

specifically demanded and they actively helped to write. From start to finish, this bill is not some partisan Democratic wish list. In fact, the previous speaker, the senior Senator from California, is correctly upset at our lack of attention to legal immigration, to the plight of DACA individuals, and to try to anchor our policy and our core values of understanding that we are a Nation of immigrants and maybe even, separate and apart from that, immigration is one of the most effective anti-inflation policies out there.

But the vote we are about to take is not about immigration. It is about border security, and it is fair to say that the Democratic conference has come a long way on border security. We negotiated with one of the most conservative Members of the U.S. Senate, JAMES LANKFORD. And when I heard that CHRIS MURPHY and JAMES LANKFORD were negotiating, I was not hopeful—not because I don't think they are serious legislators, but I just figured they were too far apart. And so when they came to a conclusion, I didn't love everything in that bill; but I still support it, and here is why: because it makes real reforms and meaningful investments to address a real crisis at the border that needs to be fixed.

There is no contradiction between believing in legal immigration and believing in the core values of the United States and believing in the need for order and security on our northern and southern borders.

And so this bill will expedite the asylum process; it would provide immediate work authorizations; it would expand legal immigration pathways; it would provide billions of dollars to law enforcement to stop the flow of fentanyl.

Those are all necessary measures, but the reason the bill failed back in February, the reason the border continues to be the way it is today, is Donald Trump. Donald Trump woke up one day and decided that doing nothing on the border would help him politically. He literally said: Blame me. Blame me.

And so the funny thing about this situation is if you describe what happened exactly accurately, which is that we—with CHRIS MURPHY and KYRSTEN SINEMA and JAMES LANKFORD—negotiated the toughest border package in many generations that has a chance to pass, a bipartisan bill where Democrats were understandably uncomfortable, that when this thing came out, I was in conversations with Republican Members of the Senate, and they were saying they expected a vote in the high 70s, close to 80 votes. They were very comfortable that this was going to win going away. And then Donald Trump said: Kill it. And that is what happened; it got killed.

And so the thing about describing things factually in this instance is it sounds like I am trying to, you know, lob rhetorical bombs or make a partisan statement, but that is just lit-

erally what happened: We negotiated this thing. They told us: Work with JAMES LANKFORD. They told us: Reform the asylum process. They told us: CBP needs more resources. They are overwhelmed. They told us: We need technology.

We did all those things. CHRIS MURPHY negotiated all those things. It is not easy for—I am not sure if he would like to be called this—an unreconstructed progressive to negotiate such a bill.

He is looking at me right now. I think he doesn't love that term.

But they voted to kill it anyway. Republicans chose to preserve chaos at the border, and now this crisis is on them. So spare me the crocodile tears. Spare me the press conferences. Spare me the unanimous consent requests. Spare me the cable news hits. Spare me the memes. Spare me the TV ads. You had your chance.

And now the beauty of this is you have your chance again. An hour and 45 minutes from now, you can decide: Am I going to vote for the strongest border package in a generation? Or am I going to vote no because my boss is Donald Trump and he doesn't want this to pass? The choice is theirs.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 160

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, President Biden has opened our homeland to the world's criminals. Under his leadership, over 9 million illegal immigrants have crossed our southern border—9 million people. That is more people than the population of 75 percent of our States.

Month after month and year after year, the Biden administration is shattering all the wrong records. For example, CBP has reported 1.6 million known "got-aways" in the last 3 years, a stark increase from the 1.4 million known "got-aways" we saw in a 10-year span from 2010 to 2020. And that is just the known "got-aways." Who really knows how many people have gotten past CBP undetected?

And these aren't just plain old numbers, folks. OK? They are people that, too often, include violent criminals who harm Americans. Hardly a day goes by without hearing of another American who has fallen victim to crimes perpetuated by the illegal immigrants the Biden administration has let flood into our country.

We all read the stories of the illegals arrested on serious criminal charges and post bail, never to be heard from again.

Everyone knows the story of Laken Riley, the 22-year-old nursing student, beaten to death by an illegal immigrant who was in police custody in New York City before being let go.

But the crisis only continues. Just last Friday, news broke that Raul Santana, a Mexican national who is in the United States illegally, had his bail dropped from \$1 million to \$100,000. What did he do? Well, he struck and

killed Washington State Trooper Christopher Gadd while driving drunk and high at 112 miles per hour.

For more than 8 years, I have warned against the dangers of letting illegal immigrants—who have already broken our laws—roam the country and continue their lawlessness.

I have repeatedly called on this body to step up and protect innocent Americans from criminals who are in our country illegally and pass my bill, Sarah's Law.

Eight years ago, Iowans Michelle and Scott Root woke up to every parent's worst nightmare. Their daughter Sarah was killed by a drunk driver.

Sarah, a 21-year-old from Council Bluffs, had just graduated from Bellevue University in Nebraska with a 4.0 GPA. She had a bachelor's degree in criminal investigations.

She was headed home after celebrating her important life milestone with her friends and her family. She had her entire life ahead of her. But like Trooper Gadd, she was struck and killed by an illegal immigrant drunk driving.

Before the Root family could even lay Sarah to rest, her murderer posted a \$5,000 bond, was released, disappeared, and has never been seen again.

These tragedies don't have to continue happening. Today, we can act to ensure no family will be subject to the pain and anguish Sarah's parents have experienced every day for the past 8 years.

My bill, which is named for Sarah, would close the appalling loophole that let Sarah's killer go free. It would merely require ICE to detain otherwise deportable illegal immigrants charged with killing or seriously injuring another person. It also requires ICE to inform victims and family members of necessary information pertaining to the investigation.

Had Sarah's Law been on the books when Sarah and Laken and Trooper Gadd were murdered, law enforcement would have to detain their killers instead of opening the door for them to simply flee. The Roots, the Rileys, and the Gadds would have been kept up-to-date on Federal immigration authorities' efforts to remove their loved one's murderers from the country.

Simply put, folks, this should be easy. This should be easy. Sarah, Laken, and Trooper Gadd's deaths are tragic and, unfortunately, doomed to be repeated, thanks to the administration's broken and ill-informed policies and my Democrat colleagues' refusal to take up this very simple legislation.

Those who come here illegally and harm our citizens should, without question, be a priority for removal. It is just common sense, folks. Otherwise deportable illegal immigrants who commit violent crimes in the United States should face justice.

We can no longer prioritize illegal immigrants over public safety. We must pass Sarah's Law to send this

message loud and clear for Sarah's family and for countless American families that Sarah's Law would protect.

As in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 160 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I don't think we are in disagreement on the Senate floor on this matter. I think we all agree that noncitizens who are convicted of serious violent crimes—who have committed serious violent crimes—should be detained, and they should be subject to removal proceedings.

The good news is that is the current law. That is the current law. This bill is a reiteration of current law.

Let me tell you what current law requires.

Current law requires the detention of any individual with serious criminal convictions, including those who have committed crimes of violence or theft offenses, including murder, rape, and assault. That is the current law.

Furthermore, this administration has given specific direction to the Department of Justice to prioritize the detention or removal of individuals who have committed violent offenses.

And so, as with earlier unanimous consent requests, this unanimous consent request is essentially a reiteration of current law.

I have a great deal of respect for my colleague. We worked together on a number of important matters. But I find myself asking the question, Why are we being asked to simply restate current law when it comes to the detainment or removal of immigrants who have committed violent crimes who right now are subject to removal for those crimes?

And I come to two conclusions: The first is that it is a means of distracting the conversation from the vote that is going to happen in an hour and a half.

We went through a painstaking process to negotiate a bipartisan compromise. That process was begun at the request of Senate Republicans. In the room was their appointed negotiator and representatives of their chosen leader of the conference. It couldn't be more official than that: their appointed negotiator, Senator LANKFORD, and the leader of their caucus, Senator McCONNELL, in the room for 4 months negotiating a bipartisan border security bill.

At the end of that process, we achieved a result. We got an agreement with the people that the Senate Republican caucus told us to get an agreement with. Within 24 hours, almost every Senate Republican had sided against that bill.

I submit, everybody probably had different reasons for it, but it was very clear that up until the point where Donald Trump said: Don't do anything; I want the border to be a mess, there were plenty of Senate Republicans who were very invested in that process. Included in that bipartisan compromise are important reforms in the way that we try to make sure that anyone with a violent history never enters the United States.

Under current law, if you have a criminal history outside of the United States or a previous criminal history inside of the United States, that doesn't become relevant to your asylum claim until you present before an asylum judge.

Under the bipartisan bill, that question of whether you have a violent history and whether you should enter the United States happens at the border as part of your credible fear screening. That would be a really important bipartisan reform to make to make sure that anybody with a violent history never enters the United States.

The current law isn't good enough. The bipartisan bill would have made that law better and made this country safer. But Republicans are going to, almost to an individual, vote against that later today.

And so what we are left with are these unanimous consent agreements that don't come close to providing the kind of security that the bipartisan border bill does.

But it also serves a second purpose. It also has a secondary impact. I wish my Republican colleagues didn't care only about crimes committed by immigrants. I know they care about crimes committed by others, but it seems that there is a disproportionate amount of energy on this floor dedicated to crimes committed by immigrants, which gives the impression to the American public that there is a specific problem related to immigrant communities; that they commit crimes at rates that are higher than natural-born Americans, when in fact the opposite is true.

I worry that there is an effort afoot to try to turn us against each other, to make us fear immigrants, when in fact immigrants commit crimes at a rate much lower than natural-born Americans. U.S. citizens are over two times more likely to be arrested for violent crimes than immigrants are. Immigrants are 60 percent less likely to be incarcerated in this country than natural-born Americans are.

The mass shooter in Las Vegas wasn't an immigrant. The mass shooter at Pulse Nightclub wasn't an immigrant. The mass shooter at Sandy Hook wasn't an immigrant. The mass shooter in Uvalde wasn't an immigrant. The mass shooter in El Paso wasn't an immigrant. The mass shooter in Sutherland Springs wasn't an immigrant. The mass shooter in Lewiston, ME, wasn't an immigrant. The mass shooter in Parkland wasn't an

immigrant. And yet there wasn't a rush to the floor by my Republican colleagues after those mass shootings to try to fix the problem.

I grieve for every single victim of crime in this country. And I think we should be all working on ways to better protect our citizens. But I worry that these UC requests are an effort, one, to try to paper over the fact that Republicans are about to vote against a bipartisan border bill that would make this country safer and being in facilitation of an effort—whether intentional or unintentional—to try to make us specifically afraid of immigrants, when in fact the truth is that the people who are coming to this country are fleeing economic destitution, trying to save their children's lives, are coming from places in which they were victims of terror and torture and violence and when they get to the United States are actually less of a threat to our public safety than those who were born in the United States.

For that reason, I would object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, I will just respond briefly to a number of points made by my colleague in opposition to this bill.

And, one, I just want to say that this UC—this bill—I am not trying to detract or distract from the vote that will happen this afternoon. This is an effort I have engaged on for 8 years. I have brought this bill to the floor many times in an effort to see it passed for Sarah, for her family and for others who are in this similar situation.

So I would hope that we would be able to pass it today. I know that I will again, in the future, be bringing this bill to the floor.

As my colleague pointed out, we do—we do—appreciate the fact that there is crime all across the United States. And for those who are impacted by that crime, we do wish that they had not had to go through that crime. But the fact of the matter is, there is a difference between American citizens who are committing crimes and illegal immigrants who are committing crimes against American citizens.

The difference is that many times those illegal immigrants whom, in my bill, I am asking ICE to detain so that they can go to their hearings—I am asking ICE to detain them—not voluntarily detain, maybe have someone release them early, but they will be detained to face justice. Many times those illegal immigrants are operating under assumed names, under assumed Social Security numbers. We don't know their true identities. Many times they don't have roots in communities.

So what has happened—and we know this to be true because it happened in the case of Sarah Root and her killer—is that Edwin Mejia—that is at least one of the names that this gentleman used while he was in the United States—when he was released on bond,

he was able to slip into the shadows, and the authorities were not able to trace him. They were not able to find him.

Why? Because he was an illegal immigrant, operating under many assumed names, operating out of many different communities, with who knows which family or what contacts.

When American citizens are committing crimes, oftentimes we can trace them. We know who they are. We know who their family members are. We know where they have worked. It is very different with those who enter the country illegally. We can't trace them. We can't find them. The families like Sarah Root's family—Michelle Root and Scott Root will never see justice for their daughter because the man who killed her was released and slipped right back into the shadows where he came from. This family in Council Bluffs, IA, will never see justice for their daughter. Many of these other families will never see justice for their loved ones because our law does not require ICE to detain and hold those murderers—those killers—until they have been seen by a court of law.

That is what my bill does. It requires the detention. It does not allow ICE to voluntarily keep them. It requires them to keep them—justice for our families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3933

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I will be making a unanimous consent request here in a second, and Senator BRITT will be joining me in that endeavor.

We are going to have a vote at 2 o'clock about a bipartisan bill. I applaud the effort to change our immigration laws and get control of an out-of-control situation. Unfortunately, it doesn't matter what law is on the books, if the administration is not going to enforce the ones that already exist.

We had a vote in February on this bill. One of the problems I had the entire time is that parole is being abused by this administration. Since February until now, April, 77,800 people have been paroled in the United States, and I believe that is an abuse of the statute that is on the books. There were 1.3 million in fiscal year 2023. Over 1.2 million were paroled by the CBP alone.

Now let's talk about the parole statute, if we have that. If we don't, well, let me tell you what the law says.

It basically says you can be paroled for two reasons: a unique humanitarian need or a special benefit to the country. The statute that they are using to parole all of these people has limitations as to how it can be used. On average, the statute in question during the Obama-Trump years was used—about 6,000 people, on average, were paroled in the United States using the statute that the Biden administration has been abusing. In fiscal year 2019, it was 7,525;

in fiscal year 2018, 6,466; in fiscal year 2015, during the Obama years, 4,598; in fiscal year 2019, again, 7,500. In fiscal year 2022, the Biden administration paroled 795,561 and, in fiscal year 2023, 1.2 million plus.

Why are they doing parole differently than Obama and Trump? They are abusing the statute. Why are they just waiving so many people into the country? That is for the voters to decide. I think they are just basically abusing the statute because they don't want to turn anybody around and send them back. So they just let people come into the country in violation of the law.

Again, the parole statute in question is limited to two circumstances: a unique benefit to the country or a special benefit to the country. A unique humanitarian situation is that your mother is dying. A special need to the country is you are a witness in a trial, and we need to get you in for a limited situation. Parole is not permanent status.

As for Laken Riley—and we will ask unanimous consent to vote on the bill authored by Senator BRITT—the man accused of murdering her and who was indicted in Georgia, Mr. Ibarra, in September 2022, was apprehended by the Border Patrol. He was released through parole. And it took me forever to find this out, the reason for parole: The subject was paroled due to detention capacity at the central processing center in El Paso, TX. The reason for parole: The subject was paroled due to detention capacity at the central processing center in El Paso, TX. They had no room for the guy, and he is now being charged with murdering this young woman in Georgia. He was arrested in 2024.

Senator BRITT will tell us what her bill does here in a moment. She is trying to find a way to make sure this never happens again. The two crimes he was charged with should result in an immediate expulsion from the country. That is what her bill does. But I want the country to know that the man accused of killing this young lady in Georgia was released into our country by the DHS—illegally, in my view. They violated the statute. They gave him parole for a reason that doesn't exist in the statute.

And you wonder why we don't want to pass another bill. The reason we don't want to pass another bill is we don't trust you, the Biden administration. Why create a new law that isn't going to be any more effective than the current law?

From the time we had this debate until the end of April, did things get better? No. There have been 77,800 people paroled from the original debate until now. So, clearly, they haven't changed their idea or policies regarding the abuse of parole. The average for Obama-Trump was around 6,000 for the entire year using the parole statute in question. This is 77,800 since February. So why are we skeptical? Because of the way they do business in the Biden administration.

Secretary Mayorkas has all the power he needs to stop this. You will never convince me that 77,800 people were individually screened. They have a program to waive people through based on country, not individual status. They promised me that an individual analysis was done on each parolee. I asked him that, and he said yes. Well, we found one parolee accused of murdering a young lady in Georgia who was not individually analyzed and released based on the criteria of the statute. He was released because they had no place to put him. So what we want to do today is try to find a way to deal with the situation that led to the murder of this young lady.

The law has a loophole in it, I guess, for lack of a better word. I am going to recognize Senator BRITT now to tell us what her bill does, because what do we know about the Georgia case? We know the man charged with the murder of Ms. Riley was released into the United States under parole, not based on statutory requirements but just because we were full. If I were the Riley family, I would be pretty upset. They might want to think about suing.

Right now, I would like to yield to Senator BRITT from Alabama, who has tried to find a solution to this problem.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, first, I would like to say thank you to my colleague from South Carolina for his leadership on this critical issue.

The Laken Riley Act is the bipartisan border bill that should be on the Senate floor today. I am proud to be the lead Senate sponsor of this critical legislation along with my colleague from North Carolina.

The Laken Riley Act passed the House of Representatives in an overwhelmingly bipartisan fashion. The gentleman from Georgia, from Congressional District 10, secured 37 Democratic votes for this bill on the House floor, and here in the Senate, this bill is bipartisan and has a cosponsor list of 47 Senators. I am confident that a bipartisan majority of Senators supports the Laken Riley Act and would vote for it today. The House already did its work in a bipartisan fashion on this legislation, and now it is our turn here in the Senate. Frankly, it is well past time.

We should send this bipartisan bill to the President's desk immediately. If this bill had been the law of the land, Laken Riley would still be alive today. Now this body has an opportunity and a responsibility, in my opinion, to prevent this kind of unimaginable tragedy from happening to more families across America.

The Laken Riley Act is straightforward. It says that ICE would be required to detain and deport illegal aliens who commit theft offenses. It would also allow States to seek an injunction against any action taken by the Secretary of Homeland Security or