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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Holy One, who expresses Your love to us each day, shower us with Your mercy so that we may rejoice and be glad. May the gift of Your presence be more than sufficient to meet the needs of our Nation and world. Bring peace to those who are devastated by war.

Lord, empower the Members of this body to depend on Your might and to stand united as they meet the challenges of our time. As they strive to do Your will, teach them to say the right thing at the right time and to serve You with faithfulness. Keep them humble and fill them with Your peace.

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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

DISAPPROVING THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION RELATING TO "DEFINING LARGER PARTICIPANTS OF A MARKET FOR GENERAL-USE DIGITAL CONSUMER PAYMENT APPLICATIONS"—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following joint resolution, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) disapproving the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Defining Larger Participants of a Market for General-Use Digital Consumer Payment Applications".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### CHINA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in January, investor concerns about China's advances in AI innovation wiped out nearly \$1 trillion in U.S. tech stock value, and that happened in a single day.

Chinese companies like DeepSeek are often able to keep pace with Silicon Valley because they steal our tech secrets, and they do it from right under our own noses. This not only puts the United States at a competitive disadvantage but also threatens our national security.

The Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman has warned that Chinese nationals in our university systems are engaged in widespread technological espionage both on campus and in the workplace. Foreign STEM students often take tech jobs that give them access to sensitive technologies. This shouldn't be possible. Why? Because the law clearly states that student visas are solely for study, not for work.

Outrageously, the Department of Homeland Security has granted work authorizations to hundreds of thousands of foreign students every year, in violation of the law. The Department of Homeland Security has even allowed foreign students to stay in this country under their student visas for years after they graduate in order to work. If we want to protect our national security and our competitive economic competition with China, this must end.

So I am hopeful that with new leadership at the Department of Homeland Security, these unlawful work authorizations will no longer be approved. That leads me to calling on Secretary Noem to protect American jobs, innovation, and national security by terminating the CPT and the OPT student work programs—in other words, stop the steal that benefits the Communist Party of China.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

#### NOMINATION OF LORI CHAVEZ-DEREMER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the Senate will soon vote on its 21st Cabinet nominee, Lori Chavez-DeRemer, nominated for Secretary of Labor.

Ms. Chavez-DeRemer is a former Congresswoman from Oregon. She has been a mayor, a city councilor, and she and her husband spent 30 years building a small business. From her first job packing peaches at a California farm, Ms. Chavez-DeRemer has known the value of a hard day's work, and in her public service, she has put in the work to seek differing perspectives and to find common ground.

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



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Ms. Chavez-DeRemer's mother would always tell her "When you know better, you do better," and we need the Labor Department to do better than what we saw from the Biden administration.

Over the last 4 years, the Labor Department pushed out many mandates that were the very opposite of pro-worker. Americans lost their jobs because of the Biden COVID vaccine mandate. Many workers found the independent contractor status they valued threatened by a Biden administration rule. Then there was the Labor Department's attempt to allow 150 million Americans' retirement savings to be invested based on climate factors rather than just an investment's rate of return.

President Trump has shown his commitment to the working people of this country. Making life better for working Americans was a priority in his first administration, and it will be a priority in his second. It is a welcome change in direction from the last 4 years.

#### JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. President, speaking of a welcome change in direction, last night, the President came to Capitol Hill to address Congress and lay out his vision for the next 4 years—his vision and his record of accomplishment, because in just 6 weeks, President Trump has already accomplished an incredible amount.

Chief among his achievements is the job he and his administration have done in securing our southern border and restoring respect for the rule of law. There were approximately 8,450 encounters at our southern border during the month of February—8,450. That is at least—at least—a 25-year low. To put that number in perspective, during the Biden border crisis, Customs and Border Protection was sometimes dealing with 8,000 or more attempted illegal crossings per day. In just 6 weeks in office, President Trump is overseeing an incredible turnaround. It just shows what happens when you have a President and an administration committed to securing the border and enforcing the law.

Senate Republicans are committed to answering the President's call for additional funding to protect our borders, enforce our immigration laws, and get dangerous criminal aliens off of our streets.

Another crisis the President has lost no time in addressing is the national energy emergency that we are facing. As the Washington Post reported last March, "Amid explosive demand, America is running out of power."

The Biden administration, of course, pursued policies guaranteed to make things worse, from restricting conventional energy development to forcing Americans into electric vehicles. Fortunately, we are in a new era. President Trump has already taken steps to roll back burdensome Biden energy regulations like the electric vehicle

mandate and unleash American energy development, and the Republican Congress will support his efforts. For the sake of our security, our economy, and Americans' pocketbooks, we need to have a reliable, affordable, and abundant energy supply, and I am thankful to have a President who recognizes this.

One of the signature accomplishments of the first Trump administration was the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, legislation that put more money in hard-working Americans' pockets, and one of the top priorities of the second Trump administration is making that tax relief permanent. It is a priority for the President, and it is a priority for Republicans here in the Senate. We are hard at work laying the groundwork for permanently extending the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act this year.

There were so many things to hear last night that were a welcome change from the last 4 years: President Trump's commitment to reversing burdensome Biden administration regulations and eliminating 10 regulations for every new one his administration proposes; the President's commitment to eliminating wasteful and unnecessary spending; his commitment to protecting children from radical gender ideology and ensuring that women and girls' athletic opportunities are protected and more.

As always, Mr. President, I am grateful for President Trump's faith in America. It reminds us just how blessed we are to live in this great country and that in the United States of America, everything is possible.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night, Donald Trump subjected the American people to a deluge of falsehoods, misrepresentations, and outright lies. What Americans heard last night was easily the nastiest, most divisive, most partisan, and most dishonest Presidential address in American history.

In a speech that lasted almost 2 hours, Donald Trump spent over 10 minutes falsely ridiculing and delegitimizing Social Security, following DOGE's lead alleging this program, which serves tens of millions of Americans, is a scam. They seemed to be preparing to go full steam ahead to take benefits away from you, the American people.

It is amazing. Tens of millions of Americans depend on that check, that Social Security check, to buy food,

which is becoming more expensive under Donald Trump; to pay for prescription drugs, and they want to repeal the laws we did that made them cheaper for the average American; and so much else. Calling it a scam, ridiculing it with false information, and cutting 7,000 out of Social Security offices shows you where they are headed: to hurt Social Security, one of the most sacred programs in America.

Why are they doing this? Why would they do this? So unpopular. Only for one reason: The motivation of Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and the Republican Party is tax cuts for the billionaires. That is their No. 1 goal, and they will twist America in knots, hurting people—many people, millions of people—to get it done.

Trump also lied about his plans to eviscerate Medicaid and lied about his plans to cut taxes for billionaires while making working Americans pay the costs.

Mr. President, there was more truth in 10 minutes of Senator ELISSA SLOTKIN's rebuttal than in 2 hours of Donald Trump's long-winded, self-serving diatribe. Senator SLOTKIN did an outstanding job last night dismantling Donald Trump's nonsense with clarity, with facts, and with some desperately needed common sense. I am so glad I asked her to deliver the Democratic response because she knocked it out of the park.

Now, when Donald Trump wasn't lying, he was distracting. He talked again about renaming the Gulf of Mexico. He talked about renaming mountains. He said that he was a better President than George Washington. What a bubble this guy is in. What planet is he on? For a moment, I wondered if Donald Trump was utterly clueless of the disaster his administration has been under his watch.

The one thing Donald Trump did not mention last night was a real, serious plan to bring down costs—the No. 1 thing Americans wanted to hear most. Instead, Donald Trump doubled down on his plans to send costs skyrocketing by starting a trade war with Canada and Mexico.

Let's be very clear about this. Donald Trump's tariffs are a tax on working- and middle-class families. The average American household could see an extra \$2,000 a year in expenses. Tariffs mean the cost of pretty much everything would go up, not just cars, although he could destroy the car industry—remember, about 40 percent of the parts that are in American cars come from Canada—but also housing and groceries and food—beef, dairy, eggs—and the cost of furniture and smartphones and laptops and fertilizer for farmers. Even going out to dinner with friends will be more expensive because of Donald Trump's tariffs.

Tariffs will slow growth. They will erode profits. They worsen unemployment and inequality and wreak havoc on supply chains that tens of millions of people and businesses depend on.

Let's be clear. The administration has obviously not thought through these tariffs. They seem to be changing their plans by the hour. Even this uncertainty is extremely harmful to the economy. It makes it impossible for businesses to plan ahead. It depresses spending, slows growth, and eats away at consumer confidence.

Yes, there are certain tariffs—particularly against China, which is competing with us economically in unfair ways—that might make some sense, but these have been unthought through. They are creating chaos for the economy. That is the one thing that the tariffs are accomplishing—chaos for the economy, stock market plummets.

Why are they doing this? Well, it is not different here than Social Security or Medicaid. Why is Donald Trump hell-bent on starting a trade war when virtually every expert knows the casualties of a trade war will be families and consumers? The reason is very simple—one reason he and DOGE say that Social Security is a scam: They want to take away people's benefits to pay for billionaire tax cuts. That is the whole ball game.

I can't think of a time where any President ridiculed Social Security the way Donald Trump did, and I can't think of a time where someone was more chaotic and deleterious on tariffs than Donald Trump was.

What they are seeking in return is the greatest transfer of wealth from working families to billionaires in the history of America. They want to take Social Security benefits away from you, the American people. They want to take healthcare away from you, the American people. They want to take education and medical research and infrastructure and basic public services. Why? Well, it is pretty expensive to give tax cuts to the wealthy and elite, but that is what they are doing. That is what a transfer of wealth looks like to the average American—taking so much away from you, the things you need and depend on.

But Donald Trump and Republicans forget one thing: The American people aren't just going to roll over and let Republicans ruin this country. Democrats and, frankly, all Americans of good will, regardless of party, are organizing and mobilizing to defend healthcare and Social Security and the livelihood of American families. Americans are organizing in public, and Republicans have seen these frustrations at townhalls. That should be the first clue that they should drop their terrible agenda. When a lead Republican in the House tells Republicans "You better cancel your townhalls," they are running away from their policies and priorities.

We are organizing online. I set up a call with some of the leading activists, people who have been out there on the frontlines protesting in New York last week. I thought about 500 people would get on the Zoom; it was 3,000. I met

with 3,000 on Zoom—a turnout exceeding all expectations—to talk about how to defend healthcare, defend public services, stop tax cuts for the very wealthy, and make people's voices heard in the halls of power.

We are organizing in the courts. New lawsuits are happening every single day. Since just March 1—that is 4 or 5 days ago—at least 35 court rulings have come down halting or pausing some of the administration's worst abuses. The courts are one of the best tools available for protecting the rule of law and preventing the worst abuses of the administration.

Organizing is not easy. It takes persistence. But it works. It makes change happen. It is the cornerstone on which democracy is founded.

Donald Trump's exhausting speech is now in the rearview mirror, so Democrats will keep fighting every day to protect this precious democracy and hold the line against Donald Trump's attempts to rob American families of their livelihoods, taking so much away from the average American family and giving it to the very, very wealthy.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SCHUMER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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

The Republican whip.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today having just heard the minority leader come to the floor and have his reflections on last night's address to the Nation by President Donald Trump. Well, a man is entitled to his opinion.

This morning, however, CBS News reported on what the viewers at home thought about what they saw. The headline is "Poll of Trump's 2025 joint address to Congress finds large majority of viewers approve."

A large majority—76 percent of the viewers—approved of what they heard last night.

They asked those viewers: Did the President spend time on talking about the issues that you care about?

Two out of three said: Yes, indeed.

His speech—how did it make people feel? What did they say?

Almost 70 percent said: Hopeful. Hopeful for the future.

Over half said: Proud. Proud of America.

Speech viewers described the President as "presidential," "inspiring," and "unifying."

The question they asked is: Does President Trump have a clear plan for inflation?

More than two out of three said: Yes.

That is what the American people saw.

So apparently the minority leader did not see the same speech or did not

reflect the same way as the great majority of the American viewers at home, because last night, I believe people saw President Trump's bold agenda and rapid action in motion. That was focused on securing the border.

Joint addresses to Congress are typically about making promises, but last night, it was different. President Trump spoke about the promises he is keeping, the action that he has already taken to make our country safer.

The numbers tell the story. Under President Trump, in February, there were less than 9,000 illegal crossings at our southern border. That is the lowest in recorded history.

Under Joe Biden, the border was a very different story. The border was wide open for members of criminal cartels, the drug dealers, people on the Terrorist Watch List.

Last month was February. We are now into March. So we look at February 2022, 2023, 2024, and now with President Trump back in office. In February 2022, under Joe Biden, 160,000 illegal crossings; 2023, 157,000 illegal crossings; 2024, 190,000 illegal crossings; President Trump, less than 9,000. Joe Biden was having these numbers in a single day when he was in the White House.

President Trump is securing the border. He is doing it boldly. He is doing it strongly. He is doing it with intention.

One illegal immigrant said: It is too hard; you can't cross right now. That is the message we wanted. The American people wanted illegal immigrants to be hearing that it is too hard, don't even try it.

Under President Trump, we actually have reverse migration. It is the reality. Cartel criminals once profited from the border invasion—not anymore. One smuggler told NBC News that his profits had fallen 80 percent. That is a good message for them all to hear.

Illegal immigrants are turning around, and at the same time, illegal criminals in this country are being taken down. In my home State of Wyoming, ICE recently arrested two Mexican nationals, drug dealers. One man was found with a pound of methamphetamine. President Trump is taking coldblooded criminals like this off of our streets and getting them out of the country.

President Trump is also fighting to stop the drug cartels, and these are the people who are flooding our Nation with deadly drugs. Fentanyl poisoning kills more than 70,000 American citizens each and every year. This is a crisis.

On day one, President Trump listed these killer cartel members as terrorist organizations. No other President has taken such a bold step ever. And it is working. The cartels are now shutting down drug labs. The leaders are going into hiding. For the first time in years, the cartels are running scared.

That is the way it should be. President Trump said he is going to do

whatever it takes to keep Americans safe.

President Trump began his first day in office by signing dozens of Executive orders. He cracked down on illegal immigrant criminals in each and every one of our communities.

He empowered the Border Patrol agents. They are securing the border once again. He launched the largest deportation operation in history. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers have started to deport the worst illegal immigrant criminals.

President Trump also made sure American taxpayers stopped paying billions of their dollars on free hotels, on free phones, on free healthcare for illegal immigrants, which, of course, acted as a magnet to bring more illegal immigrants into the country. Not the message they are hearing today.

Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid are for American citizens, not for illegal immigrants. President Trump's actions are going to protect and preserve these vital programs for the very people that the programs were intended from the beginning.

The American public overwhelmingly supports what President Trump is doing. CBS News, the same people that did the poll this morning on how successful and how much the people of this country welcomed the President's address last night—well, last week, CBS News reported that 59 percent of Americans approved of President Trump's deportation program. And 64 percent say the President's actions are reducing illegal migration and crossings at the southern border.

It is what the American people want. It is what they voted for in November—a secure border. People around this country oppose what the Democrats are doing in sanctuary cities like Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver, and Boston. They oppose funneling their hard-earned taxpayer dollars to pay for benefits for illegal immigrants. People want safety, they want security, and they want some sanity coming out of Washington that they didn't have in the last 4 years. That is what President Trump and that is what Republicans are delivering.

This is only the beginning. Last night, President Trump laid out a clear path forward. He said the Department of Homeland Security needs backup, needs manpower, we need to finish the wall.

Manpower, technology, the wall, they are essential for full border security. That is why 2 weeks ago, the Presiding Officer and I and other Members of our colleagues here on the Republican side of the aisle passed a budget that increases for border security. Senate Republicans voted for more border agents, more detention beds, more deportation flights. Every Democrat, when having an opportunity to vote for those things, voted no.

Securing the border is why I introduced a bill called the Build the Wall Act. My legislation finishes building

the wall along the southern border, and it was paid for with unspent COVID money. The money is still there. Stopping the killer cartels is why the Senate needs to now pass the HALT Fentanyl Act. Lives are on the line. Fentanyl is the No. 1 killer of Americans between the ages of 18 and 45.

Permanently listing deadly illicit fentanyl as a schedule I drug, I believe, will save lives. The HALT Fentanyl Act is bipartisan. It passed the Senate Judiciary Committee, 16 to 5. It passed the House of Representatives with the support of 98 Democrats, and I am grateful that Leader Thune is preparing to bring it to the floor.

The Senate is going to deliver a secure border and safer communities. That is what the American people demand, and it is what the American people deserve.

#### WAIVING QUORUM CALL

I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Blanche nomination.

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

I yield the floor.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 27, Todd Blanche, of Florida, to be Deputy Attorney General.

John Thune, Roger Marshall, Tommy Tuberville, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Tim Sheehy, Katie Britt, Tom Cotton, Pete Ricketts, Kevin Cramer, John Barrasso, James Lankford, Rick Scott of Florida, Jon A. Husted, Markwayne Mullin, John R. Curtis, Roger F. Wicker, Bernie Moreno.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Todd Blanche, of Florida, to be Deputy Attorney General, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 104 Leg.]

#### YEAS—51

Banks	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Moreno
Blackburn	Grassley	Mullin
Boozman	Hagerty	Paul
Britt	Hawley	Ricketts
Budd	Hoeven	Risch
Capito	Husted	Rounds
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Collins	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Curtis	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young

#### NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Baldwin	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Kaine	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schiff
Blunt	Rochester	Kim
Booker	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Coons	Lujan	Smith
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Fetterman	Murray	Warren
Gallago	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	

#### NOT VOTING—3

Lummis	Murkowski	Slotkin
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 46. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Todd Blanche, of Florida, to be Deputy Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, there is a lot going on here in Washington, DC. That is an understatement. But I want to highlight the meeting that I had—that I attended, along with many of my Senate colleagues—last week, with Elon Musk and the Department of Government Efficiency team. That is a topic that has gotten a fair amount of information and visibility in the press, but much of it has been misinformation. I would like to address some of that and the importance of this effort, here, in the next few minutes. We had a very informative meeting with Mr. Musk and his team about the work they are doing on behalf of the American people.

I first met Elon Musk maybe 15 years ago, when he came to my office and said he had a new company called SpaceX, and he wanted to be able to compete with other companies that had all of the NASA contracts for space. I guess, looking back on it, that was quite a long time ago, but we see how far SpaceX has come, which now

covers the vast majority of payloads into space for the U.S. Government and for the private sector.

Interestingly, and to the point of the Department of Government Efficiency, Mr. Musk had to sue the Federal Government in order to compete, which tells you a lot about the problems that the Federal Government has; that it is not open to competition and, thus, creates a lot of the problems now that I think the Department of Government Efficiency is now looking at.

But in addition to all of that, Mr. Musk has now moved personally his family and his businesses to Texas. So I am happy to have him as a constituent. He has created a lot of jobs in my State, anywhere from Boca Chica in South Texas, in Cameron County—which is now, I think, officially renamed Starbase—and the Tesla gigafactory, which is right outside of Austin, which I visited a few months ago with Mr. Musk; Starlink, obviously, providing internet access to people in remote parts of the planet that would never hope to have that access—all sorts of interesting things that he is involved in.

Certainly, I think we can all acknowledge, whether you like Mr. Musk and what he is doing or you don't like him, he is obviously a brilliant individual and, certainly, among the most brilliant people I know.

So you have to ask yourself: Why would a guy, maybe one of the richest—maybe the richest—human beings on the planet, do what he is doing for the U.S. Government? I think that is an important question to ask.

Certainly, he is not doing it for the money. He is certainly not doing it for the glory, because anytime you start messing with the status quo here in Washington, DC, you can be assured you will become a target. You will be criticized. You will be demagogued against. You will be lied about. It just goes with the territory, and it is something, I am sure, he has not necessarily experienced before. Frankly, I am glad he is willing to put up with all of that in order to do some important things.

But, of course, what the Department of Government Efficiency is focused on is efficiency—something that we purport and claim to be focused on here in Washington, DC: waste, abuse, and fraud. We talk about it a lot, but that is basically what we end up doing—talking about it and not doing much, if anything, about it.

Right now, the U.S. national debt—that is like our credit card—sits at over \$36.4 trillion. I am sure that the American people—certainly, it is true in my case—can't really get your heads around how much money that really is. To me, one of the most telling indications of how big a number that is, is that we are now spending more money on interest on our national debt than we are on our defense, which is the most fundamental and important role that the Federal Government plays.

I know, sometimes, when you have such a big number or a big challenge or

a big problem, it is easy to say: Well, it is just too hard. We can't do anything about it.

In the case of politicians, some may say—and I bet there are more than a few: Well, it is too politically risky to try to deal with the status quo because I am sure there are going to be some sacred cows or some pet projects that individual Members of Congress or maybe constituent groups or special interest groups want to preserve. So they don't want you looking at that. They don't want you disrupting the status quo.

But the reality is—and as we heard from President Trump last night, as well as news reports—there are many examples of outrageous expenditures of taxpayer dollars that need to be exposed, and they need to be addressed. We have to start somewhere, and I would submit that there is no time like the present.

If you spoke to someone struggling with a substance abuse problem, an addiction, you would never say to that person: Well, the situation with your addiction is just so bad that it is hopeless. It is simply too hard to change. There is nothing you can do.

The truth is, Washington, DC, is addicted to spending and has been for a long, long time. And we have no responsible choice but to address it.

So I am glad that Mr. Musk and his team have stepped up. And while DOGE may not erase that national debt overnight, they are certainly highlighting the problems that those taxpayer expenditures present. And I think this effort will be part of the answer to how we get back on track and correct our fiscal challenges here in our country.

Now, of course, there are many in Washington who want nothing to change. I think we saw some of them last night sitting on their hands during the President's State of the Union speech. They like the way things are. They like the status quo. As a result, there has been a lot of wailing and gnashing of teeth and, frankly, dissemination of a lot of erroneous information, again, which is just simply not reality.

Now, some in the media have created, for their own reasons, misperceptions that Mr. Musk and his team are going in and making personnel and financial decisions on their own or forcing these decisions on the respective Agencies that they are researching, but that is simply false. Let me say that again. Some may have the perception that Mr. Musk and the Department of Government Efficiency team are themselves making personnel or financial decisions on their own. That is false. The reality is that those working for the Department of Government Efficiency are doing so in compliance with the law.

Each Agency's DOGE employees have gone through the Presidential personnel office onboarding process. They have appropriate security clearances and are direct contract employees of

these Agencies, and they must abide by the same guidelines and rules as other employees to ensure the protection of sensitive information.

The reality on the ground is that DOGE employees are reviewing systems, processes, data, personnel, and making recommendations—recommendations—to the Agency heads. Then the Agency head—in most cases, a Cabinet member appointed by President Trump and confirmed by the Senate—is the one with the authority to make those discretionary calls.

Now, of course, it is a tremendous project, as I indicated earlier, to reform our government's giant bureaucracy, and with any undertaking of this size, it is a given that there will be some trial and error, some mistakes that are made. But, hopefully, those can be readily addressed once pointed out. And the administration has made those course corrections, and they should continue to do so and, I believe, will do so. But there is much to be hopeful about.

One example that DOGE identified—and it is just, to me, a symptom of the problem—is reforming software licenses and subscriptions. We were told at the meeting at the White House with Mr. Musk and the Department of Government Efficiency that some Agencies are finding out that they are paying for as many as 37,000 software licenses but only about 10,000 employees are responsible for functions that require those licenses—37,000 licenses but only 10,000, arguably, would be required. Now, think about what this means for a minute. And, again, this is just a symptom, I think, of a larger problem. This means taxpayers are paying for a lot of software licenses that are sitting around and are not being used.

Imagine if a private company let something like this go unaddressed. Of course, they wouldn't, because if they did, they eventually would go out of business. They would go bankrupt and cease to exist. But the Federal Government doesn't work that way. Some of these things that Mr. Musk and his team are finding should be an embarrassment.

I can tell you that my constituents back in Texas are paying close attention and mainly like what they see. But the perennial problem is that the Federal Government just is very slow to change, and part of that has to do with the incentives that exist in the private sector that don't exist in the public sector. As I indicated, a private business couldn't do what the Federal Government does, or they would go belly up.

This is part of the reason that our national debt has been growing by leaps and bounds without any credible effort by the Congress or the Federal Government to change. And change we must. It is unsustainable.

Now, here in Congress, we have a certain amount of accountability because we run for election. We have to stand

for reelection. Our constituents get to vote for us or against us, and we, naturally, want to be responsive to what our constituents are telling us. There is always a sensitivity, for example, in what we spend in our offices. We take great care—I bet, to a person—not to waste the taxpayers' dime. Now, that is the sort of accountability that democracy provides: government of the people, by the people, for the people.

But when you look at the bureaucracy—a word that literally means ruled by the desk—there are no such incentives; there is no accountability—until now. So to have someone like Elon Musk and DOGE come in and shake things up is just exactly what Washington needs. And, again, it should be no surprise to any of us that there are some folks here in town who don't like what they see. There are many people who want nothing to change.

And we are definitely hearing a lot of speculation, in addition to the misinformation, about what this means and where it will ultimately lead, but many of these stories have turned out to be nothing more than that: stories.

We know there has always been waste, fraud, and abuse within the government, but it does not have to be that way. The problem is big, but it is our job as elected Members of Congress—working as part of the Federal Government, working for the American people—not to ignore it, not to give pretty speeches talking about how bad the problem is; but, actually, our job is to do something about it.

That is why I appreciate what the Department of Government Efficiency and the Trump administration are doing. I truly believe this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to actually get our fiscal house in order. This is not easy. If it were easy, we would have done it before. This is hard. It is politically risky. But it is absolutely critical that we do so.

If we look at what the voters told us on November 5 of last year, we saw an overwhelming desire of the American people to change the direction of the country. They gave President Trump and us a mandate for change, and I think what DOGE is doing, along with the Trump administration, is very much in line with the mandate that we got from the voters on November 5.

So I support the efforts that the Department of Government Efficiency are undertaking, and I look forward to continuing to work with Mr. Musk and President Trump, as a member of the Senate Caucus for DOGE, the Department of Government Efficiency, so that we can get our Nation's fiscal trajectory back on track. It is absolutely essential that we do so.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RICKETTS). The clerk will call the roll. The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Massachusetts.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, today's vote on this Congressional Review Act resolution could not be more straightforward: Vote yes if you want more Americans to get scammed. Vote no if you don't.

Vote yes if you want Elon Musk to have a get-out-of-jail-free card when he scams people on xMoney. Vote no if you don't.

Three-quarters of Americans use digital payment platforms like Venmo and Cash App, and reports of scams on those sites have skyrocketed.

So CFPB investigated and then stepped in with a new rule to help prevent this fraud. The CFPB's rule also helps protect consumer privacy, and it combats deep banking on these platforms.

Now, ask any American how much they like getting scammed and whether they think there should be stronger protections against it. Listen to how angry people get over these scams.

Look, nobody wants to be scammed, and no one wants fewer protections against getting scammed. In fact, the only people who want weaker rules against scamming are the guys who run the scams, and that may explain why Elon Musk is hoping that the Senate kills this new rule today because Elon's new xMoney digital payment platform would be subject to CFPB review.

Elon wants to take the cop off the beat. He wants what amounts to a "get out of jail free for Elon" card, and that is what the vote today would actually give him.

Look, I think it is pretty clear what Elon's play is here. He wasn't very subtle when he tweeted "CFPB RIP." The next thing you know, his DOGE team then locks the CFPB staff out of their own building. That was act one.

Now is act two: He wants Congress to block this CFPB rule.

Now, what will Elon get out of it if the rule is blocked? Well, he will get a clear runway for his payment app without having to worry about whether there is a cop on the financial beat who would catch him if he rips off customers who use his new app.

But this is really a three-part play, not just a two part play. Act one was closing down the CFPB so that the financial cops were shut out, at least for a while. Act two is the part we see now, with Elon rolling back a rule that, when cops are back on the beat, a financial cop could use that rule to go after Elon if he breaks the law.

Act three comes next week, when Republicans try to move forward with legislation that will clear the decks for Elon to issue xMoney as his own stablecoin, without any guardrails to protect consumers, to protect national security, or to protect the financial stability of our economy.

Put simply, Republicans are setting the stage for the richest man in the

world to issue his own currency that competes with the U.S. dollar.

Act one protected all the scammers. Act two protects the cash app scammers, in particular. And act three, as currently drafted, will roll out the red carpet for Elon and Jeff and Mark and maybe a few other Big Tech billionaires to seize control of our money and payments, which underpins the entire economy.

So the question is, Will Congress go along? Will Congress protect Americans from getting cheated out of their money? Or will Congress give Elon Musk a get-out-of-jail-free card so he can scam whoever he wants to scam and know that the CFPB can't touch him?

Look, this may feel like just one more vote on a busy day, but rewarding Elon Musk and a handful of billionaires will mean real cons go forward in this country.

I urge my colleagues to vote no.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today to talk about the importance of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in defending typical Americans against scams and multinational banks. This Agency's entire purpose is standing up for regular people as a watchdog against the powerful and the corrupt.

Donald Trump and Elon Musk are attempting to close the CFPB, and they are demonstrating their priorities. They have systematically kneecapped every part of the government that can stand in the way of their spree of looting the government to make themselves and their wealthy friends even wealthier. This unlawful freeze threatens Oregonians' economic opportunity and our country's economic stability.

Donald Trump pledged to the American people to level the playing field and lower prices. His actions and the actions of many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do the opposite.

Just yesterday, my office heard from veterans who served our country and now go to college in Oregon. These are brave young people who are not wealthy. They shared details about how veterans routinely face predatory, for-profit, fake colleges that just want to target their post-9/11 GI benefits. If not for the work of the CFPB, many young veterans would have been robbed of tens of thousands of dollars each in earned benefits.

My constituents shared that they are really worried about what is going to happen in terms of our student veterans if Donald Trump and Elon Musk succeed in shuttering the CFPB. Either Donald Trump and Elon Musk didn't know that the CFPB has an entire office dedicated to protecting veterans and servicemembers from bad actors. Or possibly, they just didn't care.

Since the Bureau's start just 13 years ago, it has returned over \$21 billion to

consumers, and through its oversight, it has prevented billions more in losses.

In a choice between fraudsters and scammers and those who serve our Nation in uniform, Donald Trump and Elon Musk protected the fraudsters and the scammers by illegally sending CFPB staff home and freezing the Agency's work.

Now my Republican colleagues are attempting to repeal the CFPB rule that protects consumers from frauds and scams on payment apps like Venmo. Under this rule, the CFPB would be allowed to look at the books of payment apps to ensure they are following the law.

This rule doesn't impose new requirements on these services like Venmo. This type of supervision is important to stop illegal activity before it is too late. In the case of payment apps, this supervision is crucial to combat frauds and scams.

Frauds and scams on payment apps are only getting more common, so why are my colleagues pushing to overturn the rule now? Republicans are trying to roll back the rule. I am sure it has nothing to do with the fact that Elon Musk wants to start a payments app. That is a lot harder to do when you have to follow any pesky laws or rules. And anybody who has used the site formerly known as Twitter recently knows that Elon Musk doesn't seem to care about the proliferation of fraud or scams.

Trump, Musk, and my colleagues across the aisle seem to be working to destroy the CFPB because it enforces consumer protection and data privacy laws, which I have been working to strengthen.

Elon Musk has already trampled into Americans' sensitive data at the IRS. It should be clear to all of us by now that Elon Musk, Donald Trump, and the rest of this billionaire crowd seem to have no regard for the law or for the Constitution.

Those who voted for Donald Trump because they wanted lower prices and a fairer economy really ought to be concerned about what I have just described this economic sabotage. And anybody who plays by the rules has a right as well to feel betrayed by Trump and Musk's contempt for the rule of law.

I am glad to be here with my colleagues to blow the whistle on Trump and the Republicans' dangerous and chaotic agenda and to work with Senator WARREN, who has led the effort on this issue for so many years.

I will vote to oppose this resolution. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to this resolution disapproving of the CFPB's rule defining larger participants of a market for general-use digital consumer payment applications, which will make consumers more susceptible to fraud. In November, the CFPB published a rule to extend oversight over Big Tech companies that offer mobile payments and digital wallets. Companies like Cash App, Venmo, Google, and Apple now handle billions of dollars in consumer transactions per year. Everyone knows someone who has either been defrauded or scammed on one of these applications, and everyone also knows how difficult it can be to get your money back, even if your savings get wiped out.

The CFPB took a very sensible approach to update our financial regulations to address this problem. The CFPB's rule places big tech companies that handle your money under Federal oversight in order to make sure they are following the law. If these big tech companies want to act like banks, then they should be subject to similar consumer protection requirements as banks. Under the CFPB's rule, someone is making sure consumers actually get reimbursed when they are victims of fraud. It means that fraudsters are having a harder time stealing people's savings, and it means greater protection against sophisticated scammers that are hacking people's phone and email accounts.

If this resolution is adopted, there is no going back. It will preclude the CFPB from adopting substantially similar consumer protections in the future. Big Tech will operate under its own rules, and consumers will be vulnerable.

And it is no coincidence that this CRA vote comes only 1 month after Elon Musk announced that he would be starting his own digital payment company—what a coincidence. A vote in favor of this resolution is a vote to strip Federal oversight of Elon Musk's payment company. It is a vote to make it easier for Elon Musk to shirk his obligation to reimburse the American people when they are cheated out of their money on his platform. Elon Musk wins; the American people lose.

I hope my Republican colleagues will join us to protect this eminently sensible rule, and I urge my colleagues to oppose his resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is at its core a law enforcement agency. Congress established the CFPB 15 years ago to protect Americans from fraud, from getting ripped off by banks and credit card companies, financial institutions.

Today's Republican-led resolution weakens the CFPB's ability to protect consumers as part of a broader effort by the administration to shut down consumer protections entirely.

Now let's take a minute to go back in time to the time before the CFPB existed, right before the 2008 financial meltdown. Back then, abusive fees and misleading disclosures meant that Coloradans paid more for mortgages, more for credit cards, and more for student loans. Fly-by-night lenders made massive profits by targeting vulnerable families with excessively high-cost loans, turning credit from a tool for opportunity into a tool for scams.

Financial scammers could all too easily slip through the cracks in oversight. There just wasn't enough oversight. In some cases, there was no oversight. Our neighbors were getting hit with hidden fees and frauds when they took out a mortgage, when they used a credit card, if they were just paying for school. There was no cop on the beat.

The result? By 2008, years of this shady, abusive practice helped spark a devastating global financial crisis. Six million households lost their homes to foreclosure, and a quarter of our families lost 75 percent of their wealth. Americans lost faith in our financial system.

In 2010, Congress created the CFPB to help make sure this could never happen again. Congress gave it a simple job: to protect Americans from getting ripped off. The Bureau cleaned up mortgage markets, debt collection, student loans, and much, much more. It worked to protect veterans and servicemembers.

Fast-forward to today, and the CFPB's results really speak for themselves. The Bureau has delivered \$20 billion—that is billion dollars with a "b"—back to Americans through its enforcement actions. It has brought relief to 200 million Americans and small businesses facing scams or abusive practices.

In Colorado, nearly 67,000 people have sought help from CFPB, including more than 6,200 servicemembers. Thousands of those complaints led to relief for consumers.

It really is a remarkable track record—that is, until it was decided by Republicans to—well, they want to eliminate many of these protections, if not all of them.

This vote today would unwind protections designed for the modern financial system, for the everyday payment apps we all use like Venmo or PayPal. It would allow some of the largest financial firms in a consumer's life to stay in the shadows, to operate outside of any oversight. That is exactly the approach to consumer protection we had 20 years ago, before the CFPB, before the 2008 financial crisis.

This is but the latest attempt to leave consumers vulnerable to scams. In fact, the Trump administration is trying—I think many people believe illegally—to abolish the CFPB entirely. They fired dedicated staff who protect consumers, they canceled the lease on the CFPB's office, and they literally ordered a total shutdown of the Agency—an unprecedented effort to defy Congress.



The administration believes that the CFPB doesn't deserve to exist. Maybe they think that scammers and fraudsters have finally hung it up and have gone to find honest work, but I think the American people know better. The administration wants to take our economy back to the time before the financial crisis of 2009, with weaker protections and no one looking out for consumers. If the Trump administration gets its way, it is clear who the winners will be—loan sharks, shady mortgage companies, junk-fee merchants. The losers will be the rest of America—any Coloradan who wants a fair deal on a credit card or a mortgage.

Bottom line: More money in the pocket of fraudsters, scammers, and the unscrupulous; less for the little guy to save.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for American consumers and vote no on this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The Senator from Connecticut.

S.J. RES. 28

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, we are considering today S.J. Res. 28. That sounds highly technical, complex, and difficult to understand, and some may consider it so; but, in fact, it would have the very simple, straightforward effect of undoing a rule that is vital to protecting consumers. It would undo the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's larger participant rule under the Congressional Review Act.

I think most people, by now, know about the CFPB, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which is, in effect, the top cop on the beat of reviewing Big Banks' activities to prevent consumers from being cheated, scammed, and defrauded. It is under attack by the Trump administration and, of all people—surprise—Elon Musk. Elon Musk's attack on this rule is not coincidental, as I will explain in just a couple of minutes. To add insult to injury, our Republican colleagues are forcing a vote on this CRA to overturn the CFPB's larger participant rule, which protects consumers as big tech companies rush into offering financial services.

The big tech companies are getting into this business. Why? Because that is where the money is. This rulemaking allows the CFPB to supervise larger, nonbank companies that offer digital payment services, including peer-to-peer apps like Venmo or Cash App.

Again, it sounds complicated; but, really, at its core, it is very simple. It means that the CFPB can protect consumers on Venmo and other apps in the same way they do with banks. That is what the rule enables them to do. You are not a big bank, but consumers can still be protected if you fail in your duty to them. It is a commonsense measure to deter misconduct and protect consumers. If this CRA attempt is successful, it will undermine the

CFPB's efforts to crack down on peer-to-peer fraud—apps which are misused or abused—and that fraud has surged in recent years.

To make it real, let me just tell you about my experience as chair of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. I opened an inquiry into the handling of scams and fraud on Zelle. Our investigation found that the level of reimbursement for fraud has dropped precipitously in the last 5 years, from 62 percent to 38 percent. What does that mean? Reimbursement for fraud has diminished hugely in the last 5 years, even though the rate of fraud has, probably, increased. In other words, peer-to-peer companies like Zelle are not returning money they are supposed to be giving back to people who are scammed on their app.

Not only are consumers who have already been harmed by fraud and scams on peer-to-peer payment platforms not seeing relief by rolling back the larger participant rule, the Trump administration is effectively telling tech companies that want to offer payments: Do whatever you want. The floor is yours. No one will be watching you. No one will be enforcing reimbursement if you permit fraud on your platform.

Now, just so everyone understands, requiring reimbursements provides a pretty strong incentive for any platform to police and prevent fraud. That is the reason reimbursements are important in a more general sense. Obviously, they are important to somebody who has been defrauded in that they want their money back, but the requirement that the platform provide reimbursements is a very strong and persuasive deterrent to lax and lackadaisical oversight by the platform itself. These platforms are speedy; they are quick; they are easy. It becomes speedy, quick, and easy to lose your money, and most of the payments are irreversible.

People watching at home may be wondering why Republicans are spending their time trying to roll back a commonsense rule that will empower the CFPB to protect everyday consumers from scams.

Well, like I was saying a little bit earlier, you don't have to look very far for the answer. As with most of the havoc wreaked by this administration in the last month, follow the money. It leads to Elon Musk. In January, Musk announced that he will be partnering with Visa to launch xMoney—a new venture that would provide X users with access to a mobile wallet and the ability to make peer-to-peer payments. So this new service, provided by X, would be, in fact, potentially subject to this rule and requirements for reimbursement that, of course, would check the laxity of oversight and force the kind of responsibility—it is really a responsibility to consumers—that these peer-to-peer platforms owe them morally. It ought to be a legal obligation, not just a moral one.

The value of X has dropped dramatically—another surprise since Musk

purchased it 2 years ago with Fidelity—estimating the value has declined by nearly 80 percent. Now, seemingly, Musk is desperate to turn a profit on his investment in X. The CFPB, which Musk has attacked and now the administration is moving to shut down, will be one of xMoney's regulators—in fact, its key regulator. Given the spike in scams, bots, and hate speech on X since Musk purchased the site, one can only imagine how prevalent scams are likely to be on xMoney, especially with a diminished—or no—CFPB to regulate it.

I know “regulation” is becoming a dirty word, but think of it as protecting consumers, preventing fraud that may be irreparable when it occurs because consumers can't get their money back.

The larger participant rule, if it is not repealed, would authorize the CFPB to examine xMoney's books and records and look for illegal practices. The CFPB would be at X's door, asking for those records, overseeing their transactions, protecting consumers. No wonder Elon Musk doesn't like it. He is averse to transparency and disclosure as a matter of principle, and that is why he is trying to make “regulation” a dirty word.

Hence, while Elon Musk continues to ride roughshod over the CFPB, Senate Republicans are doing his bidding today. They are attempting to overturn the rule he doesn't like because it would require more disclosure, more transparency, more responsibility legally as well as morally from xMoney, his company.

When you come right down to it, it seems more simple than even I thought at the beginning of my talk here today. The CFPB, through rulemaking like the larger participant rule, protects consumers from fraud, scams, and financial abuse. Every attack on the CFPB—and we have seen a lot of them, including this one, the CRA—is an attack on commonsense consumer protection. It is designed to benefit the wealthy and well-connected, like Elon Musk, at the expense of everyday Americans. It takes away a protection to benefit Musk—already a multi-billionaire—and xMoney and X, and it is at the expense of us, the everyday Americans.

I urge my colleagues today to vote against this attack on the CFPB and to vote no on S.J. Res. 28.

Again, it may seem complicated. Before I came to the floor today, I was meeting with some media executives—people extremely knowledgeable and financially astute—involved in major American corporations. I told them I was coming to the floor of the U.S. Senate to talk about the CFPB and the larger participant rule, and they looked at me as though I were from outer space.

Americans are unaware, and they will be unaware until xMoney starts hosting scams, frauds, bots, and they are cheated or defrauded. Then they



will wonder: Why is there no protection? “Why aren’t you doing something?” they will say to us in the U.S. Senate. I hope they will hold accountable my Republican colleagues—anyone who supports this CRA—because it will dramatically reduce the enforcement power of the CFPB and anyone else to help protect consumers from those frauds and losses of money, which they need now more than ever.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SPORTS  
ACT

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to once again join my Republican colleagues in reaffirming our commitment to safeguarding the protections provided by title IX and the hard-won opportunities it offers women and girls.

Since its enactment in 1972, title IX has been instrumental in preventing sex discrimination in education, ensuring equality for girls and women. Remember that before title IX, women and girls were denied the same academic and athletic opportunities as their male peers.

Title IX was originally designed by Congress to ensure that women and girls receive equal and fair opportunities based on biological reality while also ensuring their safety in educational settings. For more than 50 years, it successfully upheld these principles.

Unfortunately, over the past 4 years, we have seen a concerted and completely misguided effort to redefine gender in ways that ignore biological facts and threaten the significant strides women and girls have made since the passage of title IX. These misguided actions eroded the protections that title IX was created to offer.

After watching the Biden administration claw away at the integrity of title IX for 4 years, I am proud to stand with my colleagues and President Trump in fighting to restore the protections that title IX was always meant to provide to girls and women in sports.

Despite the attempts of our colleagues across the aisle to defend their war on title IX, the American people overwhelmingly agree on a fundamental point: Biologically male athletes should not be allowed to compete in women’s sports or use women’s locker rooms.

I find it ironic that the party that wore pink to protest President Trump’s address last night claiming his policies harm women is the same party where not one Member voted to protect women in sports this week. If it were not so serious, it would almost be laughable.

This is not a matter of partisanship but of common sense and fairness. It is a matter of equal opportunity for all.

This is the message we must continue to amplify in Congress as we work to ensure the future protections of title IX remain intact.

We must pass legislation that protects female athletes and preserves the integrity of women’s sports. To suggest that biological females and transgender women are the same in all respects, particularly in the context of athletic competition, is to set women and girls back, not forward.

The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act would safeguard title IX by defining gender based on an individual’s biological and genetic sex at birth. It would also ensure that no Federal funding goes to schools or educational organizations that allow males to participate in women’s sporting events, ensuring that title IX’s original intent is upheld across the board.

Importantly, its passage would make it harder for some future President to again assault title IX.

It is disheartening to see that, once again, my Democratic colleagues are failing to advocate for the importance of title IX and what it means to women and girls everywhere. Instead, they choose to cater to an out-of-touch woke mob on this issue.

I am proud to join Senator TUBERVILLE in supporting this commonsense legislation that will continue to protect our daughters, nieces, and granddaughters for years to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act.

This act will protect our daughters and granddaughters and keep the original meaning of title IX that was meant to help protect girls and promote females in sports.

On Monday, I was proud to support and vote for this bill. Sadly, every single Democrat—every single one—voted against it. It is deeply concerning and disappointing, frankly, that not one single Democrat would step up and say: I want to protect women’s sports; that I have a daughter or a granddaughter who wants to have the same opportunities that title IX has provided over the last 50 years.

For 50 years, title IX has made it so women and girls would have a chance to compete in sports, but it is not just about athletic opportunities; it is about scholarships, and it is about long-term careers.

Title IX leveled the playing field so our daughters and granddaughters could dream big and pursue their dreams. We saw this on full display in Nebraska when we had Volleyball Day in Nebraska. For those of you who do not recall, Nebraska set a women’s sports attendance record. Over 92,000 people came to watch our women’s volleyball teams. It occurred at Memorial Stadium. It was the largest crowd ever.

You don’t have to take me at my word that this is important for title IX. The Omaha World-Herald called it “the biggest title IX statement of all time.”

It was an incredible moment and could not have happened without title IX. That progress is under attack today.

The Biden administration tried to eliminate those protections. The Biden administration tried to rewrite title IX without the approval of Congress. They tried to change the definition of “sex” to include “gender identity,” which, let me tell you, that was not a thing 50 years ago when this bill was written.

Girls would be forced to share dorm rooms, locker rooms, and bathrooms with males. Men would be able to take women’s spots on sports teams and women’s scholarships. That is what happens if you allow this to go forward, if you allow men to compete in women’s sports, just by claiming they are a woman. The damage is already being done.

Last night, President Trump told the story of Payton McNabb. Payton was a high school volleyball player on the girls’ team who was severely injured by a male opponent who smashed a ball into her head. She suffered a concussion, a brain bleed, and permanent whiplash. She also dealt with vision problems. It never should have been allowed to happen.

Riley Gaines is another example. Riley swam for the University of Kentucky and competed against a man for 3 years in her college career.

Lia Thomas, formerly William Thomas, was a mediocre male swimmer who then decided that he would be a women’s swimmer, with all that goes along with that, not only competing in events but accessing women’s restrooms and their locker rooms. He became one of the top women swimmers—because it is true, what we all know from common sense: Males and females are built differently.

It is wrong and it is unfair to allow men to compete against women in women’s sports. It ignores science and common sense.

Last August, the United Nations released a report that showed that over 600 female athletes—600 female athletes—in more than 400 competitions have already lost more than 890 medals in 29 different sports because those women were competing against males who claimed to be women. That is hundreds of young women who have trained for years, only to have their medals, records, and opportunities taken from them.

The American people see the unfairness of it, and they strongly support protecting women’s sports. A 2025 poll from the New York Times found that 79 percent of Americans want to keep women’s sports for women—for biological females. That includes a majority of registered Democrats.

This isn’t a Republican or a Democrat issue. This is an American issue. And unlike my Democratic colleagues and President Biden, President Trump took steps to protect women’s sports. He took action to protect the original meaning of title IX, in his first few

days as President. He knew that title IX was written to protect women, not erase them. His leadership stood for fairness, science, and common sense.

But there is no guarantee the next President is going to uphold President Trump's action. This bill would make those protections permanent. The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act is simple. It says that, under title IX, "sex" means the person's reproductive biology at birth. That is how title IX was understood for decades, and that is how title IX should work today.

Men and boys shouldn't compete against women and girls in female sports. It is just common sense. It is absolutely just plain common sense.

Yet, 2 days ago, every single one of my Democratic colleagues voted against protecting women's collegiate athletics. They chose the wrong side of an 80-20 issue. They chose not to fight for science, for equal opportunity, and for women and girls.

I urge them to reconsider. Let's stand with women over radical policies. Let's stand with the overwhelming majority of Americans. Let's keep a level playing field for our daughters and granddaughters. Again, I urge my Democratic colleagues to reconsider.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

#### FEDERAL BUDGET

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I think everyone so enjoyed listening to the State of the Union Address last night, and for so many Tennesseans—we have heard from them today—they were excited, they felt hopeful, and they also are watching very closely what the actions of the House and the Senate are going to be.

Now, many of them have mentioned that they know we have that March 14 funding deadline coming up, and so, in 9 days, the Federal Government would be running out of money. And they have heard my colleagues from across the aisle talk about shutting the government down and making that choice to shut the government down because they don't want to pass a budget.

But if you shut the government down, then you are not going to be able to move forward on President Trump's agenda. We know they are not for that agenda, but what they are missing is that the American people are for President Trump's agenda. They want to see the border secure. They want inflation to come down. They want crime in the cities to be dealt with. They want our standing in the world to be returned. They support President Trump.

And we know that when President Trump was returned to the Oval Office, he was given a powerful mandate from the American people, and he deserves to have his agenda shape government spending. But we know there is little time left, and so we begin to hear those conversations that we usually hear about having a continuing resolution.

Now, the reason conservatives like me oppose that is because it continues

the current spending, and that is a Joe Biden budget. And we know that, under the Biden administration, they literally ran the numbers off the government credit card. They were spending so much money. They have driven this Nation's debt to \$36.5 trillion.

This pandemic and post-pandemic spending has left every single American spending \$1,060 more per month to buy the same basket of goods and services they were buying in 2021. Now, think about that. That is the result of Bidenflation: \$1,060 more a month to buy the same basket of goods and services you could buy 4 years ago—because we know what has happened with Bidenflation. We know the true rate of that inflation is, cumulatively, over 20 percent.

It is not what they wanted to say—core inflation is only 3 percent or it is only 4 percent. Anybody that buys milk and eggs knows that is not right. And, of course, it is going to take a while to get those numbers down, to look at the prices of gas and groceries and rent and utilities.

And we know that the Biden budgets are what have fueled this growing debt, this annual deficit that we have seen, and the fact that now, when you look at every single American, their portion of our Nation's debt is now \$107,000—\$107,000.

I was talking to a friend this week who has a new baby—just arrived, brandnew—and they are so excited to once again have a little baby in their family. And as we were talking about politics and all that was going on and the excitement of the baby, I said: And when you look at the Federal debt, their share, their "welcome to the world" present from the U.S. Federal Government: You now, as a U.S. citizen, share in this \$36.5 trillion debt to the point of \$107,000.

I think the American people know that our fiscal path would lead us to disaster if we do not change what we are doing, if we do not look at where we are spending this money.

Thank goodness that President Donald Trump has taken the time to look seriously at what the Federal Government spends and, yes, to work toward moving us to a balanced budget.

Now, one of the ways that he is doing this—and, yes, there have been Executive orders and there has also been the implementation of the Department of Government Efficiency. We refer to this as DOGE.

Today, some of us have had the opportunity to listen to Elon Musk and his team who are carrying out the work at the Department of Government Efficiency.

DOGE, so far, has found \$105 billion of inefficiencies in the Federal Government—\$105 billion. They are finding about \$4 billion a day. The President went through a list last night of some of the waste that is there for projects that maybe really do not yield a result that will benefit the hard-working taxpayer.

We also heard about fraud and people that are receiving Social Security checks that maybe don't exist, people that might be 125, 150, 160 years old, even over 300 years old. That is fraud. And we all are very hopeful that we are going to be able to close that loop, find out who these individuals are, and make certain that they are prosecuted and that money is returned to the U.S. taxpayer.

This is a huge step toward getting our fiscal house in order. Yet these savings that we are finding are only going to be made official and permanent when we put them into the congressional budget.

Now, we all know that this requires us to go through the rescission process. This requires us to codify these reductions so that they are removed from the budget in future years.

We know that that is going to require us to get back to regular order on the budget as we go through this process, as we work through reconciliations, making certain there is a clear path to end continuing resolutions, return to regular order, return to a budget document, and be able to deliver.

I will tell you this: When I talk to Tennesseans, they want transparency. I think one of the things they have so appreciated about DOGE is that they have a website. They are putting all of this information on the website. They are putting it on their X account, but they are showing the American people what they are doing, where they are finding waste, where they are finding fraud, and how they are being able to address this.

This means that as we work through this, we are going to have to take our actions. We are going to have to return to that regular order. We are going to have to bring these spending bills to the floor, and we are going to have to insist and vote for and support a balanced budget so that we begin to reduce, first, eliminate our deficit for the year, and then target balancing our Federal budget and beginning to reduce our debt.

I am so pleased that President Trump talked about this last night in his State of the Union Address because it is important not only for today, tomorrow but for our children and grandchildren's future. He mentioned this—the sovereignty, the stability of our Nation.

What we want is to make the tough choices today, to make the spending reductions today, so that in the future, our children have a nation that is firmly sovereign and is able to stand whatever comes our way.

I think it is so interesting that in 2010, the summer of 2010, Admiral Mullen was asked the question: What keeps you up at night; what worries you the most; what is our greatest threat to our Nation's freedom?

His response was our Nation's debt, and we all know that debt has doubled since that point in 2010 when he made that comment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The Senator from Oklahoma.

PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SPORTS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, this body knows from just my conversations in the hallways that I am a proud dad of two amazing daughters. They are remarkable young ladies that I am terribly proud of.

I was also one of those dads that was up way before dawn when they were in middle school and high school because they were cross-country runners. Cross-country runners in high school have a long-term saying that their sport is other sports' punishment.

They are there at 6 a.m., stretching out and running a mile so they then can prepare to go run 5 or 6 more just to be able to get ready for cross-country meets in the fall. They were remarkable athletes in high school and enjoyed that.

They ran with guys and ladies when they were training, in all of their time in the training time, because the team was a team of guys and girls. But when they actually got to the competition day, my daughters competed against other girls in that competition because what we all know to be a fact, to be true, is that boys in cross-country that are training for cross-country and girls that are training in cross-country—both great athletes—have different times to the finish line. That is just a reality. It is not one negative on another. It is not diminishing one to another. It is a reality.

In the last Summer Olympics, the woman who was a remarkable athlete that won the women's marathon as the greatest runner of our time, when she came in as the Gold Medal winner, her time would have been beaten by 67 of the men who ran in the Olympics in the same sport, same distance, same track—gold medalist for the women. The top 67 men running in the marathon would have beaten her.

Where am I going with this? This is common sense that we all know and that we have all seen in our own families and in communities. It is the reason that we have protected women's sports for years to be able to make sure that women and girls have the ability to be able to have great competition, to enjoy the joy of sports and all the lessons that you learn from sports, and to be able to have equal competition levels.

But in the past few years—really, very, very recently in our country—there is a movement to be able to say if a biological male, transgender individual, wants to be able to compete in the women's sports area, they should be allowed to do that.

The question is, Whom is that fair to? Is that fair to this transgender individual or is that fair to the other female athletes? Because culturally, there seems to be a push to say I don't care if it is unfair to the female athletes. I picked this one transgender individual, and I want to be fair to them.

I look at a whole team of other folks to say: Whom is this fair to? This

seems like basic common sense that 15 years ago wouldn't even have been a dialogue in our country. Fifty years ago, it wouldn't even have been in discussion in our country, but now we are having this dialogue. This is not about disrespect for any individual or the rights of individuals to be able to make choices in their own life. It is about respecting the rights of women and girls in their sport to be able to compete on a level playing field to make sure they are able to thrive in their sport the same as men are able to thrive in their sport and to enjoy the thrill of competition without the intimidation of someone crossing over into their sport to be able to take it away from them. It doesn't seem reasonable.

For some reason, in this room, contrary to the rest of the country, this is some kind of irrational conversation. It is not. It is basically common sense. But in this room, we just had a vote this week to be able to say women should compete in women's sports, and men should compete in men's sports.

In that vote, just to begin the debate on the bill to say let's open it up for amendment, let's talk about this as a concept, every single Republican for just that simple of a bill said: Let's start debate on this and figure out where we are going to go.

Every single Democrat said: I don't want to even debate this. This is not up for discussion.

Well, it is up for discussion, but where it is up for discussion is in homes and families and communities all over the country because in homes and families and communities all over the country, there are lots of dads like me of amazing daughters that are saying: I don't want my daughter to compete against a biological male because there are inherent advantages in some sports and in some speeds just based on bone density and muscle structure.

Again, it is not negative toward female or male on that. It is reality and basic biology.

Families across the country are talking about this, and for some reason this room is allergic to talk about it. Well, we are going to continue to be able to bring this up because Americans have an expectation that this is going to be resolved. I am grateful to President Trump that he has rescinded the Biden administration's Executive order allowing transgender individuals to compete in girls' sports. That is a good thing. That sets ladies across the country at ease to say: Let's go play soccer; let's go run in cross-country; let's go do the sports we want to be able to do and not have to worry about somebody hitting me in the face at high speed in a volleyball game but to go compete on a level playing field.

That is a good thing. But it is an Executive order. That means it doesn't last from President to President to President. I don't know what the next President is going to do, but I think I know where Americans are still going to be.

They are going to want to say: Let's compete. We may all train together; we may be all friends together; we may all hang out with each other at school, but when the competition comes, give me a fair, level playing field for competition and watch people compete and enjoy the sport. That is what sports have been about, at least that is what they used to be about. Now, they seem to be about political messaging instead.

So we are going to continue to be able to bring this up. I am grateful to Coach TUBERVILLE for the work he has done on this and grateful to President Trump for the work he has done on it. But it is unfinished business at this point, to the great frustration of a lot of families around the country, including in my own State of Oklahoma.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 108

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in recent weeks, several Federal judges have issued orders blocking unlawful actions taken by the Trump administration. In response, the administration's officials and allies have made worrisome statements criticizing Federal judges and the process of judicial review. Elon Musk, an unelected bureaucrat who is assisting this administration, has repeatedly called for the impeachment of Federal judges and questioned the lifetime appointment of Federal judges that is enshrined in article III of the Constitution.

President Trump's choice of Deputy Director of the FBI, Dan Bongino, suggested on a podcast that the President set up a fake courtroom in the White House where "he can just start making judicial decisions." Mr. Bongino added:

If the judge is the executive, why can't the executive be the judge? Ask your stupid liberal friends that.

As a reminder, Mr. Bongino is second-in-command at the FBI, the most powerful investigative Agency in the world. If he sounds like a political animal out of his element, you would not be wrong.

But Mr. Bongino is not alone. Last week, a nominee to a senior position at the Department of Justice testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee:

There is no hard and fast rule about whether, in every instance, a public official is bound by a court decision.

Let that sink in for a moment. This is a person who wants a senior position at the Department of Justice testifying under oath and saying:

There is no hard and fast rule about whether, in every instance, a public official is bound by a court decision.

In a social media post, Vice President VANCE falsely asserted that "judges aren't allowed to control the executive's legitimate power." This is merely the latest in a long line of claims by the Vice President that a President can defy court orders.

President Trump himself recently posted:

He who saves his Country does not violate any Law.

That is a line that echoes others who believed they were above the law, a rationalization more common to leaders of a political coup in a banana republic.

Let me repeat that quote from President Trump:

He who saves his Country does not violate any Law.

These efforts to intimidate judges and undermine the rule of law do not stop with these statements. The Speaker of the House said he agrees with Vice President VANCE and urged the courts to “take a step back.” Three Members of the House of Representatives have introduced Articles of Impeachment against Federal judges simply because they ruled against the Trump administration.

These remarks that I have quoted are not only wrong, they are constitutionally dangerous, and they pose a serious threat to our constitutional order and the separation of powers.

Since the Supreme Court’s landmark *Marbury v. Madison* decision in 1803, there has been a broad bipartisan consensus throughout our history that, in the words of Chief Justice Marshall, and I quote:

It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.

When it comes to interpreting and applying the law, the courts have the last word, and that responsibility takes on an outsized importance when the executive branch shows little regard for the limits of its constitutional power, as this administration already has.

Under article II of the Constitution, the executive branch is charged with “taking care that the laws be faithfully executed,” but President Trump and his administration have ignored that responsibility. Let me give you one clear-cut, unequivocal example. President Trump summarily fired 18 inspectors general weeks into his Presidency. He wanted these investigative officials out of the picture. He did this despite the law that requires him as President to inform the Congress of the decision to dismiss or transfer an inspector general and provide a detailed explanation for doing so—that is what the law requires—at least 30 days before taking any action against them.

When the executive branch blatantly violates the law, it is essential that the other branches of government fulfill their constitutional role and responsibilities.

Thankfully, in the first weeks of the new Trump administration, the judicial branch has lived up to its responsibility. Judges have carefully considered the cases before them and, where appropriate, provided a check on the administration when it oversteps.

Now, the fact that a court has made a decision does not mean you have to agree with it.

JOHN KENNEDY, a Republican Senator from Louisiana, recently admonished

two Trump nominees who suggested the executive branch can ignore a court order. Here is what my colleague Senator KENNEDY said:

Don’t ever, ever take the position that you’re not going to follow the order of a federal court. Ever. Now, you can disagree with it. Within the bounds of legal ethics, you can criticize it. You can appeal it, or you can resign.

Now, I have disagreed with judicial decisions, including decisions of the Supreme Court. When that happens, I explain why I disagree. But I have never advocated ignoring or defying a court order. I never will.

More than 60 years ago, President John Kennedy spoke about the importance of the rule of law in a speech at Vanderbilt University. As President Kennedy put it, “for one man to defy a law or court order he does not like is to invite others to defy those which they do not like, leading to a breakdown of all justice and all order.”

We cannot allow any administration to defy a court order, period, and we cannot stand idly by as the President and his allies undermine the judiciary by attacking judges.

That is why I introduced the resolution we are considering today. I want to thank my colleagues who cosponsored it and are joining me on the floor in this block of time.

Our resolution simply affirms that the Constitution vests the judicial power in the Federal courts and affirms that both the Constitution and established precedent require the executive branch to comply with all Federal court rulings.

These are not partisan talking points; they are basic principles of constitutional law, so fundamental and so essential to our constitutional order that they should go without saying. But in light of recent comments and actions by President Trump, Vice President VANCE, and his administration and allies, some things must be said. So I ask my colleagues to say with one clear voice: The U.S. Senate supports the Constitution, the judicial branch, and the rule of law.

Every Member of this body has sworn an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. I urge my colleagues to fulfill their oaths today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I want to thank our chairman for bringing us together on the Senate floor today to reaffirm a proposition that really ought not to be in any doubt, and that is the proposition that when a court has ruled on a matter, the executive and legislative branches are bound to follow the law.

As the chairman said, you may choose to appeal or you may choose to obey or, if you have a hugely principled objection, you may choose to resign, but you don’t get to simply disobey court orders that you don’t like.

Now, thankfully, a number of our Republican colleagues are on record supporting that simple proposition. The majority leader, Senator THUNE, said:

The courts obviously are . . . the branch of our government that calls balls and strikes and referees and I think that they’ve got an important role to play. I mean we have three branches of our government in this country, coequal and independent branches, and the judiciary is the one that resolves some of the differences that often occur between executive and legislative branches.

Chairman GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, added:

We’ve got a system of checks and balances, and that’s what I see working. I learned in eighth grade civics about checks and balances, and I just expect the process to work its way out.

Senator HAWLEY said:

You may think that’s not the right ruling, but you know, they’re still the law.

And Senator KENNEDY said:

I don’t agree with all the rulings. It’s often the case that I’ll disagree with an opinion that a court issues, but I don’t attack. I don’t attack, and I don’t intend to attack the legitimacy of the Federal judiciary.

He, as the chairman said, advised the witnesses before: Don’t ever, ever take the position that you are not going to follow a court order.

So from all of that, you would think that things were fine and that this was a wasted exercise of time here on the Senate floor. But, unfortunately, it is not because at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, the White House is constantly attacking the rule of law from all angles. And this administration is teetering on full-blown defiance of court rulings.

Vice President VANCE posted that “Judges aren’t allowed to control the executive’s legitimate power.” That is an invitation to violate court orders if the executive takes the position that its own view of what its legitimate power is, is what controls.

One Senate Republican went so far as to call court orders that the administration lost a “coup.” Well, if there is any coup going on, it is the executive branch coup taking place in our country right now, not a court-ordered coup.

The Department of Justice, which should know better—including the Solicitor General who should for sure know better—refused to say that they will always follow a court order, and many colleagues actually defended them.

And then outside of the immediate danger of refusing to obey a court order is the attack on the integrity and safety of the judiciary. We have seen this in Rhode Island. A judge in Rhode Island—very respected judge, very well-known throughout our State, very well-regarded, very experienced—made the determination that the freeze order of the Trump administration was unconstitutional, which, in my view, is not even a close call. That was an easy, easy answer. Rather than respond, they dropped—what I call—the flying monkeys on him. Elon Musk maintains on

X a cohort of extremists and oddballs who he can launch by targeting an individual to go and attack and harass that individual and their family. He did precisely that to this judge to the point where the judge's daughter was actually doxed by one of these extremist followers of Musk.

It ought to be self-evident the judge's orders are to be followed. It ought to be self-evident if you don't like a judge's order, you don't threaten the judge or his daughter; instead, you appeal it.

And the third tactic that they are using is what I call the fog bank tactic. So the order is the freeze is unconstitutional. OMB, you have to let the money go. And then people who have money coming to them properly obligated, properly appropriated try to call up and say: OK. The order says you can't hold it back. When is it coming? What do they get? No clear answers—the fog bank. The executive officials retreat behind refusal to answer emails, refusal to answer phone calls, vague answers that give no response. Sometimes even happy indications that: Don't worry. Hang out there. I am sure that we can work this out. And even in some cases: Yes, you will have access to these funds. And no matter what the answer is from the fog bank, it doesn't change the fact that the money just doesn't go.

It reminds me of old bad movies of the Soviet Union where the KGB guy in the corner makes all the decisions and the nominal chief of the agency says: Oh, yes, of course we are going to do this. But unless the KGB guy signs off, the money doesn't go.

In this case, it isn't the KGB guy; it is the little muskrats who are in these Departments trying to foul up the lawful flow of properly appropriated and obligated funds. That is a slo-mo contempt of these court orders. And as courts and plaintiffs dig in, I think we are going to find more and more evidence of the deliberate contumacious nature of that fog bank strategy.

I yield the floor, thanking, again, our chairman for his leadership on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I, too, rise today to defend the principles at the core of our democratic Republic that we are a government of laws and institutions, not of individuals; that no billionaire has more rights than any worker, and that no President has more rights than any citizen of our country; that we are a government of three coequal branches, providing checks and balances on each other. And bottom line: That no one is above the law.

Yet as we stand here today, the Trump administration is clearly openly laying the groundwork to reject all of these principles. They are operating under their idea that the President, his Cabinet of loyalists, and an unelected billionaire adviser can simply ignore the law or courts in rulings that they disagree with.

Earlier this month, Vice President VANCE claimed that "if a judge tried to command the attorney general in how to use his or her discretion as a prosecutor, that's . . . illegal. Judges aren't allowed to control the executive's legitimate power."

That is the Vice President. At the same time, President Trump's seeming co-President, Elon Musk, has repeatedly called for the impeaching of judges who rule against Donald Trump's attempts at power grabs. And now President Trump himself has said:

He who saves his Country does not violate any law.

Historians may recognize this quote because it is widely attributed to Napoleon, a man who became a dictator and who abolished the French Republic at the time. Seems to me pretty clear that is precisely the example that Donald Trump is looking to. And it should alarm all of us.

When I think about just how much of Donald Trump's life has been spent staring at the four walls of a courtroom—yes, from the inside, folks, the four walls of a courtroom—maybe you can understand why he may want to do away with the courts.

But the Judiciary does not work for Donald Trump. It is a separate, coequal branch of government. The courts, colleagues, work for the American people. And so far, they have served the American people by pausing many of the President's blatantly illegal Executive orders and overreach. But that is why he is continuing to target the courts.

Colleagues, I am one of the few non-lawyers to serve on the Judiciary Committee. And at times, I get to bring a different perspective to our deliberations and our debates. I will defer to my colleagues to maybe cover some of the legal history or case law that applies here. But for Americans watching from home, here is how I can boil it down.

Let's ask ourselves: Do you believe the President can simply ignore the law? Do you believe that the President should be all-powerful? Do you believe that if you have to follow the law, then the President of our country should have to follow it, as well?

The answers should seem very, very obvious. For years, we have known that if a President did try to push the boundaries of what is legal and what is not, we could count on an independent Department of Justice to enforce court rulings. But over the past few weeks, what we have seen in the Judiciary Committee is nominee after nominee appear before us and refuse to simply commit to upholding the law. They claim, one after another, that they respect the Constitution and stand for the rule of law. But when given specific examples of what would you do, not if, we have seen a President in his first term and already in this term suggest those he appoints to not follow the law—they refused to commit.

That dynamic, colleagues, is unprecedented, and it is dangerous. And it is

also the result of an administration that demands applicants pass a loyalty test to get their job in the first place. And it has brought us dangerously close to a constitutional crisis. A President feeling unconstrained by the courts, by the Constitution, and the rule of law is no President at all. It is a power-hungry, wannabe King.

Last night, President Trump, in his address, had an opportunity to unite or at least genuinely try to unite the country and affirm his commitment to the rule of law. Sadly, I am not surprised that he refused to do so. But this morning, we also saw the Supreme Court cite against the Trump administration and affirm a lower court's order that the administration stop their unlawful freeze on foreign aid—one of the many, many challenges working its way through the judiciary.

So the question now becomes: Will Donald Trump listen, and will Republicans in Congress demand that he uphold the law?

So what we are asking of our Republican colleagues today isn't anything radical. It is the fundamental principle that men and women dedicated to themselves nearly 250 years ago in the founding of our Nation, that we shall be ruled of, by, and for the people; not of, by, and for a King or dictator.

To our Republican colleagues, all we ask is this: Stand up. Stand up for the rule of law. Stand up for the Constitution. And stand up for our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. President, John Adams once said that we are a Nation of laws, not men. And this idea has been foundational to the understanding of the American Republic.

But what does it mean to be a Nation of laws, and is it still true in America in the era of Donald Trump? Are we a Nation of laws when characterized by a legal code that applies equally to all citizens, a justice system in which no one is above the law or beyond its reach, in which there is not one law for the rich and powerful and yet another for everyone else?

Or have we become a Nation of men in which the law must bend to the will of its most powerful citizens, a society in which wealth and privilege mean that the law need not apply to them with the same force as it applies to others or not at all?

Four years ago, after losing his reelection campaign, Donald Trump conspired to interfere with the peaceful transfer of power and incited a violent attack on the Capitol. He also withheld highly classified material and obstructed an investigation into that offense.

In what could be seen as a vindication of the rule of law, Donald Trump was indicted for these crimes, but the system of justice bound by the rule of law requires not only that charging decisions be made against people similarly situated without preference or

disfavor according to their position but that the conduct of those prosecutions likewise be timely and appropriate. In this, our justice system failed miserably. Trump was able to seek endless delays in court, and the courts, understanding of that motivation and mindful of the fact that justice delayed can mean justice is denied, willfully delayed the prosecution of Donald Trump until he could avoid a reckoning with justice altogether.

Most egregious was the conduct of the High Court itself. The Roberts Court first delayed any potential trial of the President and then crippled the prosecution altogether in a decision granting the President immunity from prosecution for the commission of crimes while in office. No wonder the President thanked the Court at last night's joint address and told Justice Roberts, in particular, that he would not forget.

For the first time in America, the Supreme Court held that if you reach the pinnacle of power, the Presidency, the criminal laws need not apply to you; that, indeed, you may use the power of that office itself to commit crimes and never be held to account.

As Justice Sotomayor wrote, that new immunity lies about like a loaded weapon and makes a mockery of the principle that no man is above the law.

Now we have entered a perilous new phase as a country, in which a person who escaped the application of law is now charged with administering the law in which Donald Trump has appointed his own criminal defense lawyers to top positions in the Justice Department and appointed an FBI Director with a long published enemies list.

It is a Justice Department in which Trump's lawyers have sought to dismiss a serious corruption case against the mayor of New York, as an alleged quid pro quo for his willingness to do the President's bidding on unrelated policy matters. They seek a dismissal without prejudice, meaning the President can lower that sword of Damocles on the head of the mayor should he ever demonstrate independence from the whims of the President.

Six senior Justice Department prosecutors resigned their office rather than pervert justice in this way.

As one wrote in his resignation letter, "I expect you will eventually find someone who is enough of a fool, or enough of a coward, to file your motion. But it was never going to be me."

Other prosecutors at the Justice Department have likewise refused illegal orders to initiate investigations where no probable cause exists, rather than violate their oaths of office.

If this continues, we will be left with a Justice Department leadership populated by only cowards and fools—a Justice Department used both as a sword to go after the President's enemies and a shield to hide its corruption. Then, what will remain of our Nation of laws but a sad memory of a time when we lived up to our Founders' dreams only to squander the gift of our inheritance.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise in support of Senator DURBIN's simple but necessary resolution. It reaffirms three basic principles that should be self-evident to all Senators serving in this body: one, that there are courts established under the Constitution as a coequal branch of government; two, that in the words of Chief Justice Marshall, in *Marbury v. Madison*, those courts' role is to say what the law is; and three, that the Constitution requires the executive branch to comply with all Federal court rulings.

As I reminded all of the Senators who were assembled for the President's inauguration, there is a reason that that inauguration is not held in a gilded Presidential palace, like it is in some countries. It is held in the U.S. Capitol, and the President is sworn in by the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court—and in this case, with all Supreme Court Justices there—to make the point that, in America, we have three coequal branches of government, and they all have a very defined role under the Constitution.

These are things we all learned in high school civics, and they are the bedrock of the rule of law. Yet, today, the President refuses to acknowledge these foundational principles. He claims, in channeling Napoleon, that "he who saves his country does not violate the law." He has asserted that "I have an article II, where I have the right to do whatever I want as President." And he has even used the White House's social media account to post an image of himself wearing a crown, proclaiming: "LONG LIVE THE KING!"

I call that kind of a smoking gun, when it comes to the evidence that Senator DURBIN's very important resolution is necessary.

Judges appointed by Presidents of both parties have found many of the President's actions illegal. You have seen, in the past 30 days, judges appointed by Ronald Reagan, judges appointed by George Bush, judges appointed by Donald Trump himself, along with judges appointed by Democratic Presidents, who have looked at the facts, who have looked at the law, and, in the words of Chief Justice Marshall in *Marbury v. Madison*, have said "what the law is." They have found the President's actions illegal—from unilateral funding freezes, in direct defiance of statutes in the Constitution's crystal-clear mandate that the power of the purse resides squarely with Congress, to illegal firings of government officials, where they have been reinstated.

Yet the administration continues to question principles at the very heart of our Constitution.

Just last month, the Vice President said:

Judges aren't allowed to control the executive's legitimate power.

In 2021, JD VANCE, before he was elected, suggested that the President should dismantle the Federal workforce, and "when the courts stop you, stand before the country like Andrew Jackson did and say, 'The Chief Justice has made his ruling. Now let him enforce it.'"

Elon Musk, who was here in the House of Representatives just last night, lauded by the President, has said: "The only way to restore rule of the people in America is to impeach judges," citing the purge of judges by the government in El Salvador as an example—the world's greatest democracy, the United States of America, now pointing to the rules in El Salvador.

Aaron Reitz, the nominee to head the Office of Legal Policy, had previously called for defiance of a court order, tweeting himself:

Looking for some Andrew Jackson-level leadership on this one. "Judge Yeakel has made his decision. Now let him enforce it."

When asked about this tweet at the hearing that Senator DURBIN and Senator GRASSLEY held over his nomination and when asked whether the President can defy a court order, Reitz said, "There is no hard and fast rule in all instances in which a litigant must comply with all or some or various parts of a judicial decision."

And when asked for his view on the matter, John Sauer, the President's nominee for Solicitor General, told the committee he did not want to speak to hypotheticals. This is a frightening nonanswer.

It is very clear we are to follow the law in the Senate. The President is to follow the law.

In fact, while the Framers gave the President the power to faithfully execute the law, our Constitution created an accountable President. The Framers, who detested the King's unchecked power, made sure to create an independent judiciary to prevent abuse of power wherever it occurred and ensure that no one is above the law, not even the President.

As James Madison noted, "Independent tribunals of justice" serve as "an impenetrable bulwark against every assumption of power in the legislative or executive." That includes, of course, the power to issue binding court orders that the Executive cannot set aside.

Like many of my colleagues, I have vigorously opposed some decisions by judges. But even when I disagree with a decision, I never thought it was an open question about whether that decision should be followed. If you do not like a court ruling, you appeal it. If we think a decision was wrong, we introduce legislation or a constitutional amendment, as we have done, to change it or a reasoned argument before the Supreme Court or we file an amicus brief. I attended hearings in which we filed an amicus brief.

I know many of my Republican colleagues and other prominent conservatives agree.



Speaking to the nominees at last week's hearing, Senator KENNEDY of Louisiana said:

Don't ever, ever take the position that you're not going to follow the order of a Federal court, ever.

The majority leader Senator THUNE has been very clear that people should follow the law.

Federalist Society cofounder Steven Calabresi wrote in the *Minnesota Law Review* that a system in which the President had the power to defy court judgments "would not be so much a system of constitutional government as it would be a system of rule by an elected Napoleonic strongman."

Calabresi noted that all past Presidents have understood this as well. Even Richard Nixon surrendered the Watergate tapes when ordered by a court.

Ours is a nation of laws, not a nation of Kings. Ours is a nation of laws in which no one is above the law. When taking the oath of office—this just happened a month ago; we were all there—the President promises to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." That is a pledge to obey court orders. And if the President chooses not to and flouts a court order, he will provoke a constitutional crisis.

As Chief Justice John Roberts made clear at the end of last year, any suggestions that Federal court rulings will be rejected are, in his words, "dangerous" and, in his words, "must be soundly rejected."

Hagan Scotten, the lead prosecutor in the Mayor Eric Adams case, who resigned instead of carrying out politicized orders, maybe said it best. He wrote in his letter of resignation:

I expect you will eventually find someone who is enough of a fool, or enough of a coward, to file your motion. But it was never going to be me.

This comes from a lawyer with an incredible career, someone who was a decorated Iraq war veteran, someone who clerked for Judge Kavanaugh before he got to the Supreme Court and clerked for Justice Roberts himself. But he would not commit an illegal act.

"I expect you will eventually find someone who is enough of a fool," he said, "or enough of a coward, to file your motion. But it was never going to be me."

To my Republican colleagues, those words, they should be something you keep in your head, something that should haunt you in the middle of the night.

Nominees who won't answer unequivocally that the President must comply with a court order, remember the words, maybe "you will . . . find someone who is enough of a fool, or enough of a coward. . . . But it [is] never going to be me."

Our job—our job—is to look at these nominees and make decisions on the facts, to advise and consent, not to accept and acquiesce.

And certainly we should, at the very least, support Senator DURBIN's resolu-

tion—so simple and such a reinstatement of our actual law—that there are courts established under the Constitution as a coequal branch of government—super not controversial; that, in the words of Chief Justice Marshall in *Marbury v. Madison*, those courts' role is to say what the law is; and, finally, that the Constitution requires the executive branch to comply with all Federal rulings. That is the law, and we ask our colleagues to support this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, like a number of my colleagues who are here today, I want to support the Senate resolution affirming the rule of law and the legitimacy of judicial review, and I thank Senator DURBIN for bringing it to the floor.

I am here with a lot of regret and sadness in a way. We should have pride in our uniquely just and democratic system that puts the rule of law above everything else. But my regret, my sadness, is that there was a time in this country when the other side of the aisle would have been speaking for this resolution as well and would have been not just accepting but advocating robustly, not just in rhetoric but in action that we reaffirm our allegiance to the rule of law and the legitimacy of courts scrutinizing what we do to make sure that we stay within the Constitution and the rule of law.

We are here because, in effect, that basic consensus and acceptance seems to be dissipating, perhaps even shredding.

The Founders were far from perfect, and one of their great virtues was to recognize their imperfection. So they devised a system that precluded anybody from being fully in power of everything. They lived under an autocracy—the monarchy—that sent English soldiers into their homes, allowed them to take people and property without any kind of approval; in effect, subjected them to a loss of liberty that they regarded as their fundamental rights as Englishmen.

In fact, our system of constitutional rule owes a lot to the English system, the Magna Carta. We all know the history from our law school days.

From my law school days, I remember well my professor expounding with great reverence this idea that, in our country, courts can override the excesses of a legislature or an executive. It is not a simple proposition. I will grant you, in a democracy, the idea of a U.S. Supreme Court, the highest Court in the land, appointed for life nine people—the number has varied—without any election, able to override the two popularly elected branches of government seems totally anomalous and undemocratic. Yet the U.S. Supreme Court, as a check, as an enforcer of that balance, has played a critical role throughout our history in enforcing our rights and preserving them.

And at times, it has failed—Dred Scott, *Korematsu*. The U.S. Supreme Court is far from perfect too. But in our system, we are a government of people observing and enforcing the law.

In the days when I thought there would be no question that following court orders should be a basic tenet, certainly, for lawyers who are steeped in the culture of following the law—after all, what good is it to be debating in court before a judge if the losing party simply disregards the outcome?

So I come with sadness and regret because we face today a growing and more popularly accepted idea that those court orders need not be obeyed; that judicial review is not the acceptable tenet of our Constitution that it has been for centuries; and that, perhaps, maybe this President should not be bound by what the courts say.

That is so fundamentally dangerous to our democracy that we are here today simply to make a statement that this resolution affirming the rule of law and the legitimacy of judicial review is necessary at this moment.

I am not going to go into all of the history that Senator KLOBUCHAR recited so well and eloquently or colleagues have done as well. We don't blindly follow the edicts or orders of individuals in this country, elected or not, but all of us in this Chamber, all of us who have served in the military, all of us who served in any public office for the public raise our right hand, and we swear an oath not to the President, not to the majority leader, not to any potentate or officeholder, we swear to the Constitution. That is an oath that we take to the Constitution and the laws of the United States, so help me God. That is the oath that requires us to obey the courts insofar as they articulate the laws and the Constitution.

Like the Founders and the Supreme Court, lower courts may be far from perfect too. That is why we have not just judicial review of executive and legislative branches but also within our judiciary review and appeals, not just once but twice, and within State court systems as well, and then from State courts to our Federal courts.

I want to just close by saying I spent most of my career as a lawyer going to court, trying cases, arguing before judges. I can tell you, some of those decisions were just dead wrong, just so wrong as to make my blood boil.

And whether it was for a client or for the United States of America, when I was a U.S. attorney and the decision went against me, for the people of the United States, or the people of Connecticut, when I was attorney general and the decision went against me, I was angry. But it never crossed my mind that I should just disobey. And the reason is that the larger good, the longer range public interest is served when those court orders are obeyed; and that, sometimes, whether it is *Dred Scott* or *Korematsu*, the appeal is to history, the appeal is to the future, to a moral conscience or a legislative



chain or someone sensing deep in their gut that an injustice has been done.

And that is the kind of system that has survived, these centuries, as the American experiment. We believe in the possibility of change and reform but not by disobeying a judiciary that serves ultimately to prevent autocracy, dictatorship, and tyranny.

One of the lessons of tyranny in the 20th century that Professor Tim Snyder cites in his book "On Tyranny"—one of the first lessons of 20 lessons on tyranny in the 20th century—is do not obey in advance. Do not obey in advance. That is not to say we don't obey court orders. It is to say we do not obey in advance what a dictator tells us to do.

And when a dictator or a would-be tyrant says, "Don't follow court decisions," we have an obligation to speak up and stand up. And that is what we are doing through this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it has been my great honor to represent the State of Illinois in this Chamber for many years, and I have been present for a lot of proceedings which are memorable, some historic. I can't think of one, in its simplicity, that is as important as what we have witnessed in the last hour of debate.

We are literally asking a fundamental question about our democracy that is seldom asked. It is rare that we have a circumstance where we have to ask it, but we certainly understand in this situation that it must be resolved.

What I tried to do in establishing this resolution was to make it as pointed, as direct, and as simple as possible. There are "Whereas" clauses, which are of little or no consequence, but the resolution clause is so simple and direct that I want to repeat it before I make my request for unanimous consent:

Resolved, That the Senate affirms that—

(1) Article III of the Constitution of the United States vests the "judicial Power of the United States . . . in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish";

(2) as Chief Justice Marshall held in the Supreme Court's landmark 1803 decision *Marbury v. Madison*, "It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is"; and

(3) the Constitution of the United States and established precedent require the executive branch to comply with all Federal court rulings.

That is it. It acknowledges article III establishing the courts. It acknowledges *Marbury v. Madison*, one of the very first cases any student of law in the United States must understand. And, No. 3, it says clearly the Constitution and established precedent require the executive branch to comply with all Federal court rulings.

I am sorry that we have reached a point in our history where we even have to ask the question, but shame on us if we don't.

This is not a political resolution. I have tried to make it as apolitical as possible because it gets to these basic principles.

I want to thank my colleagues who came forward on the floor to say a word in support of this resolution.

Now, Mr. President, as if in legislative session, notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 108, Affirming the rule of law and the legitimacy of judicial review, which is at the desk; further, I ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I have always advocated respect for the Federal courts, and, particularly, over the last 2 years, I have opposed a vicious smear campaign by Democrats designed to undermine faith in our Supreme Court and our judicial system.

Now that we have a Republican President, my Democratic colleagues appear to have a newfound respect for the courts. It wasn't very long ago that they were singing a different time and a different tune.

In the last few years, the Democrats have called the Supreme Court: controlled by a "creepy right-wing billionaire," "a radical Supreme Court," and "a partisan and reactionary court."

One of my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee said the idea that you can trust the Supreme Court has been "blown to smithereens." Another committee colleague declared: "I oppose these Justices." And yet another committee colleague questioned: "How can they call it an honorable court? The Justices are cherry-picking their way through constitutional text and history to impose their own ideological agenda on the American people."

Over the last few years, Democrats have repeatedly threatened the Court for ruling in ways that they did not like. Famously, in 2020, the Senate Democratic leader threatened the Court to influence its rulings on abortion. He said:

I want to tell you, Gorsuch; I want to tell you, Kavanaugh: You have released the whirlwind, and you will pay the price. You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions.

And in the wake of the 2024 Presidential immunity decision, the Democratic House minority leader said:

House Democrats will engage in aggressive oversight and legislative activity with respect to the Supreme Court to ensure that the extreme, far-right Justices in the majority are brought into compliance with the Constitution.

Now, I am happy that Democrats have finally discovered the importance of respecting the judiciary. They certainly didn't hold this view when Presi-

dent Biden was in office. President Biden ignored the Court's position that the CDC's eviction moratorium was unconstitutional and his own lawyer's advice that he couldn't do it. He went ahead and extended the moratorium anyway, and the Court had to strike it down.

President Biden boasted once that the Court's decision on student loan forgiveness "didn't stop him."

The Biden administration undermined the Court's 2023 decision that racial discrimination in college admissions is unconstitutional and even issued a "Dear colleague" letter on how to circumvent that ruling.

More broadly, President Biden flouted law after law throughout his entire administration. He ignored the plain text of our immigration laws, the parole statute, and our civil rights laws in the name of advancing his agenda.

And you know what? I heard no complaint from my Democratic colleagues.

Although I fully agree that Congress stands for the rule of law, this resolution is nothing but a partisan messaging statement. President Trump has been clear on this. Just a few weeks ago, he said: I will always abide by the courts, and then I will have to appeal.

The answer is I always abide by the courts.

There have been numerous extreme orders from various district courts improperly encroaching on core article II powers. President Trump and his administration have worked diligently to abide by those orders, no matter how outrageous, by appealing them and challenging their scope and reach. He is completely within his right to do so, and his conduct is appropriate and legitimate.

Our constitutional system has a robust system of checks and balances. The executive branch must abide by the courts, and the courts must also ensure that their rulings are respectful of jurisdictional limits and, particularly, our famous separation of powers.

Some of the recent orders of individual district judges issued on an expedited basis with very broad nationwide impact have concerned me. I think Congress needs to examine this issue closely. Concerns about nationwide injunctions and temporary restraining orders have been raised on both sides of the aisle, across Presidential administrations. And if my colleagues want to work with me on it, we will head down that route of addressing those abuses.

For today's purposes, however, this resolution is incomplete. And coming from Democrats, I think it shows that they are totally inconsistent. It unfairly targets President Trump. In turn, then, it ignores the Democratic attacks on the legitimacy of the Court, and it ignores President Biden's flagrant violation of law.

So I am offering Senator DURBIN an opportunity that he can't turn down, a resolution to highlight the inappropriate attacks by Democrats against the legitimacy of the Supreme Court

and to clarify the executive branch must comply with lawful orders.

So the point is that I ask that the Senator would modify his request; that the Grassley amendment to the resolution at the desk be considered and agreed to, and the Grassley amendment to the preamble at the desk be considered and agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modification?

The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like to ask a question of my friend the chairman when it comes to the modification which he is suggesting. Does this include, in one, request, both modifications?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Yes, it does.

Mr. DURBIN. So I want to make certain particularly that I understand the modification to the resolution clause. If I understand it correctly, you are adding a word. Perhaps you could clarify that as to whether or not there is a requirement of the executive branch to comply with all Federal court rulings. Do you modify that particular sentence?

Mr. GRASSLEY. That is right.

Mr. DURBIN. And do you add the word "lawful"?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I think I want to clarify for the record and for history so there is no dispute. There have been differences of opinion about court orders in the past. I would say without fear of contradiction that although President Biden's name has been mentioned repeatedly, particularly when it comes to the forgiveness of student loan debt, there was never any acknowledgement of defiance of any court order, period.

There was a court order against the Biden administration, and President Biden did not agree with it but went forward with a different approach to the law. He was never found in contempt, nor was any suggestion made that he violated a court order. His name has been mentioned many times, but that just doesn't square with the reality.

Here is the difficulty. Think about this for a second. Under *Marbury v. Madison*, we basically said it is the province and duty of the judicial department, judges and courts, to say what the law is. Then the modification being made by the Senator from Iowa says: You only have to abide by lawful court rulings.

Did I state that correctly?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I think you need to be—we need to clarify because I think your inference is that Trump has violated some court orders. He has not. In fact, this very day, the Supreme Court ruled against him on a 5-to-4 decision that goes back to the lower court to make a firm decision.

So you can't say that the court system isn't working against President Trump as it worked against President Biden.

Mr. DURBIN. That is a fair criticism. I want to make it clear I am not saying that President Trump has violated a court order. I don't know that he has. The question is, Whenever an order is issued either for him or against him, will he obey the order? Will he acknowledge that that is his lawful responsibility? That is what it comes down to.

I am not looking prospectively or in history—his brief time in the Presidency this round—but, rather, saying that whatever the court order in the future, whether for him or against him, he is bound by that court order. You have added the word "lawful" court order.

I am not sure—if the court is to decide the law, and they decide in his favor, then the law is acknowledged to be binding on him and his actions. Conversely, if the ruling is against him and the court order is against him, I hope you would acknowledge that that is lawful and that he has to follow it even though they ruled against him. That is simple constitutional law. I am not presuming how the court will rule. I am saying that however it rules, he is bound by that ruling. Do you agree with me, Senator?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I have made very clear that we have a separation of powers, and each branch has to respect the other's powers.

Mr. DURBIN. I acknowledge that as well. The question is, Does that mean that the executive branch is bound by the decision of the court and has to follow a court order, whether it is for or against the administration?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I think what I would like to do is—do you agree with my amendment or you don't so we can move on and get to other important stuff today. I want to help you get your resolution through, and I want to just say what is good for the goose is good for the gander.

Mr. DURBIN. That is basic mid-western philosophy, which we share, and I don't disagree with you. But I think the addition of the word "lawful" in the final sentence equivocates on what the Constitution's clarity is. So I am going to object with the possibility that we can work on this together to see if there is a way to reach a conclusion.

I think this is so basic. You have served honorably in the U.S. Senate for your entire career, and the point that I am getting to is that we ought to make certain that, moving forward, there is clarity on this most basic checks-and-balances constitutional provision.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the modification?

Mr. DURBIN. I object to the modification as written.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the original request?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Reserving the right to object, before I do object, I want Senator DURBIN to know that there are things like this that we ought to work out, but we can't be complaining about

the courts if we have a Democratic President and not complaining—just complaining when we have a Republican President.

I think there are enough abuses of these nationwide orders to stop certain activity that our committee ought to be looking at and reviewing and see if they are being abused.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I would like to speak on Mr. Blanche.

Senator DURBIN, I see we have an agreement.

Mr. President, I see we have an agreement that Senator DURBIN speaks—that I go again.

Thank you very much, Senator DURBIN.

Soon, we will begin voting on the nomination of Todd Blanche.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be allowed to speak prior to the rollcall vote: Senator DURBIN for 5 minutes, Senator RICKETTS for 5 minutes, and this Senator for 10 minutes, but I am not going to take 10 minutes.

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

#### NOMINATION OF TODD BLANCHE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, soon, we will be voting on the nomination of Todd Blanche to serve as Deputy Attorney General of the United States. I support his nomination and urge all of my colleagues to vote for this well-qualified nominee. Mr. Blanche's record shows that he is the right man for this job.

His story exemplifies the American dream. As a young man, he supported his young family by working as a paralegal during the day while attending law school at night. He clerked twice for judges appointed by Presidents of both parties and ultimately became a respected prosecutor in the Southern District of New York. His colleagues from that office of both political parties told us that Mr. Blanche is "a fundamentally good and decent man." Mr. Blanche then entered private practice at two very prestigious law firms—including the oldest firm on Wall Street.

This remarkable resume has all the hallmarks of someone who should serve as a senior official at the Justice Department, but this isn't what impresses me the most. I have spoken often about the partisan weaponization of our justice system. I have worked to investigate it. I have released records proving that weaponization exists.

My colleagues, for your information, you can expect to see more of this information coming out from me very, very soon.

I believe Mr. Blanche is the right man for the job because he has seen this weaponization firsthand, and he has paid a personal cost to do something about it. This is the price he paid: Mr. Blanche was forced out of his law firm because he chose to represent

President Trump. Now, that is quite a law firm, isn't it? Just because you are taking business in, they don't like it. So then he put his reputation on the line and he put his career on the line to fight against Jack Smith's and District Attorney Bragg's rampant lawfare, and he handled these cases with professional excellence.

We need good people like Todd Blanche in the Justice Department. We need lawyers who will do justice even when it is unpopular or comes at a personal cost, as it did to Mr. Blanche. We need people leading the Department who will end the abuses of the past and make the Agency live up to the ideals of our Constitution.

I am not the only one who thinks Mr. Blanche is the right man for the job. He has received support from some of the people who understand the Justice Department best. Over 100 alumni of the Southern District of New York who worked alongside Mr. Blanche wrote to say this:

Todd's experience, character, intellect, openness to dialogue, and longstanding love of and belief in the mission of the Department of Justice make him eminently qualified to serve as Deputy Attorney General.

Another communication. Seventy former DOJ officials wrote to say:

Mr. Blanche is a special nominee in that he brings decades of experience both as a prosecutor and defense attorney to the role of Deputy Attorney General.

Another one. Law enforcement groups representing tens of thousands of officers wrote to support Mr. Blanche because of his history working alongside of law enforcement and prosecuting violent crime.

Between his record, his presentation in committee, and his extensive support, I am convinced that Mr. Blanche is the best person to serve as Deputy Attorney General. I am proud to support this nomination, and I look forward to voting for him. I know that he will work with President Trump and Attorney General Bondi to restore faith in the Justice Department.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we are considering the nomination of Todd Blanche, President Trump's nominee for Deputy Attorney General.

How important is this job? It is the No. 2 job in the Department of Justice. Traditionally, it has been given major responsibilities and has been treated very seriously, as it should be, and we should consider that when we consider this nomination.

I am not going to go into the background already outlined by Chairman GRASSLEY about Mr. Blanche's legal representation of Donald Trump, which he did on repeated occasions. There is nothing to suggest that what he did was unethical in that capacity or unprofessional, so I am not going to raise a question about it.

As to whether or not he has any bias one way or another in dealing with the President in the future is speculative, but it is important.

The thing I would like to raise is January 6, 2021. That is the day a solemn constitutional proceeding was disrupted here in this Capitol, in this Senate Chamber, by a mob of thugs who were egged on by President Trump to attack and trash the U.S. Capitol in an attempt to overturn the Presidential election. I lived through that, as many of us did.

The insurrection led to the death of 5 law enforcement officers and injuries to approximately 140 others, many of whom are still paying that price today.

In a rally before the attack on the Capitol, President Trump said:

If you don't fight like hell, you are not going to have a country anymore.

Yet, in a court filing, Mr. Blanche argued:

Not a shred of evidence suggests President Trump called for any violence. In fact, President Trump clearly and repeatedly called for "peaceful and patriotic" assembly.

There was nothing peaceful or patriotic about President Trump's conduct that day, and the same goes for his supporters. Did it seem peaceful or patriotic when this crowd assaulted police officers who were doing their job and protecting us then, as they do to this day?

One of President Trump's first moves in office—not the very first but one of the first things he did—was to issue blanket pardons for all of the violent January 6 insurrectionists. When Mr. Blanche was asked at his hearing to condemn these actions, he repeatedly refused to do so.

In fact, it appears he buys into the conspiracy theory that the FBI is actually responsible for the insurrection. In response to our question, Mr. Blanche said he does not believe the inspector general's finding that the FBI did not have any undercover employees in the Capitol on that day.

I am especially disappointed—especially—that Mr. Blanche refused to commit to me and the committee that he would not disclose the names of the FBI agents who worked on the case of the January 6 rioters even though some of the rioters are already calling for retribution against these men and women who were simply doing their duty. This is extremely dangerous. We have seen these violent individuals, and we know that they are willing to dole out their own form of justice. They believe they are above the law because of the Presidential pardon, and President Trump validated that belief with the pardons full and unconditional.

Instead of accepting the legitimacy of cases brought against the President, Mr. Blanche has repeatedly used the word "lawfare" to describe these investigations.

I have been around this Chamber for a long time and around Washington for even longer, but I don't know what this word "lawfare" means. And to use it as your explanation of what you are going to do in the No. 2 position at the Department of Justice is mind-boggling.

After the hush money convictions came down, Mr. Blanche was asked if he accepted that the President had his day in court and a jury of his peers made the decision to convict him. In response, Mr. Blanche undermined our justice system by saying, "No, not at all."

Since the President has taken office, we have already witnessed the weaponization of the justice system. Mr. Blanche will not provide the necessary independence to avoid that. His response to questions was not satisfying in this regard.

His record and his undying loyalty to the President notwithstanding, I don't believe he is the right person for this job. I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). The Senator from Nebraska.

S.J. RES. 28

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues who yesterday voted to proceed on my Congressional Review Act to undo the eleventh-hour regulation that the Biden administration put through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that would have greatly expanded the powers of the CFPB to start regulating payment systems as opposed to just the banking system that it was really designed to do.

I appreciate some of my colleagues' votes and encourage them to vote again as we vote on it here again later today.

Earlier today, some of my Democratic colleagues expressed some objections—and, again, in the interest of time, my colleague from Illinois pointed out, people are waiting to vote. I do have to hit upon one, though. The Senator from Massachusetts seemed to indicate—and she has done so many times in the past—that somehow the CFPB is the only cop on the beat there. That is simply not true. These payment systems are regulated at the State and Federal level. There are other organizations out there that do regulation, like the FDIC, the FTC, the Office of Comptroller, and, of course, State banking regulators, which I used to manage as a former Governor. These organizations all look out for protection of the consumer. She phrased this as somehow we are going to be opening the doors to bad actors, and that is simply not the case.

It is a complete misapprehension of our regulatory structure that is stunning from somebody who is the ranking member on the Banking Committee.

So I encourage my colleagues to vote for the CRA. It will help roll back this unnecessary regulation. This is a regulation the CFPB put forward without even defining what market they were going to regulate. They gave misleading information that somehow, it would only cost \$25,000. In fact, consumers are generally very broadly pleased with these payment systems. The CFPB's own data shows that only 1 percent of the 1.3 million complaints

they received last year were on these payment systems. So this is a regulation in search of a reason.

We need to stop this expansion of the Federal bureaucracy. We will have the opportunity to do that today.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the CRA.

I yield the floor.

#### VOTE ON BLANCHE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Blanche nomination?

Mr. DURBIN. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 105 Ex.]

##### YEAS—52

Banks	Graham	Mullin
Barrasso	Grassley	Murkowski
Blackburn	Hagerty	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Ricketts
Britt	Hoeven	Risch
Budd	Husted	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Curtis	McCormick	Wicker
Daines	Moody	Young
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Moreno	

##### NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Bennet	Kaine	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kim	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	King	Shaheen
Booker	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Cantwell	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gallago	Padilla	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	
Heinrich	Rosen	

#### NOT VOTING—2

Kelly Lummis

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### DISAPPROVING THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION RELATING TO "DEFINING LARGER PARTICIPANTS OF A MARKET FOR GENERAL-USE DIGITAL CONSUMER PAYMENT APPLICATIONS"—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to legislative session and resume consideration of the following joint resolution, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) disapproving the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Defining Larger Participants of a Market for General-Use Digital Consumer Payment Applications".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all time has expired.

The clerk will read the title of the joint resolution for the third time.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

#### VOTE ON S.J. RES. 28

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 106 Leg.]

##### YEAS—51

Banks	Fischer	Moreno
Barrasso	Graham	Mullin
Blackburn	Grassley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hagerty	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sheehy
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Marshall	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tillis
Curtis	McCormick	Tuberville
Daines	Moody	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young

##### NAYS—47

Alsobrooks	Blumenthal	Cantwell
Baldwin	Blunt Rochester	Coons
Bennet	Booker	Cortez Masto

Duckworth	Klobuchar	Schiff
Durbin	Lujan	Schumer
Fetterman	Markey	Shaheen
Gallago	Merkley	Slotkin
Gillibrand	Murphy	Smith
Hassan	Murray	Van Hollen
Hawley	Ossoff	Warner
Heinrich	Padilla	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Peters	Warren
Hirono	Reed	Welch
Kaine	Rosen	Whitehouse
Kim	Sanders	Wyden
King	Schatz	

#### NOT VOTING—2

Kelly Lummis

The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) was passed, as follows:

#### S.J. RES. 28

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That Congress disapproves the final rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Defining Larger Participants of a Market for General-Use Digital Consumer Payment Applications" (89 Fed. Reg. 99582 (December 10, 2024)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The Senator from Texas.

#### HALT ALL LETHAL TRAFFICKING OF FENTANYL ACT—Motion to Proceed

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 18, S. 331.

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

The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 18, S. 331, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes.

#### COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2025

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, the U.S. Coast Guard is essential to protecting our Nation's maritime borders from threats like illegal drugs, illegal immigration, and transnational crime. The Coast Guard saves American lives and ensures that commerce flows smoothly at our ports.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 is bipartisan legislation that Senator CANTWELL and I negotiated and agreed to with House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman SAM GRAVES and Ranking Member RICK LARSEN.

It authorizes funding to bolster the Coast Guard's critical missions for border security, facilitating maritime commerce, and enforcing the rule of law in domestic and international waters.

I want to draw attention to several key provisions in this bill. Last year, the Coast Guard seized over 106 metric tons of cocaine. Unfortunately, cartels are now using technology like miniature remote control drone ships to

smuggle drugs across our maritime border.

Without this legislation, the Coast Guard would remain unable to prosecute criminals who are using these remote control autonomous vessels.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 also expands the Coast Guard's and Customs and Border Protection's use of cutting-edge tools, like tactical maritime surveillance systems, which are blimp-based radar systems to find and interdict drug runners, poachers, and human traffickers at the Texas-Mexico border in the Gulf of America, in San Diego, in Key West, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

I ask my colleagues to stand with me and support President Trump's vision of protecting our borders from drugs and illegal immigrants and of building ships to revitalize the Coast Guard's fleet. And I urge my colleagues to support the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025.

With that, I yield to my colleague Senator CANTWELL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to support Senator CRUZ in our efforts here to pass the Coast Guard bill. Chairman CRUZ and I worked diligently on this bill in the last Congress with many of our colleagues.

Unfortunately, the clock ran out, and we are here today to pass this important legislation. We hope our House colleagues will just take this up and pass it as well. The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 provides the tools that our Coast Guard needs now to protect our shores, keep our maritime moving, and the Coast Guard and its responsibilities need the support of this legislation.

All in, the Coast Guard is responsible for facilitating over \$5 trillion of maritime commerce in our waterways. The Coast Guard is also the sole operator of icebreakers in our polar regions, and they are our primary force charged with the stopping of pirate fishing from China, Russia, and other dark fishing fleets that are stealing American fishing jobs. The issues in the Arctic are real, and we have highlighted them many times, and this bill will help address that.

Passage of this measure now will enable us to further provide the Coast Guard additional assets like icebreakers, hopefully in the upcoming reconciliation bill, and the Coast Guard also helps stop the flow of illegal drugs in the maritime environment. This legislation also strengthens each of the Coast Guard's missions and authorizes a 30-percent budget increase to support that workforce.

I noted the President last night talked about shipbuilding in general. We are enthusiastic about that mission. I know that in budget reconciliation, people are already, the chairman of the committee, talking about the Coast Guard and \$20 billion to help us recapitalize our Coast Guard fleet. Re-

placing the aging and inadequate equipment, from icebreakers to off-shore patrol cutters to heavy weather boats to MH-60 helicopters and C-130 aircrafts are all important.

But beyond the modernization, there are other things. It includes in Base Seattle, the homeport to our Nation's current icebreakers, the future heavy icebreaker fleet, and the needs for the Arctic Nation that we are, now defending against Chinese and Russian aggression. The bill also reauthorizes the Puget Sound Whale Desk for another 2 years, which helps ships steer clear of our cherished orca and whale populations. It also increases collaboration between Washington Tribes and the Coast Guard. And the bill invests in critical safety programs. We are very proud of all of that.

But one of the most important things in the bill is, obviously, dealing with the workforce—making sure that we have access to medical care, housing, and behavioral health and to deal with what we know in 2023 was a decades long, uncovered, sexual assault and sexual violence coverup in the Coast Guard.

Operation Fouled Anchor identified 62 substantiated incidents of rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment perpetrated by at least 42 individuals. The Coast Guard took action on only two of those subjects.

Due to the lack of oversight and the Coast Guard's mishandling of this, these individuals were allowed to retire, some at the grade of commander, with full benefits, and they received no punishment. That is unacceptable.

In 2023 December, former Commandant Schultz admitted to withholding information from Congress and stating that, "He made this decision, and he stands by it." That is why, as chairman and working then with Senator CRUZ and their oversight efforts, we did everything we could to make sure that this story came out and that we address it in this legislation.

This issue of failure to do this is—this is why we need transparency, this is why we need to make sure that we continue to address our workforce issues in the Federal Government.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 would strengthen authorities and programs to hold perpetrators accountable, enhance investigative and legal processes, improve victim recovery services and access to care, as well as boosting training.

These reforms would extend the Coast Guard protections available to members of the Armed Forces in general, in the whole Department of Defense, and it establishes a comprehensive prevention training and reporting requirement to address the issues identified in our investigation.

Moving forward, we have more to do to support the Coast Guard. They need our help with their assets, and they need access to shipyards. This morning, during the Commerce Committee, I said I would work with my colleagues

on all the shipbuilding efforts to help us meet our key global shipping competitiveness issues, to ensure that American farmers and manufacturers have access to global markets, and to make sure that we continue to invest in the best people for the Coast Guard.

To do that, we have to pass this legislation and get it on to the President's desk.

So I thank my staff Nikky Teutschel, Melissa Porter, Lila Helms, and all of the committee staff that worked on this bill. And again, thank the chairman, Chairman CRUZ, for bringing this bipartisan measure to the floor today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I thank Senator CANTWELL and her staff for their hard work on this bill. I also want to thank my staff on the committee as well who have put in many hours. This bill is important to the men and women of the Coast Guard and is important to our national security.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S. 524 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CRUZ. I ask unanimous consent 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 524

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Commandant defined.

#### TITLE I—COAST GUARD

Subtitle A—Authorization of Appropriations

Sec. 101. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 102. Authorized levels of military strength and training.

#### Subtitle B—Acquisition

Sec. 111. Modification of prohibition on use of lead systems integrators.

Sec. 112. Service life extension programs.

Sec. 113. Consideration of life-cycle cost estimates for acquisition and procurement.

Sec. 114. Great Lakes icebreaking.

Sec. 115. Regular Polar Security Cutter updates.

Sec. 116. Floating drydock for United States Coast Guard Yard.

#### Subtitle C—Organization and Authorities

Sec. 131. Modification of treatment of minor construction and improvement project management.

- Sec. 132. Preparedness plans for Coast Guard properties located in tsunami inundation zones.
- Sec. 133. Public availability of information.
- Sec. 134. Delegation of ports and waterways safety authorities in Saint Lawrence Seaway.
- Sec. 135. Additional Pribilof Island transition completion actions.
- Sec. 136. Policy and briefing on availability of naloxone to treat opioid, including fentanyl, overdoses.
- Sec. 137. Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence River cooperative vessel traffic service.
- Sec. 138. Policy on methods to reduce incentives for illicit maritime drug trafficking.
- Sec. 139. Procurement of tactical maritime surveillance systems.
- Sec. 140. Plan for joint and integrated maritime operational and leadership training for United States Coast Guard and Taiwan Coast Guard Administration.
- Sec. 141. Modification of authority for special purpose facilities.
- Sec. 142. Timely reimbursement of damage claims for Coast Guard property.
- Sec. 143. Enhanced use property pilot program.
- Sec. 144. Coast Guard property provision.
- Subtitle D—Personnel**
- Sec. 151. Direct hire authority for certain personnel.
- Sec. 152. Temporary exemption from authorized end strength for enlisted members on active duty in Coast Guard in pay grades E-8 and E-9.
- Sec. 153. Additional available guidance and considerations for reserve selection boards.
- Sec. 154. Family leave policies for the Coast Guard.
- Sec. 155. Authorization for maternity uniform allowance for officers.
- Sec. 156. Housing.
- Sec. 157. Uniform funding and management system for morale, well-being, and recreation programs and Coast Guard Exchange.
- Sec. 158. Coast Guard embedded behavioral health technician program.
- Sec. 159. Expansion of access to counseling.
- Sec. 160. Command sponsorship for dependents of members of Coast Guard assigned to Unalaska, Alaska.
- Sec. 161. Travel allowance for members of Coast Guard assigned to Alaska.
- Sec. 162. Consolidation of authorities for college student precommissioning initiative.
- Sec. 163. Tuition Assistance and Advanced Education Assistance Pilot Program.
- Sec. 164. Modifications to career flexibility program.
- Sec. 165. Recruitment, relocation, and retention incentive program for civilian firefighters employed by Coast Guard in remote locations.
- Sec. 166. Reinstatement of training course on workings of Congress; Coast Guard Museum.
- Sec. 167. Modification of designation of Vice Admirals.
- Sec. 168. Commandant Advisory Judge Advocate.
- Sec. 169. Special Advisor to Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian affairs.
- Sec. 170. Notification.
- Subtitle E—Coast Guard Academy**
- Sec. 171. Modification of Board of Visitors.
- Sec. 172. Study on Coast Guard Academy oversight.
- Sec. 173. Electronic locking mechanisms to ensure Coast Guard Academy cadet room security.
- Sec. 174. Coast Guard Academy student advisory board and access to timely and independent wellness support services for cadets and candidates.
- Sec. 175. Report on existing behavioral health and wellness support services facilities at Coast Guard Academy.
- Sec. 176. Required posting of information.
- Sec. 177. Installation of behavioral health and wellness rooms.
- Sec. 178. Coast Guard Academy room reassignment.
- Sec. 179. Authorization for use of Coast Guard Academy facilities and equipment by covered foundations.
- Sec. 180. Concurrent jurisdiction at Coast Guard Academy.
- Subtitle F—Reports**
- Sec. 181. Maritime domain awareness in Coast Guard sector for Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands.
- Sec. 182. Report on condition of Missouri River dayboards.
- Sec. 183. Study on Coast Guard missions.
- Sec. 184. Annual report on progress of certain homeporting projects.
- Sec. 185. Report on Bay class icebreaking tug fleet replacement.
- Sec. 186. Feasibility study on supporting additional port visits and deployments in support of Operation Blue Pacific.
- Sec. 187. Study and gap analysis with respect to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi aviation hangar.
- Sec. 188. Report on impacts of joint travel regulations on members of Coast Guard who rely on ferry systems.
- Sec. 189. Report on Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program.
- Sec. 190. Report on and expansion of Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps Program.
- TITLE II—SHIPPING AND NAVIGATION**
- Subtitle A—Merchant Mariner Credentials**
- Sec. 201. Merchant mariner credentialing.
- Sec. 202. Nonoperating individual.
- Sec. 203. Merchant mariner licensing and documentation system requirements.
- Subtitle B—Vessel Safety**
- Sec. 211. Grossly negligent operations of a vessel.
- Sec. 212. Administrative procedure for security risks.
- Sec. 213. Study of amphibious vessels.
- Sec. 214. Performance driven examination schedule.
- Sec. 215. Ports and waterways safety.
- Sec. 216. Study on Bering Strait vessel traffic projections and emergency response posture at ports of the United States.
- Sec. 217. Underwater inspections brief.
- Sec. 218. St. Lucie River railroad bridge.
- Sec. 219. Authority to establish safety zones for special activities in exclusive economic zone.
- Sec. 220. Improving Vessel Traffic Service monitoring.
- Sec. 221. Designating pilotage waters for the Straits of Mackinac.
- Sec. 222. Receipts; international agreements for ice patrol services.
- Sec. 223. Requirements for certain fishing vessels and fish tender vessels.
- Subtitle C—Matters Involving Uncrewed Systems**
- Sec. 231. Establishment of National Advisory Committee on Autonomous Maritime Systems.
- Sec. 232. Pilot program for governance and oversight of small uncrewed maritime systems.
- Sec. 233. Coast Guard training course.
- Sec. 234. NOAA membership on Autonomous Vessel Policy Council.
- Sec. 235. Technology pilot program.
- Sec. 236. Uncrewed systems capabilities report and briefing.
- Sec. 237. Definitions.
- Subtitle D—Other Matters**
- Sec. 241. Controlled substance onboard vessels.
- Sec. 242. Information on type approval certificates.
- Sec. 243. Clarification of authorities.
- Sec. 244. Anchorages.
- Sec. 245. Amendments to passenger vessel security and safety requirements.
- Sec. 246. Cyber-incident training.
- Sec. 247. Extension of pilot program to establish a cetacean desk for Puget Sound region.
- Sec. 248. Suspension of enforcement of use of devices broadcasting on AIS for purposes of marking fishing gear.
- Sec. 249. Classification societies.
- Sec. 250. Abandoned and derelict vessel removals.
- TITLE III—OIL POLLUTION RESPONSE**
- Sec. 301. Salvage and marine firefighting response capability.
- Sec. 302. Use of marine casualty investigations.
- Sec. 303. Timing of review.
- Sec. 304. Online incident reporting system.
- Sec. 305. Investment of Exxon Valdez oil spill court recovery in high yield investments and marine research.
- TITLE IV—SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT RESPONSE**
- Sec. 401. Independent review of Coast Guard reforms.
- Sec. 402. Comprehensive policy and procedures on retention and access to evidence and records relating to sexual misconduct and other misconduct.
- Sec. 403. Consideration of request for transfer of a cadet at the Coast Guard Academy who is the victim of a sexual assault or related offense.
- Sec. 404. Designation of officers with particular expertise in military justice or healthcare.
- Sec. 405. Safe-to-Report policy for Coast Guard.
- Sec. 406. Modification of reporting requirements on covered misconduct in Coast Guard.
- Sec. 407. Modifications to the officer involuntary separation process.
- Sec. 408. Review of discharge characterization.
- Sec. 409. Convicted sex offender as grounds for denial.
- Sec. 410. Definition of covered misconduct.
- Sec. 411. Notification of changes to Uniform Code of Military Justice or Manual for Courts Martial relating to covered misconduct.
- Sec. 412. Complaints of retaliation by victims of sexual assault or sexual harassment and related persons.
- Sec. 413. Development of policies on military protective orders.

- Sec. 414. Coast Guard implementation of independent review commission recommendations on addressing sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military.
- Sec. 415. Policy relating to care and support of victims of covered misconduct.
- Sec. 416. Establishment of special victim capabilities to respond to allegations of certain special victim offenses.
- Sec. 417. Members asserting post-traumatic stress disorder, sexual assault, or traumatic brain injury.
- Sec. 418. Participation in CATCH a Serial Offender program.
- Sec. 419. Accountability and transparency relating to allegations of misconduct against senior leaders.
- Sec. 420. Confidential reporting of sexual harassment.
- Sec. 421. Report on policy on whistleblower protections.
- Sec. 422. Review and modification of Coast Guard Academy policy on sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- Sec. 423. Coast Guard and Coast Guard Academy access to defense sexual assault incident database.
- Sec. 424. Director of Coast Guard Investigative Service.
- Sec. 425. Modifications and revisions relating to reopening retired grade determinations.
- Sec. 426. Inclusion and command review of information on covered misconduct in personnel service records.
- Sec. 427. Flag officer review of, and concurrence in, separation of members who have reported sexual misconduct.
- Sec. 428. Expedited transfer in cases of sexual misconduct or domestic violence.
- Sec. 429. Access to temporary separation program for victims of alleged sex-related offenses.
- Sec. 430. Policy and program to expand prevention of sexual misconduct.
- Sec. 431. Continuous vetting of security clearances.
- Sec. 432. Training and education programs for covered misconduct prevention and response.

#### TITLE V—COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORTS

- Sec. 501. Comptroller General report on Coast Guard research, development, and innovation program.
- Sec. 502. Comptroller General study on vessel traffic service center employment, compensation, and retention.
- Sec. 503. Comptroller General review of quality and availability of Coast Guard behavioral health care and resources for personnel wellness.
- Sec. 504. Comptroller General study on Coast Guard efforts to reduce prevalence of missing or incomplete medical records and sharing of medical data with Department of Veterans Affairs and other entities.
- Sec. 505. Comptroller General study on Coast Guard training facility infrastructure.
- Sec. 506. Comptroller General study on facility and infrastructure needs of Coast Guard stations conducting border security operations.
- Sec. 507. Comptroller General study on Coast Guard basic allowance for housing.

- Sec. 508. Comptroller General report on safety and security infrastructure at Coast Guard Academy.
- Sec. 509. Comptroller General study on athletic coaching at Coast Guard Academy.
- Sec. 510. Comptroller General study and report on permanent change of station process.

#### TITLE VI—AMENDMENTS

- Sec. 601. Amendments.

#### TITLE VII—NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

- Subtitle A—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps
- Sec. 701. Title and qualifications of head of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps and Office of Marine and Aviation Operations; promotions of flag officers.
- Sec. 702. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration vessel fleet.
- Sec. 703. Cooperative Aviation Centers.
- Sec. 704. Eligibility of former officers to compete for certain positions.
- Sec. 705. Alignment of physical disqualification standard for obligated service agreements with standard for veterans' benefits.
- Sec. 706. Streamlining separation and retirement process.
- Sec. 707. Separation of ensigns found not fully qualified.
- Sec. 708. Repeal of limitation on educational assistance.
- Sec. 709. Disposal of survey and research vessels and equipment of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

#### Subtitle B—South Pacific Tuna Treaty Matters

- Sec. 721. References to South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988.
- Sec. 722. Definitions.
- Sec. 723. Prohibited acts.
- Sec. 724. Exceptions.
- Sec. 725. Criminal offenses.
- Sec. 726. Civil penalties.
- Sec. 727. Licenses.
- Sec. 728. Enforcement.
- Sec. 729. Findings by Secretary of Commerce.
- Sec. 730. Disclosure of information.
- Sec. 731. Closed area stowage requirements.
- Sec. 732. Observers.
- Sec. 733. Fisheries-related assistance.
- Sec. 734. Arbitration.
- Sec. 735. Disposition of fees, penalties, forfeitures, and other moneys.
- Sec. 736. Additional agreements.
- Subtitle C—Other Matters
- Sec. 741. North Pacific Research Board enhancement.

#### SEC. 2. COMMANDANT DEFINED.

In this Act, the term "Commandant" means the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

#### TITLE I—COAST GUARD

##### Subtitle A—Authorization of Appropriations

#### SEC. 101. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 4902 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking "fiscal years 2022 and 2023" and inserting "fiscal years 2025 and 2026";
- (2) in paragraph (1)—
- (A) in subparagraph (A) by striking clauses (i) and (ii) and inserting the following:
- "(i) \$11,287,500,000 for fiscal year 2025; and
- "(ii) \$11,851,875,000 for fiscal year 2026.";
- (B) in subparagraph (B) by striking "\$23,456,000" and inserting "\$25,570,000"; and

- (C) in subparagraph (C) by striking "\$24,353,000" and inserting "\$26,848,500";
- (3) in paragraph (2)(A) by striking clauses (i) and (ii) and inserting the following:
- "(i) \$3,627,600,000 for fiscal year 2025; and
- "(ii) \$3,651,480,000 for fiscal year 2026.";
- (4) in paragraph (3) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B) and inserting the following:

- "(A) \$15,415,000 for fiscal year 2025; and
- "(B) \$16,185,750 for fiscal year 2026."; and
- (5) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

"(4) For retired pay, including the payment of obligations otherwise chargeable to lapsed appropriations for purposes of retired pay, payments under the Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan and the Survivor Benefit Plan, payment for career status bonuses, payment of continuation pay under section 356 of title 37, concurrent receipts, combat-related special compensation, and payments for medical care of retired personnel and their dependents under chapter 55 of title 10, \$1,210,840,000 for fiscal year 2025."

#### SEC. 102. AUTHORIZED LEVELS OF MILITARY STRENGTH AND TRAINING.

Section 4904 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) in subsection (a) by striking "fiscal years 2022 and 2023" and inserting "fiscal years 2025 and 2026"; and
- (2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking "2,500" and inserting "3,000";

(B) in paragraph (2) by striking "165" and inserting "200";

(C) in paragraph (3) by striking "385" and inserting "450"; and

(D) in paragraph (4) by striking "1,200" and inserting "1,300".

#### Subtitle B—Acquisition

#### SEC. 111. MODIFICATION OF PROHIBITION ON USE OF LEAD SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS.

Section 1105 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(c) LEAD SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'lead systems integrator' has the meaning given such term in section 805(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (Public Law 109-163)."

#### SEC. 112. SERVICE LIFE EXTENSION PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 11 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### "§ 1138. Service life extension programs

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Requirements for a Level 1 or Level 2 acquisition project or program under sections 1131 through 1134 shall not apply to an acquisition by the Coast Guard that is a service life extension program.

"(b) SERVICE LIFE EXTENSION PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'service life extension program' means a capital investment that is solely intended to extend the service life and address obsolescence of components or systems of a particular capability or asset."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 11 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1137 the following:

"1138. Service life extension programs."

(c) MAJOR ACQUISITIONS.—Section 5103 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) in subsection (a) by striking "major acquisition programs" and inserting "Level 1 Acquisitions or Level 2 Acquisitions";

(2) in subsection (b) by striking "major acquisition program" and inserting "Level 1 Acquisition or Level 2 Acquisition"; and

(3) by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:



“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) LEVEL 1 ACQUISITION.—The term ‘Level 1 Acquisition’ has the meaning given such term in section 1171.

“(2) LEVEL 2 ACQUISITION.—The term ‘Level 2 Acquisition’ has the meaning given such term in section 1171.”.

(d) MAJOR ACQUISITION PROGRAM RISK ASSESSMENT.—Section 5107 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking “section 5103(f)” and inserting “section 1171”.

**SEC. 113. CONSIDERATION OF LIFE-CYCLE COST ESTIMATES FOR ACQUISITION AND PROCUREMENT.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 11 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 1139. Consideration of life-cycle cost estimates for acquisition and procurement**

“In carrying out the acquisition and procurement of vessels and aircraft, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, acting through the Commandant, shall consider the life-cycle cost estimates of vessels and aircraft, as applicable, during the design and evaluation processes to the maximum extent practicable.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 11 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1138 (as added by this Act) the following:

“1139. Consideration of life-cycle cost estimates for acquisition and procurement.”.

**SEC. 114. GREAT LAKES ICEBREAKING.**

(a) GREAT LAKES ICEBREAKER.—

(1) STRATEGY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a strategy detailing how the Coast Guard will complete design and construction of a Great Lakes icebreaker at least as capable as the Coast Guard cutter *Mackinaw* (WLBB-30) as expeditiously as possible after funding is provided for such icebreaker, including providing a cost estimate and an estimated delivery timeline that would facilitate the expedited delivery detailed in the strategy.

(2) GREAT LAKES ICEBREAKER PILOT PROGRAM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—During the 5 ice seasons beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall conduct a pilot program to determine the extent to which the Coast Guard Great Lakes icebreaking cutter fleet is capable of maintaining tier one and tier two waterways open 95 percent of the time during an ice season.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the end of each of the 5 ice seasons beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that details—

(i) the results of the pilot program required under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) any relevant new performance measures implemented by the Coast Guard, including the measures described in pages 5 through 7 of the report of the Coast Guard titled “Domestic Icebreaking Operations” and submitted to Congress on July 26, 2024, as required by section 11212(a)(3) of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–263), and the results of the implementation of such measures.

(b) MODIFICATION TO REPORTING REQUIREMENT RELATING TO ICEBREAKING OPERATIONS IN GREAT LAKES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 11213(f) of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022

(Public Law 117–263) is amended to read as follows:

“(f) PUBLIC REPORT.—Not later than July 1 after the first winter in which the Commandant has submitted the report required by paragraph (3) of section 11212(a), the Commandant shall publish on a publicly accessible website of the Coast Guard a report on the cost to the Coast Guard of meeting the proposed standards described in paragraph (2) of such section.”.

(2) PUBLIC REPORT.—Section 11272(c) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(7) PUBLIC REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Commandant shall brief the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House or Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the cost to the Coast Guard of meeting the requirements of section 564 of title 14, United States Code, in fiscal year 2024.

“(B) SECONDARY BRIEFINGS.—Not later than November 1, 2025 and November 1, 2026, the Commandant shall brief the committees described in subparagraph (A) on the cost to the Coast Guard of meeting the requirements of section 564 of title 14, United States Code, in fiscal years 2025 and 2026, respectively.”.

**SEC. 115. REGULAR POLAR SECURITY CUTTER UPDATES.**

(a) REPORT.—

(1) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant and the Chief of Naval Operations shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the status of acquisition of Polar Security Cutters.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) a detailed timeline for the acquisition process of Polar Security Cutters, including expected milestones and a projected commissioning date for the first 3 Polar Security Cutters;

(B) an accounting of the previously appropriated funds spent to date on the Polar Security Cutter Program, updated cost projections for Polar Security Cutters, and projections for when additional funds will be required;

(C) potential factors and risks that could further delay or imperil the completion of Polar Security Cutters; and

(D) a review of the acquisition of Polar Security Cutters to date, including factors that led to substantial cost overruns and delivery delays.

(b) BRIEFINGS.—

(1) PROVISION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the submission of the report under subsection (a), and not less frequently than every 90 days thereafter, the Commandant and the Chief of Naval Operations shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a briefing on the status of the Polar Security Cutter acquisition process.

(2) TIMELINE.—The briefings under paragraph (1) shall occur after any key milestone in the Polar Security Cutter acquisition process, but not less frequently than every 90 days.

(3) ELEMENTS.—Each briefing under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) a summary of acquisition progress since the most recent previous briefing conducted pursuant to paragraph (1);

(B) an updated timeline and budget estimate for acquisition and building of pending Polar Security Cutters; and

(C) an explanation of any delays or additional costs incurred in the acquisition progress.

(c) NOTIFICATIONS.—In addition to the briefings required under subsection (b), the Commandant and the Chief of Naval Operations shall notify the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives within 3 business days of any significant change to the scope or funding level of the Polar Security Cutter acquisition strategy of such change.

**SEC. 116. FLOATING DRYDOCK FOR UNITED STATES COAST GUARD YARD.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 11 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 1159. Floating drydock for United States Coast Guard Yard**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the Commandant may not acquire, procure, or construct a floating dry dock for the Coast Guard Yard.

“(b) PERMISSIBLE ACQUISITION, PROCUREMENT, OR CONSTRUCTION METHODS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section and section 1105(a), the Commandant may—

“(1) provide for an entity other than the Coast Guard to contract for the acquisition, procurement, or construction of a floating drydock by contract, lease, purchase, or other agreement;

“(2) construct a floating drydock at the Coast Guard Yard; or

“(3) acquire or procure a commercially available floating drydock.

“(c) EXEMPTIONS FROM REQUIREMENTS.—Sections 1131, 1132, 1133, and 1171 shall not apply to an acquisition or procurement under subsection (b).

“(d) DESIGN STANDARDS AND CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES.—To the extent practicable, a floating drydock acquired, procured, or constructed under this section shall reflect commercial design standards and commercial construction practices that are consistent with the best interests of the Federal Government.

“(e) BERTHING REQUIREMENT.—Any floating drydock acquired, procured, or constructed under subsection (b) shall be berthed at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, Maryland, when lifting or maintaining vessels.

“(f) FLOATING DRY DOCK DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘floating dry dock’ means equipment that is—

“(1) constructed in the United States; and

“(2) capable of meeting the lifting and maintenance requirements of a vessel that is at least 418 feet in length with a gross tonnage of 4,500 gross tons.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 11 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1158 the following:

“1159. Floating drydock for United States Coast Guard Yard.”.

**Subtitle C—Organization and Authorities**

**SEC. 131. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF MINOR CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT MANAGEMENT.**

Section 903(d)(1) of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking “\$1,500,000” and inserting “\$2,000,000”.

### SEC. 132. PREPAREDNESS PLANS FOR COAST GUARD PROPERTIES LOCATED IN TSUNAMI INUNDATION ZONES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, in consultation with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the heads of other appropriate Federal agencies, shall develop a location-specific tsunami preparedness plan for each property concerned.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing each preparedness plan under subsection (a), the Commandant shall ensure that the plan—

(1) minimizes the loss of human life;

(2) maximizes the ability of the Coast Guard to meet the mission of the Coast Guard;

(3) is included in the emergency action plan for each Coast Guard unit or sector located within the applicable tsunami inundation zone;

(4) designates an evacuation route to an assembly area located outside the tsunami inundation zone;

(5) takes into consideration near-shore and distant tsunami inundation of the property concerned;

(6) includes—

(A) maps of all applicable tsunami inundation zones;

(B) evacuation routes and instructions for all individuals located on the property concerned;

(C) procedures to begin evacuations as expeditiously as possible upon detection of a seismic or other tsunamigenic event;

(D) evacuation plans for Coast Guard aviation and afloat assets; and

(E)(i) routes for evacuation on foot from any location within the property concerned; or

(ii) if an on-foot evacuation is not possible, an assessment of whether there is a need for vertical evacuation refuges that would allow evacuation on foot;

(7) in the case of a property concerned that is at risk for a near-shore tsunami, is able to be completely executed within 15 minutes of detection of a seismic event, or if complete execution is not possible within 15 minutes, within a timeframe the Commandant considers reasonable to minimize the loss of life; and

(8) not less frequently than annually, is—

(A) exercised by each Coast Guard unit and sector located in the applicable tsunami inundation zone;

(B) communicated through an annual in-person training to Coast Guard personnel and dependents located or living on the property concerned; and

(C) evaluated by the relevant District Commander for each Coast Guard unit and sector located within the applicable tsunami inundation zone.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In developing each preparedness plan under subsection (a), the Commandant shall consult relevant State, Tribal, and local government entities, including emergency management officials.

(d) BRIEFING.—Not later than 14 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on each plan developed under subsection (a), including the status of implementation and feasibility of each such plan.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) PROPERTY CONCERNED.—The term “property concerned” means any real property owned, operated, or leased by the Coast Guard within a tsunami inundation zone.

(2) TSUNAMIGENIC EVENT.—The term “tsunamigenic event” means any event, such

as an earthquake, volcanic eruption, submarine landslide, coastal rockfall, or other event, with the magnitude to cause a tsunami.

(3) VERTICAL EVACUATION REFUGE.—The term “vertical evacuation refuge” means a structure or earthen mound designated as a place of refuge in the event of a tsunami, with sufficient height to elevate evacuees above the tsunami inundation depth, designed and constructed to resist tsunami load effects.

### SEC. 133. PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 11269 of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–263) is—

(1) transferred to appear at the end of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 14, United States Code;

(2) redesignated as section 529; and

(3) amended—

(A) by striking the section enumerator and heading and inserting the following:

#### “§ 529. Public availability of information”;

(B) by striking “Not later than” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than”;

(C) by striking “the number of migrant” and inserting “the number of drug and person”;

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) CONTENTS.—In making information about interdictions publicly available under subsection (a), the Commandant shall include a description of the following:

“(1) The number of incidents in which drugs were interdicted, the amount and type of drugs interdicted, and the Coast Guard sectors and geographic areas of responsibility in which such incidents occurred.

“(2) The number of incidents in which persons were interdicted, the number of persons interdicted, the number of those persons who were unaccompanied minors, and the Coast Guard sectors and geographic areas of responsibility in which such incidents occurred.

“(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this provision shall be construed to require the Coast Guard to collect the information described in subsection (b), and nothing in this provision shall be construed to require the Commandant to publicly release confidential, classified, law enforcement sensitive, or otherwise protected information.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The analysis for chapter 5 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 528 the following:

“529. Public availability of information on monthly drug and migrant interdictions.”.

(2) The table of sections in section 11001(b) of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (division K of Public Law 117–263) is amended by striking the item relating to section 11269.

### SEC. 134. DELEGATION OF PORTS AND WATERWAYS SAFETY AUTHORITIES IN SAINT LAWRENCE SEAWAY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 70032 of title 46, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

#### “§ 70032. Delegation of ports and waterways authorities in Saint Lawrence Seaway

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the authority granted to the Secretary under sections 70001, 70002, 70003, 70004, and 70011 may not be delegated with respect to the Saint Lawrence Seaway to any agency other than the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. Any other authority granted the Secretary under subchapters I through III and this sub-

chapter shall be delegated by the Secretary to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation to the extent the Secretary determines such delegation is necessary for the proper operation of the Saint Lawrence Seaway.

“(b) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, after consultation with the Secretary or the head of an agency to which the Secretary has delegated the authorities in subsection (a), may—

“(1) issue and enforce special orders in accordance with section 70002;

“(2) establish water or waterfront safety zones, or other measures, for limited, controlled, or conditional access and activity when necessary for the protection of any vessel structure, waters, or shore area, as permitted in section 70011(b)(3); and

“(3) take actions for port, harbor, and coastal facility security in accordance with section 70116.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 700 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 70032 and inserting the following:

“70032. Delegation of ports and waterways authorities in Saint Lawrence Seaway.”.

### SEC. 135. ADDITIONAL PRIIBLOF ISLAND TRANSITION COMPLETION ACTIONS.

Section 11221 of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–263) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) ADDITIONAL REPORTS ON STATUS OF USE OF FACILITIES AND HELICOPTER BASING.—Beginning with the first quarterly report required under subsection (a) submitted after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Secretary shall include in each such report—

“(1) the status of the use of recently renovated Coast Guard housing facilities, food preparation facilities, and maintenance and repair facilities on St. Paul Island, Alaska, including a projected date for full use and occupancy of such facilities in support of Coast Guard missions in the Bering Sea; and

“(2) a detailed plan for the acquisition and construction of a hangar in close proximity to existing St. Paul airport facilities for the prosecution of Coast Guard operational missions, including plans for the use of land needed for such hangar.”.

### SEC. 136. POLICY AND BRIEFING ON AVAILABILITY OF NALOXONE TO TREAT OPIOID, INCLUDING FENTANYL, OVERDOSES.

(a) POLICY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall update the policy of the Coast Guard regarding the use, at Coast Guard facilities, onboard Coast Guard assets, and during Coast Guard operations, of medication to treat drug overdoses, including the use of naloxone or other similar medication to treat opioid, including fentanyl, overdoses.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—The updated policy required under subsection (a) shall require naloxone or other similar medication be available—

(1) at each Coast Guard clinic;

(2) at each independently located Coast Guard unit;

(3) onboard each Coast Guard cutter; and

(4) for response to opioid, including fentanyl, overdoses at other appropriate Coast Guard installations and facilities and onboard other Coast Guard assets.

(c) PARTICIPATION IN TRACKING SYSTEM.—Not later than 1 year after the earlier of the date of enactment of this Act or the date on which the tracking system established under

section 706 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (10 U.S.C. 1090 note) is established, the Commandant shall ensure the participation of the Coast Guard in the such tracking system.

(d) **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.**—Not later than 1 year after the earlier of the date of enactment of this Act or the date on which the tracking system established under section 706 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (10 U.S.C. 1090 note) is established, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy and the Secretary of Defense shall finalize a memorandum of understanding to facilitate Coast Guard access such tracking system.

(e) **BRIEFING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a briefing on the use, by members and personnel of the Coast Guard at Coast Guard facilities, onboard Coast Guard assets, and during Coast Guard operations, of—

(A) naloxone or other similar medication to treat opioid, including fentanyl, overdoses; and

(B) opioids, including fentanyl.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The briefing required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A description of—

(i) the progress made in the implementation of the updated policy required under subsection (a);

(ii) the prevalence and incidence of the illegal use of fentanyl and other controlled substances in the Coast Guard during the 5-year period preceding the briefing;

(iii) processes of the Coast Guard to mitigate substance abuse in the Coast Guard, particularly with respect to fentanyl; and

(iv) the status of the memorandum of understanding required under subsection (d).

(B) For the 5-year period preceding the briefing, a review of instances in which naloxone or other similar medication was used to treat opioid, including fentanyl, overdoses at a Coast Guard facility, onboard a Coast Guard asset, or during a Coast Guard operation.

(f) **PRIVACY.**—In carrying out the requirements of this section, the Commandant shall ensure compliance with all applicable privacy law, including section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “Privacy Act”), and the privacy regulations promulgated under section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (42 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note).

(g) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—For purposes of the availability requirement under subsection (b), with respect to a Coast Guard installation comprised of multiple Coast Guard facilities or units, naloxone or other similar medication available at a single Coast Guard facility within the installation shall be considered to be available to all Coast Guard facilities or units on the installation if appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure access, at all times during operations, to the naloxone or other similar medication contained within such single Coast Guard facility.

#### **SEC. 137. GREAT LAKES AND SAINT LAWRENCE RIVER COOPERATIVE VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICE.**

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall issue or amend regulations to address any applicable arrangements with the Canadian Coast Guard regarding vessel traf-

fic services cooperation and vessel traffic management data exchanges within the Saint Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes.

#### **SEC. 138. POLICY ON METHODS TO REDUCE INCENTIVES FOR ILLICIT MARITIME DRUG TRAFFICKING.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant, in consultation with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense, shall develop a policy, consistent with the Constitution of the United States, as well as domestic and international law, to address, disincentivize, and interdict illicit trafficking by sea of controlled substances (and precursors of controlled substances) being transported to produce illicit synthetic drugs.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The policy required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) include a requirement that, to the maximum extent practicable, a vessel unlawfully transporting a controlled substance or precursors of a controlled substance being transported to produce illicit synthetic drugs, be seized or appropriately disposed of consistent with domestic and international law, as well as any international agreements to which the United States is a party; and

(2) aim to reduce incentives for illicit maritime drug trafficking on a global scale, including in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, the Indo-Pacific region, the Caribbean, and the Middle East.

(c) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall brief the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives on—

(1) the policy developed pursuant to subsection (a); and

(2) recommendations with respect to—

(A) additional methods for reducing illicit drug trafficking; and

(B) additional resources necessary to implement the policy required under subsection (a) and methods recommended under subparagraph (A).

#### **SEC. 139. PROCUREMENT OF TACTICAL MARITIME SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subsection (b)(2), subject to the availability of appropriations and if the Secretary of Homeland Security determines that there is a need, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall—

(1) procure a tactical maritime surveillance system, or similar technology, for use by the Coast Guard and U.S. Customs and Border Protection in the areas of operation of—

(A) Coast Guard Sector San Diego in California;

(B) Coast Guard Sector San Juan in Puerto Rico; and

(C) Coast Guard Sector Key West in Florida; and

(2) for purposes of data integration and land-based data access, procure for each area of operation described in paragraph (1) and for Coast Guard Station South Padre Island a land-based maritime domain awareness system capable of sharing data with the Coast Guard and U.S. Customs and Border Protection—

(A) to operate in conjunction with—

(i) the system procured under section 11266 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263; 136 Stat. 4063) for Coast Guard Station South Padre Island; and

(ii) the tactical maritime surveillance system procured for each area of operation under paragraph (1); and

(B) to be installed in the order in which the systems described in subparagraph (A) are installed.

(b) **STUDY; LIMITATION.**—

(1) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—Prior to the procurement or operation of a tactical maritime surveillance system, or similar technology, that is deployed from a property owned by the Department of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall complete a study, in coordination with Secretary of Defense, analyzing the potential impacts to the national security of the United States of such operation.

(2) **LIMITATION.**—If it is determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense through the study required under paragraph (1) that the placement or installation of a system described in subsection (a) negatively impacts the national security of the United States, such system shall not be procured or installed.

#### **SEC. 140. PLAN FOR JOINT AND INTEGRATED MARITIME OPERATIONAL AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TAIWAN COAST GUARD ADMINISTRATION.**

(a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this section is to require a plan to increase joint and integrated training opportunities for the United States Coast Guard and the Taiwan Coast Guard Administration.

(b) **PLAN.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense, shall complete a plan to expand opportunities for additional joint and integrated training activities for the United States Coast Guard and the Taiwan Coast Guard Administration.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The plan required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The estimated costs for fiscal years 2024 through 2029—

(i) to deploy United States Coast Guard mobile training teams to Taiwan to meaningfully enhance the maritime security, law enforcement, and deterrence capabilities of Taiwan; and

(ii) to accommodate the participation of an increased number of members of the Taiwan Coast Guard Administration in United States Coast Guard-led maritime training courses, including associated training costs for such members, such as costs for lodging, meals and incidental expenses, travel, training of personnel, and instructional materials.

(B) A strategy for increasing the number of seats, as practicable, for members of the Taiwan Coast Guard Administration at each of the following United States Coast Guard training courses:

(i) The International Maritime Officers Course.

(ii) The International Leadership and Management Seminar.

(iii) The International Crisis Command and Control Course.

(iv) The International Maritime Domain Awareness School.

(v) The International Maritime Search and Rescue Planning School.

(vi) The International Command Center School.

(C) An assessment of—

(i) the degree to which integrated and joint United States Coast Guard and Taiwan Coast Guard Administration maritime training would assist in—

(I) preventing, detecting, and suppressing illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing operations in the South China Sea and surrounding waters; and

(II) supporting counter-illicit drug trafficking operations in the South China Sea and surrounding waters; and

(ii) whether the frequency of United States Coast Guard training team visits to Taiwan should be increased to enhance the maritime security, law enforcement, and deterrence capabilities of Taiwan.

(3) BRIEFING.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the plan required under paragraph (1) is completed, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a briefing on the contents of the plan.

#### SEC. 141. MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY FOR SPECIAL PURPOSE FACILITIES.

Section 907 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), in the first sentence—  
(A) by striking “20 years” and inserting “30 years”;

(B) by striking “or National” and inserting “National”; and

(C) by inserting before the period “, medical facilities, Coast Guard child development centers (as such term is defined in section 2921), and training facilities, including small arms firing ranges”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking the period and inserting a semicolon;

(B) by striking “means any facilities” and inserting “means—

“(1) any facilities”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) medical facilities;

“(3) Coast Guard child development centers (as such term is defined in section 2921); and  
“(4) training facilities, including small arms firing ranges.”.

#### SEC. 142. TIMELY REIMBURSEMENT OF DAMAGE CLAIMS FOR COAST GUARD PROPERTY.

Section 546 of title 14, United States Code, is amended in the second sentence by inserting “and the amounts collected shall be available until expended” after “special deposit account”.

#### SEC. 143. ENHANCED USE PROPERTY PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 504 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(13) by striking “five years” and inserting “30 years”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(g) ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts received under subsection (a)(13) shall be—

“(A) in addition to amounts otherwise available for the activities described in subsection (a)(13) for any fiscal year; and

“(B) available, without further appropriation, until expended.

“(2) CONSIDERATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a person or entity entering into a contractual agreement under this section shall provide consideration for the contractual agreement at fair market value, as determined by the Commandant.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—In the case of a contractual agreement under this section between the Coast Guard and any other Federal department or agency, the Federal department or agency concerned shall provide consideration for the contractual agreement that is equal to the full cost borne by the Coast Guard in connection with completing such contractual agreement.

“(C) FORMS.—Consideration under this subsection may take any of the following forms:

“(i) The payment of cash.

“(ii) The maintenance, construction, modification, or improvement of existing or new

facilities on real property under the jurisdiction of the Commandant.

“(iii) The use by the Coast Guard of facilities on the property concerned.

“(iv) The provision of services, including parking, telecommunications, and environmental remediation and restoration of real property under the jurisdiction of the Commandant.

“(v) Any other consideration the Commandant considers appropriate.

“(vi) A combination of any forms described in this subparagraph.

“(3) SUNSET.—The authority under paragraph (13) of subsection (a) shall expire on December 31, 2030. The expiration under this paragraph of authority under paragraph (13) of subsection (a) shall not affect the validity or term of contractual agreements under such paragraph or the retention by the Commandant of proceeds from such agreements entered into under such subsection before the expiration of the authority.”.

#### SEC. 144. COAST GUARD PROPERTY PROVISION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### “§ 722. Cooperation with eligible entities

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COAST GUARD INSTALLATION.—The term ‘Coast Guard installation’ means a base, unit, station, yard, other property under the jurisdiction of the Commandant or, in the case of property in a foreign country, under the operational control of the Coast Guard, without regard to the duration of operational control.

“(2) CULTURAL RESOURCE.—The term ‘cultural resource’ means any of the following:

“(A) A building, structure, site, district, or object eligible for or included in the National Register of Historic Places maintained under section 302101 of title 54.

“(B) Cultural items, as that term is defined in section 2(3) of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001(3)).

“(C) An archaeological resource, as that term is defined in section 3(1) of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470bb(1)).

“(D) An archaeological artifact collection and associated records covered by part 79 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(E) A sacred site, as that term is defined in section 1(b) of Executive Order No. 13007 (42 U.S.C. 1996 note; relating to Indian sacred sites).

“(F) Treaty or trust resources of an Indian Tribe, including the habitat associated with such resources.

“(G) Subsistence resources of an Indian Tribe or a Native Hawaiian organization including the habitat associated with such resources.

“(3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means any of the following:

“(A) A State, or a political subdivision of a State.

“(B) A local government.

“(C) An Indian Tribe.

“(D) A Native Hawaiian organization.

“(E) A Tribal organization.

“(F) A Federal department or agency.

“(4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian Tribe’ has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

“(5) NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘Native Hawaiian organization’ has the meaning given such term in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517) except the term includes the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

“(6) NATURAL RESOURCE.—The term ‘natural resource’ means land, fish, wildlife,

biota, air, water, ground water, drinking water supplies, and other such resources belonging to, managed by, held in trust by, appertaining to, or otherwise controlled by the United States (including the resources of the waters of the United States), any State or local government, any Indian Tribe, any Native Hawaiian organization, or any member of an Indian Tribe, if such resources are subject to a trust restriction on alienation and have been categorized into one of the following groups:

“(A) Surface water resources.

“(B) Ground water resources.

“(C) Air resources.

“(D) Geologic resources.

“(E) Biological resources.

“(7) STATE.—The term ‘State’ includes each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the territories and possessions of the United States.

“(8) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘Tribal organization’ has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

“(b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES.—

“(1) AUTHORITY.—The Commandant may enter into a cooperative agreement with an eligible entity (or in the case that the eligible entity is a Federal department or agency, an interagency agreement)—

“(A) to provide for the preservation, management, maintenance, and improvement of natural resources and cultural resources located on a site described under paragraph (2); and

“(B) for the purpose of conducting research regarding the natural resources and cultural resources.

“(2) AUTHORIZED NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES SITES.—To be covered by a cooperative agreement under paragraph (1), the relevant natural resources or cultural resources shall be located—

“(A) on a Coast Guard installation; or

“(B) on a site outside of a Coast Guard installation, but only if the cooperative agreement will directly relieve or eliminate current or anticipated restrictions that would or might restrict, impede, or otherwise interfere, either directly or indirectly, with current or anticipated Coast Guard training, testing, maintenance, or operations on a Coast Guard installation.

“(3) APPLICATION OF OTHER LAWS.—Section 1535 and chapter 63 of title 31 shall not apply to an agreement entered into under paragraph (1).

“(c) AGREEMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS.—

“(1) AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZED.—The Commandant may enter into an agreement with an eligible entity, and may enter into an interagency agreement with the head of another Federal department or agency, to address the use or development of property in the vicinity of, or ecologically related to, a Coast Guard installation for purposes of—

“(A) limiting any development or use of such property that would be incompatible with the mission of the Coast Guard installation;

“(B) preserving habitat on such property in a manner that—

“(i) is compatible with environmental requirements; and

“(ii) may eliminate or relieve current or anticipated environmental restrictions that would or might otherwise restrict, impede, or interfere, either directly or indirectly, with current or anticipated Coast Guard training or operations on the Coast Guard installation;

“(C) maintaining or improving Coast Guard installation resilience;

“(D) maintaining and improving natural resources, or benefitting natural and historic research, on the Coast Guard installation;

“(E) maintaining access to cultural resources and natural resources, including—

“(i) Tribal treaty fisheries and shellfish harvest, and usual and accustomed fishing areas; and

“(ii) subsistence fisheries, or any other fishery or shellfish harvest, of an Indian Tribe;

“(F) providing a means to replace or repair property or cultural resources of an Indian Tribe or a Native Hawaiian organization if such property is damaged by Coast Guard personnel or operations, in consultation with the affected Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization; or

“(G) maintaining and improving natural resources located outside a Coast Guard installation, including property of an eligible entity, if the purpose of the agreement is to relieve or eliminate current or anticipated challenges that could restrict, impede, or otherwise interfere with, either directly or indirectly, current or anticipated Coast Guard activities.

“(2) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS.—Notwithstanding chapter 63 of title 31, an agreement under subsection (b)(1) that is a cooperative agreement and concerns a cultural resource or a natural resource may be used to acquire property or services for the direct benefit or use of the Federal Government.

“(d)(1) An agreement under subparagraph (b)(1) shall provide for—

“(A) the acquisition by an eligible entity or entities of all right, title, and interest in and to any real property, or any lesser interest in the property, as may be appropriate for purposes of this subsection; and

“(B) the sharing by the United States and an eligible entity or entities of the acquisition costs in accordance with paragraph (3).

“(2) Property or interests may not be acquired pursuant to an agreement under subsection (b)(1) unless the owner of the property or interests consents to the acquisition.

“(3)(A) An agreement with an eligible entity under subsection (b)(1) may provide for—

“(i) the management of natural resources on, and the monitoring and enforcement of any right, title, or interest in real property in which the Commandant acquires any right, title, or interest in accordance with this subsection; and

“(ii) for the payment by the United States of all or a portion of the costs of such management, monitoring, or enforcement if the Commandant determines that there is a demonstrated need to preserve or restore habitat for the purposes of subsection (b) or (c).

“(B) Any payment provided for under subparagraph (A) may—

“(i) be paid in a lump sum;

“(ii) include an amount intended to cover the future costs of natural resource management and monitoring and enforcement; and

“(iii) be placed by the eligible entity in an interest-bearing account, so long as any interest is to be applied for the same purposes as the principal.

“(C) Any payments made under this paragraph shall be subject to periodic auditing by the Inspector General of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

“(4)(A) In entering into an agreement under subsection (b)(1), the Commandant shall determine the appropriate portion of the acquisition costs to be borne by the United States in the sharing of acquisition costs of real property, or an interest in real property, as required under paragraph (1)(B).

“(B) In lieu of, or in addition to, making a monetary contribution toward the cost of acquiring a parcel of real property, or an inter-

est therein, pursuant to an agreement under subsection (b)(1), the Commandant may convey real property in accordance with applicable law.

“(C) The portion of acquisition costs borne by the United States pursuant to subparagraph (A), either through the contribution of funds, excess real property, or both, may not exceed an amount equal to—

“(i) the fair market value of any property, or interest in property, to be transferred to the United States upon the request of the Commandant under paragraph (5); or

“(ii) the cumulative fair market value of all properties, or all interests in properties, to be transferred to the United States under paragraph (5) pursuant to an agreement under subsection (b)(1).

“(D) The contribution of an eligible entity to the acquisition costs of real property, or an interest in real property, under paragraph (1)(B) may include, with the approval of the Commandant, the following:

“(i) The provision of funds, including funds received by the eligible entity from—

“(I) a Federal agency outside the department in which the Coast Guard is operating; or

“(II) a State or local government in connection with a Federal, State, or local program.

“(ii) The provision of in-kind services, including services related to the acquisition or maintenance of such real property or interest in real property.

“(iii) The exchange or donation of real property or any interest in real property.

“(iv) Any combination of clauses (i) through (iii).

“(5)(A) In entering into an agreement under subsection (b)(1), each eligible entity that is a party to the agreement shall agree, as a term of the agreement, to transfer to the United States, upon request of the Commandant, all or a portion of the property or interest acquired under the agreement or a lesser interest therein, except no such requirement need be included in the agreement if—

“(i) the property or interest is being transferred to a State or another Federal agency, or the agreement requires the property or interest to be subsequently transferred to a State or another Federal agency; and

“(ii) the Commandant determines that the laws and regulations applicable to the future use of such property or interest provide adequate assurance that the property concerned will be developed and used in a manner appropriate for purposes of this subsection.

“(B) The Commandant shall limit a transfer request pursuant to subparagraph (A) to the minimum property or interests necessary to ensure that the property or interest concerned is developed and used in a manner appropriate for purposes of this subsection.

“(C)(i) Notwithstanding paragraph (A), if all or a portion of a property or interest acquired under an agreement under subsection (b)(1) is initially or subsequently transferred to a State or another Federal agency, before that State or other Federal agency may declare the property or interest in excess to its needs or propose to exchange the property or interest, the State or other Federal agency shall give the Commandant reasonable advance notice of its intent to so declare.

“(ii) Upon receiving such reasonable advance notice under clause (i), the Commandant may request, within a reasonable time period, that administrative jurisdiction over the property or interest be transferred to the Commandant, if the Commandant determines such transfer necessary for the preservation of the purposes of this subsection.

“(iii) Upon a request from the Commandant under clause (ii), the administrative jurisdiction over the property or interest be transferred to the Commandant at no cost.

“(iv) If the Commandant does not make a request under clause (ii) within a reasonable time period, all such rights of the Commandant to request transfer of administrative jurisdiction over the property or interest shall remain available to the Commandant with respect to future transfers or exchanges of the property or interest and shall bind all subsequent transferees.

“(D) The Commandant may accept, on behalf of the United States, any property or interest to be transferred to the United States under an agreement under subsection (b)(1).

“(E) For purposes of the acceptance of property or interests under an agreement under subsection (b)(1), the Commandant may accept an appraisal or title documents prepared or adopted by a non-Federal entity as satisfying the applicable requirements of section 301 of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4651) or section 3111 of title 40 if the Commandant finds that the appraisal or title documents substantially comply with the requirements of such sections and is reasonably accurate.

“(e) MINIMAL CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OF AGREEMENTS.—The Commandant may approve a cooperative agreement under subsection (b)(1) if the Commandant determines that—

“(1) the eligible entity has authority to carry out the project;

“(2) the project would be completed without unreasonable delay as determined by the Commandant; and

“(3) the project cannot be effectively completed without the cooperative agreement authority under subsection (b)(1).

“(f) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Commandant may require such additional terms and conditions in an agreement under subsection (b)(1) as the Commandant considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States, in accordance with applicable Federal law.

“(g) NOTIFICATION; AVAILABILITY OF AGREEMENTS TO CONGRESS.—

“(1) NOTIFICATION.—The Commandant shall notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation or the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate when the eligible entity is a Tribe, Tribal Organization or Native Hawaiian organization, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives in writing not later than the date that is 3 full business days prior to any day on which the Commandant intends to enter into an agreement under subsection (b)(1), and include in such notification the anticipated costs of carrying out the agreement, to the extent practicable.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF AGREEMENTS.—A copy of an agreement entered into under subsection (b)(1) shall be provided to any member of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation or the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate or the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives not later than 5 full business days after the date on which such request is submitted to the Commandant.

“(h) CONSULTATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Commandant shall consult with Indian Tribes to improve opportunities for Indian Tribe participation in the development and execution

of Coast Guard oil spill response and prevention activities.

“(i) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to undermine the rights of any Indian Tribe to seek full and meaningful government-to-government consultation under this section or under any other law.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for chapter 7 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 721 the following:

“722. Cooperation with eligible entities.”.

#### Subtitle D—Personnel

### SEC. 151. DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN PERSONNEL.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter I of chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### “§ 2517. Direct hire authority for certain personnel

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commandant may appoint, without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33 (other than sections 3303 and 3328 of such chapter) of title 5, qualified candidates to any of the following positions in the competitive service (as defined in section 2102 of title 5) in the Coast Guard:

“(1) Any category of medical or health professional positions within the Coast Guard.

“(2) Any childcare services position.

“(3) Any position in the Coast Guard housing office of a Coast Guard installation, the primary function of which is supervision of Coast Guard housing covered by subchapter III of chapter 29 of this title.

“(4) Any nonclinical specialist position the purpose of which is the integrated primary prevention of harmful behavior, including suicide, sexual assault, harassment, domestic abuse, and child abuse.

“(5) Any special agent position of the Coast Guard Investigative Service.

“(6) The following positions at the Coast Guard Academy:

“(A) Any civilian faculty member appointed under section 1941.

“(B) A position involving the improvement of cadet health or well-being.

“(b) **LIMITATION.**—The Commandant shall only appoint qualified candidates under the authority provided by subsection (a) if the Commandant determines that there is a shortage of qualified candidates for the positions described in such subsection or a critical hiring need for such positions.

“(c) **BRIEFING REQUIREMENT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a written briefing which describes the use of the authority provided under this section on an annual basis, including the following:

“(1) The number of employees hired under the authority provided under this section within the year for which the briefing is provided.

“(2) The positions and grades for which employees were hired.

“(3) A justification for the Commandant's determination that such positions involved a shortage of qualified candidates or a critical hiring need.

“(4) The number of employees who were hired under the authority provided under this section who have separated from the Coast Guard.

“(5) Steps the Coast Guard has taken to engage with the Office of Personnel Manage-

ment under subpart B of part 337 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, for positions for which the Commandant determines a direct hire authority remains necessary.

“(d) **SUNSET.**—The authority provided under subsection (a) shall expire on September 30, 2030.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to 2516 the following:

“2517. Direct hire authority for certain personnel.”.

### SEC. 152. TEMPORARY EXEMPTION FROM AUTHORIZED END STRENGTH FOR ENLISTED MEMBERS ON ACTIVE DUTY IN COAST GUARD IN PAY GRADES E-8 AND E-9.

Section 517(a) of title 10, United States Code, shall not apply with respect to the Coast Guard until October 1, 2027.

### SEC. 153. ADDITIONAL AVAILABLE GUIDANCE AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR RESERVE SELECTION BOARDS.

Section 3740(f) of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking “section 2117” and inserting “sections 2115 and 2117”.

### SEC. 154. FAMILY LEAVE POLICIES FOR THE COAST GUARD.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 2512 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading by striking “Leave” and inserting “Family leave”;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “, United States Code,” and inserting “or, with respect to the reserve component of the Coast Guard, the Secretary of Defense promulgates a new regulation for members of the reserve component of the Coast Guard pursuant to section 711 of title 10,”;

(B) by striking “or adoption of a child” and inserting “or placement of a minor child with the member for adoption or long term foster care”;

(C) by striking “and enlisted members” and inserting “, enlisted members, and members of the reserve component”;

(D) by inserting “or, with respect to members of the reserve component of the Coast Guard, the Secretary of Defense” after “provided by the Secretary of the Navy”;

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading by striking “ADOPTION OF CHILD” and inserting “PLACEMENT OF MINOR CHILD WITH MEMBER FOR ADOPTION OR LONG TERM FOSTER CARE”;

(B) by striking “and 704” and inserting “, 704, and 711”;

(C) by striking “and enlisted members” and inserting “, enlisted members, and members of the reserve component”;

(D) by striking “or adoption” inserting “, adoption, or long term foster care”;

(E) by striking “immediately”;

(F) by striking “or adoption” and inserting “, placement of a minor child with the member for long-term foster care or adoption,”; and

(G) by striking “enlisted member” and inserting “, enlisted member, or member of the reserve component”;

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **PERIOD OF LEAVE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, may authorize leave described under subparagraph (b) to be taken after the one-year period described in subparagraph (b) in the case of a member described in subsection (b) who, except for this subparagraph, would lose unused family leave at the end of the one-year period described in subparagraph (A) as a result of—

“(A) operational requirements;

“(B) professional military education obligations; or

“(C) other circumstances that the Secretary determines reasonable and appropriate.

“(2) **EXTENDED DEADLINE.**—The regulation, rule, policy, or memorandum prescribed under paragraph (a) shall require that any leave authorized to be taken after the one-year period described in subparagraph (c)(1)(A) shall be taken within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, after cessation of the circumstances warranting the extended deadline.

“(d) **MEMBER OF THE RESERVE COMPONENT OF THE COAST GUARD DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘member of the reserve component of the Coast Guard’ means a member of the Coast Guard who is a member of—

“(1) the selected reserve who is entitled to compensation under section 206 of title 37; or

“(2) the individual ready reserve who is entitled to compensation under section 206 of title 37 when attending or participating in a sufficient number of periods of inactive-duty training during a year to count the year as a qualifying year of creditable service toward eligibility for retired pay.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 2512 and inserting the following:

“2512. Family leave policies for the Coast Guard.”.

(c) **COMPENSATION.**—Section 206(a)(4) of title 37, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the period at the end “or family leave under section 2512 of title 14”.

### SEC. 155. AUTHORIZATION FOR MATERNITY UNIFORM ALLOWANCE FOR OFFICERS.

Section 2708 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) The Coast Guard may provide a cash allowance, in such amount as the Secretary shall determine by policy, to be paid to pregnant officer personnel for the purchase of maternity-related uniform items, if such uniform items are not so furnished to the member by the Coast Guard.”.

### SEC. 156. HOUSING.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter III of chapter 29 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### “§ 2948. Authorization for acquisition of existing family housing in lieu of construction

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In lieu of constructing any family housing units authorized by law to be constructed, the Commandant may acquire sole interest in existing family housing units that are privately owned or that are held by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, except that in foreign countries the Commandant may acquire less than sole interest in existing family housing units.

“(b) **ACQUISITION OF INTERESTS IN LAND.**—When authority provided by law to construct Coast Guard family housing units is used to acquire existing family housing units under subsection (a), the authority includes authority to acquire interests in land.

“(c) **LIMITATION ON NET FLOOR AREA.**—The net floor area of a family housing unit acquired under the authority of this section may not exceed the applicable limitation specified in section 2826 of title 10. The Commandant may waive the limitation set forth in the preceding sentence for family housing units acquired under this section during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this section.

#### “§ 2949. Acceptance of funds to cover administrative expenses relating to certain real property transactions

“(a) **AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT.**—In connection with a real property transaction referred to



in subsection (b) with a non-Federal person or entity, the Commandant may accept amounts provided by the person or entity to cover administrative expenses incurred by the Commandant in entering into the transaction.

“(b) COVERED TRANSACTIONS.—Subsection (a) applies to the following transactions involving real property under the control of the Commandant:

“(1) The exchange of real property.  
 “(2) The grant of an easement over, in, or upon real property of the United States.  
 “(3) The lease or license of real property of the United States.

“(4) The disposal of real property of the United States for which the Commandant will be the disposal agent.

“(5) The conveyance of real property under section 2945.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 29 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“2948. Authorization for acquisition of existing family housing in lieu of construction.

“2949. Acceptance of funds to cover administrative expenses relating to certain real property transactions.”

(c) REPORT ON GAO RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOUSING PROGRAM.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the status of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Government Accountability Office titled “Coast Guard: Better Feedback Collection and Information Could Enhance Housing Program”, and issued February 5, 2024 (GAO-24-106388).

#### **SEC. 157. UNIFORM FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR MORALE, WELL-BEING, AND RECREATION PROGRAMS AND COAST GUARD EXCHANGE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter IV of chapter 5 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### **“§ 565. Uniform funding and management of morale, well-being, and recreation programs and Coast Guard Exchange**

“(a) AUTHORITY FOR UNIFORM FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT.—Under policies issued by the Commandant, funds appropriated to the Coast Guard and available for morale, well-being, and recreation programs and the Coast Guard Exchange may be treated as nonappropriated funds and expended in accordance with laws applicable to the expenditure of nonappropriated funds. When made available for morale, well-being, and recreation programs and the Coast Guard Exchange under such policies, appropriated funds shall be considered to be nonappropriated funds for all purposes and shall remain available until expended.

“(b) CONDITIONS ON AVAILABILITY.—Funds appropriated to the Coast Guard and subject to a policy described in subsection (a) shall only be available in amounts that are determined by the Commandant to be consistent with—

“(1) Coast Guard policy; and  
 “(2) Coast Guard readiness and resources.

“(c) UPDATED POLICY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Commandant shall update the policies described in subsection (a) consistent with this section.

“(d) BRIEFING.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Commandant issues the updated policies required under

subsection (c), the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a briefing on such policies.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 5 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 564 the following:

“565. Uniform funding and management of morale, well-being, and recreation programs and Coast Guard Exchange.”

#### **SEC. 158. COAST GUARD EMBEDDED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TECHNICIAN PROGRAM.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, in coordination with the Assistant Commandant for Health, Safety, and Work Life, shall establish and conduct a pilot program, to be known as the “Coast Guard Embedded Behavioral Health Technician Program” (referred to in this section as the “Pilot Program”), to integrate behavioral health technicians serving at Coast Guard units for the purposes of—

(A) facilitating, at the clinic level, the provision of integrated behavioral health care for members of the Coast Guard;

(B) providing, as a force extender under the supervision of a licensed behavioral health care provider, at the clinic level—

(i) psychological assessment and diagnostic services, as appropriate;

(ii) behavioral health services, as appropriate;

(iii) education and training related to promoting positive behavioral health and well-being; and

(iv) information and resources, including expedited referrals, to assist members of the Coast Guard in dealing with behavioral health concerns;

(C) improving resilience and mental health care among members of the Coast Guard who respond to extraordinary calls of duty, with the ultimate goals of preventing crises and addressing mental health concerns before such concerns evolve into more complex issues that require care at a military treatment facility;

(D) increasing—

(i) the number of such members served by behavioral health technicians; and

(ii) the proportion of such members returning to duty after seeking behavioral health care; and

(E) positively impacting the Coast Guard in a cost-effective manner by extending behavioral health services to the workforce and improving access to care.

(2) BRIEFING.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives with a briefing regarding a plan to establish and conduct the Pilot Program.

(b) SELECTION OF COAST GUARD CLINICS.—The Commandant shall select, for participation in the Pilot Program, 3 or more Coast Guard clinics that support units that have significantly high operational tempos or other force resiliency risks, as determined by the Commandant.

(c) PLACEMENT OF STAFF AT COAST GUARD CLINICS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Under the Pilot Program, a Coast Guard health services technician with a grade of E-5 or higher, or an assigned civilian behavioral health specialist, shall be—

(A) assigned to each selected Coast Guard clinic; and

(B) located at a unit with high operational tempo.

(2) TRAINING.—

(A) HEALTH SERVICES TECHNICIANS.—Before commencing an assignment at a Coast Guard clinic under paragraph (1), a Coast Guard health services technician shall complete behavioral health technician training and independent duty health services training.

(B) CIVILIAN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS.—To qualify for an assignment at a Coast Guard clinic under paragraph (1), a civilian behavioral health specialist shall have at least the equivalent behavioral health training as the training required for a Coast Guard behavioral health technician under subparagraph (A).

(d) ADMINISTRATION.—The Commandant, in coordination with the Assistant Commandant for Health, Safety, and Work Life, shall administer the Pilot Program through the Health, Safety, and Work-Life Service Center.

(e) DATA COLLECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall collect and analyze data concerning the Pilot Program for purposes of—

(A) developing and sharing best practices for improving access to behavioral health care; and

(B) providing information to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives regarding the implementation of the Pilot Program and related policy issues.

(2) PLAN.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a plan for carrying out paragraph (1).

(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than September 1 of each year until the date on which the Pilot Program terminates under subsection (g), the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the Pilot Program that includes the following:

(1) An overview of the implementation of the Pilot Program at each applicable Coast Guard clinic, including—

(A) the number of members of the Coast Guard who received services on site by a behavioral health technician assigned to such clinic;

(B) feedback from all members of the Coast Guard empaneled for their medical care under the Pilot Program;

(C) an assessment of the deployability and overall readiness of members of the applicable operational unit; and

(D) an estimate of potential costs and impacts on other Coast Guard health care services of supporting the Pilot Program at such units and clinics.

(2) The data and analysis required under subsection (e)(1).

(3) A list and detailed description of lessons learned from the Pilot Program as of the date of on which the report is submitted.

(4) The feasibility, estimated cost, and impacts on other Coast Guard health care services of expanding the Pilot Program to all Coast Guard clinics, and a description of the personnel, fiscal, and administrative resources that would be needed for such an expansion.

(g) TERMINATION.—The Pilot Program shall terminate on September 30, 2028.



**SEC. 159. EXPANSION OF ACCESS TO COUNSELING.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall hire, train, and deploy not fewer than 5 additional behavioral health specialists, in addition to the personnel required under section 11412(a) of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (14 U.S.C. 504 note).

(b) REQUIREMENT.—The Commandant shall ensure that not fewer than 35 percent of behavioral health specialists required to be deployed under subsection (a) have experience in—

(1) behavioral health care related to military sexual trauma; and

(2) behavioral health care for the purpose of supporting members of the Coast Guard with needs for mental health care and counseling services for post-traumatic stress disorder and co-occurring disorders related to military sexual trauma.

(c) ACCESSIBILITY.—The support provided by the behavioral health specialists hired pursuant to subsection (a)—

(1) may include care delivered via telemedicine; and

(2) shall be made widely available to members of the Coast Guard.

(d) NOTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives if the Coast Guard has not completed hiring, training, and deploying—

(A) the personnel referred to in subsections (a) and (b); and

(B) the personnel required under section 11412(a) of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (14 U.S.C. 504 note).

(2) CONTENTS.—The notification required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the date of publication of the hiring opportunity for all such personnel;

(B) the General Schedule grade level advertised in the publication of the hiring opportunity for all such personnel;

(C) the number of personnel to whom the Coast Guard extended an offer of employment in accordance with the requirements of this section and section 11412(a) of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (14 U.S.C. 504 note), and the number of such personnel who accepted or declined such offer of employment;

(D) a summary of the efforts by the Coast Guard to publicize, advertise, or otherwise recruit qualified candidates in accordance with the requirements of this section and section 11412(a) of such Act; and

(E) any recommendations and a detailed plan to ensure full compliance with the requirements of this section and section 11412(a) of such Act, which may include special payments discussed in the report of the Government Accountability Office titled “Federal Pay: Opportunities Exist to Enhance Strategic Use of Special Payments”, published on December 7, 2017 (GAO-18-91), which may be made available to help ensure full compliance with all such requirements in a timely manner.

**SEC. 160. COMMAND SPONSORSHIP FOR DEPENDENTS OF MEMBERS OF COAST GUARD ASSIGNED TO UNALASKA, ALASKA.**

On request by a member of the Coast Guard assigned to Unalaska, Alaska, the Commandant shall grant command sponsorship to the dependents of such member.

**SEC. 161. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE FOR MEMBERS OF COAST GUARD ASSIGNED TO ALASKA.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Commandant shall implement a policy that provides for

reimbursement to eligible members of the Coast Guard for the cost of airfare for such members to travel to the homes of record of such member during the period specified in subsection (e).

(b) ELIGIBLE MEMBERS.—A member of the Coast Guard is eligible for a reimbursement under subsection (a) if—

(1) the member is assigned to a duty location in Alaska; and

(2) an officer in a grade above O-5 in the chain of command of the member authorizes the travel of the member.

(c) TREATMENT OF TIME AS LEAVE.—The time during which an eligible member is absent from duty for travel reimbursable under subsection (a) shall be treated as leave for purposes of section 704 of title 10, United States Code.

(d) BRIEFING REQUIRED.—Not later than February 1, 2027, the Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a briefing on—

(1) the use and effectiveness of reimbursements under subsection (a);

(2) the calculation and use of the cost of living allowance for a member assigned to a duty location in Alaska; and

(3) the use of special pays and other allowances as incentives for cold weather proficiency or duty locations.

(e) PERIOD SPECIFIED.—The period specified in this subsection is the period—

(1) beginning on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) ending on the later of—

(A) December 31, 2026; or

(B) the date on which the authority under section 352 of title 37, United States Code, to grant assignment or special duty pay to members of the uniform services terminates under subsection (g) of such section.

**SEC. 162. CONSOLIDATION OF AUTHORITIES FOR COLLEGE STUDENT PRECOMMISSIONING INITIATIVE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3710 of title 14, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

**“§ 3710. College student precommissioning initiative**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized within the Coast Guard a college student precommissioning initiative program (in this section referred to as the ‘Program’) for eligible undergraduate students to enlist in the Coast Guard Reserve and receive a commission as a Reserve officer.

“(b) CRITERIA FOR SELECTION.—To be eligible for the Program an applicant shall meet the following requirements upon submitting an application:

“(1) AGE.—The applicant shall be not less than 19 years old and not more than 31 years old as of September 30 of the fiscal year in which the Program selection panel selecting such applicant convenes, or an age otherwise determined by the Commandant.

“(2) CHARACTER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The applicant shall be of outstanding moral character and meet any other character requirement set forth by the Commandant.

“(B) COAST GUARD APPLICANTS.—Any applicant serving in the Coast Guard may not be commissioned if in the 36 months prior to the first Officer Candidate School class convening date in the selection cycle, such applicant was convicted by a court-martial or assigned nonjudicial punishment, or did not meet performance or character requirements set forth by the Commandant.

“(3) CITIZENSHIP.—The applicant shall be a United States citizen.

“(4) CLEARANCE.—The applicant shall be eligible for a secret clearance.

“(5) EDUCATION.—The applicant shall be enrolled in a college degree program at—

“(A) an institution of higher education described in section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a));

“(B) an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) that, at the time of the application has had for 3 consecutive years an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students (as defined in section 312(e) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1058(e))) that is a total of at least 50 percent Black American, Hispanic American, Asian American (as defined in section 371(c) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1067q(c))), Native American Pacific Islander (as defined in such section), or Native American (as defined in such section), among other criteria, as determined by the Commandant; or

“(C) an institution that meets the eligibility requirements for funding as a rural-serving institution of higher education under section 861 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1161q).

“(6) LOCATION.—The institution at which the applicant is an undergraduate shall be within 100 miles of a Coast Guard unit or Coast Guard Recruiting Office unless otherwise approved by the Commandant.

“(7) RECORDS.—The applicant shall meet credit and grade point average requirements set forth by the Commandant.

“(8) MEDICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE.—The applicant shall meet other medical and administrative requirements as set forth by the Commandant.

“(c) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant may provide financial assistance to enlisted members of the Coast Guard Reserve on active duty participating in the Program, for expenses of the enlisted member while the enlisted member is enrolled, on a full-time basis, in a college degree program approved by the Commandant at a college, university, or institution of higher education described in subsection (b)(5) that leads to—

“(A) a baccalaureate degree in not more than 5 academic years; or

“(B) a post-baccalaureate degree.

“(2) WRITTEN AGREEMENTS.—To be eligible for financial assistance under this section, an enlisted member of the Coast Guard Reserve shall enter into a written agreement with the Coast Guard that notifies the Reserve enlisted member of the obligations of that member under this section, and in which the member agrees to the following:

“(A) The member shall complete an approved college degree program at a college, university, or institution of higher education described in subsection (b)(5).

“(B) The member shall satisfactorily complete all required Coast Guard training and participate in monthly military activities of the Program as required by the Commandant.

“(C) Upon graduation from the college, university, or institution of higher education described in subsection (b)(5), the member shall—

“(i) accept an appointment, if tendered, as a commissioned officer in the Coast Guard Reserve; and

“(ii) serve a period of obligated active duty for a minimum of 3 years immediately after such appointment as follows:

“(I) Members participating in the Program shall be obligated to serve on active duty 3 months for each month of instruction for which they receive financial assistance pursuant to this section for the first 12 months and 1 month for each month thereafter, or 3 years, whichever is greater.

“(II) The period of obligated active duty service incurred while participating in the Program shall be in addition to any other

obligated service a member may incur due to receiving other bonuses or other benefits as part of any other Coast Guard program.

“(III) If an appointment described in clause (i) is not tendered, the member will remain in the Reserve component until completion of the member’s enlisted service obligation.

“(D) The member shall agree to perform such duties or complete such terms under the conditions of service specified by the Coast Guard.

“(3) EXPENSES.—Expenses for which financial assistance may be provided under this section are the following:

“(A) Tuition and fees charged by the college, university, or institution of higher education at which a member is enrolled on a full-time basis.

“(B) The cost of books.

“(C) In the case of a program of education leading to a baccalaureate degree, laboratory expenses.

“(D) Such other expenses as the Commandant considers appropriate, which may not exceed \$25,000 for any academic year.

“(4) TIME LIMIT.—Financial assistance may be provided to a member under this section for up to 5 consecutive academic years.

“(5) BREACH OF AGREEMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may retain in the Coast Guard Reserve, and may order to active duty for such period of time as the Secretary prescribes (but not to exceed 4 years), a member who breaches an agreement under paragraph (2). The period of time for which a member is ordered to active duty under this paragraph may be determined without regard to section 651(a) of title 10.

“(B) APPROPRIATE ENLISTED GRADE OR RATING.—A member who is retained in the Coast Guard Reserve under subparagraph (A) shall be retained in an appropriate enlisted grade or rating, as determined by the Commandant.

“(6) REPAYMENT.—A member who does not fulfill the terms of the obligation to serve as specified under paragraph (2), or the alternative obligation imposed under paragraph (5), shall be subject to the repayment provisions of section 303a(e) of title 37.

“(d) BRIEFING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than August 15 of each year following the date of the enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Commandant shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the Program.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The briefing required under paragraph (1) shall describe—

“(A) outreach and recruitment efforts over the previous year; and

“(B) demographic information of enrollees, including—

“(i) race;

“(ii) ethnicity;

“(iii) gender;

“(iv) geographic origin; and

“(v) educational institution.”.

(b) REPEAL.—Section 2131 of title 14, United States Code, is repealed.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The analysis for chapter 21 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 2131.

(2) The analysis for chapter 37 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 3710 and inserting the following:

“3710. College student precommissioning initiative.”.

#### SEC. 163. TUITION ASSISTANCE AND ADVANCED EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, acting through the Commandant, shall establish a tuition assistance pilot program for active-duty members of the Coast Guard, to be known as the “Tuition Assistance and Advanced Education Assistance Pilot Program for Sea Duty” (referred to in this section as the “pilot program”).

(b) FORMAL AGREEMENT.—A member of the Coast Guard participating in the pilot program shall enter into a formal agreement with the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating that provides that, upon the successful completion of a sea duty tour by such member, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall, for a period equal to the length of the sea duty tour, beginning on the date on which the sea duty tour concludes—

(1) reduce by 1 year the service obligation incurred by such member as a result of participation in the advanced education assistance program under section 2005 of title 10, United States Code, or the tuition assistance program under section 2007 of such title; and

(2) increase the tuition assistance cost cap for such member to not more than double the amount of the standard tuition assistance cost cap set by the Commandant for the applicable fiscal year.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the pilot program is established, and annually thereafter through the date on which the pilot program is terminated under subsection (d), the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that—

(1) evaluates and compares—

(A) the Coast Guard’s retention, recruitment, and filling of sea duty billets for all members of the Coast Guard; and

(B) the Coast Guard’s retention, recruitment, and filling of sea duty billets for all members of the Coast Guard participating in the pilot program;

(2) includes the number of participants in the pilot program as of the date of the report, disaggregated by officer and enlisted billet type; and

(3) assesses the progress made by such participants in their respective voluntary education programs, in accordance with their degree plans, during the period described in subsection (b).

(d) TERMINATION.—The pilot program shall terminate on the date that is 6 years after the date on which the pilot program is established.

#### SEC. 164. MODIFICATIONS TO CAREER FLEXIBILITY PROGRAM.

Section 2514 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(3) by striking “2 months” and inserting “30 days”; and

(2) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (2) by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) the entitlement of the member and of the survivors of the member to all death benefits under subchapter II of chapter 75 of title 10;

“(4) the provision of all travel and transportation allowances to family members of a deceased member to attend the repatriation, burial, or memorial ceremony of a deceased

member as provided in section 453(f) of title 37;

“(5) the eligibility of the member for general benefits as provided in part II of title 38; and

“(6) in the case of a victim of an alleged sex-related offense (as such term is defined in section 1044e(h) of title 10) to the maximum extent practicable, maintaining access to—

“(A) Coast Guard behavioral health resources;

“(B) sexual assault prevention and response resources and programs of the Coast Guard; and

“(C) Coast Guard legal resources, including, to the extent practicable, special victims’ counsel.”.

#### SEC. 165. RECRUITMENT, RELOCATION, AND RETENTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR CIVILIAN FIREFIGHTERS EMPLOYED BY COAST GUARD IN REMOTE LOCATIONS.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF REMOTE LOCATIONS.—The Commandant shall identify locations to be considered remote locations for purposes of this section, which shall include, at a minimum, each Coast Guard fire station located in an area in which members of the Coast Guard and the dependents of such members are eligible for the TRICARE Prime Remote program.

(b) INCENTIVE PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To ensure uninterrupted operations by civilian firefighters employed by the Coast Guard in remote locations, the Commandant shall establish an incentive program for such firefighters consisting of—

(A) recruitment and relocation bonuses consistent with section 5753 of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) retention bonuses consistent with section 5754 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—The Commandant, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Personnel and Management, shall establish eligibility criteria for the incentive program established under paragraph (1), which shall include a requirement that a firefighter described in paragraph (1) may only be eligible for the incentive program under this section if, with respect to the applicable remote location, the Commandant has made a determination that incentives are appropriate to address an identified recruitment, retention, or relocation need.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not less frequently than annually for the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that—

(1) details the use and effectiveness of the incentive program established under this section; and

(2) includes—

(A) the number of participants in the incentive program;

(B) a description of the distribution of incentives under such program; and

(C) a description of the impact of such program on civilian firefighter recruitment and retention by the Coast Guard in remote locations.

#### SEC. 166. REINSTATEMENT OF TRAINING COURSE ON WORKINGS OF CONGRESS; COAST GUARD MUSEUM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by—

(1) transferring section 316 to appear after section 323 and redesignating such section as section 324; and

(2) inserting after section 315 the following:

**“§316. Training course on workings of Congress**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant, and such other individuals and organizations as the Commandant considers appropriate, shall develop a training course on the workings of Congress and offer such training course at least once each year.

“(b) COURSE SUBJECT MATTER.—The training course required by this section shall provide an overview and introduction to Congress and the Federal legislative process, including—

“(1) the history and structure of Congress and the committee systems of the House of Representatives and the Senate, including the functions and responsibilities of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

“(2) the documents produced by Congress, including bills, resolutions, committee reports, and conference reports, and the purposes and functions of such documents;

“(3) the legislative processes and rules of the House of Representatives and the Senate, including similarities and differences between the 2 processes and 2 sets of rules, including—

“(A) the congressional budget process;

“(B) the congressional authorization and appropriation processes;

“(C) the Senate advice and consent process for Presidential nominees; and

“(D) the Senate advice and consent process for treaty ratification;

“(4) the roles of Members of Congress and congressional staff in the legislative process; and

“(5) the concept and underlying purposes of congressional oversight within the governance framework of separation of powers.

“(c) LECTURERS AND PANELISTS.—

“(1) OUTSIDE EXPERTS.—The Commandant shall ensure that not less than 60 percent of the lecturers, panelists, and other individuals providing education and instruction as part of the training course required under this section are experts on Congress and the Federal legislative process who are not employed by the executive branch of the Federal Government.

“(2) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT PRO BONO SERVICES.—In satisfying the requirement under paragraph (1), the Commandant shall seek, and may accept, educational and instructional services of lecturers, panelists, and other individuals and organizations provided to the Coast Guard on a pro bono basis.

“(d) EFFECT OF LAW.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The training required by this section shall replace the substantially similar training that was required by the Commandant on the day before the date of the enactment of this section.

“(2) PREVIOUS TRAINING RECIPIENTS.—A Coast Guard flag officer or a Coast Guard Senior Executive Service employee who, not more than 3 years before the date of the enactment of this section, completed the training that was required by the Commandant on the day before such date of enactment, shall not be required to complete the training required by this section.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to section 316 and inserting after the item relating to section 323 the following:

“324. Training for congressional affairs personnel.”

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 315 the following:

“316. Training course on workings of Congress.”

(c) SERVICES AND USE OF FUNDS FOR, AND LEASING OF, THE NATIONAL COAST GUARD MUSEUM.—Section 324 of title 14, United States Code, as transferred and redesignated by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary”; and

(B) in paragraph (2) by striking “on the engineering and design of a Museum.” and inserting “on—”

“(A) the design of the Museum; and

“(B) engineering, construction administration, and quality assurance services for the Museum.”;

(2) in subsection (e), by amending paragraph (2)(A) to read as follows:

“(2)(A) for the purpose of conducting Coast Guard operations, lease from the Association—

“(i) the Museum; and

“(ii) any property owned by the Association that is adjacent to the railroad tracks that are adjacent to the property on which the Museum is located; and”; and

(3) by amending subsection (g) to read as follows:

“(g) SERVICES.—With respect to the services related to the construction, maintenance, and operation of the Museum, the Commandant may, from nonprofits entities including the Association,—

“(1) solicit and accept services; and

“(2) enter into contracts or memoranda of agreement to acquire such services.”.

**SEC. 167. MODIFICATION OF DESIGNATION OF VICE ADMIRALS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 305(a)(1) of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by striking “may” and inserting “shall”; and

(2) in subparagraph (A)(ii) by striking “be the Chief of Staff of the Coast Guard” and inserting “oversee personnel management, workforce and dependent support, training, and related matters”.

(b) REORGANIZATION.—Chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by redesignating sections 312 through 324 as sections 314 through 326, respectively.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by redesignating the items relating to sections 312 through 324 as relating to sections 314 through 326, respectively.

**SEC. 168. COMMANDANT ADVISORY JUDGE ADVOCATE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after section 311 the following:

**“§312. Commandant Advisory Judge Advocate**

“There shall be in the Coast Guard a Commandant Advisory Judge Advocate who is a judge advocate in a grade of O-6. The Commandant Advisory Judge Advocate shall be assigned to the staff of the Commandant in the first regularly scheduled O-6 officer assignment panel to convene following the date of the enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 and perform such duties relating to legal matters arising in the Coast Guard as such legal matters relate to the Commandant, as may be assigned.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 311 the following item:

“312. Commandant Advisory Judge Advocate.”.

**SEC. 169. SPECIAL ADVISOR TO COMMANDANT FOR TRIBAL AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 312 the following:

**“§313. Special Advisor to Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Affairs**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with Federal trust responsibilities and treaty obligations, laws, and policies relevant to Indian Tribes and in support of the principles of self-determination, self-governance, and co-management with respect to Indian Tribes, and to support engagement with Native Hawaiians, there shall be in the Coast Guard a Special Advisor to the Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Affairs (in this section referred to as the ‘Special Advisor’), who shall—

“(1) be selected by the Secretary and the Commandant through a competitive search process;

“(2) have expertise in Federal Indian law and policy, including government-to-government consultation;

“(3) to the maximum extent practicable, have expertise in legal and policy issues affecting Native Hawaiians; and

“(4) have an established record of distinguished service and achievement working with Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations.

“(b) CAREER RESERVED POSITION.—The position of Special Advisor shall be a career reserved position at the GS-15 level or greater.

“(c) DUTIES.—The Special Advisor shall—

“(1) ensure the Federal government upholds the Federal trust responsibility and conducts consistent, meaningful, and timely government-to-government consultation and engagement with Indian Tribes, which shall meet or exceed the standards of the Federal Government and the Coast Guard;

“(2) ensure meaningful and timely engagement with—

“(A) Native Hawaiian organizations; and

“(B) Tribal organizations;

“(3) advise the Commandant on all policies of the Coast Guard that have Tribal implications in accordance with applicable law and policy, including Executive Orders;

“(4) work to ensure that the policies of the Federal Government regarding consultation and engagement with Indian Tribes and engagement with Native Hawaiian organizations and Tribal organizations are implemented in a meaningful manner, working through Coast Guard leadership and across the Coast Guard, together with—

“(A) liaisons located within Coast Guard districts;

“(B) the Director of Coast Guard Governmental and Public Affairs; and

“(C) other Coast Guard leadership and programs and other Federal partners; and

“(5) support Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Tribal organizations in all matters under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard.

“(d) DIRECT ACCESS TO SECRETARY AND COMMANDANT.—No officer or employee of the Coast Guard or the Department of Homeland Security may interfere with the ability of the Special Advisor to give direct and independent advice to the Secretary and the Commandant on matters related to this section.

“(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian Tribe’ has the meaning given such term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

“(2) NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘Native Hawaiian organization’ has the meaning given such term in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education

Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517) except the term includes the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

“(3) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘Tribal organization’ has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 312 the following:

“313. Special Advisor to Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Affairs.”.

(c) BRIEFINGS.—

(1) INITIAL BRIEFING.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall brief the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the manner in which the Special Advisor for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Affairs will be incorporated into the governance structure of the Coast Guard, including a timeline for the incorporation that is completed not later than 1 year after date of enactment of this Act.

(2) ANNUAL BRIEFINGS ON SPECIAL ADVISOR TO THE COMMANDANT FOR TRIBAL AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the establishment of the position of the Special Advisor to the Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Affairs under section 313 of title 14, United States Code, and annually thereafter for 2 years, the Commandant shall provide the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Technology and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives with a briefing on the duties, responsibilities, and actions of the Special Advisor to the Commandant for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Affairs, including management of best practices.

(3) BRIEFING ON COLLABORATION WITH TRIBES ON RESEARCH CONSISTENT WITH COAST GUARD MISSION REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Technology and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives with a briefing on potential collaborations on and research and use of indigenous place-based knowledge and research.

(B) ELEMENT.—In providing the briefing under subparagraph (A), the Commandant shall identify current and potential future opportunities to improve coordination with Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Tribal organizations to support—

(i) Coast Guard mission needs, such as the potential for research or knowledge to enhance maritime domain awareness, including opportunities through the ADAC-ARCTIC Center of Excellence of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(ii) Coast Guard efforts to protect indigenous place-based knowledge and research.

(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(B) NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.—The term “Native Hawaiian organization” has the meaning given such term in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517) except the term includes the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

(C) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Tribal organization” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section, or an amendment made by this section, shall be construed to impact—

(1) the right of any Indian Tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304); or

(2) any government-to-government consultation.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 11237 of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–263) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “section 312 of title 14” and inserting “section 315 of title 14”; and

(B) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by striking “section 312 of title 14” and inserting “section 315 of title 14”.

(2) Section 807(a) of the Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–282) is amended by striking “section 313 of title 14” and inserting “section 316 of title 14”.

(3) Section 3533(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (Public Law 118–31) is amended by striking “section 315 of title 14” and inserting “section 318 of title 14”.

(4) Section 311(j)(9)(D) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1321(j)(9)(D)) is amended by striking “section 323 of title 14” each place it appears and inserting “section 325 of title 14” each such place.

#### SEC. 170. NOTIFICATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall provide to the appropriate committees of Congress notification as described in subsection (b)—

(1) not later than the date that is 10 days before the final day of each fiscal year; or

(2) in the case of a continuing resolution that, for a period of more than 10 days, provides appropriated funds in lieu of an appropriations Act, not later than the date that is 10 days before the final day of the period that such continuing resolution covers.

(b) ELEMENTS.—Notification under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) the status of funding for the Coast Guard during the subsequent fiscal year or at the end of the continuing resolution if other appropriations measures are not enacted, as applicable;

(2) the status of the Coast Guard as a component of the Armed Forces;

(3) the number of members currently serving overseas and otherwise supporting missions related to title 10, United States Code;

(4) the fact that members of the Armed Forces have service requirements unlike those of other Federal employees, which require them to continue to serve even if unpaid;

(5) the impacts of historical shutdowns of the Federal Government on members of the Coast Guard; and

(6) other relevant matters, as determined by the Commandant.

(c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(3) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

(4) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

#### Subtitle E—Coast Guard Academy

#### SEC. 171. MODIFICATION OF BOARD OF VISITORS.

Section 1903 of title 14, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

##### “§ 1903. Annual Board of Visitors

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall establish a Board of Visitors to the Coast Guard Academy to review and make recommendations on the operation of the Academy.

“(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The membership of the Board shall consist of the following:

“(A) The chairperson of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, or a member of such Committee designated by such chairperson.

“(B) The chairperson of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, or a member of such Committee designated by such chairperson.

“(C) 3 Senators appointed by the Vice President.

“(D) 4 Members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

“(E) 2 Senators appointed by the Vice President, each of whom shall be selected from among members of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

“(F) 2 Members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each of whom shall be selected from among members of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

“(G) 6 individuals designated by the President.

“(2) TIMING OF APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBERS.—

“(A) If any member of the Board described in paragraph (1)(C) is not appointed by the date that is 180 days after the date on which the first session of each Congress convenes, the chair and ranking member of the subcommittee of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate with jurisdiction over the authorization of appropriations of the Coast Guard shall be members of the Board until the date on which the second session of such Congress adjourns sine die.

“(B) If any member of the Board described in paragraph (1)(D) is not appointed by the date that is 180 days after the date on which the first session of each Congress convenes, the chair and ranking member of the subcommittee of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives with jurisdiction over the authorization of appropriations for the Coast Guard shall be members of the Board until the date on which the second session of such Congress adjourns sine die.

“(C) If any member of the Board described in paragraph (1)(E) is not appointed by the date that is 180 days after the date on which the first session of each Congress convenes, the chair and ranking member of the subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate with jurisdiction over appropriations for the Coast Guard shall be members of the Board until the date on which the second session of such Congress adjourns sine die.

“(D) If any member of the Board described in paragraph (1)(F) is not appointed by the date that is 180 days after the date on which the first session of each Congress convenes, the chair and ranking member of the subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives with jurisdiction over appropriations for the Coast Guard shall be members of the Board until the date on which the second session of such Congress adjourns sine die.

“(3) CHAIRPERSON.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—On a biennial basis and subject to paragraph (4), the Board shall select from among the members of the Board a Member of Congress to serve as the Chair of the Board.

“(B) ROTATION.—A Member of the House of Representatives and a Member of the Senate shall alternately be selected as the Chair of the Board.

“(C) TERM.—An individual may not serve as Chairperson of the Board for consecutive terms.

“(4) LENGTH OF SERVICE.—

“(A) MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.—A Member of Congress designated as a member of the Board under paragraph (1) shall be designated as a member in the first session of the applicable Congress and shall serve for the duration of such Congress.

“(B) INDIVIDUALS DESIGNATED BY THE PRESIDENT.—Each individual designated by the President under paragraph (1)(G) shall serve as a member of the Board for 3 years, except that any such member whose term of office has expired shall continue to serve until a successor is appointed by the President.

“(C) DEATH OR RESIGNATION OF A MEMBER.—If a member of the Board dies or resigns, a successor shall be designated for any unexpired portion of the term of the member by the official who designated the member.

“(c) DUTIES.—

“(1) ACADEMY VISITS.—

“(A) ANNUAL VISIT.—The Commandant shall invite each member of the Board, and any designee of a member of the Board, to visit the Coast Guard Academy at least once annually to review the operation of the Academy.

“(B) ADDITIONAL VISITS.—With the approval of the Secretary, the Board or any members of the Board in connection with the duties of the Board may—

“(i) make visits to the Academy in addition to the visits described in subparagraph (A); or

“(ii) consult with—

“(I) the Superintendent of the Academy; or

“(II) the faculty, staff, or cadets of the Academy.

“(C) ACCESS.—The Commandant shall ensure that the Board or any members of the Board who visits the Academy under this paragraph is provided reasonable access to the grounds, facilities, cadets, faculty, staff, and other personnel of the Academy for the purpose of carrying out the duties of the Board.

“(2) OVERSIGHT REVIEW.—In conducting oversight of the Academy under this section, the Board shall review, with respect to the Academy—

“(A) the state of morale and discipline, including with respect to prevention of, response to, and recovery from sexual assault and sexual harassment;

“(B) recruitment and retention, including diversity, inclusion, and issues regarding women specifically;

“(C) the curriculum;

“(D) instruction;

“(E) physical equipment, including infrastructure, living quarters, and deferred maintenance;

“(F) fiscal affairs; and

“(G) any other matter relating to the Academy the Board considers appropriate.

“(d) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.—

“(1) MEETINGS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than annually, the Board shall meet at a location chosen by the Commandant, in consultation with the Board, to conduct the review required by subsection (c)(2).

“(B) CHAIRPERSON AND CHARTER.—The Federal officer designated under subsection

(f)(1)(B) shall organize a meeting of the Board for the purposes of—

“(i) selecting a Chairperson of the Board under subsection (b)(3);

“(ii) adopting an official charter for the Board, which shall establish the schedule of meetings of the Board; and

“(iii) any other matter such designated Federal officer or the Board considers appropriate.

“(C) SCHEDULING.—In scheduling a meeting of the Board, such designated Federal officer shall coordinate, to the greatest extent practicable, with the members of the Board to determine the date and time of the meeting.

“(D) NOTIFICATION.—Not less than 30 days before each scheduled meeting of the Board, such designated Federal officer shall notify each member of the Board of the time, date, and location of the meeting.

“(2) STAFF.—

“(A) DESIGNATION.—The chairperson and the ranking member of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the chairperson and the ranking member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives may each designate 1 staff member of each such Committees.

“(B) ROLE.—Staff designated under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) may attend and participate in visits and carry out consultations described under subsection (c)(1) and attend and participate in meetings described under paragraph (1); and

“(ii) may not otherwise carry out duties or take actions reserved to members of the Board under this section.

“(3) ADVISORS.—If approved by the Secretary, the Board may consult with advisors in carrying out the duties of the Board under this section.

“(4) REPORTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Board conducts a meeting of the Board under paragraph (1), the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support, in consultation with the Board, shall submit a report on the actions of the Board during the meeting and the recommendations of the Board pertaining to the Academy to—

“(i) the Secretary;

“(ii) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

“(iii) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

“(B) PUBLICATION.—Each report submitted under this paragraph shall be published on a publicly accessible website of the Coast Guard.

“(e) DISCLOSURE.—The Commandant and the Superintendent of the Academy shall ensure candid and complete disclosure to the Board, consistent with applicable laws relating to disclosure of information, with respect to—

“(1) each issue described in subsection (c)(2); and

“(2) any other issue the Board or the Commandant considers appropriate.

“(f) COAST GUARD SUPPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall—

“(A) provide support to the Board, as Board considers necessary for the performance of the duties of the Board;

“(B) designate a Federal officer to support the performance of the duties of the Board; and

“(C) in cooperation with the Superintendent of the Academy, advise the Board of any institutional issues, consistent with applicable laws concerning the disclosure of information.

“(2) REIMBURSEMENT.—Each member of the Board and each advisor consulted by the Board under subsection (d)(3) shall be reimbursed, to the extent permitted by law, by the Coast Guard for actual expenses incurred while engaged in duties as a member or advisor.

“(g) NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the first session of each Congress convenes, the Commandant shall provide to the chairperson and ranking member of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the chairperson and ranking member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, and the President notification of the requirements of this section.”

## SEC. 172. STUDY ON COAST GUARD ACADEMY OVERSIGHT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, shall enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center with relevant expertise under which such center shall conduct an assessment of the oversight and governance of the Coast Guard Academy, including—

(1) examining the—

(A) authorities regarding Coast Guard and Departmental oversight of the Coast Guard Academy, including considerations of how these may impact accreditation review at the academy;

(B) roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees of such Academy;

(C) Coast Guard roles and responsibilities with respect to management and facilitation of the Board of Trustees of such Academy;

(D) advisory functions of the Board of Trustees of such Academy; and

(E) membership of the Board of Trustees for the 10-year period preceding the date of the enactment of this Act, to include expertise, objectiveness, and effectiveness in conducting oversight of such Academy; and

(2) an analysis of the involvement of the Board of Trustees during the Operation Fouled Anchor investigation, including to what extent the Board members were informed, involved, or made decisions regarding the governance of the academy based on that investigation.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Commandant enters into an agreement under subsection (a), the federally funded research and development center selected under such subsection shall submit to the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, the Commandant, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(1) the results of the assessment required under subsection (a); and

(2) recommendations to improve governance of the Coast Guard Academy and the Board of Trustees.

## SEC. 173. ELECTRONIC LOCKING MECHANISMS TO ENSURE COAST GUARD ACADEMY CADET ROOM SECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, in consultation with the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy (referred to in this section as the “Superintendent”), shall—

(1) install an electronic locking mechanism for each room at the Coast Guard Academy within which 1 or more Coast Guard Academy cadets reside overnight;

(2) test each such mechanism not less than once every 6 months for proper function and maintained in proper working order; and

(3) use a system that electronically records the date, time, and identity of each individual who accesses a cadet room using an

electronic access token, code, card, or other electronic means, which shall be maintained in accordance with the general schedule for records retention, or a period of five years, whichever is later.

(b) **ELECTRONIC LOCKING MECHANISMS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each electronic locking mechanism described in subsection (a) shall be coded in a manner that provides access to a room described in such subsection only to—

(A) the 1 or more cadets assigned to the room; and

(B) such Coast Guard Academy officers, administrators, staff, or security personnel, including personnel of the Coast Guard Investigative Service, as are necessary to access the room in the event of an emergency.

(2) **EXISTING MECHANISMS.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Superintendent shall ensure that electronic locking mechanisms installed in academic buildings of the Coast Guard Academy, Chase Hall common spaces, and in any other location at the Coast Guard Academy are maintained in proper working order.

(c) **ACCESS POLICY INSTRUCTION.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Superintendent shall promulgate a policy regarding cadet room security policies and procedures, which shall include, at a minimum—

(1) a prohibition on sharing with any other cadet, employee, or other individual electronic access tokens, codes, cards, or other electronic means of accessing a cadet room;

(2) procedures for resetting electronic locking mechanisms in the event of a lost, stolen, or otherwise compromised electronic access token, code, card, or other electronic means of accessing a cadet room;

(3) procedures to maintain the identity of each individual who accesses a cadet room using an electronic access token, code, card, or other electronic means, while ensuring the security of personally identifiable information and protecting the privacy of any such individual, as appropriate;

(4) procedures by which cadets may report to the chain of command the malfunction of an electronic locking mechanism; and

(5) a schedule of testing to ensure the proper functioning of electronic locking mechanisms.

(d) **MINIMUM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.**—The Superintendent shall ensure that each Coast Guard Academy cadet receives, not later than 1 day after the date of the initial arrival of the cadet at the Coast Guard Academy, an initial training session, and any other training the Superintendent considers necessary, on—

(1) the use of electronic locking mechanisms installed under this section; and

(2) the policy promulgated under subsection (c).

**SEC. 174. COAST GUARD ACADEMY STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD AND ACCESS TO TIMELY AND INDEPENDENT WELLNESS SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CADETS AND CANDIDATES.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter I of Chapter 19 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 1907. Coast Guard Academy Student and Women Advisory Board**

“(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Commandant shall establish within the Coast Guard Academy an advisory board to be known as the ‘Coast Guard Academy Student and Women Advisory Board’ (in this section referred to as the ‘Advisory Board’).

“(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The Advisory Board shall be composed of not fewer than 12 cadets of the Coast Guard Academy who are enrolled at the Coast Guard Academy at the time of appointment, including not fewer than 3 cadets from each class.

“(c) **APPOINTMENT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Cadets shall be appointed to the Advisory Board by the Provost, in consultation with the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy.

“(2) **APPLICATION.**—Cadets who are eligible for appointment to the Advisory Board shall submit an application for appointment to the Provost of the Coast Guard Academy, or a designee of the Provost, for consideration.

“(d) **SELECTION.**—The Provost shall select eligible applicants who—

“(1) are best suited to fulfill the duties described in subsection (g); and

“(2) best represent the student body makeup at the Coast Guard Academy.

“(e) **TERM.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Appointments shall be made not later than 60 days after the date of the swearing in of a new class of cadets at the Coast Guard Academy.

“(2) **TERM.**—The term of membership of a cadet on the Advisory Board shall be 1 academic year.

“(f) **MEETINGS.**—The Advisory Board shall meet in person with the Superintendent not less frequently than twice each academic year to discuss the activities of the Advisory Board.

“(g) **DUTIES.**—The Advisory Board shall—

“(1) identify challenges facing Coast Guard Academy cadets, including cadets who are women, relating to—

“(A) health and wellbeing;

“(B) cadet perspectives and information with respect to sexual assault, sexual harassment and sexual violence prevention, response, and recovery at the Coast Guard Academy;

“(C) the culture of, and leadership development and access to health care for, cadets at the Academy who are women; and

“(D) any other matter the Advisory Board considers important;

“(2) discuss and propose possible solutions to such challenges, including improvements to leadership development at the Coast Guard Academy; and

“(3) periodically review the efficacy of Coast Guard Academy academic, wellness, and other relevant programs and provide recommendations to the Commandant for improvement of such programs.

“(h) **WORKING GROUPS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Advisory Board shall establish 2 working groups of which—

“(A) 1 working group shall be composed, at least in part, of Coast Guard Academy cadets who are not current members of the Advisory Board and members of the Cadets Against Sexual Assault, or any similar successor organization, to assist the Advisory Board in carrying out its duties under subsection (g)(1)(B); and

“(B) 1 working group shall be composed, at least in part, of Coast Guard Academy cadets who are not current members of the Advisory Board to assist the Advisory Board in carrying out its duties under subsection (g)(1)(C).

“(2) **OTHER WORKING GROUPS.**—The Advisory Board may establish such other working groups (which may be composed, at least in part, of Coast Guard Academy cadets who are not current members of the Advisory Board) as the Advisory Board finds to be necessary to carry out the Board’s duties other than the duties in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subsection (g)(1).

“(i) **REPORTING.**—

“(1) **COMMANDANT AND SUPERINTENDENT.**—The Advisory Board shall regularly submit a report or provide a briefing to the Commandant and the Superintendent on the results of the activities carried out in furtherance of the duties of the Advisory Board under subsection (g), including recommendations for actions to be taken based on such

results, not less than once per academic semester.

“(2) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—The Advisory Board shall transmit to the Commandant, through the Provost and the Superintendent an annual report at the conclusion of the academic year, containing the information and materials that were presented to the Commandant or Superintendent, or both, during the regularly occurring briefings under paragraph (1).

“(3) **CONGRESS.**—The Commandant shall provide to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives any report or other materials provided to the Commandant and Superintendent under paragraph (1) and any other information related to the Advisory requested by the Committees.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for chapter 19 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1906 the following:

“1907. Coast Guard Academy Student and Women Advisory Board.”.

**SEC. 175. REPORT ON EXISTING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUPPORT SERVICES FACILITIES AT COAST GUARD ACADEMY.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on existing behavioral health and wellness support services facilities at the Coast Guard Academy in which Coast Guard Academy cadets and officer candidates, respectively, may receive timely and independent behavioral health and wellness support services, including via telemedicine.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(1) an identification of each building at the Coast Guard Academy that contains a dormitory or other overnight accommodations for cadets or officer candidates; and

(2)(A) an identification of additional behavioral health or wellness support services that would be beneficial to cadets and officer candidates, such as additional facilities with secure access to telemedicine;

(B) a description of the benefits that such services would provide to cadets and officer candidates, particularly to cadets and officer candidates who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment; and

(C) a description of the resources necessary to provide such services.

**SEC. 176. REQUIRED POSTING OF INFORMATION.**

The Commandant shall ensure that, in each building at the Coast Guard Academy that contains a dormitory or other overnight accommodations for cadets or officer candidates, written information is posted in a visible location with respect to—

(1) the methods and means by which a cadet or officer candidate may report a crime, including harassment, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and any other offense;

(2) the contact information for the Coast Guard Investigative Service;

(3) external resources for—

(A) wellness support;

(B) work-life;

(C) medical services; and

(D) support relating to behavioral health, civil rights, sexual assault, and sexual harassment; and

(4) cadet and officer candidate rights with respect to reporting incidents to the Coast Guard Investigative Service, civilian authorities, the Office of the Inspector General



of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, and any other applicable entity.

**SEC. 177. INSTALLATION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS ROOMS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall install or construct at the Coast Guard Academy 2 rooms to be used for the purpose of supporting cadet and officer candidate behavioral health and wellness.

(b) STANDARDS OF ROOMS.—Each room installed or constructed under this section—

(1) shall be—

(A) equipped—

(i) in a manner that ensures the protection of the privacy of cadets and officer candidates, consistent with law and policy;

(ii) with a telephone and computer to allow for the provision of behavioral health and wellness support or other services; and

(iii) with an accessible and private wireless internet connection for the use of personal communications devices at the discretion of the cadet or officer candidate concerned; and

(B) to the extent practicable and consistent with good order and discipline, accessible to cadets and officer candidates at all times; and

(2) shall contain the written information described in section 176, which shall be posted in a visible location.

**SEC. 178. COAST GUARD ACADEMY ROOM REASSIGNMENT.**

Section 1902 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) ROOM REASSIGNMENT.—Coast Guard Academy cadets may request room reassignment if experiencing discomfort due to Coast Guard Academy rooming assignments, consistent with policy.”.

**SEC. 179. AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF COAST GUARD ACADEMY FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT BY COVERED FOUNDATIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 19 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 1908. Authorization for use of Coast Guard Academy facilities and equipment by covered foundations**

“(a) AUTHORITY.—Subject to subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary, with the concurrence of the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, may authorize a covered foundation to use, on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis as determined by the Secretary, facilities or equipment of the Coast Guard Academy.

“(b) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary may not authorize any use of facilities or equipment under subsection (a) if such use may jeopardize the health, safety, or well-being of any member of the Coast Guard or cadet of the Coast Guard Academy.

“(c) LIMITATIONS.—The Secretary may only authorize the use of facilities or equipment under subsection (a) if such use—

“(1) is without any liability of the United States to the covered foundation;

“(2) does not—

“(A) affect the ability of any official or employee of the Coast Guard, or any member of the armed forces, to carry out any responsibility or duty in a fair and objective manner;

“(B) compromise the integrity or appearance of integrity of any program of the Coast Guard, or any individual involved in any such program; or

“(C) include the participation of any cadet of the Coast Guard Academy at an event of the covered foundation, other than participation of such a cadet in an honor guard;

“(3) complies with any applicable ethics regulation; and

“(4) has been reviewed and approved by an attorney of the Coast Guard.

“(d) ISSUANCE OF POLICIES.—The Secretary shall issue Coast Guard policies to carry out this section.

“(e) BRIEFING.—For any fiscal year in which the Secretary exercises the authority under subsection (a), not later than the last day of such fiscal year, the Commandant shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the number of events or activities of a covered foundation supported by such exercise of authority during the fiscal year.

“(f) COVERED FOUNDATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘covered foundation’ means an organization that—

“(1) is a charitable, educational, or civic nonprofit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

“(2) the Secretary determines operates exclusively to support—

“(A) recruiting activities with respect to the Coast Guard Academy;

“(B) parent or alumni development in support of the Coast Guard Academy;

“(C) academic, leadership, or character development of Coast Guard Academy cadets;

“(D) institutional development of the Coast Guard Academy; or

“(E) athletics in support of the Coast Guard Academy.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 19 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to item 1907 the following:

“1908. Authorization for use of Coast Guard Academy facilities and equipment by covered foundations.”.

**SEC. 180. CONCURRENT JURISDICTION AT COAST GUARD ACADEMY.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating may establish concurrent jurisdiction between the Federal Government and the State of Connecticut over the lands constituting the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, as necessary to facilitate the ability of the State of Connecticut and City of New London to investigate and prosecute any crimes cognizable under Connecticut law that are committed on such Coast Guard Academy property.

**Subtitle F—Reports**

**SEC. 181. MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS IN COAST GUARD SECTOR FOR PUERTO RICO AND VIRGIN ISLANDS.**

Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report containing—

(1) an overview of the maritime domain awareness in the area of responsibility of the Coast Guard sector responsible for Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands, including—

(A) the average volume of known maritime traffic that transited the area during fiscal years 2020 through 2023;

(B) current sensor platforms deployed by such sector to monitor illicit activity occurring at sea in such area;

(C) the number of illicit activity incidents at sea in such area that the sector responded to during fiscal years 2020 through 2023;

(D) an estimate of the volume of traffic engaged in illicit activity at sea in such area and the type and description of any vessels used to carry out illicit activities that such sector responded to during fiscal years 2020 through 2023; and

(E) the maritime domain awareness requirements to effectively meet the mission of such sector;

(2) a description of current actions taken by the Coast Guard to partner with Federal, regional, State, and local entities to meet the maritime domain awareness needs of such area;

(3) a description of any gaps in maritime domain awareness within the area of responsibility of such sector resulting from an inability to meet the enduring maritime domain awareness requirements of the sector or adequately respond to maritime disorder;

(4) an identification of current technology and assets the Coast Guard has to mitigate the gaps identified in paragraph (3);

(5) an identification of capabilities needed to mitigate such gaps, including any capabilities the Coast Guard currently possesses that can be deployed to the sector;

(6) an identification of technology and assets the Coast Guard does not currently possess and are needed to acquire in order to address such gaps; and

(7) an identification of any financial obstacles that prevent the Coast Guard from deploying existing commercially available sensor technology to address such gaps.

**SEC. 182. REPORT ON CONDITION OF MISSOURI RIVER DAYBOARDS.**

(a) PROVISION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the condition of dayboards and the placement of buoys on the Missouri River.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include—

(1) a list of the most recent date on which each dayboard and buoy was serviced by the Coast Guard;

(2) an overview of the plan of the Coast Guard to systematically service each dayboard and buoy on the Missouri River; and

(3) assigned points of contact.

(c) LIMITATION.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant may not remove the aids to navigation covered in subsection (a), unless there is an imminent threat to life or safety, until a period of 180 days has elapsed following the date on which the Commandant submits the report required under subsection (a).

**SEC. 183. STUDY ON COAST GUARD MISSIONS.**

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall seek to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center with relevant expertise under which such center shall conduct an assessment of the operational capabilities and ability of the Coast Guard to conduct the primary duties of the Coast Guard under section 102 of title 14, United States Code, and missions under section 888 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 468).

(2) ELEMENTS.—In carrying out the assessment required under paragraph (1), the federally funded research and development center selected under such subsection shall, with respect to the primary duties and missions described in paragraph (1), include the following:

(A) An analysis of the extent to which the Coast Guard is able to effectively carry out such duties and missions.

(B) An analysis of any budgetary, policy, and manpower factors that may constrain the Coast Guard's ability to carry out such duties and missions.

(C) An analysis of the impacts to safety, national security, and the economy, of any



shortfalls in the Coast Guards ability to meet such missions.

(D) Recommendations for the Coast Guard to more effectively carry out such duties and missions, in light of manpower and asset constraints.

(E) Identification of any duties and missions that are being conducted by the Coast Guard on behalf of other Department of Homeland Security components, the Department of Defense, and other Federal agencies.

(F) An analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of the Coast Guard conducting missions on behalf of other agencies identified in subparagraph (E), including—

(i) the budgetary impact of the duties and missions identified in such subparagraph;

(ii) data on the degree to which the Coast Guard is reimbursed for the costs of such missions; and

(iii) recommendations to minimize the impact of the missions identified in such subparagraph to the Coast Guard budget, including improving reimbursements and budget autonomy of the Coast Guard.

(b) **ASSESSMENT TO COMMANDANT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date on which Commandant enters into an agreement under section (a), the federally funded research and development center selected under such subsection shall submit to the Commandant, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate the assessment required under subsection (a).

(c) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after receipt of the assessment under subsection (b), the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that includes recommendations included in the assessment to strengthen the ability of the Coast Guard to carry out such duties and missions.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The assessment received by the Commandant under subsection (b).

(B) For each recommendation included in the such assessment—

(i) an assessment by the Commandant of the feasibility and advisability of implementing such recommendation; and

(ii) if the Commandant considers the implementation of such recommendation feasible and advisable, a description of the actions taken, or to be taken, to implement such recommendation.

#### **SEC. 184. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS OF CERTAIN HOMEPORING PROJECTS.**

(a) **INITIAL REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall issue a report detailing the progress of all approved Coast Guard cutter homeporting projects within Coast Guard District 17 with respect to each of the following:

(A) Fast Response Cutters.

(B) Offshore Patrol Cutters.

(C) The commercially available polar icebreaker procured pursuant to section 11223 of Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (14 U.S.C. 561 note).

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to each homeporting project described in such paragraph, the following:

(A) A description of—

(i) the status of funds appropriated for the project;

(ii) activities carried out toward completion of the project; and

(iii) activities anticipated to be carried out during the subsequent 1-year period to advance completion of the project.

(B) An updated timeline, including key milestones, for the project.

(b) **SUBSEQUENT REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than July 1 of the first calendar year after the year in which the report required under subsection (a) is submitted, and each July 1 thereafter until the date specified in paragraph (2), the Commandant shall issue an updated report containing, with respect to each Coast Guard cutter homeporting project described in subsection (a)(1) (including any such project approved on a date after the date of the enactment of this Act and before the submission of the applicable report), each element described in subsection (a)(2).

(2) **DATE SPECIFIED.**—The date specified in this paragraph is the earlier of—

(A) July 2, 2031; or

(B) the date on which all projects described in subsection (a)(1) are completed.

(c) **REPORT ON CAPACITY OF COAST GUARD BASE KETCHIKAN.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall complete a report detailing the cost of and time frame for expanding the industrial capacity of Coast Guard Base Ketchikan to do out of water repairs on Fast Response Cutters.

(2) **REPORT.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate the report required under paragraph (1).

(d) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—The Commandant shall publish each report issued under this section on a publicly accessible website of the Coast Guard.

(e) **HOMEPORING PROJECT DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “homeporting project”—

(1) means the facility infrastructure modifications, upgrades, new construction, and real property and land acquisition associated with homeporting new or modified cutters; and

(2) includes shoreside and waterfront facilities, cutter maintenance facilities, housing, child development facilities, and any other associated infrastructure directly required as a result of homeporting new or modified cutters.

#### **SEC. 185. REPORT ON BAY CLASS ICEBREAKING TUG FLEET REPLACEMENT.**

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives—

(1) a report that describes the strategy of the Coast Guard with respect to the replacement of the Bay class icebreaking tug fleet;

(2) in the case of such a strategy that results in the replacement of the last Bay class icebreaking tug on a date that is more than 15 years after such date of enactment, a plan to maintain the operational capabilities of the Bay class icebreaking tug fleet until the date on which such fleet is projected to be replaced; and

(3) in the case of such a plan that does not include the replacement of the main propulsion engines and marine gear components of the Bay class icebreaking tug fleet, an assessment of the manner in which not replacing such engines and gear components will effect the future operational availability of such fleet.

#### **SEC. 186. FEASIBILITY STUDY ON SUPPORTING ADDITIONAL PORT VISITS AND DEPLOYMENTS IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION BLUE PACIFIC.**

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall—

(1) complete a study on the feasibility and advisability of supporting additional Coast Guard port visits and deployments in support of Operation Blue Pacific, or any successor operation oriented toward Oceania; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of such study.

#### **SEC. 187. STUDY AND GAP ANALYSIS WITH RESPECT TO COAST GUARD AIR STATION CORPUS CHRISTI AVIATION HANGAR.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall commence a study and gap analysis with respect to the aviation hangar at Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi and the capacity of such hangar to accommodate the aircraft currently assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi and any aircraft anticipated to be so assigned in the future.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The study and gap analysis required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of hangar infrastructure requirements needed—

(A) to meet mission requirements for all aircraft currently assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi; and

(B) to accommodate the assignment of an additional HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi.

(2) An assessment as to whether the aviation hangar at Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi is sufficient to accommodate all rotary-wing assets assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi.

(3) In the case of an assessment that such hangar is insufficient to accommodate all such rotary-wing assets, a description of the facility modifications that would be required to do so.

(4) An assessment of the facility modifications of such hangar that would be required to accommodate all aircraft assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi upon completion of the transition from the MH-65 rotary-wing aircraft to the MH-60T rotary-wing aircraft.

(5) An evaluation with respect to which fixed-wing assets assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Corpus Christi should be enclosed in such hangar so as to most effectively mitigate the effects of corrosion while meeting mission requirements.

(6) An evaluation as to whether, and to what extent, the storage of fixed-wing assets outside such hangar would compromise the material condition and safety of such assets.

(7) An evaluation of the extent to which any material condition and safety issue identified under paragraph (6) may be mitigated through the use of gust locks, chocks, tie-downs, or related equipment.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the commencement of the study and gap analysis required under subsection (a), the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the results of the study and gap analysis.

# **SEC. 188. REPORT ON IMPACTS OF JOINT TRAVEL REGULATIONS ON MEMBERS OF COAST GUARD WHO RELY ON FERRY SYSTEMS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the impacts of the Joint Travel Regulations on members of the Coast Guard who are commuting, on permanent change of station travel, or on other official travel to or from locations served by ferry systems.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include an analysis of the impacts on such members of the Coast Guard of the following policies under the Joint Travel Regulations:

- (1) The one-vehicle shipping policy.
- (2) The unavailability of reimbursement of costs incurred by such members due to ferry schedule unavailability, sailing cancellations, and other sailing delays during commuting, permanent change of station travel, or other official travel.
- (3) The unavailability of local infrastructure to support vehicles or goods shipped to duty stations in locations outside the contiguous United States that are not connected by the road system, including locations served by the Alaska Marine Highway System.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(2) JOINT TRAVEL REGULATIONS.—The term “Joint Travel Regulations”, with respect to official travel, means the terms, rates, conditions, and regulations maintained under section 464 of title 37, United States Code.

# **SEC. 189. REPORT ON JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICERS’ TRAINING CORPS PROGRAM.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the standards and criteria prescribed by the Coast Guard for educational institution participation in the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program.

(2) With respect to each educational institution offering a Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program—

(A) a description of—

- (i) the training and course of military instruction provided to students;
- (ii) the facilities and drill areas used for the program;
- (iii) the type and amount of Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program resources provided by the Coast Guard;
- (iv) the type and amount of Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program resources provided by the educational institution; and
- (v) any other matter relating to program requirements the Commandant considers appropriate;

(B) an assessment as to whether the educational institution is located in an educationally and economically deprived area (as described in section 2031 of title 10, United States Code);

(C) beginning with the year in which the program was established at the educational institution, the number of students who have participated in the program, disaggregated by gender, race, and grade of student participants; and

(D) an assessment of the participants in the program, including—

(i) the performance of the participants in the program;

(ii) the number of participants in the program who express an intent to pursue a commission or enlistment in the Coast Guard; and

(iii) a description of any other factor or matter considered by the Commandant to be important in assessing the success of program participants at the educational institution.

(3) With respect to any unit of the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps suspended or placed on probation pursuant to section 2031(h) of title 10, United States Code—

(A) a description of the unit;

(B) the reason for such suspension or placement on probation;

(C) the year the unit was so suspended or placed on probation; and

(D) with respect to any unit that was reinstated after previously being suspended or placed on probation, a justification for the reinstatement of such unit.

(4) A description of the resources and personnel required to maintain, implement, and provide oversight for the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program at each participating educational institution and within the Coast Guard, including the funding provided to each such educational institution, disaggregated by educational institution and year.

(5) A recommendation with respect to—

(A) whether the number of educational institutions participating in the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program should be increased; and

(B) in the case of a recommendation that such number should be increased, additional recommendations relating to such an increase, including—

(i) the number of additional educational institutions that should be included in the program;

(ii) the locations of such institutions;

(iii) any additional authorities or resources necessary for such an increase; and

(iv) any other matter the Commandant considers appropriate.

(6) Any other matter the Commandant considers necessary in order to provide a full assessment of the effectiveness of the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program.

# **SEC. 190. REPORT ON AND EXPANSION OF COAST GUARD JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICERS’ TRAINING CORPS PROGRAM.**

(a) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the status of the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Program.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A review and timeline of Coast Guard outreach efforts in Coast Guard districts that do not have a Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Program.

(B) A review and timeline of Coast Guard outreach efforts in Coast Guard districts in

which there are multiple Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Programs.

(C) Policy recommendations regarding future expansion of the Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Program.

(b) EXPANSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on December 31, 2026, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall maintain at all times a Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps Program with not fewer than 20 such programs.

(2) COST ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall provide Congress with an estimate of the costs associated with implementing this subsection.

# **TITLE II—SHIPPING AND NAVIGATION**

## **Subtitle A—Merchant Mariner Credentials**

### **SEC. 201. MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIALING.**

(a) REVISING MERCHANT MARINER DECK TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) GENERAL DEFINITIONS.—Section 2101 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (20) through (56) as paragraphs (21), (22), (24), (25), (26), (27), (28), (29), (30), (31), (32), (33), (34), (35), (36), (37), (38), (39), (40), (41), (42), (43), (44), (45), (46), (47), (48), (49), (50), (51), (52), (53), (54), (55), (56), (57), and (58), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (19) the following:

“(20) ‘merchant mariner credential’ means a merchant mariner license, certificate, or document that the Secretary is authorized to issue pursuant to this title.”; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (22), as so redesignated, the following:

“(23) ‘nautical school program’ means a program that—

“(A) offers a comprehensive program of training that includes substantial sea service on nautical school vessels or merchant vessels of the United States primarily to train individuals for service in the merchant marine; and

“(B) is approved by the Secretary for purposes of section 7315, in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary.”.

(2) EXAMINATIONS.—Section 7116 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (c).

(3) MERCHANT MARINERS DOCUMENTS.—

(A) GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.—Section 7306 of title 46, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 7306. General requirements and classifications for members of deck departments

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may issue a merchant mariner credential, to members of the deck department in the following classes:

“(1) Able Seaman-Unlimited.

“(2) Able Seaman-Limited.

“(3) Able Seaman-Special.

“(4) Able Seaman-Offshore Supply Vessels.

“(5) Able Seaman-Sail.

“(6) Able Seaman-Fishing Industry.

“(7) Ordinary Seaman.

(b) CLASSIFICATION OF CREDENTIALS.—The Secretary may classify the merchant mariner credential issued under subsection (a) based on—

“(1) the tonnage and means of propulsion of vessels;

“(2) the waters on which vessels are to be operated; or

“(3) other appropriate standards.

(c) QUALIFICATIONS.—To qualify for a credential under this section, an applicant shall provide satisfactory proof that the applicant—

“(1) is at least 18 years of age;

“(2) has the service required by the applicable section of this part;

“(3) is qualified professionally as demonstrated by an applicable examination or educational requirements;

“(4) is qualified as to sight, hearing, and physical condition to perform the seafarer's duties; and

“(5) has satisfied any additional requirements established by the Secretary, including career patterns and service appropriate to the particular service, industry, or job functions the individual is engaged.”.

(B) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall implement the requirements under subsection (c) of section 7306 of title 46, United States Code (as amended by this section), without regard to chapters 5 and 6 of title 5, United States Code, and Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 (5 U.S.C. 601 note).

(C) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 7306 and inserting the following:

“7306. General requirements and classifications for members of deck departments.”.

(b) GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF ENGINE DEPARTMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 7313 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (b) by striking “and coal passer”; and

(B) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) CLASSIFICATION OF CREDENTIALS.—The Secretary may classify the merchant mariner credential issued under subsection (a) based on—

“(1) the tonnage and means of propulsion of vessels;

“(2) the waters on which vessels are to be operated; or

“(3) other appropriate standards.

“(d) QUALIFICATIONS.—To qualify for a credential under this section, an applicant shall provide satisfactory proof that the applicant—

“(1) is at least 18 years of age;

“(2) has a minimum of 6-months service in the related entry rating;

“(3) is qualified professionally as demonstrated by an applicable examination or educational requirements; and

“(4) is qualified as to sight, hearing, and physical condition to perform the member's duties.”.

(2) REPEAL.—Section 7314 of title 46, United States Code, and the item relating to such section in the analysis for chapter 73 of such title, are repealed.

(c) TRAINING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 7315 of title 46, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

#### “§ 7315. Training

“(a) NAUTICAL SCHOOL PROGRAM.—Graduation from a nautical school program may be substituted for the sea service requirements under sections 7307 through 7311a and 7313 of this title.

“(b) OTHER APPROVED TRAINING PROGRAMS.—The satisfactory completion of a training program approved by the Secretary may be substituted for not more than one-half of the sea service requirements under sections 7307 through 7311a and 7313 of this title in accordance with subsection (c).

“(c) TRAINING DAYS.—For purposes of subsection (b), training days undertaken in connection with training programs approved by the Secretary may be substituted for days of required sea service under sections 7307 through 7311a and 7313 of this title as follows:

“(1) Each shore-based training day in the form of classroom lectures may be sub-

stituted for 2 days of sea service requirements.

“(2) Each training day of laboratory training, practical demonstrations, and other similar training, may be substituted for 4 days of sea service requirements.

“(3) Each training day of full mission simulator training may be substituted for 6 days of sea service requirements.

“(4) Each training day underway on a vessel while enrolled in an approved training program may be substituted for 1½ days of sea service requirements, as long as—

“(A) the structured training provided while underway on a vessel is—

“(i) acceptable to the Secretary as part of the approved training program; and

“(ii) fully completed by the individual; and

“(B) the tonnage of such vessel is appropriate to the endorsement being sought.

“(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘training day’ means a day that consists of not less than 7 hours of training.”.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall implement the requirements of section 7315 of title 46, United States Code, as amended by this subsection, without regard to chapters 5 and 6 of title 5, United States Code, and Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 (5 U.S.C. 601 note) and 14094 (88 Fed. Reg. 21879).

(3) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) TITLE 46.—Title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(i) in section 2113(3) by striking “section 2101(53)(A)” and inserting “section 2101(55)(A)”; and

(ii) in section 3202(a)(1)(A) by striking “section 2101(29)(A)” and inserting “section 2101(31)(A)”; and

(iii) in section 3507(k)(1) by striking “section 2101(31)” and inserting “section 2101(33)”; and

(iv) in section 4105(d) by striking “section 2101(53)(A)” and inserting “section 2101(55)(A)”; and

(v) in section 12119(a)(3) by striking “section 2101(26)” and inserting “section 2101(28)”; and

(vi) in section 51706(c)(6)(C)(ii) by striking “section 2101(24)” and inserting “section 2101(26)”.

(B) OTHER LAWS.—

(i) Section 3(3) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1802(3)) is amended by striking “2101(30) of title 46” and inserting “2101 of title 46”.

(ii) Section 1992(d)(7) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking “section 2101(31) of title 46” and inserting “section 2101 of title 46”.

(iii) Section 311(a)(26)(D) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1321(a)(26)(D)) is amended by striking “section 2101(23)” and inserting “section 2101”.

(iv) Section 1101 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “Section 2101(23)” and inserting “Section 2101(24)”.

(d) AMENDMENTS.—

(1) MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIALS.—The heading for part E of subtitle II of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “MERCHANT SEAMEN LICENSES, CERTIFICATES, AND DOCUMENTS” and inserting “MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIALS”.

(2) ABLE SEAFARERS—UNLIMITED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The section heading for section 7307 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(B) REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF CERTAIN PERIOD OF SERVICE.—Section 7307 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “3 years” and inserting “18 months”.

(C) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is further amended in the item relating to section 7307 by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(3) ABLE SEAMEN—LIMITED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The section heading for section 7308 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(B) REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF CERTAIN PERIOD OF SERVICE.—Section 7308 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “18 months” and inserting “12 months”.

(C) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is further amended in the item relating to section 7308 by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(4) ABLE SEAFARERS—SPECIAL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The section heading for section 7309 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(B) REDUCTION OF LENGTH OF CERTAIN PERIOD OF SERVICE.—Section 7309 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “12 months” and inserting “6 months”.

(C) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is further amended in the item relating to section 7309 by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(5) ABLE SEAFARERS—OFFSHORE SUPPLY VESSELS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The section heading for section 7310 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is further amended in the item relating to section 7310 by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(6) ABLE SEAFARERS—SAIL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The section heading for section 7311 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is further amended in the item relating to section 7311 by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(7) ABLE SEAMEN—FISHING INDUSTRY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The section heading for section 7311a of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is further amended in the item relating to section 7311a by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers”.

(8) PARTS E AND F.—Parts E and F of subtitle II of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking “seaman” and inserting “seafarer” each place it appears; and

(B) by striking “seamen” and inserting “seafarers” each place it appears.

(9) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The analysis for subtitle II of title 46, United States Code, is amended in the item relating to part E by striking “MERCHANT SEAMEN LICENSES, CERTIFICATES, AND DOCUMENTS” and inserting “MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIALS”.

(10) TEMPORARY REDUCTION OF LENGTHS OF CERTAIN PERIODS OF SERVICE.—Section 3534(j) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (Public Law 118-31) is repealed.

(11) MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIALS.—Section 7510 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (d).

(e) RENEWAL OF MERCHANT MARINER LICENSES AND DOCUMENTS.—Section 7507 of

title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) RENEWAL.—With respect to any renewal of an active merchant mariner credential issued under this part that is not an extension under subsection (a) or (b), such credential shall begin the day after the expiration of the active credential of the credential holder.”

(f) MERCHANT SEAMEN LICENSES, CERTIFICATES, AND DOCUMENTS; MANNING OF VESSELS.—

(1) CITIZENSHIP OR NONCITIZEN NATIONALITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 7102 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(i) in the section heading by inserting “or noncitizen nationality” after “Citizenship”; and

(ii) by inserting “or noncitizen nationals (as such term is described in section 308 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1408))” after “citizens”.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 71 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 7102 and inserting the following:

“7102. Citizenship or noncitizen nationality.”

(2) CITIZENSHIP OR NONCITIZEN NATIONALITY NOTATION ON MERCHANT MARINERS’ DOCUMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 7304 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(i) in the section heading by inserting “or noncitizen nationality” after “Citizenship”; and

(ii) by inserting “or noncitizen national (as such term is described in section 308 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1408))” after “citizen”.

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 7304 and inserting the following:

“7304. Citizenship or noncitizen nationality notation on merchant mariners’ documents.”

(3) CITIZENSHIP OR NONCITIZEN NATIONALITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 8103 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(i) in the section heading by inserting “or noncitizen nationality” after “Citizenship”; and

(ii) in subsection (a) by inserting “or noncitizen nationals” after “citizen”; and

(iii) in subsection (b)—

(I) in paragraph (1)(A)(i) by inserting “or noncitizen national” after “citizen”; and

(II) in paragraph (3) by inserting “or noncitizen nationality” after “citizenship”; and

(III) in paragraph (3)(C) by inserting “or noncitizen nationals” after “citizens”; and

(iv) in subsection (c) by inserting “or noncitizen nationals” after “citizens”; and

(v) in subsection (d)—

(I) in paragraph (1) by inserting “or noncitizen nationals” after “citizens”; and

(II) in paragraph (2) by inserting “or noncitizen national” after “citizen” each place it appears;

(vi) in subsection (e) by inserting “or noncitizen national” after “citizen” each place it appears;

(vii) in subsection (i)(1)(A) by inserting “or noncitizen national” after “citizen”; and

(viii) in subsection (k)(1)(A) by inserting “or noncitizen national” after “citizen”; and

(ix) by adding at the end the following:

“(1) NONCITIZEN NATIONAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘noncitizen national’ means an individual described in section 308 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1408).”

(B) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 81 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 8103 and inserting the following:

“8103. Citizenship or noncitizen nationality and Navy Reserve requirements.”

(4) COMMAND OF DOCUMENTED VESSELS.—Section 12131(a) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by inserting “or noncitizen national (as such term is described in section 308 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1408))” after “citizen”.

(5) INVALIDATION OF CERTIFICATES OF DOCUMENTATION.—Section 12135(2) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by inserting “or noncitizen national (as such term is described in section 308 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1408))” after “citizen”.

#### SEC. 202. NONOPERATING INDIVIDUAL.

Section 8313(b) of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116–283) is amended by striking “2025” and inserting “2027”.

#### SEC. 203. MERCHANT MARINER LICENSING AND DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 75 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### “§ 7512. Requirements of electronic merchant mariner credentialing system

“(a) DEFINITION OF MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIAL.—In this section, the term ‘merchant mariner credential’ means a merchant mariner license, certificate, or document that the Secretary is authorized to issue pursuant to this title.

“(b) NECESSARY CONSIDERATIONS.—In implementing any electronic merchant mariner credentialing system for purposes of this chapter, the Secretary shall consider how to allow, to the maximum extent practicable—

“(1) the electronic submission of the components of merchant mariner credential applications (such as sea service documentation, professional qualifications, course completion certificates, safety and suitability documents, and medical records) and course approval requests;

“(2) the direct electronic and secure submission of—

“(A) sea service verification documentation from employers;

“(B) course completion certificates from training providers; and

“(C) necessary documentation from other stakeholders; and

“(3) the electronic processing and evaluation of information for the issuance of merchant mariner credentials and course approvals, including the capability for the Secretary to complete remote evaluation of information submitted through the system.

“(c) ACCESS TO DATA.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Maritime Administration and other Federal agencies, as authorized by the Secretary, have access to anonymized and aggregated data from the electronic system described in subsection (b) and that such data include, at a minimum—

“(1) the total amount of sea service for individuals with a valid merchant mariner credential;

“(2) the number of mariners with valid merchant mariner credentials for each rating, including the capability to filter data based on credential endorsements;

“(3) demographic information including age, gender, and region or address;

“(4) the estimated times for the Coast Guard to process merchant mariner credential applications, mariner medical certificates, and course approvals;

“(5) the number of providers approved to provide training for purposes of this part and, for each such training provider, the number of classes taken by individuals with, or applying for, a merchant mariner credential; and

“(6) if applicable, the branch of the uniformed services (as defined in section 101(a) of title 10) and duty status of applicants for a merchant mariner credential.

“(d) PRIVACY REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall collect the information required under subsection (b) in a manner that protects the privacy rights of individuals who are the subjects of such information.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 75 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“7512. Requirements of electronic merchant mariner credentialing system.”

#### Subtitle B—Vessel Safety

#### SEC. 211. GROSSLY NEGLIGENT OPERATIONS OF A VESSEL.

Section 2302(b) of title 46, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(b) GROSSLY NEGLIGENT OPERATION.—

“(1) MISDEMEANOR.—A person operating a vessel in a grossly negligent manner that endangers the life, limb, or property of a person commits a class A misdemeanor.

“(2) FELONY.—A person operating a vessel in a grossly negligent manner that results in serious bodily injury, as defined in section 1365(h)(3) of title 18—

“(A) commits a class E felony; and

“(B) may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$35,000.”

#### SEC. 212. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE FOR SECURITY RISKS.

(a) SECURITY RISK.—Section 7702(d)(1) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B) by redesignating clauses (i) through (iv) as subclauses (I) through (IV), respectively (and by conforming the margins accordingly);

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively (and by conforming the margins accordingly);

(3) by striking “an individual if—” and inserting the following: “an individual—

“(A) if—”;

(4) in subparagraph (A)(ii)(IV), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) if there is probable cause to believe that the individual has violated company policy and is a security risk that poses a threat to other individuals on the vessel.”

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 2101(47)(B) of title 46, United States Code (as so redesignated), is amended by striking “; and” and inserting “; or”.

#### SEC. 213. STUDY OF AMPHIBIOUS VESSELS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall conduct a study to determine the applicability of current safety regulations that apply to commercial amphibious vessels.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An overview and analysis that identifies safety regulations that apply to commercial amphibious vessels;

(2) An evaluation of whether safety gaps and risks exist associated with the application of regulations identified in subsection (b)(1) to the operation of commercial amphibious vessels;

(3) An evaluation of whether aspects of the regulations established in section 11502 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (46 U.S.C. 3306 note) should apply to amphibious commercial vessels; and

(4) Recommendations on whether potential regulations that should apply to commercial amphibious vessels.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the

House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report containing the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the study required under subsection (a).

(d) **DEFINITION OF AMPHIBIOUS VESSEL.**—In this section, the term “amphibious vessel” means a vessel which is operating as a small passenger vessel in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, as defined in section 2.38 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation) and is operating as a motor vehicle as defined in section 216 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7550) that is not a DUKW amphibious passenger vessel as defined in section 11502 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (46 U.S.C. 3306 note).

#### **SEC. 214. PERFORMANCE DRIVEN EXAMINATION SCHEDULE.**

(a) **AMENDMENTS.**—Section 3714 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (c), the Secretary”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) **PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN EXAMINATION SCHEDULE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—With respect to examinations of foreign vessels to which this chapter applies, and subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary may adopt a performance-driven examination schedule to which such vessels are to be examined and the frequency with which such examinations occur, including the frequency of examinations for each vessel. Such schedule shall be consistent with the Secretary’s assessment of the safety performance of such vessels, including each vessel participating in the performance-driven examination schedule, in accordance with paragraph (2).

“(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In developing an examination schedule under paragraph (1) and subject to paragraph (3), with respect to each vessel in determining eligibility to participate in the performance based examination schedule—

“(A) the Secretary shall consider—

“(i) certificate of compliance and examination history, to include those conducted by foreign countries;

“(ii) history of violations, vessel detentions, incidents, and casualties;

“(iii) history of notices of violation issued by the Coast Guard;

“(iv) safety related information provided by the flag state of the vessel;

“(v) owner and operator history;

“(vi) historical classification society data, which may include relevant surveys;

“(vii) cargo-specific documentation;

“(viii) data from port state control safety exams; and

“(ix) relevant repair and maintenance history; and

“(B) the Secretary may consider—

“(i) data from relevant vessel quality assurance and risk assessment programs including Quality Shipping for the 21st Century (QUALSHIP 21);

“(ii) data from industry inspection regimes;

“(iii) data from vessel self assessments submitted to the International Maritime Organization or other maritime organizations; and

“(iv) other safety relevant data or information as determined by the Secretary.

“(3) **ELIGIBILITY.**—In developing an examination schedule under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall not consider a vessel eligible to take part in a performance-driven exam-

ination schedule under paragraph (1) if, within the last 36 months, the vessel has—

“(A) been detained by the Coast Guard;

“(B) a record of a violation issued by the Coast Guard against the owners or operators with a finding of proved; or

“(C) suffered a marine casualty that, as determined by the Secretary, involves the safe operation of the vessel and overall performance of the vessel.

“(4) **RESTRICTIONS.**—The Secretary may not adopt a performance-driven examination schedule under paragraph (1) until the Secretary has—

“(A) conducted the assessment recommended in the Government Accountability Office report submitted under section 8254(a) of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283);

“(B) concluded through such assessment that a performance-driven examination schedule provides not less than the level of safety provided by the annual examinations required under subsection (a)(1); and

“(C) provided the results of such assessment to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.”.

(b) **CAREER INCENTIVE PAY FOR MARINE INSPECTORS.**—Subsection (a) of section 11237 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263) is amended as follows:

“(a) **AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE ASSIGNMENT PAY OR SPECIAL DUTY PAY.**—For the purposes of addressing an identified shortage of marine inspectors, the Secretary may provide assignment pay or special duty pay under section 352 of title 37, United States Code, to a member of the Coast Guard serving in a prevention position that—

“(1) is assigned in support of or is serving as a marine inspector pursuant to section 312 of title 14, United States Code; and

“(2) is assigned to a billet that is difficult to fill due to geographic location, requisite experience or certifications, or lack of sufficient candidates, as determined by the Commandant, in an effort to address inspector workforce gaps.”.

(c) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually for 2 years after the implementation of a performance-driven examination schedule program under section 3714(c) of title 46, United States Code, the Commandant shall brief the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on—

(1) the status of utilizing the performance-driven examination schedule program, including the quantity of examinations conducted and duration between examinations for each individual vessel examined under the performance-driven examination schedule;

(2) an overview of the size of the Coast Guard marine inspector workforce, including any personnel shortages assessed by the Coast Guard, for inspectors that conduct inspections under section 3714 of such title; and

(3) recommendations for the inspection, governance, or oversight of vessels inspected under section 3714 of such title.

#### **SEC. 215. PORTS AND WATERWAYS SAFETY.**

(a) **WATERFRONT SAFETY.**—Section 70011(a) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by inserting “, including damage or destruction resulting from cyber incidents, transnational organized crime, or foreign state threats” after “adjacent to such waters”; and

(2) in paragraph (2) by inserting “or harm resulting from cyber incidents, transnational organized crime, or foreign state threats” after “loss”.

(b) **REGULATION OF ANCHORAGE AND MOVEMENT OF VESSELS DURING NATIONAL EMERGENCY.**—Section 70051 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by inserting “or cyber incidents, or transnational organized crime, or foreign state threats,” after “threatened war, or invasion, or insurrection, or subversive activity.”.

(c) **FACILITY VISIT BY STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.**—Section 70011(b) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3) by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) prohibiting a representative of a government of country that the Secretary of State has determined has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism under section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371) from visiting a facility for which a facility security plan is required under section 70103(c).”.

#### **SEC. 216. STUDY ON BERING STRAIT VESSEL TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE POSTURE AT PORTS OF THE UNITED STATES.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation, acting through the United States Committee on the Marine Transportation System, and in coordination with the Commandant, shall—

(1) complete an analysis regarding commercial vessel traffic, at the time of the study, that transits through the Bering Strait and projections for the growth of such traffic over the next decade; and

(2) assess the adequacy of emergency response capabilities and infrastructure at the ports of the United States that are in proximity to the vessel traffic that transits the Bering Strait, including the port facilities at Point Spencer, Alaska, Nome, Alaska, and Kotzebue, Alaska, to—

(A) address future navigation safety risks; and

(B) conduct emergency maritime response operations in the Arctic environment.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The study under this section shall include the following:

(1) An analysis of the volume and types of commercial vessel traffic, including—

(A) oil and gas tankers, cargo vessels, barges, fishing vessels, and cruise lines, both domestic and international;

(B) projected growth of such traffic through the Bering Strait;

(C) the seasonality of vessel transits of the Bering Strait; and

(D) a summation of the sizes, ages, and the country of registration or documentation of such vessels transiting the Arctic, including oil and product tankers either documented in transit to or from Russia or China or owned or operated by a Russian or Chinese entity.

(2) An assessment of the state and adequacy of vessel traffic services and oil spill and emergency response capabilities in the vicinity of the Bering Strait and its southern and northern approaches in the Chukchi Sea and the Bering Sea.

(3) A risk assessment of the projected growth in commercial vessel traffic in the Bering Strait and potential of increased frequency in the number of maritime accidents, including spill events, and the potential impacts to the Arctic maritime environment and Native Alaskan village communities in the vicinity of the vessel traffic in Western Alaska, including the Bering Strait.

(4) An evaluation of the extent to which Point Spencer can serve as a port of refuge

and as a staging, logistics, and operations center from which to conduct and support maritime emergency and spill response activities.

(5) Recommendations for practical actions that can be taken by Congress, Federal agencies, the State of Alaska, vessel carriers and operators, the marine salvage and emergency response industry, and other relevant stakeholders to mitigate risks identified in the study carried out under this section.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In the preparation of the study under this section, the United States Committee on the Marine Transportation System shall consult with—

- (1) the Maritime Administration;
- (2) the Coast Guard;
- (3) the Army Corps of Engineers;
- (4) the Department of State;
- (5) the National Transportation Safety Board;
- (6) the Government of Canada, as appropriate;
- (7) the Port Coordination Council for the Port of Point Spencer;
- (8) State and local governments;
- (9) other maritime industry participants, including carriers, shippers, ports, labor, fishing, or other entities; and
- (10) nongovernmental entities with relevant expertise monitoring and characterizing vessel traffic or the environment in the Arctic.

(d) TRIBAL CONSULTATION.—In addition to the entities described in subsection (c), in preparing the study under this section, the Secretary of Transportation shall consult with Indian Tribes, including Alaska Native Corporations, and Alaska Native communities.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after initiating the study under this section, the United States Committee on the Marine Transportation System shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the findings and recommendations of the study.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ARCTIC.—The term “Arctic” has the meaning given such term in section 112 of the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 (15 U.S.C. 4111).

(2) PORT COORDINATION COUNCIL FOR THE PORT OF POINT SPENCER.—The term “Port Coordination Council for the Port of Point Spencer” means the Council established under section 541 of Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–120).

#### SEC. 217. UNDERWATER INSPECTIONS BRIEF.

Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, or a designated individual, shall brief the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the underwater inspection in lieu of drydock program established under section 176.615 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

#### SEC. 218. ST. LUCIE RIVER RAILROAD BRIDGE.

Regarding Docket Number USCG–2022–0222, before adopting a final rule, the Commandant shall conduct an independent boat traffic study at mile 7.4 of the St. Lucie River.

#### SEC. 219. AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH SAFETY ZONES FOR SPECIAL ACTIVITIES IN EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE.

(a) SPECIAL ACTIVITIES IN EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE.—Subchapter I of chapter 700 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### “§ 70008. Special activities in exclusive economic zone

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating may establish safety zones to address special activities in the exclusive economic zone.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) SAFETY ZONE.—The term ‘safety zone’—

“(A) means a water area, shore area, or water and shore area to which, for safety or environmental purposes, access is limited to authorized persons, vehicles, or vessels; and

“(B) may be stationary and described by fixed limits or may be described as a zone around a vessel in motion.

“(2) SPECIAL ACTIVITIES.—The term ‘special activities’ includes—

“(A) space activities, including launch and reentry (as such terms are defined in section 50902 of title 51) carried out by United States citizens; and

“(B) offshore energy development activities, as described in section 8(p)(1)(C) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337(p)(1)(C)), on or near fixed platforms.

“(3) UNITED STATES CITIZEN.—The term ‘United States citizen’ has the meaning given the term ‘eligible owners’ in section 12103.

“(4) FIXED PLATFORM.—The term ‘fixed platform’ means an artificial island, installation, or structure permanently attached to the sea-bed for the purpose of exploration or exploitation of resources or for other economic purposes.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 700 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 70007 the following:

“70008. Special activities in exclusive economic zone.”

(c) REPEAL.—Section 8343 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116–283) is repealed.

(d) RETROACTIVE EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall take effect as if enacted on February 1, 2024.

#### SEC. 220. IMPROVING VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICE MONITORING.

(a) PROXIMITY OF ANCHORAGES TO PIPELINES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION OF RESTRUCTURING PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall implement the November 2021 proposed plan of the Vessel Traffic Service Los Angeles-Long Beach for restructuring the Federal anchorages in San Pedro Bay described on page 54 of the Report of the National Transportation Safety Board titled “Anchor Strike of Underwater Pipeline and Eventual Crude Oil Release” and issued January 2, 2024.

(2) STUDY.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall conduct a study to identify any anchorage grounds other than the San Pedro Bay Federal anchorages in which the distance between the center of an approved anchorage ground and a pipeline is less than 1 mile.

(3) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the results of the study required under paragraph (2).

(B) CONTENTS.—The report under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) a list of the anchorage grounds described under paragraph (2);

(ii) whether it is possible to move each such anchorage ground to provide a minimum distance of 1 mile; and

(iii) a recommendation of whether to move any such anchorage ground and explanation for the recommendation.

(b) PROXIMITY TO PIPELINE ALERTS.—

(1) AUDIBLE AND VISUAL ALARMS.—The Commandant shall consult with the providers of vessel monitoring systems to add to the monitoring systems for vessel traffic services audible and visual alarms that alert the watchstander when an anchored vessel is encroaching on a pipeline.

(2) NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall develop procedures for all vessel traffic services to notify pipeline and utility operators following potential incursions on submerged pipelines within the vessel traffic service area of responsibility.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually for the subsequent 3 years, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the implementation of paragraphs (1) and (2).

#### SEC. 221. DESIGNATING PILOTAGE WATERS FOR THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9302(a)(1)(A) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “in waters” and inserting “in the Straits of Mackinac and in all other waters”.

(b) DEFINITION OF THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC.—Section 9302 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) DEFINITION OF THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC.—In this section, the term ‘Straits of Mackinac’ includes all of the United States navigable waters bounded by longitudes 84 degrees 20 minutes west and 85 degrees 10 minutes west and latitudes 45 degrees 39 minutes north and 45 degrees 54 minutes north, including Gray’s Reef Passage, the South Channel, and Round Island Passage, and approaches thereto.”

#### SEC. 222. RECEIPTS; INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS FOR ICE PATROL SERVICES.

Section 80301(c) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting “and shall remain available until expended for the purpose of the Coast Guard international ice patrol program under this chapter.”

#### SEC. 223. REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN FISHING VESSELS AND FISH TENDER VESSELS.

(a) EXCEPTIONS TO REGULATIONS FOR TOWING VESSELS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, acting through the relevant Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection, may grant temporary waivers from the towing vessel requirements of chapters 33 and 89 of title 46, United States Code, including the regulations issued under such chapters, for fishing vessels and fish tender vessels.

(2) APPLICATION.—A temporary waiver issued under paragraph (1) shall be issued at the discretion of the relevant Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection, to a fishing vessel or fish tender vessel that—

(A) performs towing operations of net pens, and associated work platforms, to or from aquaculture or hatchery worksites;

(B) is less than 200 gross tons;

(C) does not tow a net pen, or associated work platform, that is carrying cargo or hazardous material, including oil, on board;

(D) is operating shoreward of the Boundary Line in either—



(i) Southeast Alaska; or

(ii) Prince William Sound; and

(E) complies with all applicable laws for its use in the usual purpose for which it is normally and substantially operated, including any applicable inspection requirements under section 3301 of title 46, United States Code, and exemptions under section 3302 of such title.

(3) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(A) REQUEST PROCESS.—The owner or operator of a fishing vessel or fish tender vessel seeking a waiver under paragraph (1) shall submit a request to the relevant Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection.

(B) CONTENTS.—The request submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) a description of the intended towing operations;

(ii) the time periods and frequency of the intended towing operations;

(iii) the location of the intended operations;

(iv) a description of the manning of the fishing vessel or fish tender vessel during the intended operations; and

(v) any additional safety, operational, or other relevant information requested by the relevant Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection.

(4) POLICY.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating may issue policy to facilitate the implementation of this subsection.

(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) BOUNDARY LINE.—The term “Boundary Line” has the meaning given such term in section 103 of title 46, United States Code.

(B) FISHING VESSEL.—The term “fishing vessel” has the meaning given such term in section 2101 of title 46, United States Code.

(C) FISH TENDER VESSEL.—The term “fish tender vessel” has the meaning given such term in section 2101 of title 46, United States Code.

(D) OFFICER IN CHARGE, MARINE INSPECTION.—The term “Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection” has the meaning given such term in section 3305 of title 46, United States Code.

(E) PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND.—The term “Prince William Sound” means all State and Federal waters within Prince William Sound, Alaska, including the approach to Hinchinbrook Entrance out to, and encompassing, Seal Rocks.

(F) SOUTHEAST ALASKA.—The term “Southeast Alaska” means the area along the coast of the State of Alaska from latitude 54°40′00″ N to 60°18′24″ N.

(6) SUNSET.—The authorities under this section shall expire on January 1, 2027.

(b) LOAD LINES.—Section 11325(a) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263; 136 Stat. 4095) is amended by striking “3” and inserting “5”.

#### Subtitle C—Matters Involving Uncrewed Systems

#### SEC. 231. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AUTONOMOUS MARITIME SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 151 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### “§ 15110. Establishment of National Advisory Committee on Autonomous Maritime Systems

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a National Advisory Committee on Autonomous Maritime Systems (in this section referred to as the ‘Committee’).

“(b) FUNCTION.—The Committee shall advise the Secretary on matters relating to the regulation and use of Autonomous Systems within the territorial waters of the United States.

“(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall consist of 15 members appointed by the Secretary in accordance with this section and section 15109.

“(2) EXPERTISE.—Each member of the Committee shall have particular expertise, knowledge, and experience in matters relating to the function of the Committee.

“(3) REPRESENTATION.—Each of the following groups shall be represented by at least 1 member on the Committee:

“(A) Marine safety or security entities.

“(B) Vessel design and construction entities.

“(C) Entities engaged in the production or research of uncrewed vehicles, including drones, autonomous or semi-autonomous vehicles, or any other product or service integral to the provision, maintenance, or management of such products or services.

“(D) Port districts, authorities, or terminal operators.

“(E) Vessel operators.

“(F) National labor unions representing merchant mariners.

“(G) Maritime pilots.

“(H) Commercial space transportation operators.

“(I) Academic institutions.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The analysis for chapter 151 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“15110. Establishment of National Advisory Committee on Autonomous Maritime Systems.”.

(c) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall establish the Committee under section 15110 of title 46, United States Code (as added by this section).

#### SEC. 232. PILOT PROGRAM FOR GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT OF SMALL UNCREWED MARITIME SYSTEMS.

(a) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is 2 years after such date of enactment, small uncrewed maritime systems owned, operated, or chartered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or that are performing specified oceanographic surveys on behalf of and pursuant to a contract or other written agreement with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall not be subject to any vessel inspection, design, operations, navigation, credentialing, or training requirement, law, or regulation, that the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration determines will harm real-time operational extreme weather oceanographic and atmospheric data collection and predictions.

(b) OTHER AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section shall limit the authority of the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, acting through the Commandant, if there is an immediate safety or security concern regarding small uncrewed maritime systems.

#### SEC. 233. COAST GUARD TRAINING COURSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is 3 years after such date of enactment, the Commandant, or such other individual or organization as the Commandant considers appropriate, shall develop a training course on small uncrewed maritime systems and offer such training course at least once each year for Coast Guard personnel working with or regulating small uncrewed maritime systems.

(b) COURSE SUBJECT MATTER.—The training course developed under subsection (a) shall—

(1) provide an overview and introduction to small uncrewed maritime systems, including examples of those used by the Federal Government, in academic settings, and in commercial sectors;

(2) address the benefits and disadvantages of use of small uncrewed maritime systems;

(3) address safe navigation of small uncrewed maritime systems, including measures to ensure collision avoidance;

(4) address the ability of small uncrewed maritime systems to communicate with and alert other vessels in the vicinity;

(5) address the ability of small uncrewed maritime systems to respond to system alarms and failures to ensure control commensurate with the risk posed by the systems;

(6) provide present and future capabilities of small uncrewed maritime systems; and

(7) provide an overview of the role of the International Maritime Organization in the governance of small uncrewed maritime systems.

#### SEC. 234. NOAA MEMBERSHIP ON AUTONOMOUS VESSEL POLICY COUNCIL.

Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, with the concurrence of the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall establish the permanent membership of a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration employee to the Automated and Autonomous Vessel Policy Council of the Coast Guard.

#### SEC. 235. TECHNOLOGY PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 319(b)(1) of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking “2 or more existing Coast Guard small boats deployed at operational units” and inserting “2 or more Coast Guard small boats deployed at operational units and 2 or more existing Coast Guard small boats”.

#### SEC. 236. UNCREWED SYSTEMS CAPABILITIES REPORT AND BRIEFING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that outlines a plan for establishing an uncrewed systems capabilities office within the Coast Guard responsible for the acquisition and development of uncrewed system and counter-uncrewed system technologies and to expand the capabilities of the Coast Guard with respect to such technologies.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A management strategy for the acquisition, development, and deployment of uncrewed system and counter-uncrewed system technologies.

(B) A service-wide coordination strategy to synchronize and integrate efforts across the Coast Guard in order to—

(i) support the primary duties of the Coast Guard pursuant to section 102 of title 14, United States Code; and

(ii) pursue expanded research, development, testing, and evaluation opportunities and funding to expand and accelerate identification and transition of uncrewed system and counter-uncrewed system technologies.

(C) The identification of contracting and acquisition authorities needed to expedite the development and deployment of uncrewed system and counter-uncrewed system technologies.

(D) A detailed list of commercially available uncrewed system and counter-uncrewed

system technologies with capabilities determined to be useful for the Coast Guard.

(E) A cross-agency collaboration plan to engage with the Department of Defense and other relevant agencies to identify common requirements and opportunities to partner in acquiring, contracting, and sustaining uncrewed system and counter-uncrewed system capabilities.

(F) Opportunities to obtain and share uncrewed system data from government and commercial sources to improve maritime domain awareness.

(G) The development of a concept of operations for a data system that supports and integrates uncrewed system and counter-uncrewed system technologies with key enablers, including enterprise communications networks, data storage and management, artificial intelligence and machine learning tools, and information sharing and dissemination capabilities.

(b) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for a period of 3 years, the Commandant, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Executive Director of the Office of Naval Research, the Director of the National Science Foundation, and the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, shall brief the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, on the future operation and governance of small uncrewed maritime systems.

#### SEC. 237. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) COUNTER-UNCREWED SYSTEM.—The term “counter-uncrewed system” means a system or device capable of lawfully and safely disabling, disrupting, or seizing control of an uncrewed system, including a counter-UAS system (as such term is defined in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code).

(2) SMALL UNCREWED MARITIME SYSTEMS.—The term “small uncrewed maritime systems” means unmanned maritime systems (as defined in section 2 of the CENOTE Act of 2018 (33 U.S.C. 4101)), that—

(A) are not greater than 35 feet overall in length;

(B) are operated remotely or autonomously; and

(C) exclusively perform oceanographic surveys or scientific research.

(3) UNCREWED SYSTEM.—The term “uncrewed system” means an uncrewed surface, undersea, or aircraft and associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the uncrewed system) that are required for the operator to operate the system safely and efficiently, including an unmanned aircraft system (as such term is defined in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code).

#### Subtitle D—Other Matters

#### SEC. 241. CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE ONBOARD VESSELS.

Section 70503(a) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “While on board a covered vessel, an” and inserting “An”;

(2) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) manufacture or distribute, possess with intent to manufacture or distribute, or place or cause to be placed with intent to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance on board a covered vessel.”;

(3) in paragraph (2) by inserting “on board a covered vessel” before the semicolon; and

(4) in paragraph (3) by inserting “while on board a covered vessel” after “such individual”.

#### SEC. 242. INFORMATION ON TYPE APPROVAL CERTIFICATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title IX of the Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-282) is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### “SEC. 904. INFORMATION ON TYPE APPROVAL CERTIFICATES.

“Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the Commandant of the Coast Guard shall, upon request by any State, the District of Columbia, any Indian Tribe, or any territory of the United States, provide all data possessed by the Coast Guard for a ballast water management system with a type approval certificate approved by the Coast Guard pursuant to subpart 162.060 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 pertaining to—

“(1) challenge water (as defined in section 162.060-3 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025) quality characteristics;

“(2) post-treatment water quality characteristics;

“(3) challenge water (as defined in section 162.060-3 of title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025) biologic organism concentrations data; and

“(4) post-treatment water biologic organism concentrations data.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-282) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 903 the following:

“Sec. 904. Information on type approval certificates.”.

#### SEC. 243. CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5(a) of the Deepwater Port Act of 1974 (33 U.S.C. 1504(a)) is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting “Notwithstanding section 888(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 468(b)), the Secretary shall have the authority to issue regulations to carry out the purposes and provisions of this Act, in accordance with the provisions of section 553 of title 5, United States Code, without regard to subsection (a) thereof.”.

(b) NEPA COMPLIANCE.—Section 5 of the Deepwater Port Act of 1974 (33 U.S.C. 1504) is amended by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following:

“(f) NEPA COMPLIANCE.—

“(1) DEFINITION OF LEAD AGENCY.—In this subsection, the term ‘lead agency’ has the meaning given the term in section 111 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e).

“(2) LEAD AGENCY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For all applications, the Maritime Administration shall be the Federal lead agency for purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

“(B) EFFECT OF COMPLIANCE.—Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) in accordance with subparagraph (A) shall fulfill the requirement of the Federal lead agency in carrying out the responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) pursuant to this Act.”.

(c) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall transfer the authorities provided to the Coast Guard in part 148 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act), except as provided in paragraph (2), to the Secretary of Transportation.

(2) RETENTION OF AUTHORITY.—The Commandant shall retain responsibility for au-

thorities pertaining to design, construction, equipment, and operation of deepwater ports and navigational safety.

(3) UPDATES TO AUTHORITY.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue such regulations as are necessary to reflect the updates to authorities prescribed by this subsection.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section, or the amendments made by this section, may be construed to limit the authorities of other governmental agencies previously delegated authorities of the Deepwater Port Act of 1974 (33 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) or any other law.

(e) APPLICATIONS.—Nothing in this section, or the amendments made by this section, shall apply to any application submitted before the date of enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 244. ANCHORAGES.

Section 8437 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (d) and (e);

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) PROHIBITION.—The Commandant shall prohibit any vessel anchoring on the reach of the Hudson River described in subsection (a) unless such anchoring is within any anchorage established before January 1, 2021.”.

#### SEC. 245. AMENDMENTS TO PASSENGER VESSEL SECURITY AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.

(a) MAINTENANCE OF SUPPLIES THAT PREVENT SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES.—Section 3507(d)(1) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by inserting “(taking into consideration the length of the voyage and the number of passengers and crewmembers that the vessel can accommodate)” after “a sexual assault”.

(b) CREW ACCESS TO PASSENGER STATE-ROOMS; PROCEDURES AND RESTRICTIONS.—Section 3507 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A) by striking “and” at the end; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

“(C) a system that electronically records the date, time, and identity of each crew member accessing each passenger stateroom; and”; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) ensure that the procedures and restrictions are—

“(A) fully and properly implemented;

“(B) reviewed annually; and

“(C) updated as necessary.”.

#### SEC. 246. CYBER-INCIDENT TRAINING.

Section 7103(c) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(9) The Secretary may conduct no-notice exercises in Captain of the Port Zones (as described in part 3 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations as in effect on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025) involving a facility or vessel required to maintain a security plan under this subsection.”.

#### SEC. 247. EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM TO ESTABLISH A CETACEAN DESK FOR PUGET SOUND REGION.

Section 11304(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Don Young Coast Guard Reauthorization Act of 2022 (division K of Public Law 117-263; 16 U.S.C. 1390 note) is amended by striking “4 years” and inserting “6 years”.

**SEC. 248. SUSPENSION OF ENFORCEMENT OF USE OF DEVICES BROADCASTING ON AIS FOR PURPOSES OF MARKING FISHING GEAR.**

Section 11320 of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-263; 136 Stat. 4092) is amended by striking “during the period” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “until December 31, 2029.”

**SEC. 249. CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES.**

Section 3316(d) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (2)(B)(i) to read as follows:

“(i) the government of the foreign country in which the foreign society is headquartered—

“(I) delegates that authority to the American Bureau of Shipping; or

“(II) does not delegate that authority to any classification society; or”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this subsection authorizes the Secretary to make a delegation under paragraph (2) to a classification society from the People’s Republic of China.”

**SEC. 250. ABANDONED AND DERELICT VESSEL REMOVALS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 47 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the chapter heading by striking “**BARGES**” and inserting “**VESSELS**”; and

(2) by inserting before section 4701 the following:

“SUBCHAPTER I—BARGES”; AND

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“SUBCHAPTER II—NON-BARGE VESSELS  
**“§ 4710. Definitions**

“In this subchapter:

“(1) **ABANDON**.—The term ‘abandon’ means to moor, strand, wreck, sink, or leave a covered vessel unattended for longer than 45 days.

“(2) **COVERED VESSEL**.—The term ‘covered vessel’ means a vessel that is not a barge to which subchapter I applies.

“(3) **INDIAN TRIBE**.—The term ‘Indian Tribe’ has the meaning given such term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

“(4) **NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION**.—The term ‘Native Hawaiian organization’ has the meaning given such term in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517) except the term includes the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

**“§ 4711. Abandonment of vessels prohibited**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—An owner or operator of a covered vessel may not abandon such vessel on the navigable waters of the United States.

“(b) DETERMINATION OF ABANDONMENT.—

“(1) NOTIFICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to a covered vessel that appears to be abandoned, the Commandant of the Coast Guard shall—

“(i) attempt to identify the owner using the vessel registration number, hull identification number, or any other information that can be reasonably inferred or gathered; and

“(ii) notify such owner—

“(I) of the penalty described in subsection (c); and

“(II) that the vessel will be removed at the expense of the owner if the Commandant determines that the vessel is abandoned and the owner does not remove or account for the vessel.

“(B) FORM.—The Commandant shall provide the notice required under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) if the owner can be identified, via certified mail or other appropriate forms determined by the Commandant; or

“(ii) if the owner cannot be identified, via an announcement in a local publication and on a website maintained by the Coast Guard.

“(2) DETERMINATION.—The Commandant shall make a determination not earlier than 45 days after the date on which the Commandant provides the notification required under paragraph (1) of whether a covered vessel described in such paragraph is abandoned.

“(c) PENALTY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant may assess a civil penalty of not more than \$500 against an owner or operator of a covered vessel determined to be abandoned under subsection (b) for a violation of subsection (a).

“(2) LIABILITY IN REM.—The owner or operator of a covered vessel shall also be liable in rem for a penalty imposed under paragraph (1).

“(3) LIMITATION.—The Commandant shall not assess a penalty if the Commandant determines the vessel was abandoned due to major extenuating circumstances of the owner or operator of the vessel, including long term medical incapacitation of the owner or operator.

“(d) VESSELS NOT ABANDONED.—The Commandant may not determine that a covered vessel is abandoned under this section if—

“(1) such vessel is located at a federally approved or State approved mooring area; and

“(2) such vessel is located on private property with the permission of the owner of such property;

“(3) the owner or operator of such vessel provides a notification to the Commandant that—

“(A) indicates the location of the vessel;

“(B) indicates that the vessel is not abandoned; and

“(C) contains documentation proving that the vessel is allowed to be in such location; or

“(4) the Commandant determines that such an abandonment determination would not be in the public interest.

**“§ 4712. Inventory of abandoned vessels**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Commandant, in consultation with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and relevant State agencies, shall establish and maintain a national inventory of covered vessels that are abandoned.

“(b) CONTENTS.—The inventory established and maintained under subsection (a) shall include data on each vessel, including geographic information system data related to the location of each such vessel.

“(c) PUBLICATION.—The Commandant shall make the inventory established under subsection (a) publicly available on a website of the Coast Guard.

“(d) REPORTING OF POTENTIALLY ABANDONED VESSELS.—In carrying out this section, the Commandant shall develop a process by which—

“(1) a State, Indian Tribe, Native Hawaiian organization, or person may report a covered vessel that may be abandoned to the Commandant for potential inclusion in the inventory established under subsection (a);

“(2) the Commandant shall review any such report and add such vessel to the inventory if the Commandant determines that the reported vessel is abandoned pursuant to section 4711.

“(e) CLARIFICATION.—Except in a response action carried out under section 311(j) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1321) or in the case of imminent

threat to life and safety, the Commandant shall not be responsible for removing any covered vessels listed on the inventory established and maintained under subsection (a).”

(b) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, in consultation with the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, and the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, shall issue regulations with respect to the procedures for determining that a vessel is abandoned for the purposes of subchapter II of chapter 47 of title 46, United States Code (as added by this section).

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Chapter 47 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 4701—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “chapter” and inserting “subchapter”; and

(B) in paragraph (2) by striking “chapter” and inserting “subchapter”; and

(2) in section 4703 by striking “chapter” and inserting “subchapter”; and

(3) in section 4704 by striking “chapter” each place it appears and inserting “subchapter”; and

(4) in section 4705 by striking “chapter” and inserting “subchapter”.

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The analysis for chapter 47 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting before the item relating to section 4701 the following:

“SUBCHAPTER I—BARGES”; AND

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“SUBCHAPTER II—NON-BARGE VESSELS

“4710. Definitions.

“4711. Abandonment of vessels prohibited.

“4712. Inventory of abandoned vessels.”

**TITLE III—OIL POLLUTION RESPONSE**

**SEC. 301. SALVAGE AND MARINE FIREFIGHTING RESPONSE CAPABILITY.**

(a) SALVAGE AND MARINE FIREFIGHTING RESPONSE CAPABILITY.—Section 311(j) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1321(j)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(10) SALVAGE AND MARINE FIREFIGHTING RESPONSE CAPABILITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The President, acting through the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating unless otherwise delegated by the President, may require—

“(i) periodic inspection of vessels and salvage equipment, firefighting equipment, and other major marine casualty response equipment on or associated with vessels;

“(ii) periodic verification of capabilities to appropriately, and in a timely manner, respond to a marine casualty, including—

“(I) drills, with or without prior notice;

“(II) review of contracts and relevant third-party agreements;

“(III) testing of equipment;

“(IV) review of training; and

“(V) other evaluations of marine casualty response capabilities, as determined appropriate by the President; and

“(iii) carrying of appropriate response equipment for responding to a marine casualty that employs the best technology economically feasible and that is compatible with the safe operation of the vessel.

“(B) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) MARINE CASUALTY.—The term ‘marine casualty’ means a marine casualty that is required to be reported pursuant to paragraph (3), (4), or (5) of section 6101 of title 46, United States Code.

“(ii) SALVAGE EQUIPMENT.—The term ‘salvage equipment’ means any equipment that is capable of being used to assist a vessel in

potential or actual danger in order to prevent loss of life, damage or destruction of the vessel or its cargo, or release of its contents into the marine environment.”.

(b) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on—

(A) the state of marine firefighting authorities, jurisdiction, and plan review; and

(B) other considerations with respect to fires at waterfront facilities (including vessel fires) and vessel fires on the navigable waters (as such term is defined in section 502 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1362)).

(2) **CONTENTS.**—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall—

(A) examine—

(i) collaboration among Federal and non-Federal entities for purposes of reducing the risks to local communities of fires described in paragraph (1);

(ii) the prevalence and frequency of such fires; and

(iii) the extent to which firefighters and marine firefighters are aware of the dangers of lithium-ion battery fires, including lithium-ion batteries used for vehicles, and how to respond to such fires;

(B) review methods of documenting and sharing best practices throughout the maritime community for responding to vessel fires; and

(C) make recommendations for—

(i) preparing for, responding to, and training for such fires;

(ii) clarifying roles and responsibilities of Federal and non-Federal entities in preparing for, responding to, and training for such fires; and

(iii) other topics for consideration.

**SEC. 302. USE OF MARINE CASUALTY INVESTIGATIONS.**

Section 6308 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) by striking “initiated” and inserting “conducted”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(e) For purposes of this section, an administrative proceeding conducted by the United States includes proceedings under section 7701 and claims adjudicated under section 1013 of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2713).”.

**SEC. 303. TIMING OF REVIEW.**

Section 1017 of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2717) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) **TIMING OF REVIEW.**—Before the date of completion of a removal action, no person may bring an action under this Act, section 311 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1321), or chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code, challenging any decision relating to such removal action that is made by an on-scene coordinator appointed under the National Contingency Plan.”.

**SEC. 304. ONLINE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the National Response Center shall submit to Congress a plan to design, fund, and staff the National Response Center to develop and maintain a web-based application by which the National Response Center may receive notifications of oil discharges or releases of hazardous substances.

(b) **DEVELOPMENT OF APPLICATION.**—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the plan is submitted under subsection (a), the National Response Center shall—

(1) complete development of the application described in such subsection; and

(2) allow notifications described in such subsection that are required under Federal law or regulation to be made online using such application.

(c) **USE OF APPLICATION.**—In carrying out subsection (b), the National Response Center may not require the notification of an oil discharge or release of a hazardous substance to be made using the application developed under such subsection.

**SEC. 305. INVESTMENT OF EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL COURT RECOVERY IN HIGH YIELD INVESTMENTS AND MARINE RESEARCH.**

Section 350 of Public Law 106-113 (43 U.S.C. 1474b note) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (5);

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (2), (3), (4), (6), and (7) as subsections (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g), respectively, and indenting the subsections appropriately;

(3) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law and subject to the provisions of paragraphs (5) and (7)” and inserting the following:

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) **CONSENT DECREE.**—The term ‘Consent Decree’ means the consent decree issued in *United States v. Exxon Corporation*, et al. (No. A91-082 CIV) and *State of Alaska v. Exxon Corporation*, et al. (No. A91-083 CIV).”

“(2) **FUND.**—The term ‘Fund’ means the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Fund established pursuant to title I of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1992 (43 U.S.C. 1474b).”

“(3) **OUTSIDE ACCOUNT.**—The term ‘outside account’ means any account outside the United States Treasury.”

“(4) **TRUSTEE.**—The term ‘Trustee’ means a Federal or State natural resource trustee for the Exxon Valdez oil spill.”

“(b) **DEPOSITS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law and subject to subsection (g)”;

(4) in subsection (b)(1) (as so designated)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by striking “issued in *United States v. Exxon Corporation*, et al. (No. A91-082 CIV) and *State of Alaska v. Exxon Corporation*, et al. (No. A91-083 CIV) (hereafter referred to as the ‘Consent Decree’)”;

(B) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B) and inserting the following:

“(A) the Fund;

“(B) an outside account; or”;

(C) in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (C)—

(i) by striking “the Federal and State natural resource trustees for the Exxon Valdez oil spill (‘trustees’)” and inserting “the Trustees”; and

(ii) by striking “Any funds” and inserting the following:

“(2) **REQUIREMENT FOR DEPOSITS IN OUTSIDE ACCOUNTS.**—Any funds”;

(5) in subsection (c) (as redesignated by paragraph (2)) by striking “(c) Joint” and inserting the following:

“(c) **TRANSFERS.**—Any joint”;

(6) in subsection (d) (as redesignated by paragraph (2)) by striking “(d) The transfer” and inserting the following:

“(d) **NO EFFECT ON JURISDICTION.**—The transfer”;

(7) in subsection (e) (as redesignated by paragraph (2))—

(A) by striking “(E) Nothing herein shall affect” and inserting the following:

“(e) **EFFECT ON OTHER LAW.**—Nothing in this section affects”;

(B) by striking “trustees” and inserting “Trustees”;

(8) in subsection (f) (as redesignated by paragraph (2))—

(A) by striking “(F) The Federal trustees and the State trustees” and inserting the following:

“(f) **GRANTS.**—The Trustees”; and

(B) by striking “this program” and inserting “this section, prioritizing the issuance of grants to facilitate habitat protection and habitat restoration programs”;

(9) in subsection (g) (as redesignated by paragraph (2))—

(A) in the second sentence, by striking “Upon the expiration of the authorities granted in this section all” and inserting the following:

“(2) **RETURN OF FUNDS.**—On expiration of the authority provided in this section, all”;

and

(B) by striking “(g) The authority” and inserting the following:

“(g) **EXPIRATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The authority”.

**TITLE IV—SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT RESPONSE**

**SEC. 401. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF COAST GUARD REFORMS.**

(a) **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the efforts of the Coast Guard to mitigate cases of sexual assault and sexual harassment within the service.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) evaluate—

(i) the efforts of the Commandant to implement the directed actions from enclosure 1 of the memorandum titled “Commandant’s Directed Actions—Accountability and Transparency” dated November 27, 2023;

(ii) whether the Commandant met the reporting requirements under section 5112 of title 14, United States Code; and

(iii) the effectiveness of the actions of the Coast Guard, including efforts outside of the actions described in the memorandum titled “Commandant’s Directed Actions—Accountability and Transparency” dated November 27, 2023, to mitigate instances of sexual assault and sexual harassment and improve the enforcement relating to such instances within the Coast Guard, and how the Coast Guard is overcoming challenges in implementing such actions;

(B) make recommendations to the Commandant for improvements to the efforts of the service to mitigate instances of sexual assault and sexual harassment and improve the enforcement relating to such instances within the Coast Guard; and

(C) make recommendations to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate to mitigate instances of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Coast Guard and improve the enforcement relating to such instances within the Coast Guard, including proposed changes to any legislative authorities.

(b) **REPORT BY COMMANDANT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Comptroller General completes all actions under subsection (a), the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that includes the following:

(1) A plan for Coast Guard implementation, including interim milestones and timeframes, of any recommendation made by the Comptroller General under subsection (a)(2)(B) with which the Commandant concurs.

(2) With respect to any recommendation made under subsection (a)(2)(B) with which the Commandant does not concur, an explanation of the reasons why the Commandant does not concur.

**SEC. 402. COMPREHENSIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON RETENTION AND ACCESS TO EVIDENCE AND RECORDS RELATING TO SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND OTHER MISCONDUCT.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 9 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 955. Comprehensive policy and procedures on retention and access to evidence and records relating to sexual misconduct and other misconduct**

“(a) ISSUANCE OF POLICY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Secretary, in consultation with the Office of the Inspector General of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating and the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, shall issue a comprehensive policy for the Coast Guard on the retention of and access to evidence and records relating to covered misconduct involving members of the Coast Guard.

“(b) OBJECTIVES.—The comprehensive policy required by subsection (a) shall revise existing policies and procedures, including systems of records, as necessary to ensure preservation of such evidence and records for periods sufficient—

“(1) to ensure that members of the Coast Guard who were victims of covered misconduct are able to pursue claims for veterans benefits;

“(2) to support administrative processes, criminal proceedings, and civil litigation conducted by military or civil authorities; and

“(3) for such other purposes relating to the documentation of an incident of covered misconduct in the Coast Guard as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(c) ELEMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In developing the comprehensive policy required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall, at a minimum—

“(A) identify records relating to an incident of covered misconduct that shall be retained;

“(B) with respect to records relating to covered misconduct involving members of the Coast Guard that are not records of the Coast Guard, identify such records known to or in the possession of the Coast Guard, and set forth procedures for Coast Guard coordination with the custodian of such records for proper retention of the records;

“(C) set forth criteria for the collection and retention of records relating to covered misconduct involving members of the Coast Guard;

“(D) identify physical evidence and non-documentary forms of evidence relating to covered misconduct that shall be retained;

“(E) set forth the period for which evidence and records relating to covered misconduct involving members of the Coast Guard, including Coast Guard Form 6095, shall be retained, except that—

“(i) any physical or forensic evidence relating to rape or sexual assault, as described in sections 920(a) and 920(b) of title 10 (articles 120(a) and 120(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), shall be retained not less than 50 years, and for other covered misconduct not less than the statute of limita-

tions of the alleged offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice; and

“(ii) documentary evidence relating to rape or sexual assault, as described in sections 920(a) and 920(b) of title 10 (articles 120(a) and 120(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), shall be retained not less than 50 years;

“(F) consider locations in which such records shall be stored;

“(G) identify media and methods that may be used to preserve and ensure access to such records, including electronic systems of records;

“(H) ensure the protection of privacy of—

“(i) individuals named in records and status of records under section 552 of title 5 (commonly referred to as the ‘Freedom of Information Act’) and section 552a of title 5 (commonly referred to as the ‘Privacy Act’); and

“(ii) individuals named in restricted reporting cases;

“(I) designate the 1 or more positions within the Coast Guard that shall have the responsibility for such record retention by the Coast Guard;

“(J) require education and training for members and civilian employees of the Coast Guard on record retention requirements under this section;

“(K) set forth criteria for access to such records relating to covered misconduct involving members of the Coast Guard, including whether the consent of the victim should be required, by—

“(i) victims of covered misconduct;

“(ii) law enforcement authorities;

“(iii) the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

“(iv) other individuals and entities, including alleged assailants;

“(L) require uniform collection of data on—

“(i) the incidence of covered misconduct in the Coast Guard; and

“(ii) disciplinary actions taken in substantiated cases of covered misconduct in the Coast Guard; and

“(M) set forth standards for communications with, and notifications to, victims, consistent with—

“(i) the requirements of any applicable Department of Defense policy; and

“(ii) to the extent practicable, any applicable policy of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

“(2) RETENTION OF CERTAIN FORMS AND EVIDENCE IN CONNECTION WITH RESTRICTED REPORTS AND UNRESTRICTED REPORTS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT INVOLVING MEMBERS OF THE COAST GUARD.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The comprehensive policy required by subsection (a) shall require all unique or original copies of Coast Guard Form 6095 filed in connection with a restricted or unrestricted report on an alleged incident of rape or sexual assault, as described in sections 920(a) and 920(b) of title 10 (articles 120(a) and 120(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), involving a member of the Coast Guard to be retained for the longer of—

“(i) 50 years commencing on the date of signature of the covered person on Coast Guard Form 6095; or

“(ii) the time provided for the retention of such form in connection with unrestricted and restricted reports on incidents of sexual assault involving members of the Coast Guard under Coast Guard policy.

“(B) PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY.—Any Coast Guard form retained under subparagraph (A) shall be retained in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the member of the Coast Guard concerned in accordance with Coast Guard policy.

“(3) RETENTION OF CASE NOTES IN INVESTIGATIONS OF COVERED MISCONDUCT INVOLVING MEMBERS OF THE COAST GUARD.—

“(A) REQUIRED RETENTION OF ALL INVESTIGATIVE RECORDS.—The comprehensive policy required by subsection (a) shall require, for all criminal investigations relating to an alleged incident of covered misconduct involving a member of the Coast Guard, the retention of all elements of the case file.

“(B) ELEMENTS.—The elements of the case file to be retained under subparagraph (A) shall include, at a minimum—

“(i) the case activity record;

“(ii) the case review record;

“(iii) investigative plans; and

“(iv) all case notes made by any investigating agent.

“(C) RETENTION PERIOD.—All elements of the case file shall be retained for not less than 50 years for cases involving rape or sexual assault, as described in sections 920(a) and 920(b) of title 10 (articles 120(a) and 120(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), and not less than the statute of limitations of the alleged offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for other covered misconduct, and no element of any such case file may be destroyed until the expiration of such period.

“(4) RETURN OF PERSONAL PROPERTY UPON COMPLETION OF RELATED PROCEEDINGS IN UNRESTRICTED REPORTING CASES.—Notwithstanding the records and evidence retention requirements described in paragraphs (1)(E) and (2), personal property retained as evidence in connection with an incident of rape or sexual assault, as described in sections 920(a) and 920(b) of title 10 (articles 120(a) and 120(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), involving a member of the Coast Guard may be returned to the rightful owner of such property after the conclusion of all legal, adverse action, and administrative proceedings related to such incident, as determined by the Commandant.

“(5) RETURN OF PERSONAL PROPERTY IN RESTRICTED REPORTING CASES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prescribe procedures under which a victim who files a restricted report of an incident of sexual assault may request, at any time, the return of any personal property of the victim obtained as part of the sexual assault forensic examination.

“(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The procedures required by subparagraph (A) shall ensure that—

“(i) a request by a victim for the return of personal property described under subparagraph (A) may be made on a confidential basis and without affecting the restricted nature of the restricted report; and

“(ii) at the time of the filing of the restricted report, a Special Victims’ Counsel, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocate—

“(I) informs the victim that the victim may request the return of personal property as described in such subparagraph; and

“(II) advises the victim that such a request for the return of personal property may negatively impact a subsequent case adjudication if the victim later decides to convert the restricted report to an unrestricted report.

“(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except with respect to personal property returned to a victim under this paragraph, nothing in this paragraph may be construed to affect the requirement to retain a sexual assault forensic examination kit for the period specified in paragraph (2).

“(6) VICTIM ACCESS TO RECORDS.—With respect to victim access to records after all final disposition actions and any appeals

have been completed, as applicable, the comprehensive policy required by subsection (a) shall provide that, to the maximum extent practicable, and in such a manner that will not jeopardize an active investigation or an active case—

“(A) a victim of covered misconduct in a case in which either the victim or alleged perpetrator is a covered person shall have access to all records that are directly related to the victim’s case, or related to the victim themselves, in accordance with the policy issued under subsection (a) and subject to required protections under sections 552 and 552a of title 5;

“(B) a victim of covered misconduct who requests access to records under section 552 or 552a of title 5 concerning the victim’s case shall be determined to have a compelling need, and the records request shall be processed under expedited processing procedures, if in the request for such records the victim indicates that the records concerned are related to the covered misconduct case;

“(C) in applying sections 552 and 552a of title 5 to the redaction of information related to a records request by a victim of covered misconduct made under such sections after all final disposition actions and any appeals have been completed—

“(i) any such redaction shall be applied to the minimum extent possible so as to ensure the provision of the maximum amount of unredacted information to the victim that is permissible by law; and

“(ii) any such redaction shall not be applied to—

“(I) receipt by the victim of the victim’s own statement; or

“(II) the victim’s information from an investigation; and

“(D) in the case of such a records request for which the timelines for expedited processing are not met, the Commandant shall provide to the Secretary, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a briefing that explains the reasons for the denial or the delay in processing, as applicable.

“(d) **DEFINITION OF COVERED PERSON.**—In this section, the term ‘covered person’ includes—

“(1) a member of the Coast Guard on active duty;

“(2) a member of the Coast Guard Reserve with respect to crimes investigated by or reported to the Secretary on any date on which such member is in a military status under section 802 of title 10 (article 2 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(3) a former member of the Coast Guard with respect to crimes investigated by or reported to the Secretary; and

“(4) in the case of an investigation of covered misconduct conducted by, or an incident of covered misconduct reported to, the Coast Guard involving a civilian employee of the Coast Guard, any such civilian employee of the Coast Guard.

“(e) **SAVINGS CLAUSE.**—Nothing in this section authorizes or requires, or shall be construed to authorize or require, the discovery, inspection, or production of reports, memoranda, or other internal documents or work product generated by counsel, an attorney for the Government, or their assistants or representatives.”.

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 9 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 956. Requirement to maintain certain records**

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commandant shall maintain all work product related to documenting a disposition decision on an inves-

tigation by the Coast Guard Investigative Service or other law enforcement entity investigating a Coast Guard member accused of an offense against chapter 47 of title 10.

“(b) **RECORD RETENTION PERIOD.**—Work product documents and the case action summary described in subsection (c) shall be maintained for a period of not less than 7 years from the date of the disposition decision.

“(c) **CASE ACTION SUMMARY.**—Upon a final disposition action for cases described in subsection (a), except for offenses of wrongful use or possession of a controlled substance under section 912a of title 10 (article 112a of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), where the member accused is an officer of pay grade O-4 and below or an enlisted member of pay grade E-7 and below, a convening authority shall sign a case action summary that includes the following:

“(1) The disposition actions.

“(2) The name and command of the referral authority.

“(3) Records documenting when a referral authority consulted with a staff judge advocate or special trial counsel, as applicable, before a disposition action was taken, to include the recommendation of the staff judge advocate or special trial counsel.

“(4) A reference section listing the materials reviewed in making a disposition decision.

“(5) The Coast Guard Investigative Service report of investigation.

“(6) The completed Coast Guard Investigative Service report of adjudication included as an enclosure.

“(d) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term ‘work product’ includes—

“(1) a prosecution memorandum;

“(2) emails, notes, and other correspondence related to a disposition decision; and

“(3) the contents described in paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (c).

“(e) **SAVINGS CLAUSE.**—Nothing in this section authorizes or requires, or shall be construed to authorize or require, the discovery, inspection, or production of reports, memoranda, or other internal documents or work product generated by counsel, an attorney for the Government, or their assistants or representatives.”.

(c) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for chapter 9 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Sec. 955. Comprehensive policy and procedures on retention and access to evidence and records relating to sexual misconduct and other misconduct.

“Sec. 956. Requirement to maintain certain records.”.

**SEC. 403. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF A CADET AT THE COAST GUARD ACADEMY WHO IS THE VICTIM OF A SEXUAL ASSAULT OR RELATED OFFENSE.**

Section 1902 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF CADET WHO IS THE VICTIM OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OR RELATED OFFENSE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commandant shall provide for timely consideration of and action on a request submitted by a cadet appointed to the Coast Guard Academy who is the victim of an alleged sexual assault or other offense covered by section 920, 920c, or 930 of title 10 (article 120, 120c, or 130 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice) for transfer to another military service academy or to enroll in a Senior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program affiliated with another institution of higher education.

“(2) **REGULATIONS.**—The Commandant, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense,

shall establish policies to carry out this subsection that—

“(A) provide that the Superintendent shall ensure that any cadet who has been appointed to the Coast Guard Academy is informed of the right to request a transfer pursuant to this subsection, and that any formal request submitted by a cadet who alleges an offense referred to in paragraph (1) is processed as expeditiously as practicable through the chain of command for review and action by the Superintendent;

“(B) direct the Superintendent, in coordination with the Superintendent of the military service academy to which the cadet requests to transfer—

“(i) to take action on a request for transfer under this subsection not later than 72 hours after receiving the formal request from the cadet;

“(ii) to approve such request for transfer unless there are exceptional circumstances that require denial of the request;

“(iii) upon approval of such request for transfer, to take all necessary and appropriate action to effectuate the transfer of the cadet to the military service academy concerned as expeditiously as possible, subject to the considerations described in clause (iv); and

“(iv) in determining the transfer date of the cadet to the military service academy concerned, to take into account—

“(I) the preferences of the cadet, including any preference to delay transfer until the completion of any academic course in which the cadet is enrolled at the time of the request for transfer; and

“(II) the well-being of the cadet; and

“(C) direct the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, in coordination with the Secretary of the military department that sponsors the Senior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program at the institution of higher education to which the cadet requests to transfer—

“(i) to take action on a request for transfer under this subsection not later than 72 hours after receiving the formal request from the cadet;

“(ii) subject to the cadet’s acceptance for admission to the institution of higher education to which the cadet wishes to transfer, to approve such request for transfer unless there are exceptional circumstances that require denial of the request;

“(iii) to take all necessary and appropriate action to effectuate the cadet’s enrollment in the institution of higher education to which the cadet wishes to transfer and to process the cadet for participation in the relevant Senior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program as expeditiously as possible, subject to the considerations described in clause (iv); and

“(iv) in determining the transfer date of the cadet to the institution of higher education to which the cadet wishes to transfer, to take into account—

“(I) the preferences of the cadet, including any preference to delay transfer until the completion of any academic course in which the cadet is enrolled at the time of the request for transfer; and

“(II) the well-being of the cadet.

“(3) **REVIEW.**—If the Superintendent denies a request for transfer under this subsection, the cadet may request review of the denial by the Secretary, who shall take action on such request for review not later than 72 hours after receipt of such request.

“(4) **CONFIDENTIALITY.**—The Secretary shall ensure that all records of any request, determination, transfer, or other action under this subsection remain confidential, consistent with applicable law and regulation.

“(5) **EFFECT OF OTHER LAW.**—A cadet who transfers under this subsection may retain



the cadet's appointment to the Coast Guard Academy or may be appointed to the military service academy to which the cadet transfers without regard to the limitations and requirements set forth in sections 7442, 8454, and 9442 of title 10.

“(6) COMMISSION AS OFFICER IN THE COAST GUARD.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon graduation, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, the United States Air Force Academy, or the United States Naval Academy who transferred to that academy under this subsection is entitled to be accepted for appointment as a permanent commissioned officer in the Regular Coast Guard in the same manner as graduates of the Coast Guard Academy, as set forth in section 2101 of this title.

“(B) COMMISSION AS OFFICER IN OTHER ARMED FORCE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A cadet who transfers under this subsection to the United States Military Academy, the United States Air Force Academy, or the United States Naval Academy and indicates a preference pursuant to clause (ii) may be appointed as a commissioned officer in an armed force associated with the academy from which the cadet graduated.

“(ii) STATEMENT OF PREFERENCE.—A cadet seeking appointment as a commissioned officer in an armed force associated with the academy from which the cadet graduated under clause (i) shall, before graduating from that academy, indicate to the Commandant that the cadet has a preference for appointment to that armed force.

“(iii) CONSIDERATION BY COAST GUARD.—The Commandant shall consider a preference of a cadet indicated pursuant to clause (ii), but may require the cadet to serve as a permanent commissioned officer in the Regular Coast Guard instead of being appointed as a commissioned officer in an armed force associated with the academy from which the cadet graduated.

“(iv) TREATMENT OF SERVICE AGREEMENT.—With respect to a service agreement entered into under section 1925 of this title by a cadet who transfers under this subsection to the United States Military Academy, the United States Air Force Academy, or the United States Naval Academy and is appointed as a commissioned officer in an armed force associated with that academy, the service obligation undertaken under such agreement shall be considered to be satisfied upon the completion of 5 years of active duty service in the service of such armed force.

“(C) SENIOR RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS PROGRAM.—A cadet who transfers under this subsection to a Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program affiliated with another institution of higher education is entitled upon graduation from the Senior Reserve Officers' Training program to commission into the Coast Guard, as set forth in section 3738a of this title.”

#### SEC. 404. DESIGNATION OF OFFICERS WITH PARTICULAR EXPERTISE IN MILITARY JUSTICE OR HEALTHCARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 21 of title 14, United States Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§2132. Designation of officers with particular expertise in military justice or healthcare

“(a) SECRETARY DESIGNATION.—The Secretary may designate a limited number of officers of the Coast Guard as having particular expertise in—

“(1) military justice; or

“(2) healthcare.

“(b) PROMOTION AND GRADE.—An individual designated under this section—

“(1) shall not be included on the active duty promotion list;

“(2) shall be promoted under section 2126; and

“(3) may not be promoted to a grade higher than captain.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 21 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2131 the following:

“2132. Designation of officers with particular expertise in military justice or healthcare.”

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 2102(a) of title 14, United States Code, is amended, in the second sentence by striking “and officers of the permanent commissioned teaching staff of the Coast Guard Academy” and inserting “officers of the permanent commissioned teaching staff of the Coast Guard Academy, and officers designated by the Secretary pursuant this section”.

(2) Subsection (e) of section 2103 of title 14, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(e) SECRETARY TO PRESCRIBE NUMBERS FOR CERTAIN OFFICERS.—The Secretary shall prescribe the number of officers authorized to be serving on active duty in each grade of—

“(1) the permanent commissioned teaching staff of the Coast Guard Academy;

“(2) the officers designated by the Secretary pursuant to this section; and

“(3) the officers of the Reserve serving in connection with organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the reserve components.”

(3) Section 2126 of title 14, United States Code, is amended, in the second sentence, by inserting “and as to officers designated by the Secretary pursuant to this section” after “reserve components”.

(4) Section 3736(a) of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in the first sentence by striking “promotion list and the” and inserting “promotion list, officers designated by the Secretary pursuant to this section, and the officers on the”; and

(B) in the second sentence by striking “promotion list or the” and inserting “promotion list, officers designated by the Secretary pursuant to this section, or the officers on the”.

#### SEC. 405. SAFE-TO-REPORT POLICY FOR COAST GUARD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 19 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“§1909. Safe-to-Report policy for Coast Guard

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Commandant shall, in consultation with the Secretaries of the military departments, establish and maintain a safe-to-report policy described in subsection (b) that applies with respect to all members of the Coast Guard (including members of the reserve and auxiliary components of the Coast Guard), cadets at the Coast Guard Academy, and any other individual undergoing training at an accession point of the Coast Guard.

“(b) SAFE-TO-REPORT POLICY.—The safe-to-report policy described in this subsection is a policy that—

“(1) prescribes the handling of minor collateral misconduct, involving a member of the Coast Guard who is the alleged victim or reporting witness of a sexual assault; and

“(2) applies to all such individuals, regardless of—

“(A) to whom the victim makes the allegation or who receives the victim's report of sexual assault; or

“(B) whether the report, investigation, or prosecution is handled by military or civilian authorities.

“(c) MITIGATING AND AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES.—In issuing the policy under subsection (a), the Commandant shall specify mitigating circumstances that decrease the gravity of minor collateral misconduct or the impact of such misconduct on good order and discipline and aggravating circumstances that increase the gravity of minor collateral misconduct or the impact of such misconduct on good order and discipline for purposes of the safe-to-report policy.

“(d) TRACKING OF COLLATERAL MISCONDUCT INCIDENTS.—In conjunction with the issuance of the policy under subsection (a), the Commandant shall develop and implement a process to anonymously track incidents of minor collateral misconduct that are subject to the safe-to-report policy.

“(e) MINOR COLLATERAL MISCONDUCT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘minor collateral misconduct’ means any minor misconduct that is potentially punishable under chapter 47 of title 10 that—

“(1) is committed close in time to or during a sexual assault and directly related to the incident that formed the basis of the allegation of sexual assault allegation;

“(2) is discovered as a direct result of the report of sexual assault or the ensuing investigation into such sexual assault; and

“(3) does not involve aggravating circumstances (as specified in the policy issued under subsection (a)) that increase the gravity of the minor misconduct or the impact of such misconduct on good order and discipline.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 19 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1908 (as added by this Act) the following:

“1909. Safe-to-Report policy for Coast Guard.”

#### SEC. 406. MODIFICATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS ON COVERED MISCONDUCT IN COAST GUARD.

(a) ASSESSMENT OF POLICY ON COVERED MISCONDUCT.—Section 1902 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended—

(1) in the section heading by striking “Policy on sexual harassment and sexual violence” and inserting “Academy policy and report on covered misconduct”; and

(2) by striking subsections (c) through (e) and inserting the following:

“(c) ASSESSMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall direct the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy to conduct at the Coast Guard Academy during each Academy program year an assessment to determine the effectiveness of the policies of the Academy with respect to covered misconduct involving cadets or other military or civilian personnel of the Academy.

“(2) BIENNIAL SURVEY.—For the assessment at the Academy under paragraph (1) with respect to an Academy program year that begins in an odd-numbered calendar year, the Superintendent shall conduct a survey of cadets and other military and civilian personnel of the Academy—

“(A) to measure the incidence, during such program year—

“(i) of covered misconduct events, on or off the Academy campus, that have been reported to an official of the Academy;

“(ii) of covered misconduct events, on or off the Academy campus, that have not been reported to an official of the Academy; and

“(iii) of retaliation related to a report of a covered misconduct event, on or off the Academy campus; and

“(B) to assess the perceptions of the cadets and other military and civilian personnel of the Academy with respect to—

“(i) the Academy's policies, training, and procedures on covered misconduct involving

cadets and other military and civilian personnel of the Academy;

“(ii) the enforcement of such policies;

“(iii) the incidence of covered misconduct involving cadets and other military and civilian personnel of the Academy; and

“(iv) any other issues relating to covered misconduct involving cadets and other military and civilian personnel of the Academy.

“(d) REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not earlier than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, and each March 1 thereafter through March 1, 2031, the Commandant shall direct the Superintendent to submit to the Commandant a report on incidents of covered misconduct and retaliation for reporting of covered misconduct involving cadets or other military and civilian personnel of the Academy.

“(2) ELEMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(i) Information and data on all incidents of covered misconduct and retaliation described in paragraph (1) reported to the Superintendent or any other official of the Academy during the preceding Academy program year (referred to in this subsection as a ‘reported incident’).

“(ii) The number of reported incidents committed against a cadet or any other military or civilian personnel of the Academy.

“(iii) The number of reported incidents committed by a cadet or any other military or civilian personnel of the Academy.

“(iv) Information on reported incidents, in accordance with the policy prescribed under section 549G(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (10 U.S.C. 1561 note), to the maximum extent practicable.

“(v) The number of reported incidents that were entered into the Catch a Serial Offender system, including the number of such incidents that resulted in the identification of a potential or confirmed match.

“(vi) The number of reported incidents that were substantiated (referred to in this subsection as a ‘substantiated reported incident’).

“(vii) A synopsis of each substantiated reported incident that includes—

“(I) a brief description of the nature of the incident;

“(II) whether the accused cadet or other military or civilian personnel of the Academy had previously been convicted of sexual assault; and

“(III) whether alcohol or other controlled or prohibited substances were involved in the incident, and a description of the involvement.

“(viii) The type of case disposition associated with each substantiated reported incident, such as—

“(I) conviction and sentence by court-martial, including charges and specifications for which convicted;

“(II) acquittal of all charges at court-martial;

“(III) as appropriate, imposition of a non-judicial punishment under section 815 of title 10 (article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(IV) as appropriate, administrative action taken, including a description of each type of such action imposed;

“(V) dismissal of all charges, including a description of each reason for dismissal and the stage at which dismissal occurred; and

“(VI) whether the accused cadet or other military or civilian personnel of the Academy was administratively separated or, in the case of an officer, allowed to resign in lieu of court martial, and the characterization (honorable, general, or other than hon-

orable) of the service of the military member upon separation or resignation.

“(ix) With respect to any incident of covered misconduct involving cadets or other military and civilian personnel of the Academy reported to the Superintendent or any other official of the Academy during the preceding Academy program year that involves a report of retaliation relating to the incident—

“(I) a narrative description of the retaliation claim;

“(II) the nature of the relationship between the complainant and the individual accused of committing the retaliation; and

“(III) the nature of the relationship between the individual accused of committing the covered misconduct and the individual accused of committing the retaliation.

“(x) With respect to any investigation of a reported incident—

“(I) whether the investigation is in open or completed status;

“(II) an identification of the investigating entity;

“(III) whether a referral has been made to outside law enforcement entities;

“(IV) in the case of an investigation that is complete, a description of the results of such an investigation and information with respect to whether the results of the investigation were provided to the complainant; and

“(V) whether the investigation substantiated an offense under chapter 47 of title 10 (the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

“(B) FORMAT.—With respect to the information and data required under subparagraph (A), the Commandant shall report such information and data separately for each type of covered misconduct offense, and shall not aggregate the information and data for multiple types of covered misconduct offenses.

“(3) TRENDS.—Subject to subsection (f), beginning on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, each report required under paragraph (1) shall include an analysis of trends in incidents described in paragraph (1), as applicable, since the date of the enactment of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–213).

“(4) RESPONSE.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include, for the preceding Academy program year, a description of the policies, procedures, processes, initiatives, investigations (including overarching investigations), research, or studies implemented by the Commandant in response to any incident described in paragraph (1) involving a cadet or any other military or civilian personnel of the Academy.

“(5) PLAN.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include a plan for actions to be taken during the year following the Academy program year covered by the report to enhance the prevention of and response to incidents of covered misconduct and retaliation for reporting of covered misconduct involving cadets or other military or civilian personnel of the Academy.

“(6) COVERED MISCONDUCT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE ACTIVITIES.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of the adequacy of covered misconduct prevention and response carried out by the Academy during the preceding Academy program year.

“(7) CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include, for incidents of covered misconduct and retaliation for reporting of covered misconduct involving cadets or other military or civilian personnel of the Academy—

“(A) an analysis of the factors that may have contributed to such incidents;

“(B) an assessment of the role of such factors in contributing to such incidents during such Academy program year; and

“(C) recommendations for mechanisms to eliminate or reduce such contributing factors.

“(8) BIENNIAL SURVEY.—Each report under paragraph (1) for an Academy program year that begins in an odd-numbered calendar year shall include the results of the survey conducted under subsection (c)(2) in such Academy program year.

“(9) FOCUS GROUPS.—For each Academy program year with respect to which the Superintendent is not required to conduct a survey at the Academy under subsection (c)(2), the Commandant shall require focus groups to be conducted at the Academy for the purpose of ascertaining information relating to covered misconduct issues at the Academy.

“(10) SUBMISSION OF REPORT; BRIEFING.—

“(A) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the Commandant receives a report from the Superintendent under paragraph (1), the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, as an enclosure or appendix to the report required by section 5112—

“(i) the report of the Superintendent;

“(ii) the comments of the Commandant with respect to the report; and

“(iii) relevant information gathered during a focus group under subparagraph (A) during the Academy program year covered by the report, as applicable.

“(B) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Commandant submits a report under subparagraph (A), the Commandant shall provide a briefing on the report submitted under subparagraph (A) to—

“(i) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

“(ii) the Secretary of Homeland Security.

“(e) VICTIM CONFIDENTIALITY.—To the extent that information collected or reported under the authority of this section, such information shall be provided in a form that is consistent with applicable privacy protections under Federal law and does not jeopardize the confidentiality of victims.

“(f) CONTINUITY OF DATA AND REPORTING.—In carrying out this section, the Commandant shall ensure the continuity of data collection and reporting such that the ability to analyze trends is not compromised.”.

(b) COVERED MISCONDUCT IN COAST GUARD.—Section 5112 of title 14, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

#### “§ 5112. Covered misconduct in Coast Guard

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than March 1 each year, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on incidents of covered misconduct involving members of the Coast Guard, including recruits and officer candidates, and claims of retaliation related to the reporting of any such incident.

“(b) CONTINUITY OF DATA AND REPORTING.—In carrying out this section, the Commandant shall ensure the continuity of data collection and reporting such that the ability to analyze trends is not compromised.

“(c) CONTENTS.—

“(1) INCIDENTS INVOLVING MEMBERS.—

“(A) INFORMATION AND DATA.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include, for the

preceding calendar year, information and data on—

“(I) incidents of covered misconduct; and  
“(II) incidents of retaliation against a member of the Coast Guard related to the reporting of covered misconduct, disaggregated by type of retaliation claim.

“(ii) INCLUSIONS.—The information and data on the incidents described in clause (i) shall include the following:

“(I) All incidents of covered misconduct and retaliation described in clause (i) reported to the Commandant or any other official of the Coast Guard during the preceding calendar year (referred to in this subsection as a ‘reported incident’).

“(II) The number of reported incidents committed against members of the Coast Guard.

“(III) The number of reported incidents committed by members of the Coast Guard.

“(IV) Information on reported incidents, in accordance with the policy prescribed under section 549G(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (10 U.S.C. 1561 note), to the maximum extent practicable.

“(V) The number of reported incidents that were entered into the Catch a Serial Offender system, including the number of such incidents that resulted in the identification of a potential or confirmed match.

“(VI) The number of reported incidents that were substantiated (referred to in this subsection as a ‘substantiated reported incident’).

“(VII) A synopsis of each substantiated reported incident that includes—

“(aa) a brief description of the nature of the incident;

“(bb) whether the accused member has previously been convicted of sexual assault; and

“(cc) whether alcohol or other controlled or prohibited substances were involved in the incident, and a description of the involvement.

“(VIII) The type of case disposition associated with each substantiated reported incident, such as—

“(aa) conviction and sentence by court-martial, including charges and specifications for which convicted;

“(bb) acquittal of all charges at court-martial;

“(cc) as appropriate, imposition of a non-judicial punishment under section 815 of title 10 (article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(dd) as appropriate, administrative action taken, including a description of each type of such action imposed;

“(ee) dismissal of all charges, including a description of each reason for dismissal and the stage at which dismissal occurred; and

“(ff) whether the accused member was administratively separated or, in the case of an officer, allowed to resign in lieu of court-martial, and the characterization (honorable, general, or other than honorable) of the service of the member upon separation or resignation.

“(IX) With respect to any incident of covered misconduct reported to the Commandant or any other official of the Coast Guard during the preceding calendar year that involves a report of retaliation relating to the incident—

“(aa) a narrative description of the retaliation claim;

“(bb) the nature of the relationship between the complainant and the individual accused of committing the retaliation; and

“(cc) the nature of the relationship between the individual accused of committing the covered misconduct and the individual accused of committing the retaliation.

“(X) The disposition of or action taken by the Coast Guard or any other Federal, State,

local, or Tribal entity with respect to a substantiated reported incident.

“(XI) With respect to any investigation of a reported incident—

“(aa) the status of the investigation or information relating to any referral to outside law enforcement entities;

“(bb) the official or office of the Coast Guard that received the complaint;

“(cc) a description of the results of such an investigation or information with respect to whether the results of the investigation were provided to the complainant; or

“(dd) whether the investigation substantiated an offense under chapter 47 of title 10 (the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

“(iii) FORMAT.—With respect to the information and data required under clause (i), the Commandant shall report such information and data separately for each type of covered misconduct offense, and shall not aggregate the information and data for multiple types of covered misconduct offenses.

“(B) TRENDS.—Subject to subsection (b), beginning on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, each report required by subsection (a) shall include, for the preceding calendar year, an analysis or assessment of trends in the occurrence, as applicable, of incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i), since the date of enactment of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-213).

“(C) RESPONSE.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include, for the preceding calendar year, a description of the policies, procedures, processes, initiatives, investigations (including overarching investigations), research, or studies implemented by the Commandant in response to any incident described in subparagraph (A)(i) involving a member of the Coast Guard.

“(D) PLAN.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include a plan for actions to be taken during the year following the year covered by the report to enhance the prevention of and response to incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i) involving members of the Coast Guard.

“(E) COVERED MISCONDUCT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE ACTIVITIES.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include an assessment of the adequacy of covered misconduct prevention and response activities related to incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i) carried out by the Coast Guard during the preceding calendar year.

“(F) CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include, for incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i)—

“(i) an analysis of the factors that may have contributed to such incidents;

“(ii) an assessment of the role of such factors in contributing to such incidents during such year; and

“(iii) recommendations for mechanisms to eliminate or reduce such contributing factors.

“(2) INCIDENTS INVOLVING RECRUITS AND OFFICER CANDIDATES.—

“(A) INFORMATION AND DATA.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), each report required under subsection (a) shall include, as a separate appendix or enclosure, for the preceding calendar year, information and data on—

“(I) incidents of covered misconduct involving a recruit of the Coast Guard at Training Center Cape May or an officer candidate at the Coast Guard Officer Candidate School; and

“(II) incidents of retaliation against such a recruit or officer candidate related to the reporting of covered misconduct, disaggregated by type of retaliation claim.

“(ii) INCLUSIONS.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—The information and data on the incidents described in clause (i) shall include the following:

“(aa) All incidents of covered misconduct and retaliation described in clause (i) reported to the Commandant or any other official of the Coast Guard during the preceding calendar year (referred to in this subsection as a ‘reported incident’).

“(bb) The number of reported incidents committed against recruits and officer candidates described in clause (i)(I).

“(cc) The number of reported incidents committed by such recruits and officer candidates.

“(dd) Information on reported incidents, in accordance with the policy prescribed under section 549G(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (10 U.S.C. 1561 note), to the maximum extent practicable.

“(ee)(AA) The number of reported incidents that were entered into the Catch a Serial Offender system.

“(BB) Of such reported incidents entered into such system, the number that resulted in the identification of a potential or confirmed match.

“(ff) The number of reported incidents that were substantiated (referred to in this subsection as a ‘substantiated reported incident’).

“(gg) A synopsis of each substantiated reported incident that includes—

“(AA) a brief description of the nature of the incident; and

“(BB) whether alcohol or other controlled or prohibited substances were involved in the incident, and a description of the involvement.

“(hh) The type of case disposition associated with each substantiated reported incident, such as—

“(AA) conviction and sentence by court-martial, including charges and specifications for which convicted;

“(BB) acquittal of all charges at court-martial;

“(CC) as appropriate, imposition of a non-judicial punishment under section 815 of title 10 (article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(DD) as appropriate, administrative action taken, including a description of each type of such action imposed;

“(EE) dismissal of all charges, including a description of each reason for dismissal and the stage at which dismissal occurred; and

“(FF) whether the accused member was administratively separated or, in the case of an officer, allowed to resign in lieu of court-martial, and the characterization (honorable, general, or other than honorable) of the service of the member upon separation or resignation.

“(ii) With respect to any incident of covered misconduct involving recruits or officer candidates reported to the Commandant or any other official of the Coast Guard during the preceding calendar year that involves a report of retaliation relating to the incident—

“(AA) a narrative description of the retaliation claim;

“(BB) the nature of the relationship between the complainant and the individual accused of committing the retaliation; and

“(CC) the nature of the relationship between the individual accused of committing the covered misconduct and the individual accused of committing the retaliation.

“(jj) The disposition of or action taken by the Coast Guard or any other Federal, State, local, or Tribal entity with respect to a substantiated reported incident.

“(kk) With respect to any investigation of a reported incident—

“(AA) the status of the investigation or information relating to any referral to outside law enforcement entities;

“(BB) the official or office of the Coast Guard that received the complaint;

“(CC) a description of the results of such an investigation or information with respect to whether the results of the investigation were provided to the complainant; or

“(DD) whether the investigation substantiated an offense under chapter 47 of title 10 (the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

“(II) **FORMAT.**—With respect to the information and data required under clause (i), the Commandant shall report such information and data separately for each type of covered misconduct offense, and shall not aggregate the information and data for multiple types of covered misconduct offenses.

“(B) **TRENDS.**—Subject to subsection (b), beginning on the date of enactment of Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, each report required by subsection (a) shall include, for the preceding calendar year, an analysis or assessment of trends in the occurrence, as applicable, of incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i), since the date of enactment of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–213).

“(C) **RESPONSE.**—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include, for the preceding calendar year, a description of the policies, procedures, processes, initiatives, investigations (including overarching investigations), research, or studies implemented by the Commandant in response to any incident described in subparagraph (A)(i) involving—

“(i) a recruit of the Coast Guard at Training Center Cape May; or

“(ii) an officer candidate at the Coast Guard Officer Candidate School.

“(D) **PLAN.**—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include a plan for actions to be taken during the year following the year covered by the report to enhance the prevention of and response to incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i) involving a recruit of the Coast Guard at Training Center Cape May or an officer candidate at the Coast Guard Officer Candidate School.

“(E) **COVERED MISCONDUCT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE ACTIVITIES.**—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include an assessment of the adequacy of covered misconduct prevention and response activities related to incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i) of this paragraph carried out by the Coast Guard during the preceding calendar year.

“(F) **CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.**—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include, for incidents described in subparagraph (A)(i)—

“(i) an analysis of the factors that may have contributed to such incidents;

“(ii) an assessment of the role of such factors in contributing to such incidents during such year; and

“(iii) recommendations for mechanisms to eliminate or reduce such contributing factors.

“(3) **IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY REVIEW DIRECTED ACTIONS.**—Each report required under subsection (a) submitted during the 5-year period beginning on March 1, 2025, shall include information on the implementation by the Commandant of the directed actions described in the memorandum of the Coast Guard titled ‘Commandant’s Directed Actions—Accountability and Transparency’, issued on November 27, 2023, including—

“(A) a description of actions taken to address each directed action during the year covered by the report;

“(B) the implementation status of each directed action;

“(C) in the case of any directed action that has not been implemented—

“(i) a detailed action plan for implementation of the recommendation;

“(ii) an estimated timeline for implementation of the recommendation;

“(iii) description of changes the Commandant intends to make to associated Coast Guard policies so as to enable the implementation of the recommendation; and

“(iv) any other information the Commandant considers appropriate;

“(D) a description of the metrics and milestones used to measure completion, accountability, and effectiveness of each directed action;

“(E) a description of any additional actions the Commandant is taking to mitigate instances of covered misconduct within the Coast Guard;

“(F) any legislative change proposal necessary to implement the directed actions; and

“(G) a detailed list of funding necessary to implement the directed actions in a timely and effective manner, including a list of personnel needed for such implementation.

“(d) **VICTIM CONFIDENTIALITY.**—To the extent that information collected under the authority of this section is reported or otherwise made available to the public, such information shall be provided in a form that is consistent with applicable privacy protections under Federal law and does not jeopardize the confidentiality of victims.

“(e) **SUBSTANTIATED DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘substantiated’ has the meaning given the term under section 1631(c) of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (10 U.S.C. 1561 note).”.

(c) **CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **CHAPTER 19.**—The table of sections for chapter 19 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 1902 and inserting the following new item:

“1902. Academy policy and report on covered misconduct.”.

(2) **CHAPTER 51.**—The table of sections for chapter 51 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 5112 and inserting the following new item:

“5112. Covered misconduct in the Coast Guard.”.

#### **SEC. 407. MODIFICATIONS TO THE OFFICER INVOLUNTARY SEPARATION PROCESS.**

(a) **REVIEW OF RECORDS.**—Section 2158 of title 14, United States Code, is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “may at any time convene a board of officers” and inserting “shall prescribe, by regulation, procedures”.

(b) **BOARDS OF INQUIRY.**—Section 2159(c) of such title is amended by striking “send the record of its proceedings to a board of review” and inserting “recommend to the Secretary that the officer not be retained on active duty”.

(c) **REPEAL OF BOARDS OF REVIEW.**—Section 2160 of title 14, United States Code, is repealed.

(d) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) Title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in section 2161 by striking “section 2158, 2159, or 2160” each place it appears and inserting “section 2158 or 2159”;

(B) in section 2163, in the first sentence by striking “board of review under section 2160 of this title” and inserting “board of inquiry under section 2159 of this title”; and

(C) in section 2164(a), in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “or 2160”.

(2) The analysis at the beginning of chapter 21 of title 14, United States Code, is

amended by striking the item relating to section 2160.

#### **SEC. 408. REVIEW OF DISCHARGE CHARACTERIZATION.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter I of chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

##### **“§ 2518. Review of discharge characterization**

“(a) **DOWNGRADE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The decision to conduct a case review under this section shall be at the discretion of the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

“(2) **BOARD OF REVIEW.**—In addition to the requirements of section 1553 of title 10, a board of review for a former member of the Coast Guard established pursuant to such section and under part 51 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025), may upon a motion of the board and subject to review by the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, downgrade an honorable discharge to a general (under honorable conditions) discharge upon a finding that a former member of the Coast Guard, while serving on active duty as a member of the armed forces, committed sexual assault or sexual harassment in violation of section 920, 920b, or 934 of title 10 (article 120, 120b, or 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

“(3) **EVIDENCE.**—Any downgrade under paragraph (2) shall be supported by clear and convincing evidence.

“(4) **LIMITATION.**—The review board under paragraph (2) may not downgrade a discharge of a former member of the Coast Guard if the same action described in paragraph (2) was considered prior to separation from active duty by an administrative board in determining the characterization of discharge as otherwise provided by law and in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating.

“(b) **PROCEDURAL RIGHTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A review by a board established under section 1553 of title 10 and under part 51 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025), shall be based on the records of the Coast Guard, and with respect to a member who also served in another one of the armed forces, the records of the armed forces concerned and such other evidence as may be presented to the board.

“(2) **EVIDENCE BY WITNESS.**—A witness may present evidence to the board in person or by affidavit.

“(3) **APPEARANCE BEFORE BOARD.**—A person who requests a review under this section may appear before the board in person or by counsel or an accredited representative of an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under chapter 59 of title 38.

“(4) **NOTIFICATION.**—A former member of the Coast Guard who is subject to a downgrade in discharge characterization review under subsection (b)(3) shall be notified in writing of such proceedings, afforded the right to obtain copies of records and documents relevant to the proceedings, and the right to appear before the board in person or by counsel or an accredited representative of an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under chapter 59 of title 38.”.

(b) **RULEMAKING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall initiate a rulemaking to implement this section.

(2) **DEADLINE FOR REGULATIONS.**—The regulations issued under paragraph (1) shall take effect not later than 180 days after the date

on which the Commandant promulgates a final rule pursuant to such paragraph.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2517 (as added by this Act) the following:

“2518. Review of discharge characterization.”.

**SEC. 409. CONVICTED SEX OFFENDER AS GROUNDS FOR DENIAL.**

Section 7511(a) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “or”;

(2) in paragraph (2) by striking “State, local, or Tribal law” and inserting “Federal, State, local, or Tribal law”;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) section 920 or 920b of title 10 (article 120 and 120b of the Uniform Code of Military Justice); or”.

**SEC. 410. DEFINITION OF COVERED MISCONDUCT.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 2519. Covered misconduct defined**

“In this title, the term ‘covered misconduct’ means—

“(1) rape and sexual assault, as described in sections 920(a) and 920(b) of title 10 (articles 120(a) and 120(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(2) sexual harassment, as described in Executive Order 14062 dated January 26, 2022, and enumerated under section 934 of title 10 (article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(3) abusive sexual contact and aggravated sexual contact, as described in sections 920(c) and 920(d) of title 10 (articles 120(c) and 120(d) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(4) wrongful broadcast, dissemination, or creation of content as described in sections 917 and 920c of title 10 (articles 117a and 120c of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(5) the child pornography offenses as described in section 934 of title 10 (article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

“(6) rape and sexual assault of a child, other sexual misconduct, and stalking, as described in sections 920b, 920c(a), and 930 of title 10 (articles 120b, 120c, and 130 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice); and

“(7) domestic violence, as described in section 928b of title 10 (article 128b of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2518 the following:

“2519. Covered misconduct defined.”.

**SEC. 411. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE OR MANUAL FOR COURTS MARTIAL RELATING TO COVERED MISCONDUCT.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 51 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 5116. Notification of changes to Uniform Code of Military Justice or Manual for Courts Martial relating to covered misconduct**

“Beginning on March 30, 2026, and annually thereafter, the Commandant shall notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives with respect to each of the following:

“(1) Whether the Uniform Code of Military Justice (chapter 47 of title 10) has been amended—

“(A) to add any sex-related offense as a new article; or

“(B) to remove an article relating to covered misconduct described in any of paragraphs (1) through (7) of section 301.

“(2) Whether the Manual for Courts Martial has been modified—

“(A) to add any sex-related offense as an offense described under an article of the Uniform Code of Military Justice; or

“(B) to remove as an offense described under an article of the Uniform Code of Military Justice covered misconduct described in any of paragraphs (1) through (7) of section 301.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 51 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“5116. Notification of changes to Uniform Code of Military Justice Or Manual for Courts Martial relating to covered misconduct.”.

**SEC. 412. COMPLAINTS OF RETALIATION BY VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND RELATED PERSONS.**

Section 1562a of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “The Secretary of Defense shall” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) COAST GUARD.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall designate the Commandant of the Coast Guard to be responsible for carrying out the requirements of this section with respect to members of the Coast Guard when the Coast Guard is not operating as a service in the Navy.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by inserting “and the Commandant of the Coast Guard” after “Secretary”;

(B) in paragraph (8) by inserting before the period at the end “or with respect to the Coast Guard, the component designated by the Commandant of the Coast Guard”; and

(C) in paragraph (4) by striking “Department of Defense”; and

(3) in subsection (c)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A) by inserting “, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security,” before “or any other inspector general”;

(B) in subparagraph (D) by striking “military” and inserting “armed force”; and

(C) in subparagraph (E) by inserting “or department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy for members of the Coast Guard” after “Department of Defense”.

**SEC. 413. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES ON MILITARY PROTECTIVE ORDERS.**

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall issue updated policies of the Coast Guard relating to military protective orders that are consistent with the law and policies of the Department of Defense.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The policies developed under paragraph (1) shall require—

(A) that any denial of a request for a military protective order shall include a written explanation for the denial, which shall be—

(i) forwarded to the next flag officer in the chain of command of the commanding officer or other approving authority who denied the request; and

(ii) provided to the member who submitted the request; and

(B) the recusal of an approving authority from participating in the granting or deny-

ing of a military protective order, if such authority was, at any time—

(i) the subject of a complaint of any form of assault, harassment, or retaliation filed by the member requesting the military protective order or the member who is the subject of the military protective order; or

(ii) associated with the member requesting the military protective order or the member who is the subject of the military protective order in a manner that presents as an actual or apparent conflict of interest.

(3) NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—The Commandant shall develop a policy to ensure that sexual assault response coordinators, victim advocates, and other appropriate personnel shall inform victims of the process by which the victim may request an expedited transfer, a no-contact order, or a military or civilian protective order.

**SEC. 414. COAST GUARD IMPLEMENTATION OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADDRESSING SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE MILITARY.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall review the report of the Independent Review Commission titled “Hard Truths and the Duty to Change: Recommendations from the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military” referred to in the memorandum of the Department of Defense titled “Memorandum for Senior Pentagon Leadership Commanders of the Combatant Commands Defense Agency and DoD Field Activity Directors”, dated September 22, 2021, (relating to commencing Department of Defense actions and implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Review Commission to address sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military).

(b) STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN.—On completion of the review required under subsection (a), and not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a strategy and action plan that—

(1)(A) identifies any recommendation set forth in the report by the Independent Review Commission described in subsection (a) that addresses a matter that is not within the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard, does not apply to the Coast Guard, or otherwise would not be beneficial to members of the Coast Guard, as determined by the Commandant; and

(B) includes a brief rationale for such determination; and

(2) with respect to each recommendation set forth in such report that is not identified under paragraph (1), includes—

(A)(i) a detailed action plan for implementation of the recommendation;

(ii) a description of changes the Commandant will make to associated Coast Guard policies so as to enable the implementation of the recommendation;

(iii) an estimated timeline for implementation of the recommendation;

(iv) the estimated cost of the implementation;

(v) legislative proposals for such implementation, as appropriate; and

(vi) any other information the Commandant considers appropriate; or

(B) in the case of such a recommendation that the Commandant is unable to implement, an explanation of the reason the recommendation cannot be implemented.

(c) BRIEFING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and every

180 days thereafter through 2028, the Commandant shall provide the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives with a briefing on the status of the implementation of this section and any modification to the strategy and plan submitted under subsection (b).

**SEC. 415. POLICY RELATING TO CARE AND SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF COVERED MISCONDUCT.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall issue Coast Guard policy relating to the care and support of members of the Coast Guard who are alleged victims covered misconduct.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The policy required by subsection (a) shall require, to the maximum extent practicable, that—

(1) a member of the Coast Guard who is an alleged victim of covered misconduct and discloses such covered misconduct to the appropriate individual of the Coast Guard responsible for providing victim care and support—

(A) shall receive care and support from such individual; and

(B) such individual shall not deny or unreasonably delay providing care and support; and

(2) in the case of such an alleged victim to whom care and support cannot be provided by the appropriate individual contacted by the alleged victim based on programmatic eligibility criteria or any other reason that affects the ability of such appropriate individual to provide care and support (such as being stationed at a remote unit or serving on a vessel currently underway) the alleged victim shall receive, with the permission of the alleged victim—

(A) an in-person introduction to appropriate service providers, for which the alleged victim is physically present, which shall occur at the discretion of the alleged victim; and

(B) access to follow-up services from the appropriate 1 or more service providers.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—The policy issued under subsection (a) shall apply to—

(1) all Coast Guard personnel responsible for the care and support of victims of covered misconduct; and

(2) any other Coast Guard personnel the Commandant considers appropriate.

(d) REVISION OF POLICY RELATING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall issue or revise any Coast Guard policy or process relating to domestic abuse so as to define the term “intimate partner” to have the meaning given such term in section 930 of title 10, United States Code.

(e) TRAINING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All Coast Guard personnel responsible for the care and support of members of the Coast Guard who are alleged victims of covered misconduct shall receive training in accordance with professional standards of practice to ensure that such alleged victims receive adequate care that is consistent with the policy issued under subsection (a).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The training required by paragraph (1)—

(A) shall include—

(i) instructions on specific procedures for implementing the policy issued under subsection (a); and

(ii) information on resources and personnel critical for the implementation of such policy; and

(B) to the maximum extent practicable, shall be provided in person.

(f) COVERED MISCONDUCT.—In this section, the term “covered misconduct” shall have

the meaning given such term in section 2519 of title 14, United States Code (as added by this Act).

**SEC. 416. ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL VICTIM CAPABILITIES TO RESPOND TO ALLEGATIONS OF CERTAIN SPECIAL VICTIM OFFENSES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 573 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (10 U.S.C. 1561 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “or the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy” after “Secretary of Defense”; and

(B) by striking “Secretary of each military department” and inserting “Secretary concerned”;

(2) in subsection (b) by striking “or Air Force Office of Special Investigations” and inserting “, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, or Coast Guard Investigative Services”;

(3) in subsection (c) by inserting “or the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy” after “Secretary of Defense”;

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “or the Commandant of the Coast Guard” after “Secretary of a military department”; and

(ii) by inserting “or the Coast Guard” after “within the military department”;

(B) in paragraph (2) by inserting “or the Coast Guard” after “within a military department”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(h) TIME FOR ESTABLISHMENT FOR COAST GUARD.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report containing all the items described in subsections (e) and (f) as applied to the Coast Guard.”

(b) BRIEFING.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives with a briefing on the Commandant’s assessment and implementation, as appropriate, of the recommendations included in the Center for Naval Analyses report titled “Assessing the USCG’s Special Victims’ Counsel Program”, issued in June 2024, including—

(1) the implementation status of each adopted recommendation, as appropriate;

(2) for each adopted recommendation, a description of actions taken to implement such recommendation;

(3) in the case of an adopted recommendation that has not been fully implemented—

(A) a description of actions taken or planned to address such recommendation;

(B) an estimated completion date; and

(C) a description of the milestones necessary to complete the recommendation;

(4) a description of any recommendation that will not be adopted and an explanation of the reason the recommendation will not be adopted;

(5) a description of the metrics and milestones used to ensure completion and effectiveness of each adopted recommendation;

(6) a description of any additional actions the Commandant is taking to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Special Victims’ Counsel program of the Coast Guard;

(7) any legislative change proposal necessary to implement the adopted recommendations; and

(8) an overview of any funding or resource necessary to implement each adopted recommendation in a timely and effective manner, including a list of personnel needed for such implementation.

**SEC. 417. MEMBERS ASSERTING POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.**

Section 2516 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “or has been sexually assaulted during the preceding 2-year period”; and

(ii) by striking “or based on such sexual assault, the influence of” and inserting “the signs and symptoms of either”;

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (4) as paragraphs (3) through (5), respectively;

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL, OR EMOTIONAL DISORDER.—A member of the Coast Guard who has been sexually assaulted during the preceding 5-year period and who alleges, based on such sexual assault, the signs and symptoms of a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder described within the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association—

“(A) is provided the opportunity to request a medical examination to clinically evaluate such signs and symptoms; and

“(B) receives such a medical examination to evaluate a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder described within the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association.”;

(D) in paragraph (3) by striking “paragraph (1)” and inserting “this subsection”; and

(E) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated—

(i) by inserting “or a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder” before “under this subsection”; and

(ii) by inserting “performed by” after “shall be”; and

(iii) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B) and inserting the following:

“(A) a board-certified psychiatrist;

“(B) a licensed doctorate-level psychologist;

“(C) any other appropriate licensed or certified healthcare professional designated by the Commandant; or

“(D) a psychiatry resident or board-eligible psychologist who—

“(i) has completed a 1-year internship or residency; and

“(ii) is under the close supervision of a board-certified psychiatrist or licensed doctorate-level psychologist.”;

(2) in subsection (b) by inserting “or a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder” after “traumatic brain injury”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(e) NOTIFICATION OF RIGHT TO REQUEST MEDICAL EXAMINATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any member of the Coast Guard who receives a notice of involuntary administrative separation shall be advised at the time of such notice of the right of the member to request a medical examination under subsection (a) if any condition described in such subsection applies to the member.

“(2) POLICY.—The Commandant shall—



“(A) develop and issue a clear policy for carrying out the notification required under paragraph (1) with respect to any member of the Coast Guard described in that paragraph who has made an unrestricted report of sexual assault; and

“(B) provide information on such policy to sexual assault response coordinators of the Coast Guard for the purpose of ensuring that such policy is communicated to members of the Coast Guard who may be eligible for a medical examination under this section.”.

**SEC. 418. PARTICIPATION IN CATCH A SERIAL OFFENDER PROGRAM.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy, acting through the Commandant, shall ensure the participation of the Coast Guard in the Catch a Serial Offender program (referred to in this section as the “CATCH program”) of the Department of Defense established in accordance with section 543 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113–291).

(b) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating and the Secretary of Defense shall finalize a memorandum of agreement to facilitate Coast Guard access to and participation in the CATCH program.

**SEC. 419. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT AGAINST SENIOR LEADERS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 2520. Accountability and transparency relating to allegations of misconduct against senior leaders**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Secretary shall establish a policy to improve oversight, investigations, accountability, and public transparency regarding alleged misconduct of senior leaders of the Coast Guard.

“(b) ELEMENTS.—The policy required by subsection (a)—

“(1) shall require that—

“(A) any allegation of alleged misconduct made against a senior leader of the Coast Guard shall be reported to the Office of the Inspector General of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating not later than 72 hours after the allegation is reported to the Coast Guard or the department in which the Coast Guard is operating; and

“(B) the Inspector General of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall notify the head of the Coast Guard office in which the senior leader is serving with respect to the receipt of such allegation, or, in a case where the senior leader is the head of such Coast Guard office, the next in the chain of command, as appropriate, except in a case in which the Inspector General determines that such notification would risk impairing an ongoing investigation, would unnecessarily compromise the anonymity of the individual making the allegation, or would otherwise be inappropriate; and

“(2) to the extent practicable, shall be consistent with Department of Defense directives, including Department of Defense Directive 5505.06.

“(c) FIRST RIGHT TO EXCLUSIVE INVESTIGATION.—The Inspector General of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating—

“(1) shall have the first right to investigate an allegation described in subsection (b)(1)(A); and

“(2) in cases with concurrent jurisdiction involving an allegation described in subsection (b)(1)(A), may investigate such an allegation to the exclusion of any other Coast Guard criminal or administrative investigation if the Inspector General determines that an exclusive investigation is necessary to maintain the integrity of the investigation.

“(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY AND BROAD DISSEMINATION.—The policy established under subsection (a) shall be made available to the public and incorporated into training and curricula across the Coast Guard at all levels to ensure broad understanding of the policy among members and personnel of the Coast Guard.

“(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ALLEGED MISCONDUCT.—The term ‘alleged misconduct’—

“(A) means a credible allegation that, if proven, would constitute a violation of—

“(i) a provision of criminal law, including the Uniform Code of Military Justice (chapter 47 of title 10); or

“(ii) a recognized standard, such as the Department of Defense Joint Ethics Regulation or other Federal regulation, including any other Department of Defense regulation and any Department of Homeland Security regulation; or

“(B) could reasonably be expected to be of significance to the Secretary or the Inspector General of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, particularly in a case in which there is an element of misuse of position or of unauthorized personal benefit to the senior official, a family member, or an associate.

“(2) SENIOR LEADER OF THE COAST GUARD.—The term ‘senior leader of the Coast Guard’ means—

“(A) an active duty, retired, or reserve officer of the Coast Guard in the grade of O–7 or higher;

“(B) an officer of the Coast Guard selected for promotion to the grade of O–7;

“(C) a current or former civilian member of the Senior Executive Service employed by the Coast Guard; or

“(D) any civilian member of the Coast Guard whose position is deemed equivalent to that of a member of the Senior Executive Service, as determined by the Office of the Inspector General of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, in concurrence with the Secretary acting through the Commandant.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2519 (as added by this Act) the following:

“2520. Accountability and transparency relating to allegations of misconduct against senior leaders.”.

**SEC. 420. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**

Section 1561b of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “and the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy” after “Secretary of Defense”; and

(B) by inserting “or the Commandant” after “Secretary of a military department”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by inserting “or the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when not operating as a service in the Navy” after “Secretary of Defense”; and

(B) in paragraph (1) by inserting “departments or the Commandant” after “Secretaries of the military”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(e) REPORTS FOR THE COAST GUARD.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than April 30, 2025, and April 30 every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report containing data on the complaints of sexual harassment alleged pursuant to the process under subsection (a) during the previous 2 calendar years.

“(2) PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—Any data on complaints described in paragraph (1) shall not contain any personally identifiable information.”.

**SEC. 421. REPORT ON POLICY ON WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit to the Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the policy of the Coast Guard on whistleblower protections.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A discussion of the policy of the Coast Guard as of the date of enactment of this Act with respect to—

(A) whistleblower protections;

(B) accountability measures for reprisal against whistleblowers;

(C) the applicable professional standards and potential types of support provided to whistleblowers by members of the Coast Guard personnel, such as the members in the Coast Guard Investigative Service; and

(D) the content and frequency of training provided to members of the Coast Guard on active duty, members of the Coast Guard Reserve, and civilian personnel of the Coast Guard with respect to the applicable professional standards and potential types of support offered to whistleblowers.

(2) A description of the responsibilities of commanders and equivalent civilian supervisors with respect to whistleblower complaints and measures used by the Coast Guard to ensure compliance with such responsibilities, such as—

(A) the mechanisms to ensure that—

(i) any such commander complies with section 1034 of title 10, United States Code, including subsection (a)(1) of that section;

(ii) any such equivalent civilian supervisor complies with section 2302 of title 5, United States Code; and

(iii) any such commander or supervisor protects the constitutional right of whistleblowers to speak with Members of Congress;

(B) actions to be taken against any commander or equivalent civilian supervisor who fails to act on a whistleblower complaint or improperly interferes with a whistleblower after a complaint is filed or during the preparation of a complaint;

(C) the role of Coast Guard attorneys in ensuring that such commanders comply with responsibilities under section 1034 of title 10, United States Code; and

(D) the role of Coast Guard civilian attorneys and administrative law judges in ensuring that such civilian supervisors comply with responsibilities under section 2302 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) A discussion of the availability of Coast Guard staff, including civilian staff, assigned to providing, in accordance with professional standards or practice, behavioral health care to whistleblowers, including—

(A) the number and type of such staff;

(B) a description of the specific care responsibilities of such staff;

(C) an identification of any limitation existing as of the date of enactment of this Act to the provision of such care;

(D) a description of any plan to increase capacity of such staff to provide such care, as applicable; and

(E) a description of any additional resources necessary to provide such care.

(4) An assessment of the manner in which the policies discussed in paragraph (1), the responsibilities of commanders and civilian supervisors described in paragraph (2), and the availability of Coast Guard staff as discussed in paragraph (3) apply specifically to cadets and leadership at the Coast Guard Academy.

(5) Recommendations (including, as appropriate, proposed legislative changes and a plan to publish in the Federal Register not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act a request for information seeking public comment and recommendations) of the Commandant regarding manners in which Coast Guard policies and procedures may be strengthened—

(A) to prevent whistleblower discrimination and harassment;

(B) to better enforce prohibitions on retaliation, including reprisal, restriction, ostracism, and maltreatment, set forth in section 1034 of title 10, United States Code, and section 2302 of title 5, United States Code; and

(C) to hold commanding officers and civilian supervisors accountable for enforcing and complying with prohibitions on any form of retaliation described in such section.

#### **SEC. 422. REVIEW AND MODIFICATION OF COAST GUARD ACADEMY POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy (referred to in this section as the “Superintendent”) shall—

(1) not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, commence a review of the Coast Guard Academy policy on sexual harassment and sexual violence established in accordance with section 1902 of title 14, United States Code, that includes an evaluation as to whether any long-standing Coast Guard Academy tradition, system, process, or internal policy impedes the implementation of necessary evidence-informed best practices followed by other military service academies in prevention, response, and recovery relating to sexual harassment and sexual violence; and

(2) not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(A) complete such review; and

(B) modify such policy in accordance with subsection (b).

(b) MODIFICATIONS TO POLICY.—In modifying the Coast Guard Academy policy on sexual harassment and sexual violence referred to in subsection (a), the Superintendent shall ensure that such policy includes the following:

(1) Each matter required to be specified by section 1902(b) of title 14, United States Code.

(2) Updates to achieve compliance with chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(3) A description of the roles and responsibilities of staff of the Coast Guard Academy Sexual Assault Prevention, Response, and Recovery program, including—

(A) the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator;

(B) the Victim Advocate Program Specialist;

(C) the Volunteer Victim Advocate; and

(D) the Primary Prevention Specialist, as established under subsection (c).

(4) A description of the role of the Coast Guard Investigative Service with respect to sexual harassment and sexual violence pre-

vention, response, and recovery at the Coast Guard Academy.

(5) A description of the role of support staff at the Coast Guard Academy, including chaplains, with respect to sexual harassment and sexual violence prevention, response, and recovery.

(6) Measures to promote awareness of dating violence.

(7) A delineation of the relationship between—

(A) cadet advocacy groups organized for the prevention of, response to, and recovery from sexual harassment and sexual violence, including Cadets Against Sexual Assault; and

(B) the staff of the Coast Guard Academy Sexual Assault Prevention, Response, and Recovery program.

(8) A provision that requires cadets and Coast Guard Academy personnel to participate in not fewer than one in-person training each academic year on the prevention of, responses to, and resources relating to incidents of sexual harassment and sexual violence, to be provided by the staff of the Coast Guard Academy Sexual Assault Prevention, Response, and Recovery program.

(9) The establishment, revision, or expansion, as necessary, of an anti-retaliation Superintendent’s Instruction for cadets who—

(A) report incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence;

(B) participate in cadet advocacy groups that advocate for the prevention of, response to, and recovery from sexual harassment and sexual violence; or

(C) seek assistance from a company officer, company senior enlisted leader, athletic coach, or other Coast Guard Academy staff member with respect to a mental health or other medical emergency.

(10) A provision that explains the purpose of and process for issuance of a no-contact order at the Coast Guard Academy, including a description of the manner in which such an order shall be enforced.

(11) A provision that explains the purpose of and process for issuance of a military protective order at the Coast Guard Academy, including a description of—

(A) the manner in which such an order shall be enforced; and

(B) the associated requirement to notify the National Criminal Information Center of the issuance of such an order.

(c) PRIMARY PREVENTION SPECIALIST.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Superintendent shall hire a Primary Prevention Specialist, to be located and serve at the Coast Guard Academy.

(d) TEMPORARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO RECEIVE MEDICAL SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH AND RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES.—The Superintendent shall ensure that the Academy’s policy regarding a cadet who has made a restricted or unrestricted report of sexual harassment to request a leave of absence from the Coast Guard Academy is consistent with other military service academies.

#### **SEC. 423. COAST GUARD AND COAST GUARD ACADEMY ACCESS TO DEFENSE SEXUAL ASSAULT INCIDENT DATABASE.**

(a) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall enter into a memorandum of understanding to enable the criminal offender case management and analytics database of the Coast Guard to have system interface access with the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (referred to in this section as the “Database”) established by section 563 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (10 U.S.C. 1561 note).

(b) PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after entering into the memorandum of understanding required under subsection (a), the Commandant, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a plan to carry out the terms of such memorandum.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The plan required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Measures to ensure that authorized staff of the Coast Guard have system interface access to the Database, and a description of any barrier to such access.

(B) Measures to ensure that authorized staff of the Coast Guard Academy have system interface access to the Database, and a description of any barrier to such access that is unique to the Coast Guard Academy.

(C) Measures to facilitate formal or informal communication between the Coast Guard and the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office of the Department of Defense, or any other relevant Department of Defense component, to identify or seek a resolution to barriers to Database access.

(D) A description of the steps, measures, and improvements necessary to remove any barrier encountered by staff of the Coast Guard or the Coast Guard Academy in accessing the Database, including any failure of system interface access necessitating manual entry of investigative data.

(E) An assessment of the technical challenges, timeframes, and costs associated with providing authorized staff of the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Academy with system interface access for the Database that is substantially similar to such system interface access possessed by other branches of the Armed Forces.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

#### **SEC. 424. DIRECTOR OF COAST GUARD INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### **“§ 325. Director of Coast Guard Investigative Service**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be a Director of the Coast Guard Investigative Service.

“(b) CHAIN OF COMMAND.—The Director of the Coast Guard Investigative Service shall report directly to and be under the general supervision of the Commandant, acting through the Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for Chapter 3 of title 14, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 324 the following:

“325. Director of Coast Guard Investigative Service.”.

#### **SEC. 425. MODIFICATIONS AND REVISIONS RELATING TO REOPENING RETIRED GRADE DETERMINATIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2501(d)(2) of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B) by inserting “a” before “competent authority”;

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) through (E) as subparagraphs (F) through (H), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

“(C) substantial evidence comes to light that, during the commissioned service of the officer, the officer failed to carry out applicable laws, with an intent to deceive or defraud;

“(D) substantial evidence comes to light after the retirement that the officer committed rape or sexual assault, as described in sections 920(a) and 920(b) of title 10 (articles 120(a) and 120(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice) at any time during the commissioned service of the officer;

“(E) substantial evidence comes to light after the retirement that the commissioned officer knew of and failed to report through proper channels, in accordance with existing law at the time of the alleged incident, any known instances of sexual assault by a member of the Coast Guard under the command of the officer during the officer’s service;”.

(b) **ISSUANCE AND REVISION OF REGULATIONS RELATING TO GOOD CAUSE TO REOPEN RETIRED GRADE DETERMINATIONS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall issue or revise, as applicable, and at the discretion of the Secretary consistent with this section, regulations of the Coast Guard to do the following:

(1) Define what constitutes good cause to reopen a retired grade determination referred to in subparagraph (H) of section 2501(d)(2) of title 14, United States Code, as redesignated by subsection (a), to ensure that the following shall be considered good cause for such a reopening:

(A) Circumstances that constitute a failure to carry out applicable laws regarding a report of sexual assault with an intent to deceive by a commissioned officer, that relate to a response made to a report of sexual assault, during the commissioned service of the officer.

(B) Substantial evidence of sexual assault by the commissioned officer concerned, at any time during the commissioned service of such officer, or such evidence that was not considered by the Coast Guard in a manner consistent with law.

(2) Identify the standard for making, and the evidentiary showing required to support, an adverse determination on the retired grade of a commissioned officer.

(c) **REVISION OF LIMITATIONS ON REOPENING RETIRED GRADE DETERMINATIONS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall revise applicable guidance in section K.10 of chapter 3 of Commandant Instruction 1000.4A to remove any restriction that limits the ability to reopen the retired grade of a commissioned officer based on—

(1) whether new evidence is discovered contemporaneously with or within a short time period after the date of retirement of the officer concerned; and

(2) whether the misconduct concerned was not discoverable through due diligence.

(d) **SAVINGS CLAUSE.**—No provision of this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to permit a review of conduct that was not in violation of law or policy at the time of the alleged conduct.

**SEC. 426. INCLUSION AND COMMAND REVIEW OF INFORMATION ON COVERED MISCONDUCT IN PERSONNEL SERVICE RECORDS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subchapter II, by redesignating section 2521 as section 2531; and

(2) in subchapter I, as amended by this Act, by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 2521. Inclusion and command review of information on covered misconduct in personnel service records**

“(a) **INFORMATION ON REPORTS ON COVERED MISCONDUCT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If a complaint of covered misconduct is made against a member of the

Coast Guard and the member is convicted by court-martial or receives nonjudicial punishment or punitive administrative action for such covered misconduct, a notation to that effect shall be placed in the personnel service record of the member, regardless of the grade of the member.

“(2) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of the inclusion of information in personnel service records under paragraph (1) is to alert supervisors and commanders to any member of their command who has received a court-martial conviction, nonjudicial punishment, or punitive administrative action for covered misconduct in order—

“(A) to reduce the likelihood that repeat offenses will escape the notice of supervisors and commanders; and

“(B) to help inform commissioning or promotability of the member;

“(3) **LIMITATION ON PLACEMENT.**—A notation under paragraph (1) may not be placed in the restricted section of the personnel service record of a member.

“(4) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to prohibit or limit the capacity of a member of the Coast Guard to challenge or appeal the placement of a notation, or location of placement of a notation, in the personnel service record of the member in accordance with procedures otherwise applicable to such challenges or appeals.

“(b) **COMMAND REVIEW OF HISTORY OF COVERED MISCONDUCT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Under policy to be prescribed by the Secretary, the commanding officer of a unit or facility to which a covered member is assigned or transferred shall review the history of covered misconduct as documented in the personnel service record of a covered member in order to become familiar with such history of the covered member.

“(2) **COVERED MEMBER DEFINED.**—In this subsection, the term ‘covered member’ means a member of the Coast Guard who, at the time of assignment or transfer as described in paragraph (1), has a history of 1 or more covered misconduct offenses as documented in the personnel service record of such member or such other records or files as the Commandant shall specify in the policy prescribed under subparagraph (A).

“(c) **REVIEW OF PERSONNEL SERVICE RECORD TO DETERMINE SUITABILITY FOR CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT.**—Under policy to be prescribed by the Secretary, the Commandant shall establish procedures that are consistent with the law, policies, and practices of the Department of Defense in effect on the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 to consider and review the personnel service record of a former member of the Armed Forces to determine the suitability of the individual for civilian employment in the Coast Guard.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The analysis for chapter 25 of title 14, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to section 2521 and inserting the following:

“2531. Advisory Board on Women in the Coast Guard.”; and

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 2520 (as added by this Act) the following:

“2521. Inclusion and command review of information on covered misconduct in personnel service records.”.

**SEC. 427. FLAG OFFICER REVIEW OF, AND CONCURRENCE IN, SEPARATION OF MEMBERS WHO HAVE REPORTED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT.**

(a) **POLICY TO REQUIRE REVIEW OF CERTAIN PROPOSED INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS.**—Not

later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall establish, with respect to any proposed involuntary separation under chapter 59 of title 10, United States Code, a Coast Guard policy to review the circumstances of, and grounds for, such a proposed involuntary separation of any member of the Coast Guard who—

(1) made a restricted or unrestricted report of covered misconduct (as such term is defined in section 2519 of title 14, United States Code);

(2) within 2 years after making such a report, is recommended for involuntary separation from the Coast Guard; and

(3) requests the review on the grounds that the member believes the recommendation for involuntary separation from the Coast Guard was initiated in retaliation for making the report.

(b) **RECUSAL.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The policy established under subsection (a) shall set forth a process for the recusal of commanding officers and the flag officer described in subsection (c)(2) from making initial or subsequent decisions on proposed separations or from reviewing proposed separations.

(2) **CRITERIA.**—The recusal process established under paragraph (1) shall specify criteria for recusal, including mandatory recusal from making a decision on a proposed separation, and from reviewing a proposed separation, if the commanding officer or the flag officer described in subsection (c)(2) was, at any time—

(A) the subject of a complaint of any form of assault, harassment, or retaliation, filed by the member of the Coast Guard described in subsection (a) who is the subject of a proposed involuntary separation or whose proposed separation is under review; or

(B) associated with the individual suspected or accused of perpetrating the incident of covered misconduct reported by such member.

(c) **CONCURRENCE OF FLAG OFFICER REQUIRED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The policy established under subsection (a) shall require the concurrence of the flag officer described in paragraph (2) in order to separate the member of the Coast Guard described in such subsection.

(2) **FLAG OFFICER DESCRIBED.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the flag officer described in this paragraph is—

(i) the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support or the successor Vice Admiral that oversees personnel policy; or

(ii) a designee of the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (or the successor Vice Admiral that oversees personnel policy) who is in a grade not lower than O-7.

(B) **CHAIN OF COMMAND EXCEPTION.**—In the case of a member of the Coast Guard described in subsection (a) who is in the immediate chain of command of the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support or the successor Vice Admiral that oversees personnel policy or the designee of the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support or the successor Vice Admiral that oversees personnel policy, the flag officer described in this paragraph is a flag officer outside the chain of command of such member, as determined by the Commandant consistent with the policy established under subsection (a).

(d) **NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.**—Any member of the Coast Guard who has made a report of covered misconduct and who receives a proposal for involuntary separation shall be notified at the time of such proposal of the right of the member to a review under this section.

**SEC. 428. EXPEDITED TRANSFER IN CASES OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.**

(a) **EXPEDITED TRANSFER POLICY UPDATE.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall update Coast Guard policy as necessary to implement—

(1) an expedited transfer process for covered individuals consistent with—

(A) Department of Defense policy on expedited transfers of victims of sexual assault or domestic violence in place on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) subsection (b); and

(2) a process by which—

(A) a covered individual, the commanding officer of a covered individual, or any other Coast Guard official may initiate a request that a subject be administratively assigned to another unit in accordance with military assignments and authorized absence policy for the duration of the investigation and, if applicable, prosecution of such subject;

(B) the Coast Guard shall ensure that any administrative assignment action in response to a request under subparagraph (A) will be taken not as a punitive measure, but solely for the purpose of maintaining good order and discipline within the unit of the covered individual or the subject; and

(C) protection of due process for the subject is preserved.

(b) **RECUSAL.**—The expedited transfer process implemented under this section shall require the recusal of any official involved in the approval or denial of an expedited transfer request if the official was, at any time—

(1) the subject of a complaint of any form of assault, harassment, or retaliation, or any other type of complaint, filed by the covered individual; or

(2) associated, beyond workplace interactions, with the subject in a manner that may present an actual or apparent conflict of interest.

(c) **NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.**—With respect to a member of the Coast Guard who makes an unrestricted report of sexual assault or a report of domestic violence, the updated policy required under subsection (a) shall specify the appropriate officials of the Coast Guard who shall provide such member with information regarding expedited transfer authority.

(d) **REPORT.**—

(1) **INITIAL REPORT.**—Not later than March 1 of the year that is not less than 1 year after the date on which the updates required under subsection (a) are completed, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, as an enclosure or appendix to the report required by section 5112 of title 14, United States Code, a report on such updates that includes—

(A) a copy of the updated policies of the Coast Guard relating to expedited transfers;

(B) a summary of such updated policies;

(C) for the preceding year, the number of covered individuals who have requested an expedited transfer, disaggregated by gender of the requester and whether the request was granted or denied;

(D) for each denial of an expedited transfer request during the preceding year, a description of the rationale for the denial; and

(E) any other matter the Commandant considers appropriate.

(2) **SUBSEQUENT REPORTS.**—Not later than 1 year after the Commandant submits the report required under paragraph (1), and annually thereafter for 3 years, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transpor-

tation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, as an enclosure or appendix to the report required by section 5112 of title 14, United States Code, a report on the updates required under subsection (a) that includes—

(A) any policies of the Coast Guard relating to expedited transfers that have been updated since the previous report submitted under this subsection;

(B) a summary of any such updated policies; and

(C) the information described under subparagraphs (C) through (E) of paragraph (1).

(e) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **COVERED INDIVIDUAL.**—The term “covered individual” means—

(A) a member of the Coast Guard who is a victim of sexual assault in a case handled under the Sexual Assault Prevention, Response, and Recovery Program or the Family Advocacy Program;

(B) a member of the Coast Guard who is a victim of domestic violence (as defined by the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating in the policies prescribed under this section) committed by the spouse or intimate partner of the member, regardless of whether the spouse or intimate partner is a member of the Coast Guard; and

(C) a member of the Coast Guard whose dependent is a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence.

(2) **SUBJECT.**—The term “subject” means a member of the Coast Guard who is the subject of an investigation related to alleged incidents of sexual assault or domestic violence and is stationed at the same installation as, or in close proximity to, the covered individual involved.

**SEC. 429. ACCESS TO TEMPORARY SEPARATION PROGRAM FOR VICTIMS OF ALLEGED SEX-RELATED OFFENSES.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall update the Coast Guard policy relating to temporary separation of members of the Coast Guard who are victims of alleged sex-related offenses as required under subsection (b).

(b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—The updated policy required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a provision that allows a member of the Coast Guard to request to participate in the temporary separation program if the member has reported, in an unrestricted format or to the greatest extent practicable, a restricted format, being the victim of an alleged sex-related offense on a date that is during—

(A) the 5-year period preceding the requested date of separation; and

(B) the military service of the member;

(2) a provision that provides eligibility for a member of the Coast Guard to request temporary separation if the member has reported being the victim of an alleged sex-related offense, even if—

(A) the member has had a previous temporary separation including a previous temporary separation as the victim of a previous unrelated alleged sex-related offense; or

(B) the enlistment period of the member is not nearing expiration or the tour or contract of the member is not nearing completion;

(3) an updated standard of review consistent with the application of, and purposes of, this section; and

(4) the establishment of a process—

(A) for eligible members to make requests for temporary separation under this section; and

(B) that allows the Commandant to consider whether to allow a member granted temporary separation under this section to fulfill the enlistment period or tour or con-

tract obligation of the member after the end of the temporary separation period.

(c) **EXCEPTION FROM REPAYMENT OF BONUSES, INCENTIVE PAY, OR SIMILAR BENEFITS AND TERMINATION OF REMAINING PAYMENTS.**—For any temporary separation granted under the updated policy required under subsection (a), the Secretary concerned may conduct a review to determine whether to exercise discretion in accordance with section 373(b)(1) of title 37, United States Code.

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **SECRETARY CONCERNED.**—The term “Secretary concerned” has the meaning given such term in section 101 of title 37, United States Code.

(2) **SEX-RELATED OFFENSE.**—The term “sex-related offense” has the meaning given such term in section 1044e(h) of title 10, United States Code.

**SEC. 430. POLICY AND PROGRAM TO EXPAND PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall develop and issue a comprehensive policy for the Coast Guard to reinvigorate the prevention of misconduct involving members and civilians of the Coast Guard that contains the policy elements described in section 1561 of title 10, United States Code.

(b) **PROGRAMS REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the issuance of the policy required under paragraph (1), the Commandant shall develop and implement for the Coast Guard a program to reinvigorate the prevention of misconduct involving members and civilians of the Coast Guard.

**SEC. 431. CONTINUOUS VETTING OF SECURITY CLEARANCES.**

Section 1564(c) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by inserting “, and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall conduct an investigation or adjudication under subsection (a) of any individual described in paragraph (3),” after “paragraph (2)”; and

(B) in subparagraph (A)(iv) by striking “the Secretary” and inserting “the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Homeland Security, as the case may be.”;

(2) in paragraph (2) by inserting “(other than an individual described in paragraph (3))” after “is an individual”;

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively;

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

“(3) An individual described in this paragraph is an individual who has a security clearance and is—

“(A) a flag officer of the Coast Guard; or

“(B) an employee of the Coast Guard in the Senior Executive Service.”; and

(5) in paragraph (4), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by striking “Secretary” and all that follows through “paragraph (2)” and inserting the following: “Secretary of Defense, in the case of an individual described in paragraph (2), and the Secretary of Homeland Security, in the case of an individual described in paragraph (3), shall ensure that relevant information on the conviction or determination described in paragraph (1) of such an individual”.

**SEC. 432. TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR COVERED MISCONDUCT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE.**

(a) **MODIFICATION OF CURRICULUM.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall revise the curriculum of the Coast Guard with respect to covered misconduct prevention and response training—

(A) to include—

(i) information on procedures and responsibilities with respect to reporting requirements, investigations, survivor health and safety (including expedited transfers, no-contact orders, military and civilian protective orders, and temporary separations), and whistleblower protections;

(ii) information on Department of Veterans Affairs resources available to veterans, active-duty personnel, and reserve personnel;

(iii) information on the right of any member of the Coast Guard to seek legal resources outside the Coast Guard;

(iv) general information regarding the availability of legal resources provided by civilian legal services organizations, presented in an organized and consistent manner that does not endorse any particular legal services organization; and

(v) information on the capability, operations, reporting structure, and requirements with respect to the Chief Prosecutor of the Coast Guard; and

(B) to address the workforce training recommendations set forth in the memorandum of the Coast Guard titled “Commandant’s Directed Actions—Accountability and Transparency”, issued on November 27, 2023.

(2) **COLLABORATION.**—In revising the curriculum under this subsection, the Commandant shall solicit input from individuals outside the Coast Guard who are experts in sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response training.

(b) **COVERED MISCONDUCT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TRAINING AND EDUCATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall ensure that all members and civilian employees of the Coast Guard are provided with annual covered misconduct prevention and response training and education for the purpose of strengthening individual knowledge, skills, and capacity relating to the prevention of and response to covered misconduct.

(2) **SCOPE.**—The training and education referred to in paragraph (1)—

(A) shall be provided as part of—

(i) initial entry and accession training;

(ii) annual refresher training;

(iii) initial and recurring training courses for covered first responders;

(iv) new and prospective commanding officer and executive officer training; and

(v) specialized leadership training; and

(B) shall be tailored for specific leadership levels, positions, pay grades, and roles.

(3) **CONTENT.**—The training and education referred to in paragraph (1) shall include the information described in subsection (a)(1)(A).

(c) **COVERED FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall ensure that—

(A) training for covered first responders includes the covered misconduct prevention and response training described in subsection (b); and

(B) such covered misconduct prevention and response training is provided to covered first responders on a recurring basis.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In addition to the information described in subsection (a)(1)(A), the initial and recurring covered misconduct prevention and response training for covered first responders shall include information on procedures and responsibilities with respect to—

(A) the provision of care to a victim of covered misconduct, in accordance with professional standards or practice, that accounts for trauma experienced by the victim and associated symptoms or events that may exacerbate such trauma; and

(B) the manner in which such a victim may receive such care.

(d) **TRAINING FOR PROSPECTIVE COMMANDING OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall ensure that training for prospective commanders and executive officers at all levels of command includes the covered misconduct prevention and response training described in subsection (b).

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In addition to the information described in subsection (a)(1)(A), the covered misconduct prevention and response training for prospective commanding officers and executive officers shall be—

(A) tailored to the responsibilities and leadership requirements of members of the Coast Guard as they are assigned to command positions; and

(B) revised, as necessary, to include information on—

(i) fostering a command climate—

(I) that does not tolerate covered misconduct;

(II) in which individuals assigned to the command are encouraged to intervene to prevent potential incidents of covered misconduct; and

(III) that encourages victims of covered misconduct to report any incident of covered misconduct;

(ii) the possible variations in the effect of trauma on individuals who have experienced covered misconduct;

(iii) potential differences in the procedures and responsibilities, Department of Veterans Affairs resources, and legal resources described in subsection (a)(1)(A) depending on the operating environment in which an incident of covered misconduct occurred;

(iv) the investigation of alleged incidents of covered misconduct, including training on understanding evidentiary standards;

(v) available disciplinary options, including administrative action and deferral of discipline for collateral misconduct, and examples of disciplinary options in civilian jurisdictions; and

(vi) the capability, operations, reporting structure, and requirements with respect to the Chief Prosecutor of the Coast Guard.

(e) **ENTRY AND ACCESSION TRAININGS.**—

(1) **INITIAL TRAINING.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall provide for the inclusion of an initial covered misconduct prevention and response training module in the training for each new member of the Coast Guard, which shall be provided not later than 14 duty days after the date of accession.

(B) **REQUIREMENT.**—In addition to the information described in subsection (a)(1)(A), the initial training module referred to in subparagraph (A) shall include a comprehensive explanation of Coast Guard—

(i) policy with respect to covered misconduct; and

(ii) procedures for reporting covered misconduct.

(2) **SUBSEQUENT TRAINING.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commandant shall provide for the inclusion of a detailed covered misconduct prevention and response training module in the training for each new member of the Coast Guard, which shall be provided not later than 60 duty days after the date on which the initial training module described in paragraph (1)(A) is provided.

(B) **CONTENT.**—The detailed training module referred to in subparagraph (A) shall include the information described in subsection (a)(1)(A).

(f) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **COVERED FIRST RESPONDER.**—The term “covered first responder” includes sexual assault response coordinators, victim advocates, Coast Guard medical officers, Coast Guard security forces, Coast Guard Inves-

tigative Service agents, judge advocates, special victims’ counsel, chaplains, and related personnel.

(2) **COVERED MISCONDUCT.**—The term “covered misconduct” has the meaning given such term in section 2519 of title 14, United States Code.

## TITLE V—COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORTS

### SEC. 501. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON COAST GUARD RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND INNOVATION PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the state of the research, development, and innovation program of the Coast Guard during the 5-year period ending on such date of enactment.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An evaluation and description of the process for selecting projects to be carried out under the research, development, and innovation program of the Coast Guard.

(2) An analysis of the manner in which funding needs are determined and requested for such program, and for the activities and projects of such program, in alignment with the appropriate fiscal year.

(3) An assessment of the manner in which the Coast Guard determines desired outcomes, and measures the impact, of successful projects on the execution of the operations and mission of the Coast Guard.

(4) An assessment of the manner in which the Coast Guard evaluates impacts and benefits of partnerships between the Coast Guard and the Department of Defense and other entities, and a description of the extent to which and manner in which the Coast Guard is leveraging such benefits and identifying and managing any potential challenge.

(5) An analysis of the manner in which the Commandant is working with partners to accelerate project transition from research, testing, evaluation, and prototype to production.

(6) An assessment of the manner in which the authority to enter into transactions other than contracts and grants pursuant to sections 719 and 1158 of title 14, United States Code, has been exercised by the Commandant, and a description of any training or resources necessary (including additional agreements for officers and training) to more fully exercise such authority.

(7) An evaluation of the role of the Blue Tech Center of Expertise established in section 302 of the Coast Guard Blue Technology Center of Expertise Act (Public Law 115-265).

(8) Recommendations regarding authorization, personnel, infrastructure, and other requirements necessary for the expeditious transition of technologies developed under such program from prototype to production in the field.

(c) **CONSULTATION.**—In developing the report required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General may consult with—

(1) the maritime and aviation industries;

(2) the Secretary of Defense;

(3) the intelligence community; and

(4) any relevant—

(A) federally funded research institutions;

(B) nongovernmental organizations; and

(C) institutions of higher education.

### SEC. 502. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY ON VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICE CENTER EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, AND RETENTION.

(a) **DEFINITION OF VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICE CENTER.**—In this section, the term “vessel

traffic service center” has the meaning given the term in section 70001(m) of title 46, United States Code.

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a study on employment compensation, competitiveness, assignment, and retention of civilian and military personnel assigned to or otherwise employed at vessel traffic service centers in the United States.

(c) **ELEMENTS.**—The study required under subsection (b) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the extent to which the classification, assignment, selection, and pay rates of personnel assigned to or otherwise employed at vessel traffic service centers are commensurate with the required experience, duties, safety functions, and responsibilities of such positions.

(2) An assessment of the appropriate classification, assignment, selection, and pay rate, as well as nonmonetary employment incentives, that would foster a robust and competitive civilian candidate pool for employment opportunities in civilian positions at vessel traffic service centers.

(3) An analysis of the average civilian employment retention rate and average term of employment of civilian personnel, by position, at vessel traffic service centers.

(4) An analysis of existing special payments, as discussed in the report by the Government Accountability Office entitled “Federal Pay: Opportunities Exist to Enhance Strategic Use of Special Payments” (published December 7, 2017; GAO-18-91), that may be available to personnel assigned to or otherwise employed at vessel traffic service centers.

(5) An evaluation of all assignment parameters and civilian hiring authority codes used by the Coast Guard in assigning and hiring personnel assigned to or otherwise employed at vessel traffic service centers.

(6) An analysis of whether opportunities exist to refine, consolidate, or expand Coast Guard civilian hiring authorities for purposes of hiring personnel at the vessel traffic service centers.

(7) An assessment of the ability of the composition, as in effect on the first day of the study, of military and civilian personnel assigned to or otherwise employed at vessel traffic service centers to ensure safety on the waterways and to manage increasing demand for vessel traffic services, taking into account the ranks and grades of such personnel, the respective experience levels and training of such personnel, and the respective duties, safety functions, and responsibilities of such personnel.

(8) An assessment of, and recommendations to improve, the Coast Guard’s efforts to support the career progression of and advancement opportunities for officers and enlisted members of the Coast Guard assigned to vessel traffic service centers.

(d) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after commencing the study required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the study.

**SEC. 503. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF COAST GUARD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE AND RESOURCES FOR PERSONNEL WELLNESS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a review of the quality and availability of behavioral health care and related resources for Coast Guard personnel at the locations described in subsection (b).

(b) **LOCATIONS TO BE REVIEWED.**—In conducting the review under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall—

(1) first review the practices and policies relating to the availability of behavioral health care and related resources at Training Center Cape May; and

(2) review such practices and policies at—  
(A) the Coast Guard Academy, including Officer Candidate School; and

(B) other Coast Guard training locations, as applicable.

(c) **ELEMENTS.**—The review conducted under subsection (a) shall include, for each location described in subsection (b), an assessment, and a description of available trend information (as applicable) for the 10-year period preceding the date of the review, with respect to each of the following:

(1) The nature of Coast Guard resources directed toward behavioral health services at the location.

(2) The manner in which the Coast Guard has managed treatment for recruits, cadets, officer candidates, or other personnel who may be experiencing a behavioral health crisis at the location (including individuals who have transferred to other buildings or facilities within the location).

(3) The extent to which the Coast Guard has identified the resources, such as physical spaces and facilities, necessary to manage behavioral health challenges and crises that Coast Guard personnel may face at the location.

(4) The behavioral health screenings required by the Coast Guard for recruits, cadets, officer candidates, or other personnel at the location, and the manner in which such screenings compare with screenings required by the Department of Defense for military recruits, service academy cadets, officer candidates, or other personnel at military service accession points.

(5) Whether the Coast Guard has assessed the adequacy of behavioral health resources and services for recruits, cadets, officer candidates, and other personnel at the location, and if so, the additional services and resources (such as resilience and life skills coaching), if any, needed to address any potential gaps.

(6) The manner in which the Coast Guard manages care transfers related to behavior health at the location, including command and other management input and privacy policies.

(7) The extent to which the Coast Guard has evaluated contributing factors or reasons for behavioral health crises experienced by newly enlisted personnel, cadets, officer candidates, or other personnel at the location.

(8) The extent to which the Coast Guard has addressed, at the location, provider care staffing standards and credentialing deficiencies identified in the report of the Comptroller General titled “Coast Guard Health Care: Improvements Needed for Determining Staffing Needs and Monitoring Access to Care”, issued on February 4, 2022.

(d) **REPORTS.**—The Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives—

(1) as soon as practicable but not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, a report relating to the results of the review conducted under subsection (a) relating to Training Center Cape May, including any recommendations the Comptroller General considers appropriate; and

(2) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act—

(A) a report on the results of the review conducted under subsection (a) relating to—

(i) the Coast Guard Academy, including Officer Candidate School; and

(ii) other Coast Guard training locations, as applicable; and

(B) any recommendations the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

**SEC. 504. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY ON COAST GUARD EFFORTS TO REDUCE PREVALENCE OF MISSING OR INCOMPLETE MEDICAL RECORDS AND SHARING OF MEDICAL DATA WITH DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND OTHER ENTITIES.**

(a) **STUDY.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a study assessing the efforts of the Commandant—

(1) to reduce the prevalence of missing or incomplete medical records;

(2) to share medical data of members of the Coast Guard with the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(3) to ensure that electronic health records are provided in a format that is user friendly and easy to access.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall review the following:

(1) The steps the Commandant has taken to reduce the prevalence of missing or incomplete medical records of members of the Coast Guard.

(2) How implementation of an electronic health record system has affected the ability of the Commandant to manage health records of members of the Coast Guard, including—

(A) how the Commandant adds records from private medical providers to the electronic health record system;

(B) the progress of the Commandant toward implementing the electronic health record system in shipboard sick bays of the Coast Guard;

(C) how the Coast Guard shares medical records with the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(D) any other matter the Comptroller General considers appropriate with respect to medical record storage, use, and sharing and the associated consequences for member health and well-being.

(3) The ability of members of the Coast Guard, medical professionals of the Coast Guard and of the Department of Defense, personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other personnel to access and search, as appropriate, the electronic health records of individuals, including the ability to search or quickly find information within electronic health records.

(c) **REPORT.**—Upon completion of the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a).

**SEC. 505. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY ON COAST GUARD TRAINING FACILITY INFRASTRUCTURE.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a study on Coast Guard training facility infrastructure, including the specific needs of the Coast Guard training facilities described in subsection (c).

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The study required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) With respect to each Coast Guard training facility described in subsection (c)—

(A) a summary of capital needs, including construction and repair;

(B) a summary of equipment upgrade backlogs;



(C) an assessment of necessary improvements, including improvements to essential training equipment (including swimming pools, operational simulators, and marksmanship training ranges) to enable the Coast Guard to achieve all operational training objectives;

(D) a description of the resources necessary to fully address all training needs;

(E) an assessment of any security deficiency, including with respect to base access, training facility access, and trainee berthing area access;

(F) an identification of any exposed hazard that does not serve a training purpose;

(G) an identification of the presence of hazardous or toxic materials, including—

(i) lead-based paint;

(ii) asbestos or products that contain asbestos;

(iii) black mold;

(iv) radon; and

(v) contaminated drinking water; and

(H) an assessment of the need for, and estimated cost of, remediation of such toxic materials.

(2) An evaluation of the process used by the Coast Guard to identify, monitor, and construct Coast Guard training facilities.

(C) COAST GUARD TRAINING FACILITIES DESCRIBED.—The Coast Guard training facilities described in this subsection are the following:

(1) The Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut.

(2) The Leadership Development Center in New London, Connecticut.

(3) Training Center Cape May, New Jersey.

(4) Training Center Petaluma, California.

(5) Training Center Yorktown, Virginia.

(6) The Maritime Law Enforcement Academy in Charleston, South Carolina.

(7) The Special Missions Training Center at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

(8) The Gulf Regional Fisheries Training Center (GRFTC) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

(9) The North Pacific Regional Fisheries Training Center (NPRFTC) in Kodiak, Alaska.

(10) The Northeast Regional Fisheries Training Center (NRFTC) at Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

(11) The Southeast Regional Fisheries Training Center (SRFTC) in Charleston, South Carolina.

(12) The Pacific Regional Fisheries Training Center (PRFTC) in Alameda, California.

(13) The National Motor Lifeboat School at Cape Disappointment, Washington.

(14) The Aviation Technical Training Center in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

(15) The Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Alabama.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after commencing the study required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the study.

**SEC. 506. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY ON FACILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS OF COAST GUARD STATIONS CONDUCTING BORDER SECURITY OPERATIONS.**

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a study on the facility and infrastructure needs of the Coast Guard stations and units described in paragraph (3).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The study required under paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to each Coast Guard station and unit described in paragraph (3), the following:

(A) An assessment of capital needs, including personnel capacity, construction, and repair.

(B) An assessment of equipment upgrade backlogs.

(C) An identification of any necessary improvement, including any improvement to operational and training equipment necessary to conduct safe and effective maritime border security operations.

(D) An identification of any resource necessary to fully address all operational and training needs.

(E) An identification of any physical security deficiency.

(F) An identification of any exposed hazard.

(G) An identification of the presence of any hazardous or toxic material, including—

(i) lead-based paint;

(ii) asbestos or any product that contains asbestos;

(iii) black mold;

(iv) radon; and

(v) contaminated drinking water.

(H) An assessment of the need for, and estimated cost of, remediation of any toxic material identified under subparagraph (G).

(3) COAST GUARD STATIONS DESCRIBED.—The Coast Guard stations and units described in this paragraph are the following:

(A) Coast Guard Station South Padre Island, Texas.

(B) Coast Guard Station Port Aransas, Texas.

(C) Coast Guard Station Port O'Connor, Texas.

(D) Coast Guard Station Bellingham, Washington.

(E) Coast Guard Station Neah Bay, Washington.

(F) Coast Guard Station Port Angeles, Washington.

(G) Coast Guard Station Ketchikan, Alaska.

(H) Coast Guard Station San Diego, California.

(I) Coast Guard Station Key West, Florida.

(J) Coast Guard Station Marathon, Florida.

(K) Coast Guard Station Islamorada, Florida.

(L) Coast Guard Station Jonesport, Maine.

(M) Coast Guard Station Bayfield, Wisconsin.

(N) Coast Guard Station Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.

(O) Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment Santa Barbara.

(P) Any other Coast Guard station the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after commencing the study required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, and the Commandant a report on the findings of the study, including any recommendation the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(c) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the report required under subsection (b) is submitted to the Commandant, the Commandant shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on—

(1) the actions the Commandant has taken, or has ceased to take, as a result of the findings, including any recommendation, set forth in the report; and

(2) a plan for addressing such findings and any such recommendation.

**SEC. 507. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY ON COAST GUARD BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Department of Defense issues the report on the Fourteenth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a study of Coast Guard involvement in, and efforts to support, the determination of the cost of adequate housing and the calculation of the basic allowance for housing under section 403 of title 37, United States Code.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study required under subsection (a) shall include, to the extent practicable, the following:

(1) An identification of Coast Guard duty locations in which there is a misalignment between the basic allowance for housing rate and the prevailing housing cost for members of the Coast Guard such that the basic allowance for housing is less than 95 percent of the monthly cost of adequate housing for such members in the corresponding military housing area.

(2) An analysis of each of the following:

(A) Anchor points, including—

(i) the methodology for the establishment of anchor points; and

(ii) with respect to housing provided as part of a public-private venture and Government-owned and Government-leased housing, the disparities between established anchor points and housing standards across the armed forces (as such term is defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code).

(B) Existing military housing boundary areas that affect the Coast Guard.

(C) Actions taken by the Commandant to comprehensively monitor basic allowance for housing rates for Coast Guard duty locations.

(D) The frequency of reviews conducted by the Commandant of the site visits used by the Department of Defense to inform military housing area boundaries.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the study required under subsection (a) commences, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, and the Commandant a report on the findings of the study, including any recommendation the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(d) PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the report required by subsection (c) is submitted to the Commandant, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives—

(1) an implementation plan, including timeframes and milestones, addressing any recommendation made by the Comptroller General in such report, as the Commandant considers appropriate; and

(2) with respect to any recommendation set forth in such report that the Commandant declines to implement, a written justification for the decision.

(e) ANCHOR POINT DEFINED.—In this section, the term “anchor point”—

(1) means the minimum housing standard reference benchmark used to establish the basic allowance for housing under section 403 of title 37, United States Code; and

(2) includes housing type and size based on pay grade and dependent status.

**SEC. 508. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON SAFETY AND SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE AT COAST GUARD ACADEMY.**

(a) GAO REPORT.—

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Department of Defense issues the report on the Fourteenth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a study of Coast Guard involvement in, and efforts to support, the determination of the cost of adequate housing and the calculation of the basic allowance for housing under section 403 of title 37, United States Code.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study required under subsection (a) shall include, to the extent practicable, the following:

(1) An identification of Coast Guard duty locations in which there is a misalignment between the basic allowance for housing rate and the prevailing housing cost for members of the Coast Guard such that the basic allowance for housing is less than 95 percent of the monthly cost of adequate housing for such members in the corresponding military housing area.

(2) An analysis of each of the following:

(A) Anchor points, including—

(i) the methodology for the establishment of anchor points; and

(ii) with respect to housing provided as part of a public-private venture and Government-owned and Government-leased housing, the disparities between established anchor points and housing standards across the armed forces (as such term is defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code).

(B) Existing military housing boundary areas that affect the Coast Guard.

(C) Actions taken by the Commandant to comprehensively monitor basic allowance for housing rates for Coast Guard duty locations.

(D) The frequency of reviews conducted by the Commandant of the site visits used by the Department of Defense to inform military housing area boundaries.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the study required under subsection (a) commences, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, and the Commandant a report on the findings of the study, including any recommendation the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(d) PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the report required by subsection (c) is submitted to the Commandant, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives—

(1) an implementation plan, including timeframes and milestones, addressing any recommendation made by the Comptroller General in such report, as the Commandant considers appropriate; and

(2) with respect to any recommendation set forth in such report that the Commandant declines to implement, a written justification for the decision.

(e) ANCHOR POINT DEFINED.—In this section, the term “anchor point”—

(1) means the minimum housing standard reference benchmark used to establish the basic allowance for housing under section 403 of title 37, United States Code; and

(2) includes housing type and size based on pay grade and dependent status.

**SEC. 508. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON SAFETY AND SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE AT COAST GUARD ACADEMY.**

(a) GAO REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the safety and security infrastructure at the Coast Guard Academy.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of each of the following:

(A) Existing security infrastructure for the grounds, buildings, athletic facilities, and any other facility of the Coast Guard Academy, including access points, locks, surveillance, and other security methods, as appropriate.

(B) Coast Guard policies with respect to the management, data storage and access, and operational capacity of the security infrastructure and methods evaluated under subparagraph (A).

(C) Special security needs relating to events at the Coast Guard Academy, such as large athletic events and other widely attended events.

(D) Coast Guard policies and procedures with respect to access to Coast Guard Academy grounds by—

- (i) current or former members of the Coast Guard;
- (ii) current or former civilian employees of the Coast Guard;
- (iii) Coast Guard personnel that reside at the Academy and families of cadets; and
- (iv) members of the public.

(E) Existing processes by which the Commandant, the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, or a designated individual may prohibit or restrict access to Coast Guard Academy grounds by any current or former member or civilian employee of the Coast Guard who—

- (i) has been subject to court-martial under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for sexual misconduct; or
- (ii) has been administratively disciplined for sexual misconduct.

(F) Enforcement processes regarding access to Coast Guard Academy grounds for individuals (including current and former cadets, members, and civilian employees of the Coast Guard) who are or have been subject to a no-contact order relating to—

- (i) a cadet or member of the faculty of the Academy; or
- (ii) any other individual with access to Academy grounds.

(G) Recommendations to improve—

- (i) the security of the Coast Guard Academy; and
- (ii) the safety of—
  - (I) cadets at the Coast Guard Academy; and
  - (II) members of the Coast Guard stationed at, and civilian employees of, the Coast Guard Academy.

(b) ACTIONS BY COMMANDANT.—

(1) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Comptroller General submits the report required under subsection (a), the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

(A) a detailed plan to improve the security of, and the safety of cadets at, the Coast Guard Academy; and

(B) a detailed timeline for implementation of—

- (i) the recommendations made by the Comptroller General in such report; and
- (ii) any other safety improvement the Commandant considers appropriate.

(2) POLICY.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Comptroller General submits the report required under subsection (a), the Commandant, in a manner that maintains good order and discipline, shall update Coast Guard policy relating to access to the Coast Guard Academy grounds to include procedures by which individuals may be prohibited from accessing the Coast Guard Academy—

(A) as the Commandant considers appropriate; and

(B) consistent with the recommendations made by the Comptroller General in such report.

#### SEC. 509. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY ON ATHLETIC COACHING AT COAST GUARD ACADEMY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States, in consultation with the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, shall commence a study on the number of administratively determined billets for teaching and coaching necessary to support Coast Guard Academy recruitment, intercollegiate athletics, health and physical education, and leadership development programs.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of the number of full-time and part-time employees performing coaching functions at the Coast Guard Academy whose positions are funded by a non-appropriated fund instrumentality of the Coast Guard.

(2) An identification of the number of full-time and part-time employees whose positions are funded by a nonappropriated fund instrumentality performing coaching functions at the following:

- (A) The United States Military Academy.
- (B) The United States Naval Academy.
- (C) The United States Air Force Academy.
- (D) The United States Merchant Marine Academy.

(3) An analysis of the roles performed by athletic coaches with respect to officer development at the Coast Guard Academy, including the specific functions of athletic coaches within the health and physical education and leadership development program curriculums.

(4) An identification of any adverse impacts on or deficiencies in cadet training and officer development resulting from an inadequate number of administratively determined billets for teaching and coaching at the Coast Guard Academy.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Comptroller General may consult a federally funded research and development center.

(d) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee of Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the results of the study conducted under this section.

#### SEC. 510. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY AND REPORT ON PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION PROCESS.

(a) STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall commence a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the permanent change of station process of the Coast Guard.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after commencing the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the study.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A description of the permanent change of station policies of the Coast Guard.

(B) A description of Coast Guard spending on permanent change of station moves and associated support costs.

(C) An evaluation of the effectiveness of using contracted movers for permanent change of station moves, including the estimated costs associated with—

- (i) lost or damaged personal property of members of the Coast Guard;
- (ii) delays in scheduling such a move through a contracted mover;
- (iii) delayed delivery of household goods; and
- (iv) other related challenges.

(D) A review of changes to permanent change of station policies implemented during the 10-year period ending on the date of enactment of this Act, and the costs or savings to the Coast Guard directly associated with such changes.

(E) Recommendations to improve the permanent change of station process of the Coast Guard.

(F) Any additional information or related matter arising from the study, as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

#### TITLE VI—AMENDMENTS

##### SEC. 601. AMENDMENTS.

(a) PROHIBITION ON ENTRY AND OPERATION.—Section 70022(b)(1) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “Federal Register” and inserting “the Federal Register”.

(b) PORT, HARBOR, AND COASTAL FACILITY SECURITY.—Section 70116(b) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) in paragraph (1) by striking “terrorism cyber” and inserting “terrorism, cyber”; and
- (2) in paragraph (2) by inserting a comma after “acts of terrorism”.

(c) ENFORCEMENT BY STATE AND LOCAL OFFICERS.—Section 70118(a) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “section 1 of title II of the Act of June 15, 1917 (chapter 30; 50 U.S.C. 191)” and inserting “section 70051”; and

(2) by striking “section 7(b) of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (33 U.S.C. 1226(b))” and inserting “section 70116(b)”.

(d) CHAPTER 701 DEFINITIONS.—Section 70131(2) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “section 1 of title II of the Act of June 15, 1917 (50 U.S.C. 191)” and inserting “section 70051”; and

(2) by striking “section 7(b) of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (33 U.S.C. 1226(b))” and inserting “section 70116(b)”.

(e) NOTICE OF ARRIVAL REQUIREMENTS FOR VESSELS ON THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF.—

(1) PREPARATORY CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 70001 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by redesignating subsections (l) and (m) as subsections (m) and (n), respectively.

(2) TRANSFER OF PROVISION.—Section 704 of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act 2012 (Public Law 112-213; 46 U.S.C. 70001 note) is—

(A) amended by striking “of title 46, United States Code,”;

(B) amended by striking “(33 U.S.C. 1223 note)” and inserting “(46 U.S.C. 70001 note)”;

(C) transferred to appear after 70001(k) of title 46, United States Code; and

(D) redesignated as subsection (l).

(f) TITLE 46.—Title 46, United States Code, is amended as follows:

(1) Section 2101(2) is amended by striking “section 1” and inserting “section 101”.

(2) Section 2116(b)(1)(D) is amended by striking “section 93(c)” and inserting “section 504(c)”.

(3) In the analysis for subtitle VII by striking the period after “70001” in the item relating to chapter 700.

(4) In the analysis for chapter 700 by striking the item relating to section 70006 and inserting the following:

“70006. Establishment by Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating of anchorage grounds and regulations generally.”.

(5) In the heading for subchapter IV in the analysis for chapter 700 by inserting a comma after “DEFINITIONS”.

(6) In the heading for subchapter VI in the analysis for chapter 700 by striking “OF THE UNITED” and inserting “OF UNITED”.

(7) Section 70052(e)(1) is amended by striking “section 4197 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (46 U.S.C. App. 91)” and inserting “section 60105”.

(g) OIL POLLUTION ACT OF 1990.—The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.) is amended as follows:

(1) Section 1001 (33 U.S.C. 2701) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (32)(G) by striking “pipeline” and all that follows through “offshore facility” and inserting “pipeline, offshore facility”;

(B) in paragraph (39) by striking “section 101(20)(G)(i)” and inserting “section 101(20)(H)(i)”;

(C) in paragraph (40) by striking “section 101(20)(G)(ii)” and inserting “section 101(20)(H)(ii)”;

(D) in paragraph (41) by striking “section 101(20)(G)(iii)” and inserting “section 101(20)(H)(iii)”;

(E) in paragraph (42) by striking “section 101(20)(G)(iv)” and inserting “section 101(20)(H)(iv)”;

(F) in paragraph (43) by striking “section 101(20)(G)(v)” and inserting “section 101(20)(H)(v)”;

(G) in paragraph (44) by striking “section 101(20)(G)(vi)” and inserting “section 101(20)(H)(vi)”.

(2) Section 1003(d)(6) (33 U.S.C. 2703(d)(6)) is amended by striking “this paragraph” and inserting “this subsection”.

(3) Section 1016 (33 U.S.C. 2716) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsections (e) through (i) as subsections (d) through (h), respectively; and

(B) in subsection (e)(1)(B), as redesignated by subparagraph (A), by striking “subsection (e)” and inserting “subsection (d)”.

(4) Section 1012(b)(2) (33 U.S.C. 2712(b)(2)) is amended by striking “section 1016(f)(1)” and inserting “section 1016(e)(1)”.

(5) Section 1005(b)(5)(B) (33 U.S.C. 2716(b)(5)(B)) is amended by striking “section 1016(g)” and inserting “section 2716(f)”.

(6) Section 1018(c) (33 U.S.C. 2718(c)) is amended by striking “the Act of March 3, 1851 (46 U.S.C. 183 et seq.)” and inserting “chapter 305 of title 46, United States Code”.

(7) Section 7001(h)(1) (33 U.S.C. 2761(h)(1)) is amended by striking “subsection (c)(4)” and inserting “subsection (e)(4)”.

## **TITLE VII—NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION**

### **Subtitle A—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps**

#### **SEC. 701. TITLE AND QUALIFICATIONS OF HEAD OF NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AND OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS; PROMOTIONS OF FLAG OFFICERS.**

(a) TITLE AND QUALIFICATIONS OF HEAD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 228(c) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-

tion Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3028(c)) is amended—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “CORPS AND OFFICE OF” and inserting “COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AND ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR”;

(B) in the second sentence, by striking “serving in” and all that follows through “half” and inserting “who has served, on the date of such appointment, in the grade of captain or above for not less than one year”; and

(C) in the fourth sentence, by striking “Director of the Office of” and inserting “Assistant Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 4(a) of the Commercial Engagement Through Ocean Technology Act of 2018 (33 U.S.C. 4103(a)) is amended by striking “Director of the Office of” and inserting “Assistant Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for”.

(b) PROMOTIONS OF FLAG OFFICERS.—Section 226 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3026) is amended—

(1) by striking “Appointments” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Appointments”;

(2) by inserting after “all permanent grades” the following: “, other than a grade described in subsection (b),”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) FLAG OFFICERS.—Appointments in and promotions to the grade of rear admiral (upper half) or above shall be made by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.”.

#### **SEC. 702. NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION VESSEL FLEET.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The NOAA Fleet Modernization Act (33 U.S.C. 891 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 603 (33 U.S.C. 891a)—

(A) in the section heading, by striking “FLEET” and all that follows through “PROGRAM” and inserting “OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF NOAA FLEET”; and

(B) by striking “is authorized” and all that follows and inserting the following: “, acting through the Assistant Administrator of NOAA for Marine and Aviation Operations, shall operate and maintain a fleet of vessels to meet the requirements of NOAA in carrying out the mission and functions of NOAA, subject to the requirements of this title.”;

(2) in section 604 (33 U.S.C. 891b)—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “Secretary” and all that follows and inserting “Secretary, acting through the Assistant Administrator of NOAA for Marine and Aviation Operations, shall develop and submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a replacement and modernization plan for the NOAA fleet not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, and every 2 years thereafter.”;

(B) by striking subsections (b) and (d);

(C) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b);

(D) in subsection (b), as so redesignated—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “proposed” and all that follows and inserting the following: “in operation in the NOAA fleet as of the date of submission of the Plan, a description of the status of those vessels, and a statement of the planned and anticipated service life of those vessels.”;

(ii) by striking paragraph (6);

(iii) by redesignating paragraphs (2), (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (4), (5), (6), and (7), respectively;

(iv) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) a plan with respect to operation, maintenance, and replacement of vessels described in paragraph (1), including the schedule for maintenance or replacement and anticipated funding requirements;

“(3) the number of vessels proposed to be constructed by NOAA.”;

(v) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated, by striking “constructed, leased, or chartered” and inserting “acquired, leased, or chartered by NOAA”;

(vi) in paragraph (6), as so redesignated—

(I) by striking “or any other federal official” and inserting “the Director of the National Science Foundation, or any other Federal official”;

(II) by striking “their availability” and inserting “the availability of those vessels”;

(vii) in paragraph (7), as so redesignated, by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon; and

(viii) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) a plan for using small vessels, uncrewed systems, and partnerships to augment the requirements of NOAA for days at sea;

“(9) the number of officers of the NOAA commissioned officer corps and professional wage mariners needed to operate and maintain the NOAA fleet, including the vessels identified under paragraph (3); and

“(10) current and potential challenges with meeting the requirements under paragraph (9) and proposed solutions to those challenges.”;

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) VESSEL PROCUREMENT APPROVAL.—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may not procure vessels that are more than 65 feet in length without the approval of the Assistant Administrator of NOAA for Marine and Aviation Operations.”;

(3) in section 605 (33 U.S.C. 891c)—

(A) in subsection (a), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “working through the Office of the NOAA Corps Operations and the Systems Procurement Office” and inserting “acting through the Assistant Administrator of NOAA for Marine and Aviation Operations”;

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking “shall” and all that follows through “submit to Congress” and inserting “, acting through the Assistant Administrator of NOAA for Marine and Aviation Operations, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.”;

(ii) by striking “subsequent”;

(4) in section 608 (33 U.S.C. 891f)—

(A) by striking subsection (b);

(B) by striking “(A) VESSEL AGREEMENTS.”;

”; and

(C) by inserting after “Secretary” the following: “, acting through the Assistant Administrator of NOAA for Marine and Aviation Operations.”;

(5) in section 610 (33 U.S.C. 891h)—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “for carrying” and all that follows and inserting the following: “\$93,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2025 through 2026 to carry out this title and section 302 of the Fisheries Survey Vessel Authorization Act of 2000 (title III of Public Law 106-450; 114 Stat. 1945; 33 U.S.C. 891b note).”;

(B) in subsection (b), by striking “National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration fleet modernization” and inserting “NOAA fleet modernization.”.

(b) FISHERY SURVEY VESSELS.—Section 302(a) of the Fisheries Survey Vessel Authorization Act of 2000 (title III of Public Law 106-450; 114 Stat. 1945; 33 U.S.C. 891b note) is amended—

(1) by striking “may in accordance with this section” and inserting “may”;

(2) by striking “up to six”; and

(3) by inserting after “this section” the following: “and the NOAA Fleet Modernization Act (33 U.S.C. 891 et seq.)”.

(c) NOTIFICATIONS OF PROPOSED DEACTIVATION OF VESSELS.—Section 401(b)(4) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Authorization Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-567; 106 Stat. 4291; 33 U.S.C. 891b note) is amended—

(1) by striking “(A)” and all that follows through “The Secretary”;

(2) by striking “the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries” and inserting “the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology”;

(3) by striking “, if an equivalent” and all that follows through “deactivation”.

#### SEC. 703. COOPERATIVE AVIATION CENTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 218 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3008) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking “AVIATION ACCESSION TRAINING PROGRAMS” and inserting “COOPERATIVE AVIATION CENTERS”;

(2) in subsection (a), by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting the following:

“(2) COOPERATIVE AVIATION CENTER.—The term ‘Cooperative Aviation Center’ means a Cooperative Aviation Center designated under subsection (b)(1).”;

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “AVIATION ACCESSION TRAINING PROGRAMS” and inserting “COOPERATIVE AVIATION CENTERS”;

(B) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4);

(C) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(D) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) DESIGNATION REQUIRED.—The Administrator shall designate one or more Cooperative Aviation Centers for the commissioned officer corps of the Administration at institutions described in paragraph (3).

“(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of Cooperative Aviation Centers is to facilitate the development and recruitment of aviators for the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.”; and

(E) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), inserting “that” after “educational institution”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “that requests” and inserting “applies”;

(iii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking “that has” and inserting “has”; and

(II) by striking the semicolon and inserting “; and”;

(iv) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) by striking “that is located” and inserting “is located”;

(II) by striking clause (ii);

(III) by striking “that—” and all that follows through “experiences” and inserting “that experiences”;

(IV) by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(v) by striking subparagraph (D); and

(4) by striking subsections (c), (d), and (e) and inserting the following:

“(c) COOPERATIVE AVIATION CENTERS ADVISOR.—

“(1) ASSIGNMENT.—The Administrator shall assign an officer or employee of the commis-

sioned officer corps of the Administration to serve as the Cooperative Aviation Centers Advisor.

“(2) DUTIES.—The Cooperative Aviation Centers Advisor shall—

“(A) coordinate all engagement of the Administration with Cooperative Aviation Centers, including assistance with curriculum development; and

“(B) serve as the chief aviation recruiting officer for the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to reauthorize the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by striking the item relating to section 218 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 218. Cooperative Aviation Centers.”.

#### SEC. 704. ELIGIBILITY OF FORMER OFFICERS TO COMPETE FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 269B the following new section:

##### “SEC. 269C. ELIGIBILITY OF FORMER OFFICERS TO COMPETE FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual who was separated from the commissioned officer corps of the Administration under honorable conditions after not fewer than 3 years of active service may not be denied the opportunity to compete for a vacant position with respect to which the agency in which the position is located will accept applications from individuals outside the workforce of that agency under merit promotion procedures.

“(b) TYPE OF APPOINTMENT.—If selected for a position pursuant to subsection (a), an individual described in that subsection shall receive a career or career-conditional appointment, as appropriate.

“(c) ANNOUNCEMENTS.—The area of consideration for a merit promotion announcement with respect to a position that includes consideration of individuals within the Federal service for that position shall—

“(1) indicate that individuals described in subsection (a) are eligible to apply for the position; and

“(2) be publicized in accordance with section 3327 of title 5, United States Code.

“(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to confer an entitlement to veterans’ preference that is not otherwise required by any statute or regulation relating to veterans’ preference.

“(e) REGULATIONS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall prescribe regulations necessary for the administration of this section.

“(f) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, the Administrator shall submit to the Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committees on Natural Resources and Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report which includes the following:

“(1) A description of how the Administrator has utilized the authority granted under this section, including the number and locations of individuals hired utilizing the authority granted under this section.

“(2) An overview of the impact to Federal employment for former members of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration as a result of the authority granted under this section.

“(g) SUNSET.—This section shall be repealed on the date that is 5 years after the

date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1 of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 269B the following new item:

“Sec. 269C. Eligibility of former officers to compete for certain positions.”.

#### SEC. 705. ALIGNMENT OF PHYSICAL DISQUALIFICATION STANDARD FOR OBLIGATED SERVICE AGREEMENTS WITH STANDARD FOR VETERANS’ BENEFITS.

Section 216(c)(2)(B) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3006(c)(2)(B)) is amended by striking “misconduct or grossly negligent conduct” and inserting “willful misconduct”.

#### SEC. 706. STREAMLINING SEPARATION AND RETIREMENT PROCESS.

Section 241(c) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3041(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) EFFECTIVE DATE OF RETIREMENTS AND SEPARATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), a retirement or separation under subsection (a) shall take effect on such date as is determined by the Secretary.

“(2) DETERMINATION OF DATE.—The effective date determined under paragraph (1) for a retirement or separation under subsection (a) shall be—

“(A) except as provided by subparagraph (B), not earlier than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary approves the retirement or separation; or

“(B) if the officer concerned requests an earlier effective date, such earlier date as is determined by the Secretary.”.

#### SEC. 707. SEPARATION OF ENSIGNS FOUND NOT FULLY QUALIFIED.

Section 223(b) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (30 U.S.C. 3023(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “permanent”; and

(2) by striking “the officer’s commission shall be revoked and”.

#### SEC. 708. REPEAL OF LIMITATION ON EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 204 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020 (33 U.S.C. 3079-1) is repealed.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-259; 134 Stat. 1153) is amended by striking the item relating to section 204.

#### SEC. 709. DISPOSAL OF SURVEY AND RESEARCH VESSELS AND EQUIPMENT OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.

Section 548 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “The Maritime” and inserting “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the Maritime”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION VESSELS AND EQUIPMENT.—

“(1) AUTHORITY.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may dispose of covered vessels and equipment, which would otherwise be disposed of under subsection (a), through sales or transfers under this title.

“(2) USE OF PROCEEDS.—During the 2-year period beginning of the date of enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025, notwithstanding section 571 of this title or

section 3302 of title 31, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may—

“(A) retain the proceeds from the sale or transfer of a covered vessel or equipment under paragraph (1) until expended under subparagraph (B); and

“(B) use such proceeds, without fiscal year limitation, for the acquisition of new covered vessels and equipment or the repair and maintenance of existing covered vessels and equipment.

“(3) COVERED VESSELS AND EQUIPMENT DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘covered vessels and equipment’ means survey and research vessels and related equipment owned by the Federal Government and under the control of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.”.

#### Subtitle B—South Pacific Tuna Treaty Matters

#### SEC. 721. REFERENCES TO SOUTH PACIFIC TUNA ACT OF 1988.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this subtitle an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988 (16 U.S.C. 973 et seq.).

#### SEC. 722. DEFINITIONS.

(a) APPLICABLE NATIONAL LAW.—Section 2(4) (16 U.S.C. 973(4)) is amended by striking “described in paragraph 1(a) of Annex I of” and inserting “noticed and in effect in accordance with”.

(b) CLOSED AREA.—Section 2(5) (16 U.S.C. 973(5)) is amended by striking “of the closed areas identified in Schedule 2 of Annex I of” and inserting “area within the jurisdiction of a Pacific Island Party that is closed to vessels pursuant to a national law of that Pacific Island Party and is noticed and in effect in accordance with”.

(c) FISHING.—Section 2(6) (16 U.S.C. 973(6)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “for any purpose” after “harvesting of fish”; and

(2) by amending subparagraph (F) to read as follows:

“(F) use of any other vessel, vehicle, aircraft, or hovercraft for any activity described in this paragraph except for emergencies involving the health or safety of the crew or the safety of a vessel.”.

(d) FISHING VESSEL; VESSEL.—Section 2(7) (16 U.S.C. 973(7)) is amended by striking “commercial fishing” and inserting “commercial purse seine fishing for tuna”.

(e) LICENSING AREA.—Section 2(8) (16 U.S.C. 973(8)) is amended by striking “in the Treaty Area” and all that follows and inserting “under the jurisdiction of a Pacific Island Party, except for internal waters, territorial seas, archipelagic waters, and any Closed Area.”.

(f) LIMITED AREA; PARTY; TREATY AREA.—Section 2 (16 U.S.C. 973) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraphs (10), (13), and (18);

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (11) and (12) as paragraphs (10) and (11), respectively;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (14) as paragraph (12); and

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (15) through (17) as paragraphs (14) through (16), respectively.

(g) REGIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—Section 2 (16 U.S.C. 973) is amended by inserting after paragraph (12), as redesignated by subsection (f)(3), the following:

“(13) The term ‘regional terms and conditions’ means any of the terms or conditions attached by the Administrator to a license issued by the Administrator, as notified by the Secretary.”.

#### SEC. 723. PROHIBITED ACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5(a) (16 U.S.C. 973c(a)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “Except as provided in section 6 of this Act, it” and inserting “It”;

(2) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4);

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (13) as paragraphs (3) through (11), respectively;

(4) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated, by inserting “, except in accordance with an agreement pursuant to the Treaty” after “Closed Area”;

(5) in paragraph (10), as so redesignated, by striking “or” at the end;

(6) in paragraph (11), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

“(12) to violate any of the regional terms and conditions; or

“(13) to violate any limit on an authorized fishing effort or catch.”.

(b) IN THE LICENSING AREA.—Section 5(b) (16 U.S.C. 973c(b)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “Except as provided in section 6 of this Act, it” and inserting “It”;

(2) by striking paragraph (5); and

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (6) and (7) as paragraphs (5) and (6), respectively.

#### SEC. 724. EXCEPTIONS.

Section 6 (16 U.S.C. 973d) is repealed.

#### SEC. 725. CRIMINAL OFFENSES.

Section 7(a) (16 U.S.C. 973e(a)) is amended by striking “section 5(a) (8), (10), (11), or (12)” and inserting “paragraph (6), (8), (9), or (10) of section 5(a)”.

#### SEC. 726. CIVIL PENALTIES.

(a) AMOUNT.—Section 8(a) (16 U.S.C. 973f(a)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking “Code” after “liable to the United States”; and

(2) in the fourth sentence, by striking “Except for those acts prohibited by section 5(a) (4), (5), (7), (8), (10), (11), and (12), and section 5(b) (1), (2), (3), and (7) of this Act, the” and inserting “The”.

(b) WAIVER OF REFERRAL TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Section 8(g) (16 U.S.C. 973f(g)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “section 5(a)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), or (13)” and inserting “paragraph (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (11), (12), or (13) of section 5(a)”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “, all Limited Areas closed to fishing,” after “outside of the Licensing Area”.

#### SEC. 727. LICENSES.

(a) FORWARDING OF VESSEL LICENSE APPLICATION.—Section 9(b) (16 U.S.C. 973g(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) In accordance with subsection (e), and except as provided in subsection (f), the Secretary shall forward a vessel license application to the Administrator whenever such application is in accordance with application procedures established by the Secretary.”.

(b) FEES AND SCHEDULES.—Section 9(c) (16 U.S.C. 973g(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) Fees required under the Treaty shall be paid in accordance with the Treaty and any procedures established by the Secretary.”.

(c) MINIMUM FEES REQUIRED TO BE RECEIVED IN INITIAL YEAR; GROUNDS FOR DENIAL OF FORWARDING OF LICENSE APPLICATION; GRANDFATHERING OF CERTAIN VESSELS.—Section 9 (16 U.S.C. 973g) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (f);

(2) by redesignating subsections (g) and (h) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively;

(3) by amending subsection (f), as so redesignated, to read as follows:

“(f) The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may determine that a license application should not be forwarded to the Administrator if—

“(1) the application is not in accordance with the Treaty or the procedures established by the Secretary; or

“(2) the owner or charterer—

“(A) is the subject of proceedings under the bankruptcy laws of the United States, unless reasonable financial assurances have been provided to the Secretary;

“(B) has not established to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the fishing vessel is fully insured against all risks and liabilities normally provided in maritime liability insurance; or

“(C) has not paid any penalty which has become final, assessed by the Secretary in accordance with this Act.”; and

(4) in subsection (g), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) section 12113 of title 46, United States Code;”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “of 1972” after “Marine Mammal Protection Act”;

(C) in paragraph (3), by inserting “of 1972” after “Marine Mammal Protection Act”; and

(D) in the matter following paragraph (3), by striking “any vessel documented” and all that follows and inserting the following:

“any vessel documented under the laws of the United States as of the date of enactment of the Fisheries Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-43) for which a license has been issued under subsection (a) may fish for tuna in the Licensing Area, and on the high seas and in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States west of 146 west longitude and east of 129.5 east longitude in accordance with international law, subject to the provisions of the Treaty, this Act, and other applicable law, provided that no such vessel intentionally deploys a purse seine net to encircle any dolphin or other marine mammal in the course of fishing.”.

#### SEC. 728. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) NOTICE REQUIREMENTS TO PACIFIC ISLAND PARTY CONCERNING INSTITUTION OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.—Section 10(c)(1) (16 U.S.C. 973h(c)(1)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking “paragraph 8 of Article 4 of”;

(2) in the third sentence, by striking “Article 10 of”.

(b) SEARCHES AND SEIZURES BY AUTHORIZED OFFICERS.—Section 10(d)(1)(A) (16 U.S.C. 973h(d)(1)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (ii), by striking “or” at the end; and

(2) in clause (iii), by adding “or” at the end.

#### SEC. 729. FINDINGS BY SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.

(a) ORDER OF VESSEL TO LEAVE WATERS UPON FAILURE TO SUBMIT TO JURISDICTION OF PACIFIC ISLAND PARTY; PROCEDURE APPLICABLE.—Section 11(a) (16 U.S.C. 973i(a)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “, all Limited Areas,”;

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “paragraph 2 of Article 3 of”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking “within the Treaty Area” and inserting “under the jurisdiction”; and

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “section 5 (a)(4), (a)(5), (b)(2), or (b)(3)” and inserting “paragraph (3) of section 5(a) or paragraph (2) or (3) of section 5(b)”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “section 5(b)(7)” and inserting “section 5(b)(6)”;

and

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking “section 5(a)(7)” and inserting “section 5(a)(5)”.

(b) ORDER OF VESSEL TO LEAVE WATERS WHERE PACIFIC ISLAND PARTY INVESTIGATING ALLEGED TREATY INFRINGEMENT.—Section 11(b) (16 U.S.C. 973i(b)) is amended by striking “paragraph 7 of Article 5 of”.

#### SEC. 730. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.

Section 12 (16 U.S.C. 973j) is amended to read as follows:

##### “SEC. 12. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.

“(a) PROHIBITED DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Pursuant to section 552(b)(3) of title 5, United States Code, except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary shall keep confidential and may not disclose the following information:

“(1) Information provided to the Secretary by the Administrator that the Administrator has designated confidential.

“(2) Information collected by observers.

“(3) Information submitted to the Secretary by any person in compliance with the requirements of this Act.

“(b) AUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—The Secretary may disclose information described in subsection (a)—

“(1) if disclosure is ordered by a court;

“(2) if the information is used by a Federal employee—

“(A) for enforcement; or

“(B) in support of the homeland security missions and non-homeland security missions of the Coast Guard as defined in section 888 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 468);

“(3) if the information is used by a Federal employee or an employee of a Fishery Management Council for the administration of the Treaty or fishery management and monitoring;

“(4) to the Administrator, in accordance with the requirements of the Treaty and this Act;

“(5) to the secretariat or equivalent of an international fisheries management organization of which the United States is a member, in accordance with the requirements or decisions of such organization, and insofar as possible, in accordance with an agreement that prevents public disclosure of the identity of any person that submits such information;

“(6) if the Secretary has obtained written authorization from the person providing such information, and disclosure does not violate other requirements of this Act; or

“(7) in an aggregate or summary form that does not directly or indirectly disclose the identity of any person that submits such information.

“(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—

“(1) Nothing in this section shall be construed to adversely affect the authority of Congress, including a Committee or Member thereof, to obtain any record or information.

“(2) The absence of a provision similar to paragraph (1) in any other provision of law shall not be construed to limit the ability of the Senate or the House of Representatives, including a Committee or Member thereof, to obtain any record or information.”.

#### SEC. 731. CLOSED AREA STOWAGE REQUIREMENTS.

Section 13 (16 U.S.C. 973k) is amended by striking “. In particular, the boom shall be lowered” and all that follows and inserting “and in accordance with any requirements established by the Secretary.”.

#### SEC. 732. OBSERVERS.

Section 14 (16 U.S.C. 973l) is repealed.

#### SEC. 733. FISHERIES-RELATED ASSISTANCE.

Section 15 (16 U.S.C. 973m) is amended to read as follows:

##### “SEC. 15. FISHERIES-RELATED ASSISTANCE.

“The Secretary and the Secretary of State may provide assistance to a Pacific Island Party to benefit such Pacific Island Party from the development of fisheries resources

and the operation of fishing vessels that are licensed pursuant to the Treaty, including—

“(1) technical assistance;

“(2) training and capacity building opportunities;

“(3) facilitation of the implementation of private sector activities or partnerships; and

“(4) other activities as determined appropriate by the Secretary and the Secretary of State.”.

#### SEC. 734. ARBITRATION.

Section 16 (16 U.S.C. 973n) is amended—

(1) by striking “Article 6 of” after “arbitral tribunal under”; and

(2) by striking “paragraph 3 of that Article” and all that follows through “under such paragraph” and inserting “the Treaty, shall determine the location of the arbitration, and shall represent the United States in reaching agreement under the Treaty”.

#### SEC. 735. DISPOSITION OF FEES, PENALTIES, FORFEITURES, AND OTHER MONEYS.

Section 17 (16 U.S.C. 973o) is amended by striking “Article 4 of”.

#### SEC. 736. ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS.

Section 18 (16 U.S.C. 973p) is amended by striking “Within 30 days after” and all that follows and inserting “The Secretary may establish procedures for review of any agreements for additional fishing access entered into pursuant to the Treaty.”.

#### Subtitle C—Other Matters

#### SEC. 741. NORTH PACIFIC RESEARCH BOARD ENHANCEMENT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “North Pacific Research Board Enhancement Act”.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—Section 401(e) of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (43 U.S.C. 1474d(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (L), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

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

(C) in subparagraph (N), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (N) the following:

“(O) one member who shall represent Alaska Natives and possesses personal knowledge of, and direct experience with, subsistence uses and shall be nominated by the Board and appointed by the Secretary.”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following: “Board members appointed under subparagraphs (N) and (O) shall serve for 3-year terms, and may be reappointed once.”;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

“(5) If the amount made available for a fiscal year under subsection (c)(2) is less than the amount made available in the previous fiscal year, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may increase the 15 percent cap on administrative expenses provided under paragraph (4)(B) for that fiscal year to prioritize—

“(A) continuing operation of the Board;

“(B) maximizing the percentage of funds directed to research; and

“(C) maintaining the highest quality standards in administering grants under this subsection.”.

(c) WAIVER.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is 5 years after such date of enactment, the 15 percent cap on funds to provide support for the North Pacific Research Board and administer grants under section 401(e)(4)(B) of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (43 U.S.C. 1474d(e)(4)(B)) shall be waived.

Mr. CRUZ. I yield the floor.

#### HALT ALL LETHAL TRAFFICKING OF FENTANYL ACT—Motion to Proceed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

#### TRUMP EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I want to note that we just learned that the Trump administration is getting ready to cut nearly 80,000 employees from the VA. Slashing nearly 80,000 VA staff is a benefit cut by another name. No one should think this doesn't dramatically hurt our veterans who have served us so well.

This staffing cut is a betrayal of our promise to our servicemembers—a betrayal to the promise of our servicemembers. It is going to mean longer wait times, fewer appointments, and ultimately less healthcare for our veterans. It is outrageous.

No one in America bargained for this, and Democrats are going to fight this tooth and nail, working with our veterans service organizations to fight these awful, unfair cuts that take out the desire to give tax cuts to billionaires on our veterans who served us so well. This is just one of the most outrageous things they have done, and there is a long list.

#### UKRAINE

Now, another outrageous thing that is happening with the Trump administration is what is happening in Ukraine.

First, I want to thank my colleagues for bringing these five resolutions to the floor. I thank Senator SANDERS for taking the lead on this issue, Senators BENNET, VAN HOLLEN, DURBIN, BLUMENTHAL, and WELCH. Let's start by speaking some much needed truth.

Three years ago, Vladimir Putin brought war and destruction to the people of Ukraine. He started the war, not any mythology that comes from Donald Trump or our Republican colleagues. Vladimir Putin started the war. Full stop.

His tanks and airstrikes have obliterated homes and schools. He is slaughtering civilians as a way to try and win territory in Ukraine. He has kidnapped children. The people of Ukraine did not ask for this war. President Zelenskyy did not start this war. Putin did. That is the truth of this lie after lie after lie that comes out of the Trump administration. This is one of the most egregious.

The people of Ukraine have struggled. President Zelenskyy has led them valiantly, risking his own life, and now the nerve of Donald Trump and others to say Zelenskyy started the war.

Donald Trump is trying to rewrite history and gain favor with Vladimir Putin. He blames Ukraine for starting the war, and now he is shutting off, halting, military aid that Ukraine desperately needs on the battlefield—desperately needs—and we need to restore it.



He has frozen critical intelligence sharing between our countries. He has allowed Putin to launch cyber operations against us, here in the United States. That jeopardizes the privacy of American citizens.

He has frozen intelligence sharing between our countries, and he has brought President Zelenskyy to the Oval Office, only to lecture and insult him in front of the whole world.

Guess who was laughing as he watched Vladimir Putin.

To side with Putin is to put America at risk. My Democratic colleagues will make that clear over the next several hours. To side with Putin is to betray the values that define America, values our troops have died for in battlefields across the world, from Gettysburg to Normandy, to Iwo Jima.

The Senate must respond. Democrats and Republicans have done so before. I worked with then-Leader McCONNELL to get Ukraine desperately needed aid. And today's resolutions affirm very basic bipartisan ideas that, hopefully, still remain with our Republican colleagues—that the U.S. Senate stands with democracy, stands with the great people of Ukraine, and against the dictator—the brutal dictator—Vladimir Putin and his war crimes.

History is clear—perfectly clear. Appeasing autocrats is like putting out a fire with kerosene. In the long run, it will only make autocracy more powerful and the citizenry of America less safe. That is why today the Senate must speak in one voice, Democrats and Republicans together, and pass these resolutions.

I hope that is what happens, and I yield the floor to my colleague from Vermont, who has led the charge on this so important an issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 109

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I thank the minority leader for his comments.

I am here tonight with colleagues who have worked extremely hard to protect the sovereignty of Ukraine and to defend democracy in that country and, in fact, throughout the world. And I thank all of my colleagues for getting on the floor this evening and for the resolutions that they will be bringing forth.

I am not a historian, but I do know that, for the last 250 years, since the inception of our great country, despite our imperfections, the United States has stood in the world as a symbol of democracy. And all over the world—all over the world—people have looked to our country as an example of freedom and self-governance to which the rest of the world could aspire. People have long looked to our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution as blueprints for how to establish governments of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Tragically, all of that is now changing. As President Trump moves this

country toward authoritarianism, he is aligning himself with dictators and despots who share his disdain for democracy and the rule of law.

Last week—just last week—in a radical departure from longstanding U.S. policy, the Trump administration voted against a United Nations resolution which clearly stated that Russia began the horrific war in Ukraine. That U.N. resolution also called on Russia to withdraw its forces from occupied Ukraine, in line with international law.

The resolution was brought forward by our closest allies, countries that we have been aligned with for God knows how many years, including the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, and dozens of other democratic nations. And 93 countries at the U.N. voted yes on that resolution.

Rather than side with our longstanding allies to preserve democracy and uphold international law, President Trump voted with authoritarian nations like Russia, North Korea, Iran, and Belarus to oppose the resolution. Many of the other opponents of that resolution are undemocratic nations propped up by Russian military aid.

But it wasn't just the U.N. vote. Pathetically, President Trump also told an outrageous lie, claiming that it was Ukraine that started the war, not Russia. He also called Zelenskyy a dictator, rather than the leader of a democratic nation, as he is.

As we discuss Ukraine tonight, it is terribly important that we not forget who Vladimir Putin is and why he is no friend of the United States and why we should not be in an alliance with him against Ukraine.

Putin is a man who crushed Russia's movement toward democracy after the end of the Cold War. Putin is a man who steals elections, murders political dissidents, and crushes freedom of the press. He has maintained control in Russia by offering the oligarchs there a simple deal: If they grant him absolute power and share the spoils—and he, by the way, is one of the wealthiest people in the world—he would let them steal as much as they wanted from the Russian people.

The result: While the vast majority of the Russian population struggles economically, Putin and his fellow oligarchs stash trillions of dollars in offshore tax havens.

And so today, 26 years after he took power, Putin is the absolute ruler of Russia, and I think, as everyone knows, Russia's elections are blatantly fraudulent—a sham.

And Putin is the man who sparked the bloodiest war in Europe since World War II. More than 3 years ago, on February 24, 2022, Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Russian land, air, and naval forces have attacked and occupied territory across Ukraine.

Since that terrible day, more than a million people have been killed or injured because of Putin's war. Putin's forces have massacred civilians and kidnapped thousands of Ukrainian children, bringing them back to Russian reeducation camps.

These atrocities led the International Criminal Court to issue an arrest warrant for Putin in 2023 as a war criminal—a war criminal. That is who we are aligning ourselves with.

And still today, Russia continues its attacks, raining down hundreds of missiles and drones on Ukrainian citizens. Russian forces illegally occupy about 20 percent of Ukraine's sovereign territory.

This war could end today, right now. If Putin gave up his outrageous effort to conquer a neighboring country, the war could end today. The killing could stop right now if Putin gave that order, and that simply is what my resolution says to Vladimir Putin: Stop the killing. Obey international law. Withdraw your forces and cease your attacks on Ukraine. And I, honestly, just don't know how anybody in the U.S. Senate could object to that simple demand.

Now, more than at any time in recent history, it is imperative that the Senate come together in a bipartisan manner to make it clear that we stand for democracy, not authoritarianism; that we stand for international law, not conquest by force; and that we stand with Ukraine and fellow democracies throughout the world, not with the murderous dictator of Russia.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 109, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I rise to object to this. Senator SANDERS has brought us a resolution which very simply states that Russia must immediately and completely and unconditionally withdraw from the territory of Ukraine. This isn't even a law. It isn't even a bill. It is only a resolution.

Now, there isn't anybody that disagrees with this. I certainly agree with the substance of this, but this is going to have absolutely zero effect of any kind. If my good friend Senator SANDERS believes that Vladimir Putin is watching this show on TV and says, "Huh, they passed a resolution saying I should get out of Ukraine; so I guess I will pack up and go," you are delusional if you think it is going to have any effect of any kind on Vladimir Putin.

However, having said that, I don't think it is a secret to anyone that there are very delicate negotiations going on. There are four entities involved. Obviously, Ukraine is involved,

the United States is involved, Russia is involved, and our European allies are involved. There is constant conversation going on.

I think a lot of people were upset when they saw the exchange this weekend, understandably. But, look, what you are looking at is the tip of the iceberg. Everybody wants the same outcome and that is to have peace in Ukraine.

There is one man on this planet—one man—that can make that happen, and that is Donald J. Trump. He promised he would do that in the election. He is making very significant strides in that regard.

And to my good friend Senator SANDERS, this is not helpful to the activities that are going on to try to get this resolved. You may think you know what is going on, but I can guarantee with absolute certainty, you do not know what is going on as far as the negotiations are concerned to get this over with. What you are looking at is the tip of the iceberg, and this is not going to be helpful to getting to the point that you want to get to, that I want to get to, that everyone wants to get to, and that is to get peace in Ukraine.

On that basis, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Let me respond to my friend from Idaho. I think he said, to paraphrase him a bit, there is one man who can stop the war. You are right. But that man doesn't live here in Washington, DC. That man happens to live in Moscow, and his name is Vladimir Putin. He is the one who started the war. And, in my view, when we ally ourselves with Putin, when we threaten and, in fact, cut back on military support or intelligence support for Ukraine, do you know what we are telling that one man? We are saying you have got a green light. The United States is withdrawing. You do what you want. You continue the war. You continue to pummel the people of Ukraine, who have already suffered so terribly.

So I think it is true that there are many approaches to how we can end this war, and I agree with my friend that we all have the common goal of wanting to end this war. But I think the fastest way forward is in a bipartisan way. You have 100 U.S. Senators and hopefully 435 Members of the House who stand up and say: Mr. Putin, you started this terrible war. You are acting illegally. You are acting barbarically. Stop that war.

That, in my mind, would be a major step forward to ending the atrocities we are currently seeing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MCCORMICK). The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I respect my friend, but I vehemently disagree that this resolution is going to cause Vladimir Putin to end this war.

My good friend says that Vladimir Putin could end this war. He does not

have the ability to end this war. This war is going to end when there is an agreement by the four entities involved: Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and our European allies. When those four reach an agreement, there will be an end to this war. That can be done by Donald J. Trump.

I guarantee you, Vladimir Putin does not have the ability to bring those four entities together to end this war.

Again, this is not helpful. You don't know what the negotiations are that are going on, and this is going in the wrong direction, and that is the reason I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. One brief remark because I strongly disagree on this issue with my friend.

You think it takes Trump to end the war. You think that Putin alone can't end the war. Well, who do you think started the war? Who do you think runs Russia with an iron fist? If, tomorrow, Putin thought it was to his advantage to end this war, he would do it, and as a dictator, he can do it.

So, with that, Mr. President, I would—I don't want to yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Again, to my good friend Senator SANDERS I would say that Putin does not have that ability. He simply does not have the ability. You talked about how he started this and how he could end it. He could have ended it shortly after he started it. He is in so deep in this, he cannot end it. It is going to take an agreement between the four entities to end it. That is how it is going to end.

Mr. SANDERS. Could I ask my friend—I mean this sincerely—Senator RISCH, would you agree with me that he is a dictator who runs Russia?

Mr. RISCH. I don't—the answer to that is yes, but I don't want to do a quiz here.

Mr. SANDERS. All right. The point is, he is a dictator, and he can end the war unilaterally, in my view.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 110

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am going to ask unanimous consent on a resolution concerning one aspect of this conflict in Ukraine that is particularly compelling, from my point of view. It is a little different than the Senator from Vermont's, but I think it is very important that it be raised and part of our consideration.

War brings out the worst in humans, there is no doubt about it. Russia, under the bloody leadership of Vladimir Putin, has been guilty of some of the worst wartime atrocities the mind can imagine—murders, mass murders, rapes, torture, deliberate targeting of hospitals and civilians. That has been the 3-year strategy of Vladimir Putin to bring Ukraine to its knees.

But one of the most horrific atrocities is Russia's kidnapping of Ukrain-

ian children. I cannot even imagine the reality of this. Since Russia's full-scale war of aggression started in 2022, the Government of Russia has abducted, forcibly transferred, facilitated the illegal deportation of at least 20,000 Ukrainian children—20,000 children forcibly taken from their homes, families, and communities to a place they have never known.

The depravity of this Putin strategy is hard to imagine, but Putin and his government know no humanity, no morality. It is not surprising that Putin would stoop to such a repulsive strategy. That is why today I am asking unanimous consent to pass a resolution condemning Russia's abduction of Ukrainian children.

I am calling on Russia to work with the international community to return all of these children to their families. There is no tactful way to violate the sovereignty of a nation, but Putin takes depravity to a new extreme with his kidnapping of Ukrainian children. This barbaric act must be condemned.

It should be easy for Members on both sides of the aisle to just imagine for a moment if this had happened to American children. It should be clear to everyone that President Trump cannot side with this grotesque child-kidnapping by President Putin. I am sure he does not.

But it has to be a priority of any peace process to acknowledge Putin's responsibility for the invasion and the terrible policies in Ukraine.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 110, submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, to my good friend from Illinois, I say I am going to object to this, and it is not because of the substance of the resolution. You correctly stated what the resolution states, but, again, I think you, along with myself and every Member of this body, want to see the fighting stop in Ukraine. That is a necessity. It has to happen.

The things that are happening are going on right now. There are discussions going on right now. As I said to my good friend Senator SANDERS, you may think you know what is going on on this because you watched what happened this weekend. I can tell you with absolute certainty that you do not know the discussions and what is happening as the train moves forward to try to resolve this.

This isn't a resolution that is going to happen with a whole bunch of people getting involved and trying to lay out different things that they want to get to resolution. It is going to be complicated. It is going to be complex.

Again, I come back to the fact that there is one person who is in the center

of this that can make this happen, and that is Donald J. Trump.

Our passing resolutions here is not helpful to the efforts that are trying to be done to resolve this. So as a result of that, I am going to object to it, and as a result of that, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would just like to say briefly, I respect my friend from Idaho. We have a difference of opinion on this.

I cannot imagine any resolution of this conflict on Ukraine that does not take into consideration these 20,000 kids who have been kidnapped by the Russians. They are going through this terrible indoctrination where they are being punished if they won't sing the Russian national anthem, where they are demanding that they learn a new language and develop a new loyalty to Russia. This is outrageous.

The international courts have branded Vladimir Putin as a war criminal, and this is one of the reasons.

I cannot imagine there will be any resolution of this peaceably without bringing these children back home to their families, and for us to be on the record saying that does not seem to me to be intrusive or a radical point of view. It just reflects the reality of where America should be.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I agree with my good friend from Illinois that this is amongst many, many facts that are going to be taken into consideration as the parties negotiate in what is going to be a very complex negotiation to get to the end point. There are going to be a lot of things that do need to be considered.

The difficulty is that when this institution, the U.S. Senate, puts something out like this, it does have an effect on the parties that are sitting at the table. And you don't really get to a resolution by prodding on these kinds of things. You talk about what it takes to stop the fighting, not what it took to get into it, not the actions that were taken during the fighting. But if you want to stop the fighting, you have to talk about where we are and where we need to get to.

This simply, I can assure you, Senator, is not helpful to those negotiations that are going on.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 111

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I want to join this conversation and broaden it a little bit. In my view, we are witnessing the great betrayal during these last 44 days. We have the great betrayal here at home of the American people because the President promised certain things that he was going to deliver on, and we haven't seen those. We see the great betrayal of our Ukrainian friends and our allies around the world and freedom-loving people around the world.

Here at home, Candidate Trump, of course, promised that on day one, he was going to cut prices, that he was going to help working families. Last night, we witnessed the longest speech in American history to a joint session of Congress, and no plan was presented for lowering prices.

Grocery prices are going up, rent prices are going up, and home prices are going up.

We did see Elon Musk in the Gallery—the guy who said he wanted to take a chain saw to important services that benefit every American family. This is all part of a plan to cut taxes for very wealthy people like Elon Musk at the expense of everyone else.

So in these 44 days, we have seen that great betrayal, but we have also seen the other betrayal. We have seen President Trump throw the Ukrainian people under the bus. I don't think any of us could have imagined a day when the United States sided with Russia and North Korea on a U.N. General Assembly resolution that condemned Russian aggression, where we voted with them and against our allies—against Ukraine, against all of our European allies, against all of our friends in Asia. Heck, even North Korea abstained. Even China abstained.

So here we are throwing our allies under the bus. The folks that are openly cheering are the Russian leadership. I mean, this isn't just rhetoric; we have actually seen them expressing glee over the U.S. position. And of course they were very happy with the terrible spectacle in the Oval Office of the President and Vice President of the United States bullying President Zelenskyy.

We have all met with President Zelenskyy. Nobody wants peace more than President Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian people. They have lost thousands of people. They have sacrificed a lot. But they want a durable peace, and they want a peace that will recognize their sovereignty and their freedom and their independence. That is what they want.

We have all heard President Zelenskyy repeatedly thank the American people for our support. In fact, on one occasion, he brought an American flag signed by Ukrainian soldiers expressing gratitude for all our help. And what he has gotten in exchange for that great sacrifice—a sacrifice that helps support freedom-loving people everywhere—is the back of a hand he received in the Oval Office.

So I think this is a moment where we need to speak with moral clarity, and we should do it together as a Senate. We are not directing the negotiations; we are expressing simple truths here on the Senate floor.

The simple truth that I want to express here through the resolution that I will ask to be considered is that the Russian armed forces committed crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine. It is pretty simple, and I would just draw my colleague's

attention to a resolution that was considered by this Senate back in 2022. I have it right here in my hand, S. Res. 546, authored by Senator GRAHAM, cosponsored by then-Senator Rubio, now-Secretary of State Rubio.

What this resolution that the Senate considered just 3 years ago says—and I am going to read it—is:

[The Senate] strongly condemns the ongoing violence, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and systematic human rights abuses carried out by the Russian Armed Forces and their proxies and President Putin's military commanders, at the direction of President Vladimir Putin.

That was the resolution we considered just 3 years ago. This resolution passed unanimously. Not a single Senator objected. Now, of course, we have new Members of the Senate, but every single Senator who was here at that time supported this simple statement of moral clarity.

Two things have happened since then. In February of 2023, the Department of State determined that members of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and officials of the Government of the Russian Federation have committed crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine. And in September of 2022, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine concluded that war crimes have been committed in Ukraine by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

So the Senate adopted a resolution with the simple truths a number of years ago. Those truths were reaffirmed by the Department of State in 2023 and by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry in September 2022.

Regardless of the state of negotiations, I would think that we would be able to reaffirm today the same truth that we expressed unanimously just a few years ago.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 111, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WICKER. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, my friend in Maryland and I participated in a bipartisan delegation on Friday morning last where we met with the President of Ukraine before what we hoped was going to be a signing ceremony. There were a number of Democrats that met with President Zelenskyy.

As chairman of the Armed Services Committee, I participated and chaired that meeting. The distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee was also

there and the President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate was also there, along with quite a number of Democrats. We were wishing for the very best because we thought a significant agreement was about to be signed that would move us toward a reconciliation of this terrible war.

I was distressed—I was devastated, even—when I saw the conversation that took place later on that day. I wondered if the damage could ever be repaired. Thankfully, the damage is being repaired, and we have had very hopeful signs of progress being made.

I made the statement to the public and to members of the Armed Services Committee at a hearing just yesterday. It is time for those of us in the political realm who are not part of this negotiation to be silent; to take a deep breath and not do anything that could interfere with the excellent news that we saw coming yesterday with a very fine statement from President Zelenskyy, with the quoting of that statement with approval by the President of the United States last night.

This is not the time for elected Members of the House and Senate to be passing resolutions. Take a deep breath. Let the negotiators do their work. And for Heaven's sake, not do anything that might, in some way, be interpreted as being belligerent or counterproductive. For that reason, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Mississippi, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, for his commitment to this issue to working to end the war in Ukraine but to do it in a way that preserves the freedom and sovereignty of the people of Ukraine and as a durable peace.

It escapes me how reaffirming truthful statements that the Senate has made in the past can possibly get in the way of a resolution of this crisis. I would argue that it is the President of the United States who has gotten in the way of a resolution of this crisis in the sense that, No. 1, he has clearly embraced Vladimir Putin in so many of his comments. And he went into this discussion by unilaterally giving away important leverage that is needed to result in a resolution that is a just resolution.

You don't go into a negotiation by giving up the issue of American participation and security guarantees, however that might look. You don't go into a negotiation by unilaterally giving up on territorial concessions.

This is why it is important, in my view, for the Senate simply to reconfirm the truths that we have already stated in the past. This seems to be a simple one—that war crimes have been committed by the Russian Army and that they have committed crimes against humanity. That is all this resolution says.

I hope that we can, at some point, come back and revisit this because it is going to be very important to achieve not just a peace but a just peace.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. I am simply responding and not attempting to prolong this. The negotiation process is underway.

It may be that the negotiators are in different cities and in different continents at this point. But the matter is very sensitive. We should be very careful not to interfere with something that may make us all proud and give relief to thousands of millions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 112

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I greatly respect the representation made by my colleague and friend from Mississippi, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and Senator RISCH, our colleague, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee about timing.

I want to talk about timing because we have just passed the third year of this war. This moment is crucial.

Thank you to Senator SANDERS, Senator VAN HOLLEN, Senator DURBIN—soon we will hear from Senator BENNET. We have resolutions that support Ukraine at a critical moment in its history.

I have been there six times. I have come to know President Zelenskyy not only from meetings there, but in Paris, Munich, a number of times here in Washington, DC, and I will never forget my first meeting with him shortly after he was offered an escape. Do you remember what he said to President Biden when he offered a helicopter to exit the country: Don't send me a helicopter; send me ammunition—that courage and determination in the face of Russia coming within just a few miles of his bunker.

I visited him and I then went to Bucha where I saw the remnants of the Russian tanks that came within a 10-minute drive of killing him and taking Kyiv. I also saw the mass graves where women and children were buried after the Russians shot hundreds of them in the back of their head, committing those war crimes that became so despicable in the eyes of the world and resulted in criminal charges against Vladimir Putin. It is the reason why I have urged that we regard the Putin regime as a terrorist organization.

I recognize we are at a critical moment in these negotiations, as well as in Ukraine's 3-yearlong fight. Actually, it is well longer than 3 years because the invasion first occurred in 2014, not long after Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons on the assurance that the free world would come to its aid if its security was ever threatened.

It is that history that Volodymyr Zelenskyy tried to remind President Trump and Vice President Vance about last Friday—betrayal of agreements by

Vladimir Putin. He is a thug. He understands force. He will assure the security of Ukraine only if force is guaranteed to meet another invasion if this one is stopped.

On these negotiations and the timing, Senator VAN HOLLEN said it well. You don't have to be an expert on the art of the deal to know you go into negotiations from a position of strength. Strength never hurts; it only helps in a negotiation.

We are not dictating an outcome. We are not prescribing what the result of the negotiation should be. We are not telling the President or President Zelenskyy what their positions would be. We are saying to Ukraine: We have your back. We are going to be your backstop.

And at that meeting, which I attended along with the Senator from Mississippi and Senator VAN HOLLEN on that bright, sunny Friday morning, President Zelenskyy was asking us to assure that he had a security backstop. Of course, his preference is to be in NATO—no secret there. But security, as I suggested to him, through some bilateral agreement might be an acceptable outcome.

We are not prescribing what that security should be, but only that Ukraine has support from the American people. That is the purpose of these resolutions. That support strengthens his position.

We are not saying a specific amount of military aid should be provided or a specific negotiating position should be dictated for anyone. But only that—and I read from my resolution—we reaffirm the support of the United States for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in the face of the illegal invasion of its territory by the Russian Federation and the bonds of friendship and shared values between the people of the United States and allied fighting forces.

Now, by any measure of military success, Ukraine has done the impossible. I am not giving away classified information when I tell you that in the days right after the invasion, we were assured by our military that the Russians would be in Kyiv within weeks. They weren't. The only reason they weren't was because of the ingenuity and inventiveness and just plain guts and grit of the Ukrainian people.

Their success will go down as one of the most important feats of modern warfare in this century, and their accomplishments in the use of drones—an inventive use of drones—in their use of intelligence—our intelligence and their intelligence—in their success in the destruction of half or more of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea. They have developed techniques of warfare and platforms with our help that are absolutely remarkable.

On every one of those six trips—in fact, in every meeting that I have had with President Zelenskyy—he has begun by declaring his gratitude for the aid from the United States. On

March 3, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which is their Parliament, expressed its “profound gratitude to President Donald Trump, Congress, and the American people for their firm and consistent support of Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, as well as for the security assistance packages provided to Ukraine, which have helped stabilize the situation on the frontline.”

The people of Ukraine are beyond grateful. If you walk through the streets of Ukraine and you are identified as an American, people will come up to you and thank you. In the Ukrainian community here in the United States, supporters of Ukraine have been thanked again and again and again. I wear a pin—and have done so for some years—with the American and Ukrainian flags. I have a bracelet that has the Ukrainian colors. The people of Ukraine thank me for those insignias of my support.

We all know that Ukraine’s fight is our fight and that our national security is at stake because Putin will keep going. If he swallows Ukraine, if he has dinner in Kyiv, he will want to have dinner in Finland and Sweden and Poland. They are NATO allies. We will be obligated to put troops on the ground. The soldiers of Ukraine are saving our soldiers from a fight where they will be in harm’s way. They are bleeding and dying for our national security.

So, when we talk about timing, let’s recognize that now is the moment to make clear that Ukraine must be as strong as possible for our security if it enters these negotiations.

Let me just finish with this thought: You know, I think it is difficult to describe what it is like to be in Ukraine in the midst of an air attack. On a couple of my visits, we were forced into bunkers when the sirens started. Obviously, we were never injured, and I want to avoid any misrepresentation. I never felt like I was going to be bombed right then and there. But if I had been there 365 days in a year and the apartment house next to me or my school or hospital were bombed and I came out of it and saw the bodies and realized how close I had come and how near death was—day after day after day, the Ukrainian people are living with this nightmare, not to mention the blackouts of electricity, the impacts of their quality of life, the loss of their loved ones, the injuries, and the maiming of young men, whom I have visited.

The Ukrainian people want peace. The Ukrainian people want peace more than any of us. They certainly want peace more than Vladimir Putin, who has no respect for the lives of his people or the Ukrainians. They have fought for 3 years to stay free, to stay independent, to stay sovereign, and they have fought for years before that. The history of their people is one of fighting for their independence. They will continue fighting as long as peace threatens their sovereign and free sta-

tus. They believe in peace. They want Donald Trump to succeed in achieving peace. We should support them in their goals, in their quest for peace with freedom and sovereignty for their people.

I want to offer my resolution. So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 112, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, the Book of Ecclesiastes, in the Old Testament, has provided mankind with some of the greatest words of wisdom ever imparted.

In chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes, the words say:

For everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.

It goes on to say there is “a time to speak and a time to be silent.”

Now, I have spoken, perhaps, not as eloquently but, perhaps, as often as my friend from Connecticut about this war—about who is to blame and about what should happen. I have been disappointed, over a 3-year period, at the previous administration for what I viewed as a slow-walking of aid which might have given us a different situation currently on the ground in this European country.

But we are at a point where there are delicate negotiations going on which might save lives, which might lead to peace—and lasting peace—with a backstop by the United States and our allies in Europe. This is the Ecclesiastical time to be silent and let the negotiators do their work if they possibly can.

For that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to make clear, first—absolutely clear—that I deeply respect my colleague from Mississippi, my friend and fellow Member, the leader of the Armed Services Committee, for his commitment to Ukraine. There should be no question that Senator WICKER is committed to Ukraine’s freedom and independence. I have traveled with him. I have worked with him. I sat with him just Friday. We have a difference of view. He has access to different facts that I don’t. I am going on basic principles, and I must confess I can’t cite Scripture for my position. But I think common sense tells me, although he has more knowledge about the negotiations, that supporting Ukraine at this moment—simply saying we have your back; we are your backstop; we are supporting you—can’t help but aid their position.

But let me just say, what is most important about this conversation is that

we will continue together on both sides of the aisle, in a bipartisan way, to support Ukraine. It isn’t about their being less strong, at least in the case of Senator WICKER. I am absolutely sure, and I respect his views on this topic even though we differ, and I hope that this cause will continue to be bipartisan.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 114

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I am sorry. The Presiding Officer seems to have the misfortune of being out here every time I come to the floor to speak. I regret that, and I feel sorry for him.

I am glad to be out here with my colleagues, today, on both sides of the aisle. We have heard the Senator from Mississippi refer to what he described as the greatest words of wisdom that came from Ecclesiastes. Those were words of wisdom.

I think another set of great words of wisdom came from Ronald Reagan, who said, “Peace through strength.” Peace through strength is what Ronald Reagan represented.

I know the President, last night, had a less clear message to the American people. I know that he said that he was the greatest President in American history. George Washington, I think, was second on his list.

For most of us in this Chamber, I think we probably would say Ronald Reagan earned a place there, even those of us who disagreed with him. One of the reasons was that he did what he said when it came to the national security interests of the United States of America. Because we have been following that path of peace through strength in a bipartisan way, the American people have been extremely generous in their support of the Ukrainian people since the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

The American people have earned a profound debt of gratitude from free people all over the world, including in the United States. Their courage and our weapons and the weapons of our allies have held Putin’s army at the gates of Europe. Nothing else has. They have shown that democracies will stand up to defend themselves and will not roll over to dictators, whether they are in Moscow or Beijing.

But unlike us and unlike the rest of the world, the Ukrainians actually have paid a huge human toll. They have had almost 400,000 casualties. They have had over 40,000 deaths in this war. Their cemeteries are bulging with new graves that are piled high with flowers that testify to the sacrifice of the Ukrainian people in every community in Ukraine. Anybody who has been there has seen them. It is impossible to avoid the cemeteries that have piled up with soldiers who have been willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice on the frontlines of this war in Ukraine.

I delivered a speech just a few days ago, which the Presiding Officer may have had the misfortune of hearing, discussing President Trump's false accusation that Ukraine started this war with Russia.

To my colleagues who say it doesn't matter what the President says, that it is only the outcome that matters—be patient about this great negotiator who learned everything at the heels of Mr. Cohen while he was doing commercial real estate in New York—some of us are worried about it because words do matter, especially the words that the President utters.

Could you imagine anybody on this floor defending a President who said that Taiwan had invaded China when China had invaded Taiwan? That would be ridiculous. That would be absurd. But that is the situation that we face today. It is no different than that. It is identical to that.

He has called President Zelenskyy a dictator—the freedom fighter who is leading this battle and who has led this battle at Ukraine.

Ronald Reagan would turn over in his grave if he knew that the President has invited Russia to rejoin the G7, which is a group of the world's most powerful democracies—democracies—that suspended Russia after Putin invaded Ukraine for the first time in 2014. By the way, are we supposed to believe that he didn't invade Ukraine then; that he was invited in somehow to Crimea? Is President Trump really fooled by the little green men that Vladimir Putin sent there after his administration held supposed peace talks in Saudi Arabia without even the decency to include Ukraine, which has had more than 400,000 casualties?

Every single one of these statements and decisions have emboldened Putin. You can see it in the newspapers in Russia. You can see it on TV. And they have weakened Ukraine's negotiating position, profoundly undermining our own national security.

How this war ends will determine whether Putin sets his sights on our NATO allies, like Poland and the Baltics; whether dictators like China's Xi Jinping test our resolve by invading their neighbor, Taiwan; whether the post-World War II international order that the United States built and is today frittering away under this President's leadership remains intact; whether the United States can continue to provide the leadership on behalf of free nations all over this world and democracies all over this world that our parents and grandparents had the decency to sacrifice and build for us; whether we are going to face another conflict in this world that is actually started by a tyrant but ended by democracies.

The last thing we should be doing is undermining Ukraine's negotiating position and ours when we have this much at stake.

I know the Presiding Officer has spent his life in negotiations in the pri-

vate sector. I have spent time—not as much as the Presiding Officer. I certainly have spent time in these negotiations as well. Our discipline, when I was in the private sector negotiating these deals, was that we would let every deal die at least three times because our theory was no deal worth doing could be done the first time or the second time. I can see the Presiding Officer probably—he probably said it is five times before you can do it. But the point is, you wouldn't undermine your own negotiating leverage while you are going into a deal.

Today—today—the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency went on FOX News and told the world that we had shut down our intelligence-sharing with Ukraine. We met—I don't know if I can say. I am on the Intelligence Committee, let me be careful what I say. Today, the United States of America has said we have cut off Ukraine.

I don't know what anybody is doing in this Chamber if they are not coming here saying the United States of America should not be cutting off Ukraine's intelligence in midstream, in the ramp-up to a negotiation. If you come out here on this floor and say it is the right thing to do; that you, in the private sector, would make an equivocally idiotic, compromising, self-defeating move in a negotiation like this, come and defend it out here. Come and tell us how that is peace through strength.

We shut off our offensive cyber with respect to Russia and got nothing back from them. Ronald Reagan is turning over in his grave at a national security strategy that, I guess, has been concocted in the realm of social media and cable television but has nothing to do with the national security interests of the United States. It can't be defended.

I want to also say, while I have the floor and for the record—and I hope people will look it up—I have never met President Zelenskyy where he hasn't started the meeting by thanking the American people and ended the meeting by thanking the American people. He has done it in every meeting that I have been in. But I don't want us to lose sight of the fact that we also hold a profound debt of gratitude to him and to his soldiers and to the Ukrainian people.

The President doesn't seem to understand that. The President seems to think: Oh, my gosh, they are doing us a favor by using our weapons.

You are in tough shape; your country is in tough shape, he stated the obvious in that embarrassing interaction in the Oval Office the other day, where he couldn't even keep his temper for 5 minutes on the global stage.

The Ukrainians are not just fighting for Ukraine; they are fighting for democracy. They are fighting for Europe. They are fighting for freedom. They are fighting for the international order that we created, that we led after the Second World War.

Should NATO pay its share? Yes, it should. But we are not some charity

case. We have benefited from the casualties that Ukraine has suffered. We have benefited from the exposure of the weakness of Putin's corrupt army. We have benefited from Xi Jinping's new knowledge that if a dictator tries to invade another country, the free world will stand together, until Donald Trump became President of the United States.

I want to say again, Mr. President, to you and to all of my colleagues here today, the United States has turned off our intelligence to the Ukrainian people. They are not in retreat. They are on the frontlines of this war today, in the middle of winter, on the steps of Europe, where 16 million people were killed by Hitler and Stalin, when my mother was born in Warsaw—a Polish Jew in 1938, the year before Hitler invaded Poland. And we turned off their intelligence.

They are killing more Russians there every month than they were 6 months ago. This is a catastrophe.

The other night when we had the budget reconciliation, I had a request for an amendment that simply would have said that it was the sense of the Senate that Russia invaded Ukraine; that Russia had started this war. I wanted to ask my colleagues just the basic question: Can we agree that Russia started the war in Ukraine? That seems like a shocking question to ask. I hope every schoolchild in America knows that that is true. Yet the President of the United States has said that Ukraine started this war. There are people around this city these days who are suggesting that Russia didn't start the war; that Ukraine started the war.

And I am not even talking about people like the new head of Intelligence for the Trump administration who has taken the view that Ukraine had what was coming to them, who tweeted out at 11:30 the night that Putin's tanks invaded Ukraine, a peaceful country—for the first time in Europe since World War II, a dictator invading a peaceful country—who took to social media to say that Ukraine had it coming to them. I am not even saying that; I am saying people who are unwilling to say that Russia invaded Ukraine when it launched an unprovoked, an unjustified, full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, following their already illegal annexation of Crimea and their illegal occupation of parts of the Donbas. So that is all my resolution says, and that is it.

That may seem like a basic and remedial task. I am sorry it is necessary.

I want to remind every schoolchild in America who started this war and whose side we are on and what the legacy of Ronald Reagan's peace through strength is all about.

This is a measure that will not in any way disrupt the progress in negotiations. I think quite the opposite. I think quite the opposite. I want us to assure ourselves that we are all clear here about who started this war.

I want us to fulfill our responsibility to the American people. We are not



here to repeat untruths from the Oval Office. We all have a patriotic responsibility to live up to. The President does as well.

I want us to demand, on behalf of the American people, that the United States lead for the sake of the Ukrainian people and for our national security and for the security of the world.

That is why this is not just a matter of how worried people in NATO are; it is how worried people in Southeast Asia are because they know if we don't get our act together here and support Ukraine, support our allies in Europe, the same thing could happen there. And China could invade Taiwan, and we could have an American President who claims he is the best President in American history, with George Washington second, saying that Taiwan invaded China.

I want us to avow, as Ronald Reagan proclaimed 40 years ago, that "freedom is America's core" and "[w]e must never deny it nor forsake it." That is what we risk today by withdrawing our support for Ukraine, allowing the President to promulgate falsehood after falsehood about who started this war and what is going on with this war.

If we abandon Ukraine, we are going to abandon the core of who we are.

This is a simple question. It is not a partisan one. And the answer couldn't be clearer.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 114, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). Is there objection?

The Republican whip.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, the American people want to see this war end. We want to see the killing and the bloodshed stopped.

President Trump shares those views. He wants peace. He wants to end the war. President Trump and the administration are negotiating right now, today, to achieve that peace. He addressed it last night in his address to Congress and to the Nation.

I think that President Trump is the very best hope to achieve lasting peace in Ukraine. He has my full support as the negotiations continue. The entire Senate should support those efforts, and therefore, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, let me say—I know my colleague from Vermont is here, so I am not going to go on, but I would just like to respond to my friend from Wyoming by saying that it is shocking to me that tonight, in the Nation's Capital of the wealthiest country in the world, the place that we think of as the freest country in the world, our intelligence sharing with

Ukraine, which has been one of the most effective means of their ability to prosecute the war in Ukraine against Russia, has been shut off by the United States of America. And our arms have been shut off to some degree as well, in the middle of winter, while they are sacrificing on the frontlines for freedom and for democracy.

It is shocking that we are in the position that we are in, and I hope, for the sake of our kids and for our grandkids, for the sake of the allies that we have all over the world, for the sake of democracy and freedom in this world, that we pull together as a Senate and articulate the importance of pursuing this negotiation out of a position of strength and not of weakness.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 113

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, last week, the U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly in favor of a resolution that acknowledged that Russia brutally invaded Ukraine. Among those voting in favor were all our friends and allies. Among those voting against it were most of our adversaries—Russia, Iran, North Korea, Nicaragua—and the United States.

Of course, no Americans that we represent want to see our country on a team with some of the world's most brutal dictators, but what made that vote remarkable was that the Trump administration voted against something so unquestionably true: It was Russia that was the invader; that Russia's invasion has been devastating; that too many have died, too many have suffered; that peace is long overdue; and that Ukrainian territory is Ukrainian territory.

The bottom line: This was a very simple resolution asserting that one country has no right to invade another country.

Americans know from experience that peace in the world depends on adhering to a core principle: Countries cannot change their borders by force. One country cannot steal the sovereign territory of another country. Over the years, many Americans have died to uphold this principle for our national security.

World War I, World War II, and the gulf war sent a clear message: America will support its friends and allies who are fighting to defend their own freedom and sovereignty.

Of course, the U.N. vote last week was followed by last week's meeting in the Oval Office between Ukrainian President Zelenskyy and President Trump. Just hours before that very disastrous meeting, right across from the White House, I, along with many of our colleagues, joined in a bipartisan group of Senators who met with President Zelenskyy. He told us he was extremely grateful for America's help. He told us how thankful he was for the help President Trump gave in his first administration with the delivery of

Javelin missiles and what he was doing in his second administration. There was not a hint of anything other than support and respect, and he told us how enthusiastic he was about meeting with the President and signing the minerals deal.

It blew up, and, of course, the press will debate whether President Zelenskyy derailed the meeting because he didn't wear a suit or he said a provocative thing or he was rude and not grateful enough, and others will say that it was a setup by the President to derail the meeting.

My view: I don't know the answer to that, and I don't really care because that is not the question. The one question that is profoundly important is the one that affects our national security: Whose side are we on? Do we continue to side with Ukraine against Russia and its invasion—with our NATO allies, with the principle we have fought for since the beginning of the last century—or do we flip sides and go with Putin?

There is every reason for many of us to be concerned about that being a question actively under consideration by the Trump administration, starting with his affection for Putin and with his assertion that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that started the war.

We are suddenly confronted with this unthinkable question of whether our President is realigning whose side we are on. That, in my view, is why all of us in the U.S. Senate—and there has been tremendous leadership on the Republican side of the aisle, and I would like to particularly acknowledge the leadership of Chairman WICKER and Chairman RISCH—for us to stand with Ukraine and with our NATO allies.

This year, we are going to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. In the eight decades since that devastating war, America's global alliances and our leadership have been anchored on the principle—anchored on the principle—that no country should seize and occupy the territory of another country by force. That matters. It is anchored on the elementary principle that might does not make right—something that in the Putin invasion, where he thought he would be in Kyiv in days, was desecrated.

So my hope is that we in the U.S. Senate will reaffirm those principles of territorial integrity and do that on behalf of the American people.

I have introduced a resolution that does just this. It commits to the principle that the United States remains totally in favor of upholding and defending the proposition that no state shall threaten or use force against the territorial integrity or the political integrity of any other state. I think all of us know that is among the most fundamental propositions holding together the world's very fragile peace. It is also a fundamentally American principle that we have advocated for and defended. It is a principle that we must

uphold today on behalf of the people and the sovereignty of Ukraine—not just for their benefit but for our national security.

Therefore, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 113, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and for the reasons I have given previously, we want the killing to end. We want the bloodshed to stop. There are active negotiations going on right now, and I think the best hope to achieve lasting peace in Ukraine is the efforts of President Trump today. For that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. WELCH. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### RELATING TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE DAVID LYLE BOREN, FORMER SENATOR FOR THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 115, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 115) relating to the death of the Honorable David Lyle Boren, former Senator for the State of Oklahoma.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 115) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### MORNING BUSINESS

#### FALSE CLAIMS ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, 8 score and 2 years ago, President Abraham Lincoln signed the False Claims Act into Federal law. The anti-fraud tool, enacted March 2, 1863, became known as Lincoln's Law. Our 16th

President embraced meatier measures to go after fraudsters bilking the U.S. Treasury during the Civil War. Contractors were selling inferior supplies to the Union Army, outfitting the troops with poor quality uniforms and boots, mixing sawdust with gunpowder, and even selling blind horses to the Union cavalry.

Back then, Congress resurrected the legal principle known as *qui tam*—part of a Latin phrase that translates to "in the name of the king"—with origins from the 13th century England in which citizens could bring lawsuits on behalf of the king.

Lincoln's Law gave workers a financial incentive to blow the whistle on their employer's wrongdoing, rewarding them with a share of fines collected through litigation. This common sense, patriotic solution put more eyes and ears on the ground to save tax dollars and ensure Union soldiers were getting high-quality supplies the Federal Government purchased.

The principle also was anchored in the merits of our Nation's first whistleblower law enacted on July 30, 1778. The Continental Congress sided with naval informants who reported abuses by their supervisor. Since the earliest days of our Republic, our Nation's leaders affirmed it is the duty of every American to report wrongdoing "in service to the United States."

During my first term in the U.S. Senate, I launched a decades-long crusade to expose wasteful government spending, leaning on the inside scoop provided by patriotic whistleblowers such as Ernie Fitzgerald. A Pentagon analyst, Fitzgerald relentlessly pursued the facts and courageously told the truth. When he appeared before my Judiciary Subcommittee in 1984, he testified the Air Force pumped the brakes on his requests for information needed to properly analyze costs for weapons systems and spare parts. At the time, I remarked how "inefficiency is almost an underground economy in this town." Those comments offer a foreshadowing clue to the Trump administration's effort to drain the swamp.

Transparency brings accountability. It is impossible to expose wrongdoing if whistleblowers are muzzled and access to information is blocked. President Trump created the Department of Government Efficiency—DOGE—to derail the "underground economy" and scrutinize how taxpayer dollars are spent. Fleecing Uncle Sam's coffers is a tale as old as time, exploited during war, natural disasters, and economic crisis, including the pandemic. Honest Abe deployed the False Claims Act to unleash an army of private citizens to serve as watchdogs during the Civil War. Congress can't adequately do its constitutional oversight duty without them.

After hearing from truth-tellers like Ernie Fitzgerald, I dusted off the Civil War-era law to encourage more patriots to step forward and help put a stop to fraud and corruption. In 1986, I authored amendments to the False

Claims Act that beefed up the *qui tam* provisions in Lincoln's Law to strengthen financial incentives and protections for whistleblowers. It takes guts to stick one's neck out and report misconduct within an organization. Whistleblowers put their careers, livelihoods, and reputations on the line in service to their country. So, when a *qui tam* case is successful, the whistleblower can receive up to 30 percent of the recovery. My amendments to the False Claims Act put fraudsters across the sprawling bureaucracy on notice that fraud is no longer the cost of doing business and empowered whistleblowers throughout the private sector to report willful misuse of taxpayer dollars.

Since the enactment of my 1986 amendments, the False Claims Act has become the Federal Government's No. 1 tool to fight and deter fraud. It has returned over \$78 billion back to taxpayers and saved countless more by deterring would-be fraudsters. Last year, whistleblowers filed 979 suits, a historic number of *qui tam* actions in a single year. The False Claims Act recovered nearly \$3 billion in fiscal year 2024, of which \$2.4 billion came from whistleblower *qui tam* actions.

In just the last year, whistleblower *qui tam* cases exposed fraud in defense procurement, pandemic and disaster relief programs, Federal housing grants and underpaid royalties on Federal lands. Notably, the healthcare industry produced the lion's share of fraud recoveries. Whistleblowers exposed kickbacks, price fixing, double billing, unlawful prescriptions for opioids and controlled substances, and other fraudulent schemes that returned scarce resources to Federal programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid, and TRICARE. These False Claims Act whistleblowers also protected patients by exposing providers who billed for medically unnecessary, substandard, and potentially harmful care.

Every dollar lost to fraud rips off the American people and erodes the public trust. I will keep fighting misguided efforts to water down Lincoln's Law and build on whistleblower protection laws across-the-board so truth-tellers don't fear reprisal. I have asked President Trump and every President since the Reagan administration to hold a Rose Garden ceremony honoring whistleblowers. Such an event would complement President Trump's efforts to drain the swamp, eliminate waste, and promote government efficiency by welcoming the very whistleblowers who put Washington, DC, on notice to wake up and smell the roses.

#### TRIBUTE TO LUDMYA "MIA" LOVE

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor Representative Ludmya "Mia" Love, who has been battling glioblastoma.

Mia and I were first elected as mayors together in 2010, and from the very beginning, I saw firsthand the energy,

passion, and optimism she brings to public service. I always say that there is an understanding amongst mayors, and we make some of the best legislators. Together in Utah, we worked on projects that shaped our communities, and I had the privilege of watching her take that same determination to a national stage when she ran for and won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, something I shared with her after I joined her in Washington in 2017.

Mia is young, vibrant, and full of life. She carries herself with an infectious energy, always greeting me in a way that lifts my spirits. No matter the challenges she has faced—whether in governance or as a trailblazer in politics—she meets them with grace and determination. Being a Black woman in the Republican Party comes with its own set of hurdles, but Mia has never let barriers define her. Instead, she breaks them. Her memoir was appropriately titled, “Qualified.” Mia was qualified to break barriers and inspire people to see great possibilities—not because of her heritage, gender, faith tradition, or political party—Mia was qualified because of the content of her character.

In Congress, she was deeply respected by her colleagues and admired by her constituents, not just for her policies, but for the way she made people feel: valued, heard, and empowered. Her decision to stop treatment and cherish the time she has left with her family is a reflection of the strength and clarity with which she has always lived her life.

I am grateful for the time I have known Mia, for the work we have done together, and for the example she continues to set for so many. My thoughts are with her, her family, and all who love her during this difficult time.

#### TRIBUTE TO MARYALICE CROFTON

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the spirit of volunteerism is one of Maine's greatest strengths. For the past 30 years, that spirit has been nurtured and enhanced by Volunteer Maine Executive Director Maryalice Crofton, and I join people throughout our State in honoring Maryalice for her outstanding leadership and in wishing her all the best in her retirement.

Volunteer Maine is our State's National Service Commission that supports AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. During Maryalice's tenure, which began just 1 year after those programs were launched, more than 4,200 individuals have served as Maine volunteers, contributing more than 3.9 million hours to support housing, education, environmental conservation, healthcare, childcare, and emergency preparedness efforts across our State. While increasing their job skills and knowledge, student volunteers have earned nearly \$27 million in awards to further their educations.

In addition to advancing the well-being of Mainers and expanding civic

engagement, Maryalice has been an innovative leader at the national level helping to shape workforce development and public-private initiatives. She has been instrumental in efforts to ensure that national service programs are guided by community priorities and local concerns.

At an event celebrating the 30th anniversary of AmeriCorps last year, Maryalice described the importance of people stepping forward to address unmet needs in their communities with these words: “If you're thinking that someone else will take care of it, that's probably not true. You've got to get out there.”

With Maryalice Crofton leading the way, Maine's AmeriCorps volunteers have gotten out there and made a real difference. Her exceptional spirit of service to others will inspire volunteers for years to come.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### RECOGNIZING 100 YEARS OF THE BENTONVILLE ROTARY CLUB

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Bentonville Rotary Club in celebration of its 100th anniversary. This organization of volunteers and community leaders has made a tremendous impact on northwest Arkansas throughout its history, and I am grateful for the many ways its members live the Rotary mission to promote peace, education, and goodwill through service.

The Bentonville Rotary Club's work has been a key part of the community's extraordinary growth over the last century. When it was first founded, the city's population was 2,300 people. Since then, it has become the focal point of one of the fastest growing regions in the Nation and a hub for global business and entrepreneurship.

This growth has also been seen in the club's leadership and expansion. In 1924, its founding was sponsored by the Rogers' Rotary Club. The first president was Dave Peel, and his successors have often been leaders in other capacities, including Walmart founder Sam Walton, while the club has expanded its impact through sponsoring additional clubs in Bentonville/Bella Vista Daybreak, Holiday Island and Bella Vista Sunrise, in addition to the Bentonville Satellite club.

I am grateful for the many contributions the Bentonville Rotary Club has made and continues to make in the community. These include fundraisers like the New Kids on the Block and Snack Packs for Kids. Rotarians also help beautify the city by planting redbud trees along West Central Avenue, as well as provide opportunities for local residents by sponsoring a library meeting room and an exhibit at the Scott Family Amazeum, donating over \$15,000 in scholarships to students at Bentonville High School and supporting local food banks.

After more than 100 years, the Bentonville Rotary continues to be truly dedicated to “service above self” through leadership and action. Its impact provides inspiration throughout the State, and I am grateful for the many ways its members continue working hard to make northwest Arkansas a special place to live.●

#### RECOGNIZING PLANTPEDDLER

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as chair 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 Plantpeddler of Cresco, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

On June 28, 1980, newlyweds Mike and Rachel Gooder purchased Cresco Greenhouse, a local, century-old greenhouse that they planned to revitalize. As recent graduates of Iowa State University with degrees in horticulture, the couple updated the existing infrastructure, optimized production methods, and diversified the variety of plants grown. They rebranded to Plantpeddler and grew their small business quickly. In 1984, the couple successfully launched a wholesale division with the support of their second retail location. This new department led the way for the Gooders to serve independent and middle-market retailers with their premium crops, ranging from garden mums to begonias. The Gooders traveled to Europe in an effort to learn longstanding techniques in transportation, horticulture, and genetics. By 2001, Plantpeddler introduced the young plants division, becoming a major producer of vegetative genetics for the floriculture industry. Plantpeddler continued to invest in state-of-the-art greenhouse technology and currently boasts a production space of over 500,000 square feet.

Today, the company excels as a global leader in supplying young plants, finished plants, and specialty horticultural products, and its impact is felt far beyond Iowa. Plantpeddler serves 3,200 growers across the U.S. and beyond, shipping plants to all 50 States and another 15 countries worldwide. The Cresco-based powerhouse operates as the United States' No. 1 propagator of begonias and ranks second for poinsettias, shipping over 15 million plants annually.

In 2014, Mike and Rachel's son John Gooder joined the company to follow in his parents' footsteps. With a degree in horticulture from Iowa State, John took on a key role in the company to explore advancements in automation and genetic research. A decade later, in 2024, John became a part-owner, helping manage the business and a team of 99 community employees.

In 2017, peers in the greenhouse industry selected Mike Gooder for the inaugural class of the Horticultural Industries Leadership Awards. In 2023,

Mike and Rachel won the Iowa State University Outstanding Horticulture Alumni of the Year award for their small business success and service to the Cresco community. In 2024, the two received the Iowa Leadership in Agriculture Education Award in recognition of the business' "Educate the Educators" program, which trains and mentors teachers on greenhouse production, horticulture genetics, and real-world horticulture practices. Currently, Mike serves as the chairman of the Iowa State Horticulture Advisory Committee.

Plantpeddler's excellence remains widely recognized. As an active industry leader, Plantpeddler is a member of the Cresco Chamber of Commerce, Choose Iowa, and several regional and national horticulture industry groups. In 2022, Plantpeddler played an active role in providing funding for a greenhouse project at Mike and John's high school alma mater in Cresco. Additionally, the Gooders founded and host a biannual event with roughly 400 growers and industry leaders to share and learn about best practices in floriculture genetic testing. This June, Plantpeddler looks forward to celebrating its 45th anniversary in Iowa. When I visited Plantpeddler in 2020, I witnessed their entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to excellence that allow them to play such an essential role in the floriculture industry. I want to congratulate the Gooders and the entire Plantpeddler team for their hard work and dedication to providing exceptional products and services to families and businesses across Iowa and beyond. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success.●

#### TRIBUTE TO VALDEMAR DEHERRERA

● Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and share the inspiring story of native New Mexican Mr. Valdemar DeHerrera, a World War II veteran and prisoner of war, who celebrated his 105th birthday on October 8, 2024. Valdemar is one of the last American survivors of the fighting in Bataan and Corregidor in the Philippines during the end of World War II.

Valdemar was raised near Taos in the town of Costilla as the third of 14 children. Valdemar helped his family with farming, raising sheep, chickens, cattle, pigs, horses, and crops until dropping out of school in the 10th grade to join the Civilian Conservation Corps. Valdemar did manual labor for conservation projects on rural lands owned by State, local, and Federal governments until he was drafted into the Army at 22 years old. He was sent to train in Fort Bliss, TX, and later deployed to the 515 Coast Artillery in the Philippines.

During the war, Valdemar was captured as a Japanese prisoner of war. He survived the Bataan Death March by escaping to Corregidor Island. Shortly after, Valdemar and his fellow escapees

were captured by the Japanese. During his 3 years and 7 months in captivity, Valdemar was forced to work at a textile plant in Manchuria. He survived off rations consisting of one cup of rice, two cups of water a day, and foraging for grasshoppers, monkeys, and wild spinach. Valdemar was liberated in Manchuria when World War II ended. He returned to Santa Fe, weighing just 80 pounds, spending months recovering. Valdemar credits his faith and the presence of his guardian angel for his survival.

Valdemar has lived a full and meaningful life since his time in the Army. Upon his return home to Costilla, he married Consuelo DeVargas. Valdemar and Consuelo were married until her passing in 2019. Valdemar worked for the State of New Mexico highway department and the MolyCorp Mine. Family has played an integral role in Valdemar's life as he raised his 8 children, 19 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great grandchildren. Valdemar still attends the Bataan Memorial Death March memorial ceremony each year at White Sands Missile Range.

I had the pleasure of speaking to Valdemar prior to his 105th birthday. I thanked him for his service and sacrifice during World War II. Valdemar, your service will never be forgotten, and I am forever grateful for your role in fighting for our freedom.●

#### TRIBUTE TO JO ANN VERDUCE

● Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Pennsylvania's own Jo Ann Verduce.

Starting as a young intern in the communications office for the Diocese of Scranton, she later met the late Sister Marian Denise Walsh, IHM, during the first capital campaign for St. Joseph's Center. Since first joining the St. Joseph's Center Auxiliary, she has spent over 20 years serving as the director of development for the center. As the daughter of Anthony and Josephine Verduce, she was born and raised in Archbald, PA. She lived in other States due to her father's work schedule in construction, which made her a pro at meeting new people across this great Nation. While she attended school in Florida and Hawaii, she graduated from Valley View High School and received a BA in communications and an MS in counselor education from Marywood University. Her deepfelt connection with the IHM Sisters of Marywood led her to a 19-year stretch in public relations for the university.

She is also involved with the Steamtown Marathon team of St. Joe's, and the Go Joe Bike Ride every July with WNEP meteorologist Joe Snedeker. She served on the board of the Scranton chapter of UNICO, promoting Italian heritage, and as president of the ladies auxiliary of the Scranton chapter of UNICO National. She is the president-elect of the Asso-

ciation of Fundraising Professionals NEPA Chapter and was featured in Happenings Magazine and as the Scranton Times Northeast Woman and NOW.

It is with great pride that I recognize the achievements of Jo Ann and bring the attention of Congress to this successful daughter of Pennsylvania; March 5, 2025.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 579. An act to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to improve foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention, and for other purposes.

H.R. 919. An act to codify Internal Revenue Service guidance relating to treatment of certain services and items for chronic conditions as meeting the preventive care deductible safe harbor for purposes of high deductible health plans in connection with health savings accounts.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 579. An act to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to improve foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 919. An act to codify Internal Revenue Service guidance relating to treatment of certain services and items for chronic conditions as meeting the preventive care deductible safe harbor for purposes of high deductible health plans in connection with health savings accounts; to the Committee on Finance.

#### MEASURES DISCHARGED PETITION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, hereby direct that the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 7, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission relating to "Addressing the Homework Gap Through the E-Rate Program" and, further, that the joint resolution be immediately placed upon the Legislative Calendar under General Orders.

Ted Cruz, Pete Ricketts, John R. Curtis, Deb Fischer, Eric Schmitt, Bill Hagerty, Todd Young, Marsha Blackburn, Ted Budd, Shelley Moore Capito, Mike Lee, Tim Sheehy, James C. Justice, Ron Johnson, Rand Paul, Joni Ernst, Thom Tillis, Jerry Moran, Jim Banks, Tommy Tuberville, Mike Crapo, Bernie Moreno, John Barrasso, John Cornyn, Tim Scott, Markwayne Mullin, Roger F. Wicker, Cynthia M. Lummis, Tom Cotton, Ashley Moody.

#### MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following joint resolution was discharged from the Committee on

Commerce, Science, and Transportation, by petition, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 802(c), and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 7. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission relating to "Addressing the Homework Gap Through the E-Rate Program".

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-477. A communication from the United States Trade Representative transmitting, pursuant to the Trade Act of 1974, the 2025 Trade Policy Agenda and the 2024 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-478. A communication from the Chair, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Civil Monetary Penalty Annual Inflation Adjustment" (RIN3147-AA33) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 28, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-479. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; New Jersey; Permits and Certificates for Minor Facilities (and Major facilities Without an Operating Permit), and Air Emission Control and Permitting Exemptions" (FRL No. 12459-02-R2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 28, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-480. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Japan in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-084) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-481. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-089) for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad to Japan received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-482. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Ukraine in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-098) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-483. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Depart-

ment of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Colombia in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-104) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-484. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to various countries in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-106) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-485. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Data Mining Activities by Federal Agencies" received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-486. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Determination Under Section 36(b) (1) of the Arms Export Control Act"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### 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 Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Mr. LEE):

S. 848. A bill to provide for joint reports by relevant Federal agencies to Congress regarding incidents of terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MORENO:

S. 849. A bill to prohibit displaying the flag of a country other than the United States on Capitol Hill and to prohibit Members of Congress from using official funds to purchase the flag of a country other than the United States; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 850. A bill to amend the Northern Border Security Review Act to require updates to the northern border threat analysis and the northern border strategy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BANKS (for himself, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. HAWLEY):

S. 851. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to disqualify any State that discriminates against parents or guardians who oppose medical, surgical, pharmacological, psychological treatment, or clothing and social changes related to affirming the subjective claims of gender identity expressed by any minor if such claimed identity is inconsistent with such minor's biological sex from receiving funding under such Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BLUNT ROCHES-TER, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CANT-

WELL, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. GALLEG0, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KELLY, Mr. KIM, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SLOTKIN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 852. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act, the Labor Management Relations Act, 1947, and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 853. A bill to improve the SBIR and STTR programs under the Small Business Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 854. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish the Life Sciences Research Security Board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

S. 855. A bill to require executive branch employees to report certain royalties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. HAWLEY):

S. 856. A bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to clarify a provision relating to certain contents of registrations under that Act; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CURTIS (for himself, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. HICKENLOOPER):

S. 857. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the exclusion for certain conservation subsidies to include subsidies for water conservation or efficiency measures, storm water management measures, and wastewater management measures; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. JUSTICE (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 858. A bill to authorize the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish a commemorative work on the National Mall to honor the extraordinary acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LUJÁN (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 859. A bill to modify the requirements applicable to locatable minerals on public domain land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 860. A bill to modify the information about countries exporting methamphetamine that is included in the annual International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, to require a report to Congress on the seizure

and production of certain illicit drugs, to impose sanctions with respect to the production and trafficking into the United States, of synthetic opioids, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 861. A bill to streamline the sharing of information among Federal disaster assistance agencies, to expedite the delivery of life-saving assistance to disaster survivors, to speed the recovery of communities from disasters, to protect the security and privacy of information provided by disaster survivors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. TUBERVILLE (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 862. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish hyperbaric oxygen therapy to certain veterans with traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 863. A bill to provide consumers with the right to delete their genomic data, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 864. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to apply financial assistance towards the cost-sharing requirements of health insurance plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 865. A bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require certain disclosures by registrants regarding exemptions under the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 866. A bill to require executive agencies to take steps to better meet the statutory deadline for processing communications use applications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LUJÁN (for himself, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 867. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that the Federal Communications Commission may not take action against a broadcast licensee or any other person on the basis of viewpoint, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 868. A bill to support democracy and the rule of law in Georgia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 869. A bill to abolish the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks, to repeal the Federal Reserve Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 870. A bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to enhance the longevity, dignity, empowerment, and respect of older individuals who are Native Americans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 871. A bill to establish a competitive grant program to support the conservation and recovery of native plant, fungi, and animal species in the State of Hawaii, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. MORENO):

S. 872. A bill to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 to ensure that other transaction agreements are reported to USAspending.gov, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. RISCH, Mr. KELLY, Mr. BANKS, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. PETERS, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BENNET, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. GALLEGOS):

S. 873. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to preserve and recapitalize the fighter aircraft capabilities of the Air Force and its reserve components, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PETERS:

S. 874. A bill to ensure that whistleblowers, including contractors, are protected from retaliation when a Federal employee orders a reprisal, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

## SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. Res. 106. A resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KING, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. KAINE):

S. Res. 107. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of March 3 through March 7, 2025, as "National Social and Emotional Learning Week" to recognize the critical role social and emotional learning plays in supporting the academic success and overall well-being of students, educators, and families; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KIM, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. KELLY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. OSSOFF, and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. Res. 108. A resolution affirming the rule of law and the legitimacy of judicial review; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. Res. 109. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that Russian President Vladimir Putin should immediately withdraw Russian forces from Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. Res. 110. A resolution condemning Russia's illegal abduction of Ukrainian children; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

S. Res. 111. A resolution condemning the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and

officials of the Government of the Russian Federation for committing crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. Res. 112. A resolution recognizing the partnership between the United States and Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WELCH:

S. Res. 113. A resolution reaffirming the fundamental principle prohibiting any state from forcibly acquiring the territory of another state; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. Res. 114. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Russian Federation started the war against Ukraine by launching an unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. MULLIN):

S. Res. 115. A resolution relating to the death of the Honorable David Lyle Boren, former Senator for the State of Oklahoma; considered and agreed to.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 29

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mrs. MOODY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 29, a bill to make daylight saving time permanent, and for other purposes.

S. 107

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 107, a bill to amend the Lumbee Act of 1956.

S. 121

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mrs. MOODY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 121, a bill to extend the statute of limitations for violations relating to pandemic-era programs to be 10 years.

S. 167

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 167, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to punish criminal offenses targeting law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

S. 193

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 193, a bill to repeal the Alien Enemies Act.

S. 237

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGOS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 237, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide public safety officer benefits for exposure-related cancers, and for other purposes.

S. 332

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut



(Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 332, a bill to require a study on Holocaust education efforts of States, local educational agencies, and public elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

S. 335

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 335, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to rebase the calculation of payments for sole community hospitals and Medicare-dependent hospitals, and for other purposes.

S. 373

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to prohibit discrimination based on political affiliation in granting disaster assistance.

S. 410

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 410, a bill to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to improve benefits and services for surviving spouses, and for other purposes.

S. 455

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. KIM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 455, a bill to amend section 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to limit immigration enforcement actions at sensitive locations, to clarify the powers of immigration officers at sensitive locations, and for other purposes.

S. 522

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. 522, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to modify the frequency of board of directors meetings, and for other purposes.

S. 575

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 575, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to increase access to services provided by advanced practice registered nurses under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes.

S. 595

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 595, a bill to establish the Office of Gun Violence Prevention, and for other purposes.

S. 696

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 696, a bill to provide tem-

porary Ukrainian guest status for eligible aliens, and for other purposes.

S. 767

At the request of Mr. KELLY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 767, a bill to amend the Office of National Drug Control Prevention Act of 1998 to include new requirements for assessments and reports, and for other purposes.

S. 774

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 774, a bill to prohibit the use of funds to seek membership in the World Health Organization or to provide assessed or voluntary contributions to the World Health Organization until certain conditions have been met.

S. 813

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 813, a bill to amend the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 to provide families year-round access to nutrition incentives under the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program, and for other purposes.

S. 838

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 838, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income interest received on certain loans secured by rural or agricultural real property.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 866. A bill to require executive agencies to take steps to better meet the statutory deadline for processing communications use applications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. 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. 866

*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 "Accelerating Broadband Permits Act".

#### SEC. 2. TRACKING AND IMPROVING PROCESSING TIMES FOR COMMUNICATIONS USE APPLICATIONS.

Section 6409(b)(3) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1455(b)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(E) TRACKING AND IMPROVING PROCESSING TIMES.—

"(i) DATA CONTROLS.—An executive agency shall develop controls to ensure that data is

sufficiently accurate and complete to track the processing time for each application described in subparagraph (A).

"(ii) REQUIREMENT TO ANALYZE, ADDRESS, AND REPORT ON DELAY FACTORS.—With respect to the factors that contribute to delays in processing applications described in subparagraph (A), an executive agency shall—

"(I) analyze the factors as the delays are occurring;

"(II) take actions to address the factors; and

"(III) provide an annual report on the factors to—

"(aa) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

"(bb) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

"(cc) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

"(dd) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

"(ee) each committee of Congress with jurisdiction over the executive agency.

"(iii) METHOD FOR ALERTING STAFF TO AT-RISK APPLICATIONS.—An executive agency shall establish a method to alert employees of the executive agency to any application described in subparagraph (A) with respect to which the executive agency is at risk of failing to meet the 270-day deadline under that subparagraph."

#### SEC. 3. MINIMUM BROADBAND PROJECT COST.

Section 41001(6)(A) of the FAST Act (42 U.S.C. 4370m(6)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (iii), by striking "or" at the end;

(2) by redesignating clause (iv) as clause (v); and

(3) by inserting after clause (iii) the following:

"(iv)(I) is subject to NEPA;

"(II) involves the construction of infrastructure for broadband; and

"(III) is likely to require a total investment of more than \$5,000,000; or".

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 106—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 106

Whereas, as of March 2025, there are approximately 4,100,000,000 women and girls in the world, making up ½ of the world's population;

Whereas women and girls around the world—

(1) have fundamental human rights;

(2) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families and driving positive change in their communities;

(3) contribute substantially to food security, economic growth, the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the sustainability of peace and stability;

(4) are affected in different and often disproportionate ways by global, country, and community circumstances, including economic downturns, global health concerns, conflict, and migration; and

(5) must have meaningful protections and opportunities to more fully participate in and lead the political, social, and economic lives of their communities and countries;

Whereas the advancement and empowerment of women and girls around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United

States and is critical to the achievement of global peace, prosperity, and sustainability;

Whereas, on October 6, 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-68; 131 Stat. 1202) was enacted into law, which includes requirements for a government-wide “Women, Peace, and Security Strategy” to promote and strengthen the participation of women in peace negotiations and conflict prevention overseas, enhanced training for relevant United States Government personnel, and follow-up evaluations of the effectiveness of the strategy;

Whereas the United States Strategy and National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, dated October 2023, recognizes that—

(1) the “implementation of the [Women, Peace, and Security] agenda is both a moral and a strategic imperative for U.S. foreign policy and national security”, reiterating that “the status of women and the stability of nations are inextricably linked”;

(2) the challenges posed to the United States and the global community cannot be solved without addressing the inequities faced by ½ of the world’s population; and

(3) the United States must “eliminate barriers to women’s meaningful participation . . . in peace and security decision-making processes” in order to “achieve and safeguard our national security priorities” and achieve “sustainable peace, international security, and economic stability”;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (commonly referred to as “UN Women”), peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women and women’s groups play a meaningful role in the negotiation process;

Whereas, according to a study by the International Peace Institute, a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas, every year, approximately 12,000,000 girls are married before they reach the age of 18, which means that, on average—

(1) nearly 33,000 girls are married every day; or

(2) nearly 28 girls are married every minute;

Whereas, despite global progress, it is predicted that by 2030 more than 100,000,000 girls will marry before reaching the age of 18, and approximately 2,400,000 girls who are married before reaching the age of 18 are under the age of 15;

Whereas girls living in countries affected by conflict or other humanitarian crises are often the most vulnerable to child marriage, and 9 of the 10 countries with the highest rates of child marriage are experiencing humanitarian crises;

Whereas, on August 15, 2021, the Taliban entered Kabul, Afghanistan, and toppled the elected government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, resulting in de facto Taliban rule over the people of Afghanistan;

Whereas the Taliban continues to restrict the ability of women and girls to exist in Afghan society, including by—

(1) prohibiting girls from going to school past sixth grade, including banning women from attending university;

(2) severely limiting the employment that women can pursue outside of their households;

(3) mandating that women cover their heads and faces in public and punishing those who wear brightly colored clothing;

(4) restricting the independent movement of women and girls and closing public spaces for women, including parks, salons, and gyms;

(5) closing domestic abuse shelters, sometimes forcing residents to return to their abusive families;

(6) preventing women aid workers from operating in Afghanistan, thus restricting operations in support of humanitarian assistance for all Afghans;

(7) jailing women human rights defenders; and

(8) limiting access to women’s healthcare, including preventative and emergency services, and requiring a male chaperone at most clinics and hospitals;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund (commonly referred to as “UNICEF”)—

(1) globally, 1 in 5 girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have been victims of some form of physical violence;

(2) approximately 370,000,000 girls and young women worldwide, about 1 in 8, have experienced forced sexual acts before the age of 18; and

(3) an estimated 1 in 3 women around the world have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas the overall level of violence against women is a better predictor of the peacefulness of a country, the compliance of a country with international treaty obligations, and the relations of a country with neighboring countries than indicators measuring the level of democracy, level of wealth, or level of institutionalization of the country;

Whereas women around the world remain vastly underrepresented in government positions, as women account for only 26.9 percent of national parliamentarians and 23.3 percent of government ministers;

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve strong and lasting economic growth, self-reliance, and political and social stability;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—

(1) approximately 122,000,000 girls between the ages of 6 and 17 remain out of school;

(2) girls living in countries affected by conflict are 2.5 times more likely to be out of primary school than boys;

(3) girls are twice as likely as boys to never set foot in a classroom; and

(4) up to 30 percent of girls who drop out of school do so because of adolescent pregnancy or child marriage;

Whereas women around the world face a variety of constraints that severely limit their economic participation and productivity and remain underrepresented in the labor force;

Whereas, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations—

(1) agriculture and food systems are a major source of livelihoods, particularly for rural women;

(2) wage and productivity gaps persist in agriculture and food systems, despite the crucial role that women play in those sectors;

(3) the work of women in agriculture and food systems is more likely than that of men to be part-time, irregular, informal, vulnerable, labor-intensive, and low-skilled;

(4) in countries reporting on Sustainable Development Goal 5.a.1, more men than women are owners or have rights to agricultural land; and

(5) the empowerment of women can have important benefits for agricultural productivity, nutrition, and food security;

Whereas the economic empowerment of women is inextricably linked to a myriad of other internationally recognized human rights that are essential to the ability of women to thrive as economic actors, including—

(1) living lives free of violence and exploitation;

(2) achieving the highest possible standard of health and well-being;

(3) enjoying full legal and human rights, such as access to registration, identification, and citizenship documents, and freedom of movement;

(4) access to formal and informal education;

(5) access to, and equal protection under, land and property rights;

(6) access to fundamental labor rights;

(7) the implementation of policies to address disproportionate care burdens; and

(8) receiving business and management skills and leadership opportunities;

Whereas, according to the World Health Organization, global maternal mortality decreased by approximately 34 percent from 2000 to 2020, yet approximately 800 women and girls continue to die from preventable causes relating to pregnancy or childbirth each day, and 95 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries, putting the global community off-track to meeting Sustainable Development Goal 3.1 for reducing maternal deaths;

Whereas the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022, has resulted in a disproportionate number of women and children seeking safety outside of Ukraine;

Whereas those women and girls, like women and girls in all humanitarian emergencies, including those subject to forced displacement, face increased and exacerbated vulnerabilities to—

(1) gender-based violence, including rape, child marriage, domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation and assault;

(2) disruptions in education and livelihood;

(3) lack of access to health services; and

(4) food insecurity and malnutrition;

Whereas malnutrition poses a variety of threats to women and girls specifically, as malnutrition can weaken their immune systems, making them more susceptible to infections, and affects their capacity to survive childbirth, and children born of malnourished women and girls are more likely to have cognitive impairments and higher risk of disease throughout their lives;

Whereas it is imperative—

(1) to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and girls; and

(2) to afford women and girls every opportunity to be equal members of their communities; and

Whereas March 8, 2025, is recognized as International Women’s Day, a global day—

(1) to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women in the past, present, and future; and

(2) to recognize the obstacles that women face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women’s Day;

(2) recognizes that the fundamental human rights of women and girls have intrinsic value that affect the quality of life of women and girls;

(3) recognizes that the empowerment of women and girls is inextricably linked to the potential of a country to generate—

(A) economic growth and self-reliance;

(B) sustainable peace and democracy; and

(C) inclusive security;

(4) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women human rights defenders, activists, and civil society leaders, who have worked throughout history to ensure that women and girls are guaranteed equality and fundamental human rights;

(5) applauds the women around the world who stand against oppression in any form and fight for a better future, especially in Ukraine, Iran, and Afghanistan;

(6) recognizes the unique cultural, historical, and religious differences throughout the world and urges the United States Government to act with respect and understanding toward legitimate differences when promoting any policies;

(7) reaffirms the commitment—

(A) to end discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(B) to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of women and girls;

(C) to pursue policies that guarantee the fundamental human rights of women and girls worldwide; and

(D) to promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of society and community, including conflict prevention, protection, peacemaking, and peacebuilding;

(8) supports sustainable, measurable, and global development that seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and

(9) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 107—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF MARCH 3 THROUGH MARCH 7, 2025, AS “NATIONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING WEEK” TO RECOGNIZE THE CRITICAL ROLE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PLAYS IN SUPPORTING THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND OVERALL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND FAMILIES**

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KING, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 107

Whereas decades of research demonstrate how social and emotional learning (referred to in this preamble as “SEL”) promotes academic achievement, mental wellness, healthy behaviors, and long-term success;

Whereas, according to a study by researchers at the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, Loyola University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois at Chicago, SEL programs that addressed the 5 core social and emotional competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decisionmaking) increased academic performance by 11 percentile points, improved the ability of students to manage stress, and improved the attitudes of students about themselves, others, and school;

Whereas, according to a study by researchers at Yale University, the University of Rochester, the University of Maryland, and Loyola University of Chicago, students participating in SEL at school had higher “school functioning”, including grades, test scores, attendance, homework completion, and engagement;

Whereas, according to research conducted by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Harvard University, the COVID-19 pandemic heightened the urgency of providing greater assistance to students, educators, and families to address the mental health, behavioral, and other systemic challenges that impede the academic and de-

velopmental improvement and success of students;

Whereas a study in the Journal of Benefit-Cost Analysis found that, on average, for every dollar spent on the evidence-based SEL programs examined, there was an \$11 return on investment;

Whereas, according to a study published by the American Public Health Association, the development of social and emotional skills in kindergarten has been associated with improved outcomes for young adults later in life, resulting in reduced societal costs for public assistance, public housing, police involvement, and detention;

Whereas, in response to a Pew Research Center survey of parents of K-12 students, 93 percent of the parents said that schools teaching children to develop social and emotional skills was important;

Whereas research from Yale University, the University of Cantabria, Jagiellonian University, and Pennsylvania State University indicates that educators who demonstrate greater social and emotional competence are frequently more capable of protecting themselves from burnout; and

Whereas the week of March 3 through March 7, 2025, would be an appropriate period to designate as “National Social and Emotional Learning Week”: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of “National Social and Emotional Learning Week”;

(2) recognizes the role that social and emotional learning plays in promoting academic achievement, mental and behavioral health, and future career success for students;

(3) expresses support for expanding access to social and emotional learning for each student and teacher; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States to identify opportunities among Federal agencies to advance social and emotional learning to support the academic success and overall well-being of students, parents, educators, and their communities.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 108—AFFIRMING THE RULE OF LAW AND THE LEGITIMACY OF JUDICIAL REVIEW**

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KIM, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. KELLY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. OSSOFF, and Mr. WARNOCK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 108

Whereas the Constitution of the United States establishes 3 separate but equal branches of Government;

Whereas Article III of the Constitution of the United States vests the “judicial Power of the United States . . . in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish”;

Whereas the Supreme Court of the United States, in *Marbury v. Madison*, established the principle of judicial review, which empowers Federal courts to hold that a legislative or executive act violates the Constitution of the United States;

Whereas Vice President Vance and other prominent elected officials have made remarks suggesting the President or the executive branch may ignore the constitutional

authority of the Federal Judiciary and disregard a decision of a Federal court; and

Whereas the President or the executive branch ignoring the constitutional authority of the Federal Judiciary and disregarding a decision of a Federal court would precipitate a constitutional crisis: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate affirms that—

(1) Article III of the Constitution of the United States vests the “judicial Power of the United States . . . in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish”;

(2) as Chief Justice Marshall held in the Supreme Court's landmark 1803 decision *Marbury v. Madison*, “It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is”; and

(3) the Constitution of the United States and established precedent require the executive branch to comply with all Federal court rulings.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 109—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN SHOULD IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW RUSSIAN FORCES FROM UKRAINE**

Mr. SANDERS submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 109

Whereas, on February 24, 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law;

Whereas Russian land, air, and naval forces have attacked, invaded, and occupied territory within Ukraine for more than 3 years, and such attacks are still taking place;

Whereas Putin's unprovoked attack on Ukraine has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, including many civilians;

Whereas Russian forces illegally occupy approximately 20 percent of Ukraine's sovereign territory; and

Whereas Russian forces have committed grave human rights violations, including widespread attacks against civilians and civilian objects: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Russian Federation must—

(1) immediately, completely, and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces from any territory within the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine; and

(2) immediately cease its attacks against Ukraine.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 110—CONDEMNING RUSSIA'S ILLEGAL ABDUCTION OF UKRAINIAN CHILDREN**

Mr. DURBIN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 110

Whereas, since the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Russian Federation military forces and the Government of the Russian Federation have abducted, forcibly transferred, or facilitated the illegal deportation of at least 20,000 Ukrainian children; and

Whereas the Russian Federation's abduction, forcible transfer, and facilitation of the illegal deportation of Ukrainian children has

left countless children and families with devastating physical and psychological trauma: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Russian Federation's abduction, forcible transfer, and facilitation of the illegal deportation of Ukrainian children; and

(2) implores the Russian Federation to work with the international community to ensure the return, without delay, of all forcibly transferred Ukrainian children to their families.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 111—CONDEMNING THE ARMED FORCES OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION FOR COMMITTING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND WAR CRIMES IN UKRAINE**

Mr. VAN HOLLEN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 111

Whereas, on February 18, 2023, the Department of State determined that members of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and officials of the Government of the Russian Federation have committed crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine; and

Whereas, on September 23, 2022, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine concluded that war crimes have been committed in Ukraine by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate condemns the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and officials of the Government of the Russian Federation for committing crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 112—RECOGNIZING THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND UKRAINE**

Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 112

Whereas the contribution of the United States as Ukraine's strategic partner has been of decisive importance among international allies in supporting Ukraine during the most challenging times in its history;

Whereas, on March 3, 2025, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine expressed its profound gratitude to President Donald Trump, Congress, and the American people for their firm and consistent support of Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, as well as for the security assistance packages provided to Ukraine, which have helped stabilize the situation on the frontline;

Whereas the leadership of the United States on the international stage is inseparably linked to the defense of the ideals of freedom and democracy, adherence to international agreements, and reliability in relations with allies and friends;

Whereas the security and stable development of our Nation are ensured by the unwavering support of the United States and reflect the values that have been the foundation of America's historic success, inspiring millions of Ukrainians;

Whereas support for Ukraine is more crucial than ever for the Ukrainian people and the Security and Defense Forces of Ukraine, as well as for ensuring security and stability across the entire European continent;

Whereas the people of Ukraine desire peace and believe that the personal role of President Donald Trump and his peacekeeping efforts will be decisive in the swift cessation of hostilities and the achievement of peace for Ukraine, Europe, and the entire world;

Whereas, on March 3, 2025, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine declared that it welcomes President Donald Trump's initiatives to launch a negotiation process aimed at securing peace;

Whereas the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has underscored the necessity of further developing the strategic partnership with the United States, particularly in the exploration of critical minerals; and

Whereas the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has reaffirmed that Ukraine must remain an independent and sovereign state, and the Ukrainian people free and unconquered: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the support of the United States for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in the face of the illegal invasion of its territory by the Russian Federation; and

(2) reaffirms the bonds of friendship and shared values between the people of United States and allied fighting forces.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 113—REAFFIRMING THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE PROHIBITING ANY STATE FROM FORCIBLY ACQUIRING THE TERRITORY OF ANOTHER STATE**

Mr. WELCH submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 113

Whereas the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation invaded and continue to occupy the sovereign territory of Ukraine; and

Whereas President Reagan said, "We must stand by all our democratic allies. And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives . . . to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth."': Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate reaffirms the fundamental principle that no state shall threaten or use force against the territorial integrity or political integrity of any other state.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 114—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION STARTED THE WAR AGAINST UKRAINE BY LAUNCHING AN UNPROVOKED FULL-SCALE INVASION OF UKRAINE ON FEBRUARY 24, 2022**

Mr. BENNET submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 114

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Russian Federation started the war against Ukraine by launching an unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, following the Russian Federation's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and illegal occupation of parts of the Donbas region in 2014.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 115—RELATING TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE DAVID LYLE BOREN, FORMER SENATOR FOR THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA**

Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. MULLIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 115

Whereas, on April 21, 1941, the Honorable David Lyle Boren (referred to in this preamble as "Senator Boren") was born in Washington, DC, to Lyle H. Boren and Christine McKown Boren;

Whereas Senator Boren attended public school in Seminole, Oklahoma, and Bethesda, Maryland;

Whereas Senator Boren graduated from Yale University with a bachelor's degree in 1963;

Whereas Senator Boren attended Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, earning a master's degree in 1965;

Whereas Senator Boren graduated from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in 1968, and was admitted to the Oklahoma bar;

Whereas Senator Boren served in the Oklahoma House of Representatives, representing Seminole County, from 1967 to 1974

Whereas Senator Boren was a captain in the Oklahoma National Guard from 1968 to 1974;

Whereas Senator Boren served as the Chair of the Division of Social Sciences at Oklahoma Baptist University;

Whereas, in 1974, Senator Boren successfully ran for Governor of Oklahoma, becoming the youngest governor in the United States at the age of 33, and served 1 term;

Whereas, from 1979 to 1994, Senator Boren served in the Senate representing the State of Oklahoma;

Whereas Senator Boren served as a member of several Senate committees, including—

(1) from 1979 to 1994—

(A) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; and

(B) the Committee on Finance;

(2) from 1993 to 1994—

(A) the Joint Committee on Taxation; and

(B) the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, serving as co-chair;

(3) from 1985 to 1992, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, including serving as the chair from 1987 to 1992;

(4) from 1983 to 1990, the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate; and

(5) from 1987 to 1988, the Senate Select Committee on Secret Military Assistance to Iran and Nicaraguan Opposition;

Whereas Senator Boren retired from the Senate and became President of the University of Oklahoma, serving from 1994 to 2018;

Whereas Senator Boren spearheaded many reforms at the University of Oklahoma, including—

(1) opening the Honors College;

(2) expanding study abroad programs;

(3) beautification efforts; and

(4) support for athletics;

Whereas Senator Boren was the first Oklahoman to serve the State of Oklahoma as a State legislator, Governor, Senator, and President of the University of Oklahoma; and

Whereas, on February 20, 2025, Senator Boren died at the age of 83, leaving behind his wife, Molly, and 2 children, Dan and Carrie: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That—

(1) the Senate—

(A) has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death

of the Honorable David Lyle Boren, former Senator for the State of Oklahoma; and

(B) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate—

(i) communicate this resolution to the House of Representatives; and

(ii) transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the family of the Honorable David Lyle Boren; and

(2) when the Senate adjourns on the date of the adoption of this resolution, the Senate stands adjourned as the further mark of respect to the memory of the Honorable David Lyle Boren.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1229. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution S. Res. 108, affirming the rule of law and the legitimacy of judicial review; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SA 1230. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution S. Res. 108, *supra*; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 1229.** Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution S. Res. 108, affirming the rule of law and the legitimacy of judicial review; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; as follows:

In paragraph (3) of the matter following the resolving clause, strike “all” and insert “lawful”.

**SA 1230.** Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the resolution S. Res. 108, affirming the rule of law and the legitimacy of judicial review; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; as follows:

In the preamble, before the first *whereas* clause, insert the following:

Whereas the Senate Democratic Leader, in 2020, threatened the Supreme Court of the United States to influence its rulings on abortion saying “I want to tell you, Gorsuch. I want to tell you, Kavanaugh. You have released the whirlwind, and you will pay the price. You won’t know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions.”;

Whereas numerous Senate Democrats in recent years have attacked the legitimacy of the Supreme Court of the United States and suggested that it was a “partisan and reactionary court”;

Whereas during the administration of President Biden, the executive branch routinely flouted the nation’s immigration, civil rights, and other laws to advance a partisan and unlawful agenda;

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I have eight 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 au-

thorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

#### COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

#### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

#### COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

#### COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting.

#### COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

#### COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

#### SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in open and closed session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., to receive testimony.

#### PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for the following detailees in my office to be granted floor privileges until the end of this Congress: Joel Coito, Dean Legidakes, and Thomas Hastings.

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

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following press secretary be granted floor privileges until March 6, 2025: Allison Abrahamian.

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my mili-

tary fellow Capt. Sean McSpirit be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this year.

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

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2025

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 6; that following the prayer and the 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, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume Executive Calendar No. 25, Troy Edgar; further, that if cloture is invoked on the Edgar nomination, all time be expired at 1:45 p.m. and the Senate vote on confirmation; that following confirmation of the Edgar nomination, the Senate resume consideration of Executive Calendar No. 29, Lori Chavez-DeRemer, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture; further, that if cloture is invoked on the nomination, all time be considered expired and the Senate vote on the Chavez-DeRemer nomination at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader on Monday, March 10; that following the cloture vote on the Chavez-DeRemer nomination, the Senate proceed to legislative session and resume the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 18, S. 331, and the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday’s session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, Senators should expect one vote at 11 a.m. tomorrow and three votes at 1:45 p.m.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. BARRASSO. 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, as a further mark of respect to the late David Lyle Boren, former Senator from Oklahoma, the Senate, at 7:13 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 10 a.m.

#### CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate March 5, 2025:

#### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

TODD BLANCHE, OF FLORIDA, TO BE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL.