of notes (the ''related Agreement'') on February 4, 2010; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end add the following:

SEC. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This resolution of ratification shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after ratification.

SA 137. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 136 submitted by Mr. SCHUMER and intended to be proposed to the resolution of ratification for Treaty Doc. 112–8, The Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Chile for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed in Washington on February 4, 2010, with a Protocol signed the same day, as corrected by exchanges of notes effected February 25, 2011, and February 10 and 21, 2012, and a related agreement effected by exchange of notes (the ''related Agreement'') on February 4, 2010; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, line 4, strike ''1 day'' and insert ''2 days''.

SA 138. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution of ratification for Treaty Doc. 112–8, The Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Chile for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed in Washington on February 4, 2010, with a Protocol signed the same day, as corrected by exchanges of notes effected February 25, 2011, and February 10 and 21, 2012, and a related agreement effected by exchange of notes (the ''related Agreement'') on February 4, 2010; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

(____) The Convention authorizes the United States to request or accept, regardless of whether such information is exchanged on an automatic basis, only information that is individualized and relevant to an individual investigation for carrying out the provisions of the Convention or to the administration or enforcement of the domestic tax laws concerning taxes covered by the Convention. Information that is not individualized or not relevant to an individual investigation shall not be requested or accepted, regardless of whether that information is provided on an automatic basis, by the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I have two requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in closed session during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 5 p.m.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

The Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in closed session during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following interns in my office be granted floor privileges until the end of the Congress: Nell Palumbo, Reagan Philbeck, and John Orantes.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 277

Mr. BENNET. 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 (H.R. 277) 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will receive a second reading on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2023

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., on Wednesday, June 21; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, 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, notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate resume consideration of the veto message with respect to S. J. Res. 11 and that the Senate vote on passage of the joint resolution, the objection of the President to the contrary notwithstanding, at 11:30 a.m.; further, that following the disposition of the veto message, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Merle nomination, and following the cloture vote on the Merle nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; further, that at 2:15 p.m., if cloture has been invoked, all time be considered expired and the Senate vote on the confirmation of the Merle nomination; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Wednesday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:43 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, June 21, 2023, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate June 20, 2023:

THE JUDICIARY

JULIE RIKELMAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT.