

This growing threat makes our work on funding America's Armed Forces especially important, but the process of setting the Senate's national security priorities begins with a long-overdue annual Defense authorization.

I am hopeful that the Democratic leader is taking the necessary steps to bringing the NDAA to the Senate floor next week. I am hopeful this legislation will receive the thorough amendment process that it deserves.

The sooner we deliver on the NDAA, the sooner we can deliver the robust hard-power investments our Armed Forces need to replenish stocks, support our allies and partners, and deter growing threats to American security all around the world.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, last month, the Supreme Court included in its most consequential rulings of the term a major blow to the Biden administration's sprawling conception of executive branch power.

For years, the administration grasped for a way to deliver a big dose of catnip to Washington Democrats' wealthy blue-State base in the form of student loan socialism. They had dreamed up a reverse Robin Hood system of taking from working families to pay off the student loans of highly educated professionals, moving hundreds of billions of dollars in outstanding debt from high-earning doctors and lawyers onto the taxpayers' tab.

The median college graduate earns 55 percent more than the median worker who holds a high school diploma. And the wealthiest households in the country owe a disproportionate share of America's student debt.

But Democrats are hellbent on forgiving that debt at the expense of folks who carefully saved, paid off their debt, or avoided it altogether.

Of all the ways Washington Democrats have dreamed up to waste taxpayer dollars and betray the trust of working Americans, this one may well have taken the cake. But when the Biden administration picked an especially outlandish deal for enacting this particular scheme, the Supreme Court ended up being involved.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the Court ruled that 20-year-old emergency authorities designed during the War on Terror did not permit the President to ignore Congress and unilaterally cancel debt from his party's most reliable supporters.

As Chief Justice Roberts put it in the opinion of the Court, the administration's plan "‘modified’ the cited provisions” of existing authorities “only in the same sense that the French Revolution ‘modified’ the status of the French nobility.”

Washington Democrats tried to serve working families a raw deal. And by all accounts, they will probably try it again. But Senate Republicans con-

tinue to stand against radical student loan socialism—in whatever form it may take.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

MILITARY PROMOTIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. First, Madam President, I want to reiterate a point I made yesterday about Senator TUBERVILLE's military holds. The bottom line is very, very simple: Republican leaders and many of Senator TUBERVILLE's Republican colleagues oppose what Senator TUBERVILLE is doing because it puts at serious risk our military preparedness, our military security, our national security.

Very simply, the onus is on Republican Senators to prevail on Senator TUBERVILLE and get him to back off his reckless pursuit. That is the crux of the matter. It is on the backs of his Republican colleagues to get Senator TUBERVILLE to back off. It is hurting our military security. It is dangerous, unprecedented, and they have the power and the ability to stop him from doing it.

INFLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on inflation, let me begin with some welcome news for the American people. This morning, reports came out with new signs that inflation came down last month. The price of gas has come down over 25 percent since last year, and wages are now up also. Wage growth is significantly above inflation for the first time since the spring of 2021, right after President Biden took office. This news means one thing: more money in people's pockets, greater financial security, and affirmation that Democrats' agenda is working. We made a promise to lower costs, and today we have proof that we are making progress towards keeping that promise.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on the AI briefing, yesterday, the Senate held its first-ever—its first-ever—classified briefing on the national security implications of artificial intelligence. It was an eye-opening presentation. Many of us spent a lot of time educating ourselves on AI, talking to experts, and holding hearings, but yesterday's briefing was a candid wake-up call on how truly complicated AI is and how much work, hard work, we have before us.

This will be an ongoing effort. We want to move quickly but not too quickly. We need to move quickly so bad countries—authoritarian countries

and bad actors, not countries themselves—don't get ahead of us, but we can't move too quickly because we have to get this right, and it is very complicated. Action on AI will not be a matter of weeks, nor of years but, rather, of months.

I want to thank my colleagues who attended yesterday's briefing. We had a terrific turnout of roughly 70 Members—even better than the first.

I want to thank the briefers by name: Dr. Arati Prabhakar, Director of the White House Office of Science and Tech; Avril Haines, Director of National Intelligence; Kath Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense; VADM Trey Whitworth, Director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency; and Dr. Craig Martell, Chief Digital and AI Officer at DOD. Each briefer was clear, concise, and informative.

I was gratified my Republican colleagues came out of the briefing and said: Yes, this was a real back-and-forth, not just people reading a piece of paper and not just people answering questions.

For sure, we are not done. Very soon, I will announce the timing for our third all-Senate briefing and again urge my colleagues to attend, especially those who couldn't make the first two briefings. Learning as much as we can about AI as quickly as possible is essential.

AI is unlike anything Congress has dealt with before. It moves and changes so quickly. It is going to affect our world so dramatically. It is so much deeper in its complexity and lies so far outside our expertise. Coming up with legislative solutions will be one of the most difficult things Congress has ever, ever faced, so these briefings are an important initial step.

I don't kid myself on how difficult this is going to be. Some people asked why did I decide to take this on. Well, just because an issue is difficult or unfamiliar to Congress is no excuse to turn away, especially when it is so important and is going to have such a huge effect on every American and every person in the world's life. We can't throw our hands in the air and hope someone else figures it out.

Of the many things yesterday's briefing made clear, one of them was that government must play a role in making sure AI works for society's benefit. The private sector has made stunning progress innovating on AI, and Congress needs to be careful not to curb or hinder that innovation. But we are going to need guardrails, and the only agent that can do that is government.

Yes, some companies may put guardrails on on their own, but when another company refuses to put on those guardrails, that company, the original company, will feel the pressure—political or, more importantly, economic—and say: Look, we can't have those guardrails either. Even if many developers have good intentions, there are always going to be rogue actors, unscrupulous companies, and foreign adversaries

that seek to harm us and discard any guardrails at all. We can't expect companies to adopt guardrails, as I said, if their competitors won't be forced to do so as well.

So it is only a task that government can do with help and input from the experts. That was made clear at the hearings yesterday. Even those AI companies that are way out front on this now admit that they need some government action, we need some kinds of guardrails.

Later this year, Congress will host the first-ever AI Insight Forums to bring the best developers, experts, and legislators in one room to identify the areas where we can take action and to make sure we are asking the right questions to begin with. Ensuring our national security and safety will be one of the most important issues we discuss.

I want to thank everyone who attended yesterday. It was bipartisan, and we must keep this issue bipartisan. How to deal with AI is not a Republican issue; it is not a Democratic issue; it is a national issue.

I really want to thank our little group of Senators—HEINRICH, ROUNDS, and YOUNG—for helping organize these briefings. I look forward to the third briefing soon.

FEDERAL JUDICIARY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on forum shopping in the judiciary, our Federal judiciary is built on the trust and confidence of the American people, but right now, sadly, Americans' faith in the judicial system is at an alltime low thanks to the hijacking of our courts by the MAGA hard right and the unfair practice known as forum shopping.

Forum shopping essentially allows litigants in certain cases to handpick judges sympathetic to their cause. At its core, forum shopping undermines the spirit of a fair and balanced judiciary. That is why earlier this week I sent a letter to 18 of my Democratic colleagues and to the chair of the Advisory Committee on Civil Rights, calling on the Judicial Conference to consider reforms that would put an end to forum shopping.

If Americans want to see a clear example of why forum shopping is a serious problem, consider the Northern District of Texas. In that district, civil cases are often assigned to a single judge, if not one of just a few.

And it so happens, one of those judges is infamous—infamous—for his well-documented opposition to freedom of choice.

Do you know who knew that? The MAGA Republicans. So when MAGA Republicans sought to strip away access to FDA-approved abortion medication, widely available for decades, they intentionally targeted the Northern District of Texas, where only one judge sat. They knew which judge they would get.

To those who don't follow judiciary procedure, in most districts there are a bunch of judges. They put the case on wheel, and they spin the wheel around, and whomever the arrow lands on gets the case. You can't pick your judge.

But in this case, you can pick your judge, and in this case, it is an extreme MAGA judge, who we know has views that are so, so deeply held that no unbiased bystander can think a fair trial will be held.

And, lo and behold, of course, that judge sided with the anti-choice extremists, marking the first time ever that a judge has ordered a drug to be taken off the market nationwide. It doesn't just affect Amarillo and northern Texas. It affects the whole country.

This isn't equal justice. This isn't a fair or impartial application of the rule of law. This is extremists using forum shopping to pull a fast one on the vast majority of Americans who opposed this ruling.

And, of course, women's freedom of choice isn't the only issue at stake. When extremists can manipulate our judiciary to get judges of their preference, it endangers everything from healthcare to immigration reform, to commonsense gun safety, to voting rights.

Forum shopping is a serious problem that will only worsen Americans' crisis of faith in the judiciary. The letter Democrats sent offers a path for sensible, good-faith reforms that will preserve an independent Federal judiciary, while letting in much needed fresh air into America's halls of justice.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on nominations, today, we will confirm two more district judges: Tiffany Cartwright to serve in the Western District of Washington and Myong Joun to serve in the District of Massachusetts. We will also move forward on two executive nominations: Kalpana Kotagal to be a member of the EEOC, and David Uhlmann to be an Assistant Administrator of the EPA.

Ms. Kotagal is exceptionally qualified to serve on the EEOC, and, if confirmed, she will shift the balance of the Commission.

So it is going to be a busy day here on the Senate floor with several votes on nominees, and I thank my colleagues for their cooperation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Republican whip.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, summer has arrived, which means Congress is turning its attention to appropriations bills for the coming year, and my hope is that this year Congress will consider all 12 appropriations bills under regular order.

Now, what do I mean by regular order? Regular order refers to allowing bills to go through the committee process—including hearings and a markup, where members of the committee have a chance to amend and improve the bill—and then a referral by the committee to the Senate as a whole.

Bills are then considered on the Senate floor. Some bills pass the Senate by unanimous consent, while others undergo a full debate, including amendment votes, before being voted on by the Senate as a whole.

Then, if necessary, the bill goes to a conference committee or is passed back and forth between the House and the Senate to reconcile any differences between the House and Senate bills before the amended versions are then put to the full House and Senate.

That is what is considered the "regular order" process, and it is generally the best way to make laws. Regular order allows for a truly deliberative process. It provides the time to fully consider all aspects of legislation and to hear input from a broad array of Members. It promotes collaboration, compromise, and a sense of ownership of the final legislation, which makes bills more likely to pass. And, it is a transparent process, one that ensures that both Senators and the American people can see how the legislation in question is made and have ample time to digest it—not to mention the key fact that, by ensuring the input of more Senators, regular order helps ensure that a broader swath of the American people is represented in any final legislation.

Regular order is something that I think most Members generally aspire to. But the actual use of regular order has all too frequently been in short supply around here in recent years.

Too often, major legislation has been written behind closed doors and dropped on Members at the last minute—bypassing the chairmen, ranking members, and Senators who sit on the committees of jurisdiction and would otherwise have the opportunity to consider and amend the legislation in committee, before being brought up for a floor vote with little or no opportunity to offer amendments.

Fifty years ago, most bills were going through regular order. In fact, 83 percent of the legislation considered on the Senate floor during the 1970s was a product of the committee process. But by the 2010s, those numbers had dropped sharply, along with the number of Senate floor votes on amendments.