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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, March 14, 2025, at 9 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2025

The Senate met at 11 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.

Spirit of the living God, fix our thoughts on You. Let not anything impure distract us from listening to You. Lord, focus the attention of our lawmakers on serving You, as they seek to become salt and light to our world. Give them the wisdom to discern the things You desire to teach them. May they strive to strengthen their friendships with each other, finding common ground.

Lord, inspire our lawmakers to become disciplined followers, always ready to obey Your commands. May their lives become open letters from You that people can read with joy.

Lord, guide, teach, and strengthen us all until we reflect Your image of purity, gentleness, honesty, humility, generosity, and love.

We pray in Your wonderful 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS AND EXTENSIONS ACT, 2025—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 26, H.R. 1968.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 26, H.R. 1968, a bill making further continuing appropriations and other extensions for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Stephen Miran, of New York, to be Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

RECOGNIZING THE 133RD TEST SQUADRON

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a military unit that is being retired in Fort Dodge, IA.

On March 2, the colors were retired for the 133rd Test Squadron in Fort Dodge, IA. The 133rd has an extraordinary legacy. Since its inception in 1948, the 133rd has stood as a pillar of excellence, evolving from radar spotting to pioneering the use of advanced communication technologies.

From the Korean war to the Global War on Terror, the 133rd has answered our Nation's call with unwavering dedication. Its innovation has helped ensure our military remains at the forefront of defense capabilities.

To the men, women, and families of the 133rd, past and present, thank you for your service, sacrifice, and commitment to our State and Nation. Your impact is immeasurable, and your legacy will endure.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

HALT FENTANYL ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday, I came to the floor to discuss the terrible human cost of fentanyl: the lives lost, the families changed, the futures destroyed. In 2022, we lost 295 people a day to drug overdoses, the vast majority of them opioids and, specifically, fentanyl. Twenty-two teenagers died each week that same year from drug overdoses. That is like losing an entire high school classroom every week.

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

The majority of drug overdoses in this country are from fentanyl, and a lot of illegal fentanyl comes across our southern border in the form of fentanyl analogs, which are versions of fentanyl created with slight chemical variations in an attempt to dodge law enforcement. So getting this crisis under control requires targeting that flow of drugs.

That starts, of course, with securing our southern border so the cartels can't hide behind a flood of illegal immigration and so that the Border Patrol is free to focus on cross-border crime.

In just a few short weeks, President Trump has made major progress on this front, dramatically slowing illegal crossings and taking significant steps to halt the flow of fentanyl across our borders.

Now it is Congress's turn. The bill before us today, the HALT Fentanyl Act, would permanently classify fentanyl analogs—the fentanyl that cartels are making—as schedule I substances. In other words, fentanyl analogs would be permanently listed as the deadliest type of drug, and that would ensure that law enforcement agencies have the greatest flexibility to combat the scourge of fentanyl and hold accountable those who trade in destroying lives.

During his first term, President Trump temporarily classified fentanyl analogs as schedule I substances. And because it is so important, Congress has extended that classification several times. Now, it is time to make it permanent.

I was very pleased that we had a robust bipartisan vote, last week, on moving to this bill, and I hope that same bipartisanship is reflected in the final vote. There could hardly be a more commonsense piece of legislation, and every Member of this body should be able to agree that fentanyl analogs, which have been responsible for so many overdose deaths, should be classified as schedule I drugs.

The fentanyl crisis affects every corner of society and every State in the Union, and my State of South Dakota is no exception. Last year, in Sioux Falls, police seized enough fentanyl to kill 2.5 million people—2.5 million—and that was in just one South Dakota city.

I am grateful to Senators CASSIDY, GRASSLEY, and HEINRICH for introducing this legislation and to other Senators, like Senator JOHNSON and Senator GRAHAM, whose work has drawn attention to the fentanyl crisis. I hope that, in the next few days, Senators of both parties will unite to pass the HALT Fentanyl Act and ensure that law enforcement has critical tools to combat this crisis, protect our cities, and protect our children.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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 MINORITY LEADER

The minority leader is recognized.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, Donald Trump and Republicans have wanted to take away Americans' hard-earned entitlement benefits for a very long time.

This week, Elon Musk said the quiet part out loud, and every single American should be alarmed. He said:

> Most of the Federal spending is entitlements. So that is the big one to eliminate.

Of course, he is referring to Social Security.

Elon Musk is saying it plainly: Republicans' big goal is to eliminate—his words—Social Security and Medicare benefits.

The American people deserve to know where Senators stand on protecting Social Security. The American people deserve to know that. Are Senate Republicans fine with the terrible things Elon Musk and DOGE are doing to Social Security? Do they agree with Mr. Musk that it is one giant scam? We have seen the Social Security offices slashed so that people get less services. Is that the first step to eliminate Social Security? It seems to be.

Donald Trump ridiculed Social Security by just lying about people who have been on the books 200 years and making people think they got benefits, which, of course, they didn't. It seems he is in on the plan. It is not just Musk; it is Trump, too.

Well, all of these are simple questions, and Americans deserve to know the truth. If Republicans truly support Social Security, they need to break their silence and condemn Musk's attacks. DOGE has already—already—taken over the Social Security Administration and accessed the private data and benefits of tens of millions of Americans. Why are they after that? Why are they after that data? My guess is so they can hurt the program, close the program, eliminate the program.

Republicans and Trump and DOGE are gutting the Agency. They are firing thousands of staff, leading to office closures, longer wait times, and deteriorating service. In my State, they have already announced a few offices being closed. I am sure that is true in every other State.

If Mr. Musk and DOGE are allowed to keep going, at the moment, seniors will have to wait longer for their benefits, but in the future, they may not get them. People with disabilities will wait longer times for their claims to be processed, but they may not get them. Americans will spend more time waiting to talk to someone on the phone to get help with their benefits. But it seems, where they are headed, there will be no one on the phone to talk to and no benefits to be received.

Social Security is one of the most popular programs. Why the heck would any President—any erstwhile Vice President—Musk—maybe he is President—why would any party want to eliminate Social Security? Why would they want to cut Social Security, one of the most popular Federal programs we have? I will tell you why. They are frenetic on tax breaks for the billionaires, and they are taking away things from Americans. This is not what the American people want. This is not efficiency.

For Elon Musk, the richest man in the world, to not understand how a senior citizen depends on the $1,100 a month to buy food, to purchase vitally needed medicines—what arrogance. What arrogance to not even deign to understand it.

We will cut the government.

Social Security is not the government; it is people. It is the money they put in. It is the money they now get back. It helps them live a decent life.

If Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and Republicans continue to go after benefits like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—I have no reason to think they won't—Democrats will fight it, but most importantly, the American people will not stand for it.

ECONOMY

Mr. President, now on the economy, Donald Trump's erratic decisions—yes; no; maybe; this country; that country—are creating havoc in the economy, and we are starting to see dark clouds hanging over our economy because of Donald Trump and his whole team's erratic performance when it comes to the economy.

Listen to this: For the first time, CNN's polling shows that a clear majority—56 percent of the people—disapprove of Donald Trump's handling of the economy. Some of his pundits say he won the election because of his performance on the economy. Well, if now 56 percent of people disapprove, he is not in very good electoral shape now or in the future.

This week, forecasters say that thanks to Donald Trump's chaos and tariffs, the odds of a dreaded recession have started to crawl up. One J.P. Morgan report puts it, alarmingly, at 40 percent—40 percent chance of recession already. Trump is in office 2, 3 months. There was no chance—little chance of a recession the day he took office, and now it is up to 40 percent according to J.P. Morgan.

Household debt is also growing. The average household credit card debt surpassed $10,000 for the first time since 2009. People are starting to fall behind on their car payments at the highest rate in decades.

Donald Trump promised an economic boom during the campaign, but 2 months into his Presidency, Trump is already backtracking and telling Americans they should be OK with ''pain'' and ''disturbance'' with the economy.

Donald Trump tells Americans: You should be OK with pain and disturbance with the economy. That is pretty rich coming from a billionaire who said he would bring cost down on day one and doesn't have to suffer when prices go up, wages stay flat, or be fired and not have any income.

Donald Trump knows his policies could wreck the economy, but he is doing it anyway. Why? Same thing as Social Security. Why are they doing all these crazy things that Americans don't like? One reason—one reason alone: tax breaks for billionaires, the North Star of the Republican Party's goals.

TESLA AND THE WHITE HOUSE

Mr. President, now on Tesla and the White House, Donald Trump yesterday did an unseemly, self-serving—it just turns your stomach, what they do to help one another. He did an unseemly, self-serving business advertisement for his No. 1 political patron on the White House lawn, Elon Musk. What do you think Americans think of that when they see Trump pushing Elon Musk's—the richest man in the world's—Teslas? A man born with a limousine, who for the rest of his life will be driven by Secret Service, was supposedly buying a new car and checking out his EV options. What a joke.

This was a grossly transparent attempt to get Donald Trump's MAGA supporters to purchase Teslas after sales have slumped. That has driven the company's stock price into a wall. We all know what Donald Trump thinks about stock prices—it is the end-all and be-all.

But for any of the new MAGA converts who are now joining the EV revolution even though they have said they have hated it—MAGA said they hated it—let me just say to these MAGA converts who might buy an EV to bail out their buddy Elon: If you are below the income limit, you can thank Democrats for your $7,500 EV tax credit.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call 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.

INFLATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor having just heard my colleague, the Democrat leader, senior Senator from New York. Formerly, he had been the majority leader; now the minority leader because of an election we just had. I heard him talk about the fact that household debt is up.

Every American who has lived through the last 4 years knows that household debt is up, and they know why household debt is up. It is up because we have been living through 4 years of a previous administration, which was an administration of high prices and open borders, and people have been paying the price; and the debt of the American families is much higher than it was when they took over.

That is why President Trump and Republicans in the Senate and the House are now in a situation where we are trying to get America back on track. So to hear the minority leader talk about household debt being up, there is a reason, and they are the cause of that. And so I am delighted by seeing the headlines that just came out this morning in terms of the economy under President Trump.

New York Times, ''U.S. Inflation Shows Improvement.'' We need a lot of improvement there. Happy to see it is showing improvement; we have a long way to go.

Wall Street Journal, ''Inflation . . . Lower Than Expected.''

Republicans knew that we would be able to deliver for the American people. We are doing just that. Now, I am from an energy State. The Presiding Officer is from an energy State. We produce a lot of American energy. I am from Wyoming, America's energy breadbasket, a powerhouse of energy. What do we see about energy prices?

The average price of gasoline in the U.S.—

The headline is—

dropped for the third straight week.

That is what happens when you have an American energy policy—a policy that puts American energy first. Affordable, available, reliable energy. Not what we lived with through the last 4 years where they wanted to prioritize—believe it or not—the climate over energy for American families that was affordable, available, and reliable.

So there you have it.

The average price of gasoline in the United States dropped for the third straight week.

Additionally, the national average is now just a little over $3 a gallon, the lowest March price in 4 years.

HALT FENTANYL ACT

Mr. President, I come to the floor today, however, to talk about the bill that is currently before us on the floor of the U.S. Senate. And it is a bill relating to the fentanyl crisis in our country. We are seeing it in every State in the country, including the Presiding Officer's home State of Montana and my home State of Wyoming. And so in many ways every State has been impacted by the crisis of fentanyl.

Look, I practiced medicine in Wyoming for 24 years. Illicit fentanyl is poisoning and killing Americans every day. More than 74,000 Americans died last year as a result of this poison.

Every State is impacted to the point that it is the No. 1 cause of death now for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45. When you take a look at the number of people that are being killed, this has actually resulted in lowering the life expectancy of the American people. Every American in one way or another is a victim of fentanyl because everyone knows someone who has lost a loved one to illicit fentanyl. No community has been spared.

We are losing our sons and our daughters, our brothers and our sisters, friends and neighbors, our fellow citizens.

Congress needs to treat illicit fentanyl like the crisis it truly is, and we are going to do that today in the U.S. Senate. Look, our law enforcement officers are working to stop this flow of illicit fentanyl into this country. They are doing a great job now cracking down on drug dealers.

But what they need and they asked for and have come to us with is a desire for certainty within the law. Right now, law enforcement officers are fighting against these merchants of death, and they seem to be doing it, but they have one hand tied behind their back.

The Senate has an opportunity today to change that. We have legislation to the floor that is going to save lives. It is called the HALT Fentanyl Act. This bipartisan legislation permanently schedules deadly illicit fentanyl as a schedule I drug.

That is the way things are scheduled under the Controlled Substances Act. This is the reason it is an important change, because it means tough penalties for fentanyl traffickers.

It means certainty for law enforcement. Now, that is going to be a law enforcement tool that they have been asking for in our effort to get fentanyl off our streets. This is why Senators, just on Monday evening, unanimously agreed to debate the legislation. We now, after working and working on this, now have strong bipartisan support.

In 2018, the Drug Enforcement Agency temporarily scheduled illicit fentanyl on a short-term basis under this schedule I. They found it started to make a difference. Congress voted a number of times to extend this classification—bipartisan votes.

Republicans have pushed for years to make this change permanent. The Democrat Leader said, ''No, no,'' when he was the leader of the majority. He wouldn't bring the permanent solution to the floor of the U.S. Senate. He would not allow us to have votes on the HALT Fentanyl Act. Why? Because he bowed to the soft-on-crime Democrats, the left wing of his leftist party. They didn't want tougher penalties on drug traffickers. That was the clear message behind the Democrats' blockade.

What Americans need, we want safety, we want security, we want it for our families, we want it for our communities, and the status quo of fentanyl is not an option. The border crisis of the last 4 years is what fueled the fentanyl crisis. An open border meant more illegal drugs flowing across our southern border.

Most of the fentanyl in the United States actually comes from Mexico. It

is produced, it is transported, and it is sold by transnational criminal cartels—criminal cartels. They import chemicals to make the poison from communist China and then traffic it into the United States.

The secure border that President Trump is delivering does take a chunk out of the cartels' bottom line, and they notice it. The cartels are actually having to shut down their drug labs. They are running scared. We need to keep them on the run. Now is the time to turn up the heat.

Passing the HALT Fentanyl Act will aid President Trump's successful efforts to secure the border and to stop these killer cartels.

On one point, let me end with this: The Senate Judiciary Committee heard from parents who lost their children to fentanyl overdoses. One of those parents who testified, Jaime Puerta of California, lost his son to a fentanyl overdose. His son was just 16 years old. Listen to what Jaime had to say here in the Senate. He said:

My son had consumed what he thought was a blue M30 Oxycodone pill, but, in fact, had, unknowingly—

And the man went on to say—

I repeat, unknowingly ingested an illicitly manufactured counterfeit opioid made of nothing more than filler, a binding agent, and illicit fentanyl. This was deceptively made to look exactly like a pharmaceutical grade oxycodone pill, and it killed him.

Look, we need to pass the HALT Fentanyl Act. We need to do it today. We need to turn the tide against this fentanyl epidemic. This is the legislation that deserves to become law. Every major law enforcement group supports it. Most importantly, families of victims support it as well.

We have an opportunity to act today to save lives, to act now. Let's work together to get it done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

ECONOMY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, my friend and colleague from Wyoming mentioned the New York Times this morning and reports, articles, on the economy, and so I took a quick look to see if I could find the column that he was referring to, though I couldn't find it, I did find this on page B2.

Headline: ''Stocks Decline Further As Investors Struggle To Make Sense Of Trump's Latest Tariff Talk.''

The article says:

Markets whipsawed on Tuesday, as investors puzzled through President Trump's commitment to tariffs, with stocks dropping in early trading before recovering late in the day. The S&P 500 index fell 1.5 percent at its low point before recovering some ground and ending the day 0.8 percent lower.

Same page B2:

Business confidence falls as uncertainty sets in. The confidence level of small businesses dropped for a third straight month in February wiping away much of the gains notched in the aftermath of President Trump's election victory.

I don't think the Trump plan for this economy is all that clear, and it appears that the writers of the New York Times agree. Many of the people in the business community are puzzled. Some are alarmed by the tariff talk of this administration and the zigzagging approach to the economy.

So I would say, at this moment the jury is still out and sending messages to the court that they are dubious about this policy at all.

If the Presiding Officer has any question in his own mind, I suggest he starts with the farmers in his State and ask them what they think of this tariff policy. I have been meeting with them over the last several days, and they are very skeptical, to say the least.

HALT FENTANYL ACT

Mr. President, the second point I would like to make is on the HALT Fentanyl bill which is coming before us. I am going to vote for it. It extends the classification of fentanyl-type drugs as schedule I drugs, the most serious narcotics in our country.

I do say this: What we are doing is extending current policy. There is no new approach in this bill. It was reported out of committee virtually as it passed the House, and the effort in the committee—Judiciary Committee—to make it stronger or better was turned back with the argument: We can't change a word. We have to accept the current language.

As Senator BOOKER of New Jersey has said on the floor—and I have heard him—unfortunately, saying that we can't change a word means the policies of today must continue indefinitely.

I think that is a mistake. We need to consider several other elements that could help us fight these cartels and stop fentanyl, which is taking so many American lives.

Let me give you a couple examples. No. 1, the President had thunderous applause when he suggested that he was designating the cartels in Mexico as terrorist agents. I applauded along with the rest of the people in the Chamber, but I wonder if we are seriously, as a nation, treating the cartels as terrorist agents. And here is why I raise the question: One of the major complaints in Mexico is the fact that the cartels are heavily armed, sometimes more heavily armed than the Mexican military and law enforcement forces.

And they are heavily armed with weapons provided by the United States, high-powered rifles that we are sending in volume down to the cartel members to fight the Government of Mexico and to spread their deadly product into the United States and beyond.

If we seriously believe the cartels are a terrorist group, what in the world are American gun manufacturers doing supplying them with the arms that they can stop the reach of the law and military forces in Mexico? Are they terrorists, or are they customers? If they are just customers, then I don't understand this bragging about designating them as terrorists. Let's treat them as terrorists, and let's stop the flow of deadly weapons from the United States to the Mexican drug cartels.

Secondly, 80 percent of the drugs that end up in the hands of our children in America are there because of the internet. Kids have access to buying drugs. The Senator from Wyoming gave a good point and illustration of that when referring to a recent hearing we held. The 16-year-old thinking he was buying some form of oxycodone ended up buying fentanyl and dying as a result of it.

Why in the world aren't these social media sources and internet sources being held responsible? Why don't we pass laws now saying they cannot develop the end product for these cartels to sell to our children in a deadly fashion?

If they are truly terrorists, let's treat them as such. And those who are complicit in the terrorist strategy of poisoning our youth should be held accountable.

NOMINATION OF MARTIN MAKARY

Mr. President, I would like to make the following statement: The Food and Drug Administration is one of the most important Agencies in the Federal Government and the world. Every day the FDA makes life-and-death decisions, whether to approve a new cancer drug, initiate a recall of contaminated food, or keep deadly tobacco products out of the hands of our children.

This Agency, the Food and Drug Administration, oversees 20 percent of the entire American economy, nearly $3 trillion in product and services, on a budget, the FDA budget, of $6 billion annually.

Yesterday, I met with President Trump's FDA nominee Dr. Martin Makary. It was a good discussion. There were areas where I would imagine we would be able to work together, such as promoting healthy food or addressing deceptive direct-to-consumer prescription drug advertisements you see everywhere on television.

These commercials overstate the benefit about the latest wonder drugs, rattling off side effects so quickly you can hardly hear them, but always keeping you in the dark about one crucial element on each one of these drugs: How much does it cost?

My bill, which I introduced with Senator GRASSLEY, Republican of Iowa, would end Big Pharma's secrecy and require these ads to show a pricetag—just that simple. They declare the price, and they advertise it. I appreciated Dr. Makary's comments that medication can give a patient false hope if it is not affordable.

But let me share my concerns with Dr. Makary's nomination, in general. The FDA requires a Commissioner who is willing to withstand a lot of pressure from Big Pharma, Big Tobacco—maybe even the President—to protect public health. We cannot afford an FDA Commissioner who gets chewed up by Elon Musk's chain saw or stands idly by while RFK, Jr., pushes his deadly bias

against vaccines. To safeguard the foods we eat and the drugs we use, we need a leader of the Food and Drug Administration with the courage to say no.

Cigarettes are responsible for more than 480,000 deaths each year. They were responsible for my father's death. So when I came to Congress, I vowed to fight this entity. While we have succeeded in reducing youth smoking rates, anyone who thought Big Tobacco would disappear was mistaken. They rebranded with flashy new products, vaping and e-cigarettes, and they followed the same playbook they used to drive sales of Marlboros back in the 1980s, target kids.

For years, the Food and Drug Administration utterly failed. This is during the Biden administration. As a Democrat, I am reluctant to say it, but it is true, and I am going to say it. For years, the Food and Drug Administration utterly failed to protect children from the lifetime addiction fueled by e-cigarettes, many of which are sold by the largest tobacco companies.

Under the law, a vaping product is required to first prove to the FDA that its product, e-cigarettes, is ''appropriate for the protection of public health.'' That is a requirement under law. They have to prove that before they can sell on the market in the United States legally. It didn't happen under the previous Food and Drug Administration. Instead, thousands of dangerous, highly addictive e-cigarettes illegally flooded the market without FDA review, hooking a generation of kids.

By law, FDA is required to remove all unauthorized tobacco products from the market. In fact, it can do so today.

So the question is, Will the new President's FDA nominee follow the science and the law to protect our kids or will he align with the tobacco corporations that peddle this poison?

At the same time, President Trump and Elon Musk have fired thousands of Federal health workers. Before you run off celebrating efficiency, let me tell you who was terminated. One hundred twenty cancer researchers at the National Institutes of Health who were running clinical trials for new cures, disease detectives at the Centers for Disease Control who help identify and respond to outbreaks of new viruses. Does that sound like efficiency to you, to tell these cancer researchers that we don't need them any longer?

At the FDA, those fired include inspectors of drug manufacturing plants, regulators in charge of recalling faulty medical devices, and those monitoring the safety of infant formula.

For goodness' sake, we have a measles outbreak in Texas that has killed 2 and sickened 220 people, mostly unvaccinated children. It is the worst measles outbreak in a generation in America.

Instead of encouraging vaccinations to save these kids, Secretary Kennedy diminished their significance by falsely stating that measles outbreaks are ''not unusual''—his words—and issuing a statement about the outbreak stating that ''the decision to vaccinate is a personal one.'' Of course, it is a personal one. But what is his position, questioning the efficacy of vaccines, doing to that personal decision process for the ordinary American?

NIH is cutting 40 grant awards for promoting the vaccine updates and addressing hesitancy, which breaks the promise that he made to Republican Senators who were skeptical of his nomination.

The list goes on. You cannot claim that you want to make America healthy again and then allow preventable diseases to come roaring back, all while firing scientists working to address these challenges.

Will Dr. Makary stand up to Mr. KENNEDY and encourage parents to vaccinate their kids? Will he stand up to the buzz saw of Elon Musk's chain saw? to Big Tobacco? I hope that he will.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum with respect to the Miran nomination be waived.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask unanimous consent that the previously scheduled rollcall vote begin immediately.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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. 31, Stephen Miran, of New York, to be Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

John Thune, Ted Budd, Tom Cotton, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Tommy Tuberville, Katie Britt, Ashley B. Moody, Pete Ricketts, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Dan Sullivan, Roger F. Wicker, Cynthia M. Lummis, Eric Schmitt, Joni Ernst, John Hoeven, Jerry Moran, Lindsey Graham.

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 Stephen Miran, of New York, to be Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. JUSTICE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 116 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	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sheehy
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Curtis	McCormick	Wicker
Daines	Moody	Young
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Moreno	

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—3

Duckworth	Justice	Sanders

(Mr. RICKETTS assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 45. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last night, the House of Representatives passed a short-term government funding bill that would extend funding through the end of this fiscal year. That is the end of September.

I was surprised to see only one Democrat in the House, JARED GOLDEN from Maine, saw the light that a shutdown is a bad choice. Nevertheless, 212 Democrats voted against the continuing resolution, effectively voting to shut down the government.

It remains to be seen whether our colleagues here in the Senate, our Senate Democrats, will vote for a SCHUMER shutdown or not. The cognitive dissonance, though, is striking and I think worth commenting on.

If I listen to our colleagues across the aisle, they claim to have a lot of

concern for the Federal workers that depend on government funding. They talk a pretty good game. So I find it interesting that so many of them in the House cast a vote that would put thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of Federal workers out of work, which is what results when the government shuts down.

Of course, I don't like continuing resolutions any more than the next person. They are certainly not the ideal way to govern, and I will talk about that in a minute. But it remains the second worst choice, a shutdown being the worst of all.

So let's take a look at how we got here in the first place. Last year, the Senate Appropriations Committee, on a bipartisan basis, passed all but 1 of their 12 appropriations bills. What did the majority leader—Senator SCHUMER at the time—what did he do? He simply refused to schedule any of those appropriations bills for a vote.

So it is because of Democratic dysfunction that we find ourselves now in a continuing resolution situation rather than having already attended to what in effect was last year's business and passing appropriations bills for the entire fiscal year.

Well, if our Democratic colleagues don't like voting for another CR, I would encourage them to take that up with their now-minority leader, as this falls squarely on his shoulders.

But the truth is, most of all, our Democratic colleagues are just mad about the outcome of the November 5 election.

Here in the Senate, I am glad that Senate Republicans are working to pass this necessary CR that will ensure that we prevent a government shutdown.

NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION

Mr. President, on another matter, I spoke last week about the importance of establishing a lasting peace in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine where Russia, without any chance of contradiction, is the aggressor. But I appreciate President Trump on his efforts as a peacemaker, and I congratulate the administration, particularly Secretary Rubio and National Security Advisor Mike Waltz, for working to negotiate a 30-day cease-fire—at least that is what Ukraine has agreed to. But now the ball is in Vladimir Putin's court.

As I said last week, this is a big deal. Hundreds of thousands of casualties on each side have arisen as a result of this 3-year war in Ukraine. It is important that these negotiations get it right.

It is true that a lasting peace would be no small achievement, but one of the most important aspects to getting this right is to make sure it does not result in nuclear proliferation—that is, more countries than currently have nuclear weapons getting those nuclear weapons because they feel insecure and they feel it is critical to their ability to continue to exist.

As I mentioned last week, the United States, along with Russia and the United Kingdom, back in 1994 signed something called the Budapest Memorandum. In this agreement, these three countries gave Ukraine security guarantees, guaranteeing its independence and territorial integrity in exchange for Ukraine turning over its nuclear weapons arsenal. Ukraine, of course, had been part of the Soviet Union. After the Soviet Union fell, it had the world's third largest arsenal of nuclear weapons. So this was a landmark agreement where Ukraine agreed—now an independent republic—agreed to turn over its nuclear weapons rather than retain them.

Such agreements are important because in the absence of nonproliferation agreements, other countries may be tempted to seek and acquire nuclear weapons to provide for their own security and their own protection. This is another reason why it is so important to achieve a lasting peace in the ongoing war by Russia against Ukraine now going on 3 years.

Nuclear proliferation is different. It is a unique threat, and it is a threat to America's core interests and to peace in the world. It is much harder to create a safer, more peaceful world if the number of countries seeking nuclear weapons is growing.

I know President Trump concurs, and he has described nuclear weapons as an existential threat, which they are. I know that sounds dire, and perhaps we would like not to think about such terrible things, but we must because it is reality.

In the wake of weak or nonexistent security assurances and a more dangerous world thanks to Russia, China, and Iran, additional countries are starting to think about acquiring nuclear programs.

This is happening in Poland, where Prime Minister Donald Tusk suggested that Poland might ''reach for opportunities related to nuclear weapons.'' Poland, of course, is a signatory to the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which prohibited all but five declared nuclear powers at the time from acquiring nuclear weapons. In a similar vein, Germany, through the newly elected Chancellor, has discussed the possibility that France and Britain might share their nuclear arsenal with Ukraine. Now, these are warning signs. These are flashing red signs that no one should take lightly.

While we, of course, welcome European countries—primarily members of NATO—to increase their defense spending for conventional purposes, nuclear proliferation is not the way to a more stable and peaceful world.

If we look back to 1956, the United States had to step in to prevent the Suez Crisis from escalating into a nuclear conflict between the Soviet Union, Britain, and France.

In the case of the 1973 nuclear alert during the Arab-Israeli war, U.S. nuclear forces were put on alert in response to what turned out to be, thankfully, a false alert.

Again, in 1999, the United States stepped in to stop nuclear escalation during the Kargil War between India and Pakistan.

So it is imperative that, while the United States facilitates a lasting and enforceable peace between Russia and Ukraine, that at the same time, we need to reduce the likelihood of nuclear proliferation. Suffice it to say the stakes could not be higher. We are living in one of the most dangerous times since World War II.

President Trump and Vice President Vance are correct in taking all reasonable and necessary efforts to end the war in Ukraine, but it requires a stable and lasting and enforceable peace to prevent this proliferation of nuclear weapons.

I applaud President Trump for his efforts to bring about this peace. If President Trump can successfully pull this off, it will be an accomplishment for which humanity will owe him a profound debt of gratitude.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Ms. ALSOBROOKS. Mr. President, on rollcall vote No. 114, I was recorded as a ''yes.'' It was my intention to vote no.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote since it will not affect the outcome.

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

Ms. ALSOBROOKS. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

TRIBUTE TO GERI SHAPIRO

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I want to tell you about an extraordinary woman, my senior adviser Geri Shapiro. Geri is in the final stages of a long battle with cancer, and so I wanted to express my deepest gratitude and thanks for her service to my office and to all of New York State.

Geri joined my staff in 2009 after having served as Hillary Clinton's Westchester regional director. But she is so much more than just a member of my staff, she is one of my closest confidants, mentors, and friends. She is truly one of a kind.

Geri is an institution in Westchester County, New York. She knows everybody, and everyone knows her name. Everyone knows that when Geri gives her word, it is as good as gold. She is an expert in so many important areas of policymaking. And the depth of knowledge she brings to any conversation is as impressive as her ability to make people feel at ease.

My staff, most of whom are decades younger, adore her energy and her spirit.

Geri is also one of the kindest people you are ever going to meet. She cares

deeply about all of her fellow New Yorkers. But don't let that fool you; she is also tough as nails. Geri tells it like it is and doesn't pull punches. She is fearless and formidable. And her family calls her ''the expediter'' because she gets things done. With Geri on your side, you know you can't lose.

A long-time resident who grew up in New Rochelle, Geri's first career as a homemaker and a mom, she devoted much of her time to caring also for her aging parents. During that time, she took courses at Columbia University and became a stockbroker to support her ailing father's business. She also volunteered at her daughter Leslie's school where she served as Edgemont PTA president.

In 2000, Geri was inspired to volunteer for Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign because she admired Hillary's passion for healthcare. Hillary immediately recognized Geri's talent and hired her as her Westchester regional director when Geri was already 59 years old. In Geri's own words, it gave her a whole new meaning to the term ''late bloomer,'' and she credits Hillary's young staffers for helping her learn the ropes.

To this day, Geri is among the oldest members of staff in Congress. She is proof positive that you can do amazing things at any age.

I first met Geri when I also volunteered on Hillary Clinton's Senate race. When I became Senator, I asked her to continue to serve as my Westchester County expert. I remember meeting her at the train stop in Westchester early in my Senate tenure and knowing then and there that I would have a friend for life.

Since then, Geri has led our community outreach in Westchester and has become a deeply valued member of our team. She is my go-to expert when it comes to anything related to Indian Point nuclear facility. She knows the ins and outs of policymaking and procedure better than most, and she has become an invaluable source for people working on nuclear energy regulation, especially with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and its Indian Point decommissioning process.

But if it is not nuclear policy, it is something just as important, like her leadership on my aging working group or her work with healthcare and disability advocates. Geri understands the substance of the work, and she knows how to channel her experiences into bigger causes.

But what really sets her apart is that she understands how much relationships matter. Whether you are a neighbor, a CEO, a friend, a high-ranking elected official, Geri is the first person you turn to. Her instincts are spot on. She connects with people in ways that few others can, and she always brings a human touch to everything she does.

She mentors my staff on the importance of public service and the power of grassroots organizing. She emphasizes what it means to connect with a community and to understand the needs of our constituents, and she gives everything her full attention and effort and leads by example in everything she does.

She clearly sees her work not just as her job but as her personal calling.

Throughout my Senate career, Geri has not only been an outstanding strategic and political advisor, but also a dear, dear friend. She gives me heartfelt advice when I need it most and shows thoughtfulness and generosity to everyone who knows her. She is hard working, she is caring, and the most dedicated Senate staffer that I know by her years served and service given.

When Geri speaks, people listen. And when she gives advice, you know it comes from a place of deep knowledge and careful thought.

New York and this Nation need more leaders like Geri Shapiro. When asked what motivates her, Geri says: Do good. Feel good—a maxim that is evident in everything that she has ever done.

She is truly an inspiration to everyone who knows her, and I am so grateful for everything she has done for Westchester, for our great State, and for our country.

Thank you, Geri. We love you, and we will always remember how you made us feel.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

UKRAINE

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I come here to speak briefly about the status of the peace talks led by the United States and President Trump involving both Ukraine and Putin.

First, I want to thank President Trump for—there is one thing that President Trump has been consistent with: He hates war, and he tries to do everything he can to bring peace.

We attempted—he has attempted that across the globe. He is working right now on trying to settle the situation in the Middle East, and we are trying to address the situation in Ukraine.

Now, the response from Ukraine, after President Zelenskyy—let's keep in mind that President Zelenskyy, over the past week, has withstood attacks in Ukraine that have killed more people than are sitting up in the Gallery right now. So that is over the past couple of days, killed roughly twice as many people that are in the Gallery right now. Many of them civilians. I am not even counting any of the losses on the battlefield.

Now, Vladimir Putin says he needs a little bit of time to assess to see. What part of a complete cease-fire is difficult to understand, right? Stop killing people. Ukraine said that they would. They are ready to sign a 30-day cease-fire now.

Why do you think Putin's not ready to sign it right now? They have got to examine what a complete cease-fire means. It is because this liar and this murderer is trying to find ways to get an angle before they agree to any peace agreement.

He would probably like a partial one because then he could lie about his orders to kill people and destroy Ukraine's infrastructure under the auspices of a limited cease-fire. If Vladimir Putin comes back with a proposed limited cease-fire, then you know he is looking to kill and destabilize Ukraine, Moldova, the West Balkans. It will be interesting to see how he weighs in on the vote today in Srpska where their parliament is voting to separate from BiH, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and create a Russian separatist state in BiH.

So my guess is he doesn't want to sign up to a cease-fire because he hasn't moved all the pieces around to make sure that he can still murder as many Ukrainians as possible during the supposed limited cease-fire.

So I would say to the Ukrainian people and President Zelenskyy: Thank you—in spite of the fact that dozens of people have died this week, including civilians, at the hands of decisions made by Putin—thank you for being willing to lay down your guns and try to get to peace there.

But the American people need to know Putin is a liar. He is a murderer. He hates democracy. He is not trying—the reason that he is in Ukraine now is because Ukraine is finally, after about 20 years of wasted time, that is in part because they had Russians and thugs preventing Ukraine from moving forward on the democratic reforms they know they need to do.

Well, over the past 7 or 8 years, they started taking that seriously, and they are starting to make democratic reforms. They are starting to talk about maybe accession into the E.U., and that scares the hell out of Vladimir Putin because the last thing he wants is a successful former satellite of the Soviet Union demonstrating that democracy works and communism never has. That is what he is worried about. That is the provocative act that he used as a predicate to invade Ukraine and kill tens of thousands of people, including hundreds of thousands of his own soldiers. He is afraid of democracy proving to work in a society that was under the yoke of communism for decades.

That is what this is about, folks. This is about good versus evil. This is about totalitarian versus this messy thing we call democracy.

So if Vladimir Putin can't understand what an unconditional cease-fire means, it is because he doesn't want to. It is because he still wants to find a way to murder and undermine democratic reforms and the people of Ukraine being finally free.

So I do want to thank President Trump for taking the initiative, for showing Ukrainians a path. But I also want to make sure that this administration and everybody in America knows that Putin will not rest until his vision of communist fiat throughout this world is realized.

We have to help Ukraine be free. We have to make Putin lose in Ukraine.

We have to recognize that North Korea, China, Iran are just chafing at the bit to see Putin succeed there so they can export their brand of terrorism and communism throughout the world.

There is nothing redeemable in Vladimir Putin. He is an evil man responsible for the murders of hundreds of thousands of people, nearly a million in the last 3 years in Ukraine alone. We all need to go in open-eyed and understand that this is the true nature of Vladimir Putin. And he cannot succeed in Ukraine.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

SENATE SCHEDULE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, two points—a short one and a long one. The short one is simply this: to remind my colleagues that at the beginning of the year, we get a Senate calendar that says what days we are going to be in session and what days we are not going to be in session.

Between now and the end of the fiscal year, September 30, we have 16 Fridays that we are supposed to be in session. Will we be in session on those Fridays? We have had a few Friday sessions this year so far, but I am afraid that if we don't count on being a little more devoted to a 5-day workweek, those Fridays will slip away from us.

I bring that to our attention because we are always complaining because we don't have enough time to do appropriations bills. These extra 16 days that we might not be in session would be a good amount of time to take care of the 12 appropriations bills that we have to do regularly.

I always say there is enough work for a Senator, an individual Senator, to do 7 days a week if he wants to work. But you can't solve this country's problems if you are only in session 2½ or 3 days a week. That was the practice of the U.S. Senate before the Republicans took over. Republicans are supposed to make a difference, and I think a big difference we can make in the U.S. Senate is showing that we are running the U.S. Senate in a businesslike way, and that is to get more work done and in particular do our separate appropriations bills instead of doing one great big thousand-page appropriations bill just before government is ready to shut down.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Mr. President, the second point and a little longer is to discuss for my colleagues the disastrous legacy of the Biden-Harris administration's Environmental Protection Agency.

Sadly, the recent revelations of wasteful spending by the EPA under the last administration are no surprise.

If you are a Democrat and you get tired of Republicans complaining about something being wrong in the previous administration, hear me out, and I think you will agree that a lot of things happened at the end of the last administration that are just a violent misuse of taxpayers' money.

Two years ago, I wrote the Biden EPA about a program called the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. I asked a very simple question about how the EPA planned to administer and oversee the taxpayers' money that was going to be spent by the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. I also expressed doubts about the EPA handling such a large program given the Agency's lack of oversight on how they spend the taxpayers' money.

As you would expect, I requested its plans to ensure this money would be spent responsibly. These are pretty simple questions that Congress and the taxpayers ought to be given an answer to. In its response to my letters, the Biden EPA gave me lipservice about its commitment to the oversight of the spending of the money in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. The Biden EPA said it would require ''rigorous transparency, risk management, and accountability measures.''

Now, if they had actually done that, that is a responsible way of handling the taxpayers' money, but the Biden EPA failed to describe how it would accomplish all of that rigorous transparency and also answer the questions I asked them to answer.

Clearly, based upon the Trump administration's recent revelation of fraud, waste, and abuse, EPA's response to me was really, in the end, nothing but lipservice. For example, in December of last year, as the Biden-Harris administration neared its end, Brent Efron, EPA's Special Advisor for Implementation, was actually filmed saying the Agency had rushed taxpayer money out the door. That EPA official called the effort an insurance policy against the incoming Trump administration to make sure the money was out the door so the Trump administration couldn't stop it.

The EPA official also stated that—this is Brent Efron—''it's like we're on the Titanic and we are throwing gold bars over the edge.'' The EPA official said his job was ''just how to get the money out as fast as possible before they came in and stopped it all.'' The ''they'' he was talking about is the new Trump administration.

This conduct is an example of the contempt and the lack of respect the previous administration had for the American taxpayers' dollars.

In January of this year, I met with Lee Zeldin in my office before his confirmation as President Trump's EPA Administrator. I was encouraged by his shared commitment to transparency and accountability.

After Mr. Zeldin took office, I wrote to him asking that he find the gold bars, so to speak, and take steps to get this taxpayer money back that was shoveled out the door the last few days of the previous administration.

Since that letter, Administrator Zeldin found that in the months leading up to President Trump taking office, the Biden-Harris EPA sheltered $20 billion of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund outside of the Treasury at Citibank. Now, that is a lot of gold bars. Administrator Zeldin explained that this unprecedented move by the Biden EPA was done to protect the program from government oversight. This revelation shows that the Biden EPA not only obstructed my investigations, but the oversight assurances it tried to offer me were dishonest.

Administrator Zeldin also referred this mismanagement to the EPA acting inspector general and noted that there is an ongoing FBI investigation.

I am encouraged by what Administrator Zeldin has done so far, and I expect him to provide records responsive to my inquiries showing the Biden EPA fraud, waste, and abuse.

Now, a closer look into the recipients of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund exposed several ethical red flags.

Jahi Wise, President Biden's pick to lead the program, oversaw a $5 billion grant to his former employer—that employer is the Coalition for Green Capital—on August 8, 2024, to ''build the national green bank and a network with self-sustaining community lenders in every state.''

Another 2 billion taxpayer dollars went to an organization called Power Forward Communities on August 8 to reportedly ''offer financing for residential carbon emission-reduction projects.''

Power Forward Communities is made up of five nongovernment organizations, including Rewiring America. The leadership of this group is full of familiar faces from past Democratic administrations. I will give you four examples: Shaun Donovan, listed on Power Forward's tax documents as the director and cochair, was President Obama's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Ari Matusiak, also listed as a director and cochair, served as Special Assistant to President Obama and Director of Private Sector Engagement in the Obama White House. The vice president of Rewiring America is Cammie Croft, Deputy Director in the Obama White House and Senior Advisor in the Obama Department of Energy. A name that is pretty famous to anybody in politics and really famous in Georgia is Stacey Abrams. The failed gubernatorial nominee that President Obama campaigned for is reportedly senior counsel for Rewiring America.

The FBI and the EPA Office of Inspector General must fully investigate this situation and determine where the money was used to line the pockets of well-connected Democrats.

As my oversight has shown, the legacy of the Biden-Harris administration's EPA will be one of unprecedented spending with no accountability and transparency. This blatant lack of discipline and lack of respect for the taxpayers' money enabled EPA's left-wing allies to profit at the expense of the American taxpayer. All the while, the Biden EPA obstructed my efforts to conduct independent and objective oversight.

President Trump and Administrator Zeldin must return the EPA to its mission of protecting the health of our environment while spending taxpayers' dollars with transparency and accountability.

My message to the new director of EPA, Administrator Zeldin, is this: Keep exposing waste, fraud, and abuse, and provide all the records.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

(The remarks of Mrs. BRITT pertaining to the introduction of S. 1003 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mrs. BRITT. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

REMEMBERING DR. HAZEL DUKES

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to honor the late Dr. Hazel Dukes, who died earlier this month.

Hazel was not just my mentor and longtime friend, she was an extraordinary advocate for members of the African-American community across New York State. When I was first appointed to the Senate, Hazel took me under her wing. She helped me learn how to do my job well and how to serve my constituents effectively.

Hazel was a wise and generous soul. She was a trailblazer in the civil rights movement and the longstanding president of New York's NAACP. She fought housing discrimination on Long Island and was a tireless advocate for equal educational opportunities. Hazel's leadership shaped the NAACP, and she inspired future generations nationwide.

Hazel was truly a treasure, and I was devastated to learn of her passing. Her legacy will live on in the fight for justice she waged and the lives that she changed. May we honor her by continuing the work she so fiercely championed.

Hazel, we will miss you very much, and we will always remember you. May God bless you and keep you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UKRAINE

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, I returned Sunday night from 2 days in Ukraine. It was my third trip since the war began, and it came at a perilous and difficult time.

A week earlier, President Trump had blown up the meeting with President Zelenskyy, starting an argument in front of cameras that made the United States look like a weak bully. He gave away two of Ukraine's primary goals: regaining their territory and becoming a member of NATO. The result is a weakened hand in negotiations with Russia. And President Trump also cut off security and intelligence to Ukraine, leaving them blind and at risk of losing ground.

So I made a decision to travel to Ukraine to show my support for the Ukrainian people and to bring back information—what I would learn on the ground—about how these policy changes were going to impact the war. What I saw showed me just why we cannot give up on the Ukrainian people and why it is important to our security to keep Putin from winning.

Of course, the Ukrainians want this war to end. They want it to end more than anybody else. But any agreement has to protect Ukraine's security, and it can't be a giveaway to Putin.

This war started with what Putin thought would be a 3-day operation to take Kyiv and then control all of Ukraine. Now we are 3 years later, and that hasn't happened. The Ukrainian people, with security and intelligence assistance from us and from our allies, have been fighting for every inch of their homeland. They have endured constant missile barrages on cities and hospitals.

I visited one of these hospitals myself. And this hospital had been hit with gunfire. There were holes in the exterior walls of the hospital. There was a crater in the sidewalk in front of the door of this hospital where a mortar round landed. And there, in this hospital, I spoke to wounded soldiers who were eager for nothing more than to get back into this fight. I also met with nurses who shared their stories of this invasion through tears.

They told me—this is hard to repeat on the floor of the Senate. They told me how they witnessed Russian soldiers raping children in front of their parents and then murdering these same children in front of their parents—horrendous war crimes which can never be forgiven.

I met with Ukrainian pilots, one of whom I had met with in Tucson when he was learning to fly the F–16. I will be honest. When I first visited their F–16 training at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona, I wasn't sure that they could step up to flying the Viper. It is not an easy airplane to fly. And I wasn't sure that they would be effective in combat.

Those pilots have more than proven themselves flying challenging combat missions against the Russians, who are protected by a considerable electronic warfare defense and a surface-to-air missile defense and, by the way, are also flying some pretty sophisticated airplanes.

I spoke to one pilot. This guy shot down six cruise missiles and drones on a single mission, and he did this while carrying only four air-to-air missiles. So how did he do this? Well, two of the targets he had a gun, used the gun of the F–16 to shoot them down. That is really hard to do.

My twin brother, who is also a Navy pilot, and I were both stunned. That is impressive. They are stepping up. Ukraine's underdog status against the heavyweight Russia has bred a scrappy innovation that the United States should envy and that we can learn from. I heard it in their words when they said that they would fight—get this, Mr. President—they said they would fight with rocks and sticks if they had to, to defend their country against Putin.

And I saw it in their efforts to produce cutting-edge weapons to take the fight directly to the Russian enemy. They are building one-way attack drones at an incredible rate, especially considering that they stood up this production from nothing. And that is what is possible when hitting your production target and every single day is a matter of life and death. They have an innovation cycle that is measured in days, while ours is measured in years.

We should learn from that because supporting Ukraine is not just about defending freedom. And freedom is a fundamental tenet of what makes America great. It is also critical to our national security and preventing future, bigger wars. Not only would victory make Putin stronger to strike further into Europe, but if the United States abandons Ukraine, what message does that send to our friends across the globe? It tells them we are untrustworthy and unreliable.

Now, as significant as that is, the bigger deal is what we would see from China. The Chinese watch everything, and they want to take Taiwan. If they view our loyalty to our partners and allies as weak, they are more likely to take Taiwan by force. If that happens, this President or any future President will have to make one of the most consequential decisions in the history of our country.

My goal is to prevent that moment. My goal in the Senate is and will continue to be to keep us out of wars. And I think that is true for most combat veterans like myself. So I came back this week with the message that we need to fix this mess and get back to supporting Ukraine.

Now, I am glad that already there has been positive movement. The announcement from the American and Ukrainian negotiations in Saudi Arabia yesterday, led by Secretary Rubio and the National Security Advisor Tim Walz, was a step forward. Once again, we are supporting Ukraine with military security assistance and with intelligence aid, and we are working toward a resolution to this war that guarantees Ukraine's security. And Ukraine accepted a proposal for an immediate 30-day cease-fire.

Now, this is going to come down to whether Putin will accept these terms and commit to a real negotiation. So far, he has shown no indication that he is ready for peace. Putin started this war by breaking a cease-fire. He has mobilized his entire country and the help of other dictators like Kim Jong

Un to try to win this war, and every single day, his soldiers commit war crimes.

Not only must he agree to the terms of this cease-fire; he has to be held to them by the United States and our allies. America is the strongest and richest country in the world. We didn't get here by being bullies like Vladimir Putin. We got there by leading from the front and bringing our allies along with us and standing by them like they stand by us.

The safety and security of all of us—our kids, our grandkids—depends on the United States continuing to keep its word, standing for democracy, and looking out for Americans by being smart and strong and standing up to the bullies. That is what I will hold this President to, and I urge my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats alike—to do the same.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON MIRAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Miran nomination?

Mr. CRUZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 117 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	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	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Curtis	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—1

Duckworth

The nomination was confirmed.

(Mr. MULLIN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). 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.

The Senator from Wyoming.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Sonderling nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 34, Keith Sonderling, of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary of Labor.

John Thune, Ted Budd, Tom Cotton, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Tommy Tuberville, Katie Britt, Ashley Moody, Pete Ricketts, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Dan Sullivan, Roger F. Wicker, Cynthia M. Lummis, Eric Schmitt, Joni Ernst, John Hoeven, Jerry Moran, Lindsey Graham.

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 Keith Sonderling, of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary of Labor, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 118 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	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	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Curtis	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Keith Sonderling, of Florida, to be Deputy Secretary of Labor.

The Democratic leader.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, funding the government should be a bipartisan effort, but Republicans chose a partisan path drafting their continuing resolution without any input—any input—from congressional Democrats.

Because of that, Republicans do not have the votes in the Senate to invoke cloture on the House CR. Our caucus is unified on a clean April 11 CR that will keep the government open and give Congress time to negotiate bipartisan legislation that can pass.

We should vote on that. I hope—I hope—our Republican colleagues will join us to avoid a shutdown on Friday.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 93

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, for the second time over the past few weeks, I have come to the Senate floor to talk about the importance of medical research funding at the National Institutes of Health—NIH.

Last week during his address to Congress, President Trump unveiled a new member of the U.S. Secret Service; a 13-year-old named DJ who had always dreamed of becoming a police officer. It was a touching moment because DJ wasn't supposed to be alive today. You see, in 2018, he was diagnosed with brain cancer and given just a few months to live.

Because of advances in science and medicine, because of medical researchers conducting lifesaving work, because of new treatments and cures, thank goodness this young man is alive today. And he is alive because of the work of the National Institutes of Health.

But that work, for a lot of other desperate families, is in danger because of President Trump and his unelected assistant, Elon Musk, who are carrying out a cruel campaign to cut research

funding for diseases such as childhood cancer, ALS, Alzheimer's, dementia, and so many more.

I don't know young DJ or his family, but I can just imagine what they went through when they were told their son had brain cancer. Who can imagine, as a parent, what that must have been like. And I bet you one of their first questions to the doctor was basic: Is there a cure? Is there treatment? Is there something we can do? Thankfully, the answer was ''yes'' because of medical research.

You know, all the miracle drugs you see on TV, a constant deluge of ads about new drugs—99 percent of drugs approved in the last 10 years benefited from NIH research. NIH funding is why kids like DJ are beating cancer, why babies are being spared from preventive illness, why HIV is no longer a death sentence, why progress is being made on ALS and so many neurological diseases.

Since the start of this administration, we have seen the White House unleash a lawless, chaotic attack on everything from our Federal Aviation Administration to biomedical research.

First, President Trump and Elon Musk ordered a freeze on most Federal grant funding, including medical research funding. You see, after extensive review of grant applications, the NIH awards approximately $38 billion a year in funding to the best and brightest medical researchers and universities in all 50 States, Illinois included.

But Trump and Musk inexplicably view this as wasteful and needless. While this freeze was found illegal by a Federal judge, the administration has continued to defy court order. To this day, we are taking actions to prevent medical research funding from going out to scientists in labs with breakthrough ideas. As a result, NIH has delayed awarding approximately $1 billion in grant funding to institutions nationwide. What alarms me is that NIH funding has not historically been a partisan issue. This used to be the most bipartisan thing in the Senate.

Over the past decade, bipartisan members of Congress—Roy Blunt, Republican Senator from Missouri; Lamar Alexander, Republican Senator from Tennessee; and PATTY MURRAY, Democrat from Washington—joined with me in an effort to increase funding for the NIH. This bipartisan team, which I was proud to be part of, increased NIH funding over the last 10 years by 60 percent.

We did this because we know sickness does not respect partisan lines. We need cures on a bipartisan basis, and NIH funding leads to new breakthroughs for all patients in need, supports good-paying jobs in red and blue States, and cements our global leadership.

Illinois universities and hospitals receive approximately $1.3 billion in NIH funding every year that support 16,000 researchers in our State and $3.6 billion in economic activity. Our State is the rule, not the exception in this regard.

But Trump and Musk aren't finished here. Next, they tried to indiscriminately slash how NIH pays for indirect costs. What is an indirect cost? It helps medical researchers operate their laboratories, it pays for new computers, microscopes, and the handling of hazardous materials.

They are negotiated on a case-by-case basis between the Federal Government and each hospital and university. Look, I am open to discussion about reforms to how indirect costs are calculated, but just arbitrarily and illegally slashing all indirect cost allotments will stop medical research in its tracks and many laboratories.

Thankfully, Illinois' attorney general and 21 others sued and secured temporary relief for universities and researchers. Now Trump and Elon Musk have focused their efforts on firing the medical researchers themselves. Reports indicate that 1,200 NIH employees have been fired so far, experienced vaccine researchers, the next generation of scientists and the acting director of the NIH's Alzheimer's and dementia program.

Further, Trump and Musk have ended a popular trainee program that brought 1,600 young scientists out of colleges to the NIH world-renowned campus in Maryland. NIH research leads to new cures and treatments that extend, improve, and save lives. That is why I am once again trying to pass a resolution pledging just basic bipartisan support for NIH.

This resolution is simple. It says the work of NIH should not be subject to interruption, delay, or funding disruptions in violation of the law, and it reaffirms the workforce of the NIH is essential to sustaining medical progress.

For kids like DJ, for people like my friend Brian Wallach who is fighting ALS, for every family out there dealing with a life-threatening diagnosis, we cannot—we must not—stay silent in the face of Donald Trump and Elon Musk's assault on medical research.

I will never stop fighting to protect NIH and the medical research it supports. I hope it once again will become a bipartisan effort.

As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 93; further, that the resolution be agreed to; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. MULLIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at this point, I hope I can appeal to my friend from Oklahoma. It is important to every single State, but it is certainly important to my State of Illinois where we have thousands of researchers and millions of dollars being spent. But it is also important to his State. Oklahoma has very valuable laboratories and hospitals that do research as well.

I would like to just give you some examples. Each year, Oklahoma receives $160 million in NIH funding. This money supports 2,500 jobs in the State of Oklahoma and $450 million in economic activity. The top NIH funding research in Oklahoma is the University of Oklahoma. It receives $80 million a year.

With this funding, researchers in Oklahoma recently conducted research on slowing kidney disease progression, improving brain function after strokes, and how changes in cell activity can slow the progression of Alzheimer's.

Senator MULLIN, I know, is a graduate—a proud graduate, I am sure—of Oklahoma State University, which receives $50 million in NIH funding. Mr. President, I hope I can appeal to my colleague and others to take a close look at their own home States on this medical research. It makes a difference in their States, and it makes a valuable difference in the quality of life for Americans across the board.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, we are 50 days into Donald Trump's second term, and the American economy is already in free fall; prices are soaring, stocks are plummeting, and people are panicking about a recession. None of this was inevitable. All of this is Trump's own making.

This week after Trump couldn't categorically rule out that his policies would lead to a recession, Nasdaq had its worst day in years while the Dow Jones dropped a whopping 1,300 points. But it is not just the stock market that is taking a hit; it is regular people everywhere.

Consumer confidence is down by 7 points—7 points in 50 days—since Trump took office, and spending has dropped for the first time in 2 years. The dollar is weaker, hiring is slowing, interest rates are unlikely to come down, and the GDP is expected to shrink this quarter for the first time in 3 years.

You know, usually Presidents get too much blame or too much credit for the state of the economy but not this time. Trump is going out of his way to plunge the economy into chaos and make life harder for everyone. Whether you are buying groceries or trading stocks or hoping to retire next month, you are getting hit.

When the Commerce Secretary was asked yesterday about a potential recession, he said: ''It's worth it.''

''It's worth it.''

They actually think a recession would be worth it. And if the economic numbers coming in are bad, if they show that the economy is shrinking or the costs are rising, their solution is to cook the books to make them seem

better because when the data is bad, change it. Everybody knows that.

Instead of getting to work on lowering prices on day one, like he said he would, the President has spent his days plotting the rebirth of a gilded age with tariffs and tax cuts. That was a time when the rich got richer while everyone else got screwed.

Trump tells a different story.

> We were at our richest from 1870 to 1913. That's when we were a tariff country. . . . We were a very wealthy country, and we're going to be [that way again].

So I just want to make clear, yes, I am a partisan. Yes, I think Donald Trump is screwing up the economy. But it is really important for us to understand they actually do have a theory of the case, and that is the golden age from 1870 to 1913. I didn't say that; the President said that. I didn't say ''Hey, these guys think a recession is worth it.'' They said a recession is worth it.

It is true that in the gilded age, some people were very wealthy then. Robber barons and business tycoons built enormous empires on the backs of working people, who had little to show for it. Profits boomed. Billionaires emerged. Regular people suffered in tenements and on factory floors, and poverty was everywhere. But the gilded age is exactly what the President is trying to recreate.

Whether it is tariffs on our largest trading partners that will jack up the price of our food or our homes or our cars or mass layoffs of the people who inspect our food or keep the skies safe or care for our veterans or the tax cuts for the richest people to ever exist, funded by slashing regular people's healthcare and hard-earned retirement savings, all of this is about taking money from people who don't have enough and handing it over to people who already have more than anyone has ever had.

Whether you voted for Trump or not, whether you believed he would be good on the economy or not, whatever sort of side of the political, tribal, ideological, partisan, algorithmic divide that we are all experiencing in our little filter bubbles on Instagram and TikTok and Twitter and wherever else we get our disaggregated information, this economy sucks. People are paying too much.

It is the intentional policy of the President's economic team to recreate a time when—until just about 50 days ago, everybody agreed we should never go back to that time. Kids working on factory floors, people working 70 hours and not able to feed their family, unprecedented disparity between the extremely wealthy and everybody else—that is what they are explicitly going for.

This is not me putting spin on the ball. That is what they are saying. That is what the Commerce Secretary is saying. That is what the Treasury Secretary is saying. That is what the President of the United States is saying. This is their plan, and it is going according to plan.

These people have the ability to short things and ride the volatility and monetize all of the craziness and make side deals and do crypto and park their assets here and there. They make money no matter what. But if you are retiring next month with a 401(k) or an IRA or a 403(b), you just got screwed. Trillions of dollars of wealth were eliminated.

And the President sprang into action. Why? For what purpose? To help his buddy sell cars on the White House lawn. I don't have a preference for electric cars or nonelectric cars. I don't care. That is fine. But what a weird thing to spring into action about when everybody is getting kicked in the face economically except his buddies.

FOREIGN AID

Mr. President, it wasn't so long ago that a Senator stood on this floor and said the following:

> Foreign aid as a part of our overall budget is less than 1 percent of the total amount the US Government spends. I promise you it is going to be a lot harder to recruit someone to anti-Americanism and anti-American terrorism if the United States of America is the reason one is even alive today.

The person who said that was not me. It wasn't another Democrat. It was then-Senator, now-Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Marco Rubio was one of the strongest supporters of foreign aid and specifically the U.S. Agency for International Development or USAID. He introduced bills to leverage USAID, to fight human trafficking, advance women's economic empowerment, and reduce violence globally. He called on the Agency to, among other things, provide humanitarian relief to Colombia, support free and fair elections in Burma, promote internet freedom in Cuba, and advance democratic values in the Indo-Pacific.

Speaking in 2018, he said:

> Anybody who tells you that we can slash foreign aid and that will bring us to balance is lying to you. It's just not true.

So to witness the evisceration of USAID and foreign aid more broadly under his leadership as Secretary of State—Secretary of State and Acting Administrator of USAID—has been honestly shocking. This is someone who 2 months ago was confirmed by the Senate 99 to 0. He is someone who throughout his time in the Senate believed in the power and jurisdiction of this institution; someone who, while we disagreed on policy a lot, consistently showed moral clarity on the basic belief that America ought to be on the side of the good guys, on the side of democracy and freedom. But he has sidestepped Congress at every turn on this issue.

As lead Democrat on the Senate Appropriations subcommittee overseeing funding for foreign and national security policy, I have been working with my colleagues to press Secretary Rubio publicly and privately for answers. We have sent numerous letters with dozens of questions, virtually all of which have gone unanswered.

These aren't out of the ordinary, partisan, gotcha questions; they are the normal things that your clerk from the Appropriations subcommittee would say ''Hey, can you tell us what this is?'' and ''Please inform us per the law.'' This is like normal, mundane, workaday correspondence—nothing.

We are supposed to get notifications about changes, and we have gotten nothing.

Then, on Monday, 5 a.m. eastern time, there is a tweet from him saying that the review of foreign aid that was supposed to take 90 days is now complete and that 5,200 contracts are gone—83 percent of the whole enterprise—and they will consult with Congress about what remains. But the last part is not true. There has been no consultation with Congress at all during this process.

There has to be as a matter of law, and the Secretary ought to come to Congress and explain to us—not Pete Marocco, whom we didn't confirm, who most people in the public have never heard of, who is widely viewed as a controversial figure. He came in, closed-door briefing, 1 hour, and you know what—he had a hard stop, had to go at 11.

Do you know what he did at 11? He went with Federal marshals to another Federal Agency and barged in the door, and that was found to be illegal. That was his hard stop. He only had an hour to talk to members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee because he had to get on to commandeering a building with Federal marshals.

As of today, we still have no idea which programs were cut and which still remain. They gave us a stack of programs, but it was like we were in a classified session, right? When you are in a classified session, they might give you a paper, and then there is staff that politely but firmly take the paper back so you don't accidentally take a bunch of classified stuff out of the building. They acted like the stuff they are doing on appropriations is somehow top secret. It is not top secret; they just don't want anyone to know.

We don't know how or even whether Secretary Rubio intends to reprogram the funds for the programs that were eliminated, and we are still waiting to hear how he intends to operate the remaining programs going forward. Weeks and months have passed, and we still don't even have the most basic information.

Here is what we do know. I am going to try to calm down here. Here is what we do know. Multiple laws are being violated at once—the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998, which established USAID as an independent Agency; the Impoundment Control Act, which says the President can't delay or refuse to spend the funds Congress appropriates just because they have a different policy view.

The Impoundment Control Act is not ambiguous. It says that a President cannot decide what they spend based on a policy preference. If it is in the law, it is in the law; they have to execute on it.

Their opportunity to exercise their leverage as a separate and coequal branch is to threaten to veto a bill if it has something they don't want to spend money on, but once that law is enacted, their discretion is gone.

The appropriations bills for State and foreign ops, which, among other things, set minimum funding levels, prohibit the creation of new programs, the suspension or elimination of existing programs, and changes to Agencies without prior consultation with and notification to Congress—nobody did that.

You can love these cuts. I assume some people love these cuts. You can hate these cuts. I hate these cuts. But one thing you cannot say is that this administration is following the law and fulfilling its duties in consulting with Congress. In the meantime, millions of people will die. Millions of people will die.

Our sudden withdrawal has pushed people in Syria, Sudan, South Africa, and so many other places to the verge of starvation, disease, and death.

I learned when I was 28 that when you are an elected officer, you better be very careful what you say. I said some casual words one time. I still remember what I said. I won't repeat them. I was on Hawaii News Now, and someone asked me a question, and I was tired. It was the morning show. And I said something just overly casually, and it really hurt people. So ever since then, I have tried to be as precise as I can be. Now that I am in the Senate, even more so do I have an obligation to not say anything that is untrue but also just to be careful not to be too provocative.

So I say this advisedly: Millions of people will die because of the U.S. Government executive branch. This is a global humanitarian catastrophe about to happen on America's watch.

When I became ranking member of the subcommittee, one of the first things I talked to Chairman LINDSEY GRAHAM about was: How do we make things work better? Where can we better align our priorities?

I am open for business if the enterprise is lawmaking, and I am absolutely opposed if the enterprise is lawbreaking.

I yield the floor.

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

TARIFFS

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, I want to speak about the reckless tariffs that the Trump administration, Donald Trump, is inflicting on the American consumer, the American worker, American businesses—especially with respect to Canada.

Canada is Vermont's largest trading partner. We are not alone. Thirty-four States count Canada as its largest trading partner. We regard Canada as an independent friend, not as a prospective 51st State. And the reason we have that view toward Canada is because of the incredibly constructive and positive relationships we have had with that wonderful country for years.

But with respect to these tariffs, last year, trade with Canada accounted for 35 percent of Vermont exports and 67 percent of our imports and 56 percent of our total trade. One in four businesses in Vermont relies on trade with Canada. Vermont's economy is almost entirely made up of small businesses. They operate on the tightest of margins. Ninety-nine percent of Vermont's businesses, 76,878, are considered small. They support 60 percent of Vermont employees, that is 156,000, and these businesses cannot—they cannot—afford to absorb a 25-percent hike on imports from our largest trading partner.

Take maple syrup, for example. Vermont produces 51 percent of the maple syrup consumed in the United States. And by the way, these are small farmers or small land owners. For farmers, it supplements their income in a very difficult margin business when they are having a dairy operation as well. But Vermont's maple syrup industry expects millions of dollars in losses if the tariffs go through.

And that may surprise some, but Vermont imports $408 million in maple products, primarily maple syrup, from Canada, and we reprocess it and sell it. The four largest maple syrup equipment manufacturers are located in Canada. Tariffs will make it far more expensive for our Vermont sugar producers, maple sugar producers, to buy that equipment.

This is an industry that has grown almost 500 percent in production over the past 20 years, and we are about to let all of that growth go down the drain with these reckless tariffs.

Vermont's maple syrup producers are also concerned that the loss in market share will result in people turning to other products instead of Vermont's liquid gold, with customers possibly turning to far inferior but more affordable products like corn syrup or agave if the price of syrup is too high.

These tariffs will also smash our farmers. Vermont farmers rely on organic grains and seeds and fertilizers that are imported from Canada. In that respect, all of our States on the northern tier are especially connected to potash and grains from Canada. And Trump's tariffs will raise prices on fertilizers, grains, and seeds, on lumber products, and machinery equipment from Canada that Vermont farmers rely on.

And, understandably, Canada—as are other countries that are subject to the Trump tariffs—is imposing retaliatory tariffs on the United States, and that includes, of course, Vermont. That is going to make our sales much more difficult. Nearly half of the farmers polled in February said U.S. agricultural tariffs would result in the decrease in exports.

And, of course, we saw that that happened big time in the first Trump administration, particularly hammering our Midwest grain and soybean farmers. Those markets have not come back. The markets now are for Argentina and Brazil. What is the point of our own government doing something that so hurts our farmers for no benefit for the United States? This was a bad deal for our farmers during the first Trump administration.

And a USDA study from 2022 found that retaliatory tariffs led to a significant reduction in U.S. agricultural exports to the retaliating partners. The study found that export losses from 2018 to 2019 amounted to more than $27 billion.

And if you remember what happened then is, Trump wanted to get right with the farmers so he took away their market, $27 billion in sales, and then went to the taxpayer to make up the difference for those farmers. Every farmer I know, they would rather be selling what they grow rather than getting a government Trump subsidy.

The tariffs are also going to hurt consumers. There is no question about that. Grocery prices will be up. The price of eggs is up 19 percent from the end of the year and could climb to 41 percent this year.

Meanwhile, the President is reposting articles on social media telling people to shut up—shut up about the price of eggs. Did he talk about anything else during his campaign?

His tariffs on Canada, Mexico, and China would directly cost the typical U.S. household over $1,200 in purchasing power. And people in Vermont—and I know in your State, Mr. President—they are struggling at the end of the month to make that checkbook balance. They can't afford that $1,200 hit. And some economists are estimating it could be an increase as much as 3,900 for the average American household.

Jobs and homes, the trade war could cost 400,000 good-paying, blue-collar jobs. The trade war will increase the cost of a home. You know, in Vermont we have a wood products industry. We export timber to Canada. It is milled in Canada, reimported to the United States, to Vermont, to help us build homes. A 25-percent increase on that imported lumber is going to go straight to the cost of an already unaffordable home. What sense does that make?

Trump's tariffs will raise gas prices for us in Vermont 25 to 40 cents a gallon. We get a lot of our petroleum products from Canada.

It is going to cost more in home heating fuel, and that is a tough expense for Vermonters. And it is going to cost more in electricity. We, for years, imported electricity from Hydro-Quebec and other sources of power in Canada. So folks who have high electric bills, they are going to get higher; who are paying more than

they can afford for gas, they are going to pay more; and that home heating bill is going to hammer them once again—all for no constructive, positive reason.

You know, there is another aspect to this. It is not just the tariffs in our argument about the policy and the bizarre assertion that the Trump administration is making that these tariffs will make us rich, everybody knows—except, apparently, President Trump—that the people who pay the tariffs are the people who buy the products. You have a Canadian product that you have to, as a manufacturer, pay a tariff. That has to be added onto the price of the product—let's say to the sugarmaker, that farmer who is paying it. There is a price on electricity, a tariff. The consumer is going to pay that. We all know that.

But aside from that, it is so chaotic, so disorganized, so hit-or-miss, so random in the rollout of these tariffs: on again, off again, on again, 25 percent, 50 percent, 10 percent. It is like the President wakes up and throws something at a dart board, and that is the new policy for the day. You cannot have an orderly expectation for your business. You cannot have the confidence that a consumer needs who is trying to really pay close attention to how she is spending the family budget with chaos. You can't do it, and you don't need it.

So why in the world is the President doing it? He seems to think chaos is a good policy.

You know what we saw—and we are seeing—and it is getting worse and it is not going to stop. The stock market had its worst week in 6 months. What does Donald Trump say? The stock markets are literally crashing. There was no reason for this, all self-inflicted. He said that in 2022. He is right today. It is all self-inflicted. The last 72 hours we have seen a wild ride.

And Trump is ready to send the United States into a recession in order to implement his disastrous economic agenda, and that boastful confidence that he always asserts: Everything is going to work out. It is going to be beautiful. He is saying: A recession, who knows, we may have to pay that as a price.

Well, you know what. We don't have to pay that as a price for foolish policies that only hurt us and hurt our allies.

Nearly half of all U.S. imports, more than $1.3 trillion, come from Canada, China, and Mexico. And it is estimated that Trump's tariffs could reduce overall U.S. imports by 15 percent as well as increase prices.

And Trump's last attempt at a trade war was passed on entirely to U.S. importers and consumers, leading to a loss of 245,000 U.S. jobs and higher consumer prices.

And I note that the unemployment rate ticked up last week.

Trump's stated goal is using tariffs to achieve unrelated goals of curbing fentanyl—we all want to do that—and illegal immigration. We all want a secure border. But the southern border has about 1,000 times the amount of fentanyl that comes through the miniscule amount on the northern border. So what the President has is this indiscriminate policy where he is using—I would say abusing—the delegation of national security powers by this Congress decades ago, when it was expected that they would be used for a real national security military threat, to meet his whims to negotiate this way and that on whatever strikes his fancy that particular day.

And I also note that in the House bill that has been sent over here, the continuing resolution, the House has included a provision that can only be described as outrageous and cowardly. It said—the House stripped itself of the authority to vote on these tariffs that have been invoked by Trump's emergency authority.

How can a legislative body do that, literally vote to say we can't vote on whether we believe that these tariffs have any merit or are going to be good or bad for the people we represent? The House did that, and that is in the CR.

We have got a long history with tariffs. And we saw in the 1930s, the Smoot-Hawley tariffs led to a trade war, led to a depression, hurt jobs, hurt consumers. It is really, really stupid.

This is going to hurt Vermont. I call on all of us to speak out against these tariffs that are going to hurt us in every State of this United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

HAMAS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, since Hamas's barbaric attack on Israel on October 7 of last year, many of our Nation's top universities have abandoned their Jewish students. Instead of providing a place to learn, they have become hotbeds of anti-Semitism, anti-American hatred, and open support for terrorism.

Here are some examples. At Princeton, students have waved the flags of terror groups like Hezbollah. At UCLA, activists set up barricades across campus and blocked Jewish students from attending class. At George Washington University, a pro-Hamas demonstrator walked around campus with a sign calling for a ''Final Solution'' against the Jewish people. At Columbia University, students chanted ''We are Hamas'' and ''Long Live Hamas.''

In recent weeks, pro-Hamas activists at Barnard College occupied an academic building, allegedly assaulted a school employee, and handed out fliers produced by the Hamas Media Office. These fliers glorified ''Operation Al-Aqsa Flood.'' That is Hamas's term for its kidnapping, rape, and murder of more than 1,200 Israelis.

These are not isolated cases. To many Americans and, certainly, many Tennesseans, it seems impossible that this would be happening right here. But according to Hillel International, there were more than 1,800 anti-Semitic incidents on college campuses during the 2023–2024 school year. Think about that—1,800 anti-Semitic incidents. The thing that is so upsetting about this is that is an increase of more than 500 percent from the year before. This shows you the organization and the intensity of these events.

What we do know is Jewish students have faced harassment and intimidation on their university campuses. And we also know that the Biden administration sat on their hands, and they chose to do nothing about this. Instead, they sided with the radical activists who turned our campuses into cesspools of hatred.

Now, with President Trump back in the Oval Office, pro-Hamas students and the colleges that enable them are being put on notice. Recently, Secretary of State Rubio vowed to revoke visas and green cards for any foreign students who support terror groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. This is something that I have called for and supported, which is why I am so pleased to see this administration—the Trump administration—actually taking action.

What we do know is that ICE arrested a former Columbia University student who is from Syria. That is Mahmoud Khalil. This was a ring leader for Columbia's anti-Israel encampment—as I said, a former student.

As I said, pro-Hamas activists spat on Jewish students. They chanted ''F—the Jews,'' and they held signs next to Jewish students claiming that they would be Hamas's next target. Think about this—if you are a 19-year-old Jewish college student, and you were there on Columbia's campus, and you have a protester holding a sign against your head saying you should be the next target.

In many ways, Khalil was the perfect leader for this anti-Semitic, pro-terror movement. What we know is this: Before he enrolled at Columbia University, he allegedly served as a political affairs officer for UNRWA. That is right, the U.N. Relief and Works Agency there in Gaza. This person was a political affairs officer for UNRWA.

This is the same UNRWA that we now know indoctrinated Palestinian children to hate the Jews and stored Hamas's weapons in its facilities in Gaza. They actually put ammunition and weapons in the schools—the U.N. schools—there in Gaza. We know that they had people affiliated with Hamas on their payroll, and we know they provided support and aid to the terrorists.

There is no reason why someone like this should be allowed in our country to support terrorism and to promote anti-Jewish bigotry. That is why Secretary Rubio is intending to deport Khalil, which this administration has the full authority to do under our Federal immigration laws. And under this

administration, I have no doubt we are going to see many more deportations.

As we work to deport Hamas affiliates, my bipartisan No Immigration Benefits for Hamas Terrorists Act would block any migrant tied to Hamas from entering our country. And my No Flights for Terrorists Act would put anyone on the no-fly list if they have called for violence against the Jewish people or pledged allegiance to a foreign terrorist organization.

At the same time, President Trump is vowing to pull Federal funding from schools that fail to protect Jewish students from discrimination. Just on Friday, his administration canceled $400 million in grants and contracts with Columbia University. That is a good start to accountability.

Right after October 7, I joined Senator TIM SCOTT in introducing the Stop Anti-Semitism on College Campuses Act. This legislation would rescind Federal funding for any university—any university—in this country that authorizes, funds, or facilitates events that promote violent anti-Semitism.

With such widespread failure from our Nation's colleges and universities to protect Jewish students, there are billions of dollars on the line. One thing should be clear: With President Trump back in the Oval Office and Republicans in the majority, pro-Hamas activists and colleges are going to face accountability. And if you are visiting our great Nation and supporting terrorism, please know this: You will be deported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, let me be perfectly clear for my colleagues: Democrats want to immediately pass a clean 4-week CR. No one wants a shutdown. We should get this done immediately.

Right now, we should be hard at work negotiating bipartisan funding bills that help folks back home in all of our States and make sure that our constituents—not Trump and Musk—have the biggest say in how their taxpayer dollars are spent.

That is what I have been focused on for months now. In fact, I actually wanted to get our funding bills done all the way back in December, but Republican leadership in the House wanted to kick the can down the road to March. Well, we spent these past few months working hard, getting close to a deal. And we should see that work through, especially when the alternative bill is a bill that will seriously undermine the ability for all of us—all of us—to use our power to fight for our communities. I hope my Senate colleagues would agree that power is worth protecting.

Unfortunately, Speaker JOHNSON has made clear he is content to sit on the sidelines and actually even cheer while two billionaires fire veterans; choke off resources to rebuild roads and bridges; cancel research on cancer, Alzheimer's disease, and vaccine hesitancy; dismantle the Social Security Administration; and spark a trade war that is raising prices and driving us toward a recession.

But there is still time for us here to choose a different path, a bipartisan path, that gives our constituents—our constituents, each and every one of us—a voice in this process.

Right now, instead of working with Democrats to fund the government, invest in the middle class, protect Congress's power of the purse, and put out some of these fires, House Republicans are rolling over for the billionaire arsonists by rolling out a slush fund-filled, yearlong continuing resolution that empowers Trump and Musk to pick winners and losers with your taxpayer dollars.

House Republicans didn't just walk away from Democrats at the negotiating table. They are trying to give up Congress's seat at the table, all together, with a partisan bill that writes Trump and Musk a blank check, shortchanges families and America's future, devastates our Nation's Capital, and painfully slashes critical domestic priorities like lifesaving medical research, construction of VA hospitals, and so much more.

House Republicans didn't merely refuse to address the lawlessness we have seen from Trump and Musk. They would actually empower it with this bill because the House Republicans' bill fails to include the typical, detailed spending directives—the basic guardrails—that Congress provides each year in our funding bills. In other words, instead of writing a bill that gives our communities what they need, they wrote a bill that turns many of our accounts into slush funds and gives the final say over what gets funding to two billionaires who don't know the first thing about the needs of our working families. So that is problem No. 1 with this CR—and it was a completely avoidable one.

House Republicans could have worked with us to include the standard bipartisan spending directives that are included every single year. But House Republican leadership decided to throw in the towel on the hard work of negotiating and on the hard work of governing and making sure their constituents' voices are reflected in our funding bills. Tearing down those guardrails was a choice they made, and it is a dangerous one.

We have already seen how far President Trump and Elon Musk and Russ Vought are willing to twist and outright break our laws to suit their will. But House Republicans are setting them up to make everything so far look like child's play, because this slush fund CR surrenders more power over Federal funding to the very people who are already abusing the power they have to steal from our constituents.

This bill is a green light for Donald Trump and Elon Musk to redirect funding to their own pet projects; to force States and communities to abide by their directives; and slash, burn, and zero out programs that our families count on.

They could use the flexibilities being granted to them to override our constituents' priorities. Clean energy investments could become a payday for fossil fuels. Money meant to stop fentanyl and opioids could fuel private prison operators and Trump's mass deportations.

This bill will let them pick which Army Corps, which transit, which military construction projects move ahead and which grind to a halt.

And when it comes to programs that rural communities rely on, which do you think will get funded? Housing? Utilities? Small business support? Well, do you know what? It would all depend on who Trump wants to punish or extort.

When it comes to medical research, are we going to spend precious research dollars curing Alzheimer's disease? Are we going to help the Fred Hutch Center in Washington State fight cancer? Are we going to work to develop a universal flu vaccine? Are we going to support maternal and women's health research? Congress would usually have a say. But this CR tells RFK, Jr., exactly what Trump promised: ''Go wild on healthcare.'' You have got a free pass from House Republicans to commandeer hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars and set them on fire, relitigating disproven theories about autism and sowing distrust about vaccines amid a measles outbreak that is killing children.

Or if Trump wants to rip away resources from our public K through 12 schools and leverage Federal dollars to make them rewrite history, this CR could help them do that—to say nothing of the broad power he would have to cut off funding to schools like our HBCUs or eliminate funding that thousands of colleges and universities rely on to provide financial aid to students.

When it comes to the FAA, House Republicans gave up on writing detailed instructions for how the budget must be spent in favor of just letting Trump shovel tax dollars at Elon Musk's Starlink.

When it comes to our Tribes, they would let Trump manipulate the formulas that dictate how much money our Tribes get for everything from housing to road maintenance to law enforcement.

Our public lands, those are now President Trump's personal prerogative, as he will have under this CR near absolute discretion over which Land and Water Conservation Fund acquisitions and which public lands deferred maintenance projects get funding.

That is a tremendous amount of power to give to a President who has shown he is completely willing to abuse his existing authority.

For the record, the Federal funding for many of the programs I have just

mentioned makes up massive percentages of many of our State's budgets.

It takes no imagination—none—to consider how Trump would use this new authority to threaten and bully States across the country. You do what he says, or he blows up your entire State budget.

We all know full well how the President is looking to pick fights with our States and with our Governors, and this bill allows for him to use the full force of the government to try and win those fights.

But that is far from the only problem with this bill because this bill also seriously shortchanges our families, our small businesses, our country's competitiveness, and our security. In fact, it makes major cuts to domestic spending.

Nearly 2 years ago, after bruising negotiations between House Republicans and the President, a law was passed that set spending levels for fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025. I didn't care for those levels, not by a long shot. But, nonetheless, there was an agreement and a starting point for us. But this bill now from the House Republicans reneges entirely on that agreement. It cuts nondefense funding by $15 billion relative to that agreement, and it even cuts defense spending by nearly $3 billion relative to the FRA level for 2025.

Those aren't just numbers on a page. Those are real investments that our constituents are being robbed of in this bill.

Despite what House Republicans would like you to believe, as a longtime appropriator, I can tell you, this is not a clean CR. A clean CR would not slash funding for Army Corps construction by 44 percent. That means halting progress on major hydropower projects, dredging for ports in red and blue States, and more.

This CR is not clean. It would cut by nearly 50 percent funding for medical research, funding for medical research into treatments and cures for dozens of diseases and conditions specifically affecting our servicemembers and their families. It would create an utterly massive hole in the NIH budget, reducing funding for lifesaving cancer research and the discovery of cures for diseases by more than a quarter of a billion dollars. That is what this CR does.

Or a clean CR wouldn't do what this bill does to cut VA construction or nuclear arms controls or election security.

Let's not forget, this bill forces rural development programs to absorb a $34 million effective cut and decides who suffers. And it effectively endorses the Trump administration's plans for significant staffing reductions and, worse, customer service at Social Security.

The only increase for Social Security in this bill is to go after fraud and further Elon Musk's lies—his lies—about Social Security. It doesn't provide one additional dime to improve customer service—something our constituents asked for. It doesn't reduce how long it takes to process benefit applications or to address the average, by the way, 1½ hour wait now to talk to someone on the phone. And that, by the way, is if you are the lucky 40 percent of the people who get through at all.

The House CR will mean that Musk and Trump are going to continue to fire workers and shutter offices. And it will be seniors and people with disabilities and their family members looking to Social Security in a moment of need who will pay the price.

Let's not ignore the massive shortfall in funding for new NOAA satellites or the serious risk of setting back weather predictions that every part of our economy hinges on.

Then, of course, there is the $700 million shortfall in this CR at HUD—at Housing and Urban Development—which means 32,000 fewer families getting help to keep a roof over their head.

Then there is this inexplicable fact that this CR actually blocks the District of Columbia from spending its own money for the fiscal year we are already 6 months into. That change, by the way, won't save the Federal Government a penny, but it will force DC to lay off police officers and teachers halfway through the year.

I could spend hours right here on the floor talking about what we lose out on, what our constituents lose out on with this CR and what is at risk with this flat funding and the major cuts.

When House Republicans refuse to write serious funding bills that strengthen our investments, they are putting people in danger—in danger—by undermining food safety, rail safety, workplace safety, and public health. They are doing nothing to help our families afford groceries or heating and cooling or get high-quality healthcare. There is nothing to fight fentanyl and opioids, build roads and bridges, and clean up our waters. There is nothing to improve access to healthcare for our rural areas, or uphold our responsibility to our Tribes, or advance cutting-edge tech, and so much more.

I would just note, we have never funded the Department of Defense through a yearlong CR. Never. What we are talking about here is irresponsible on multiple levels. It is irresponsible in the cuts that it makes to things like medical research, VA hospital construction, and so many other investments in our communities.

It is irresponsible in the glaring problems it ignores, like the recent natural disaster, or China's aggression abroad.

And it is irresponsible in the additional power that it gives the President at the expense of Congress and at the expense of the people we all represent.

I don't come here with rose-colored glasses. It is not that I thought this process would ever be easy—certainly not while the President lets the richest man in the world break our government—but I do continue to believe that it is our responsibility, as lawmakers, to ensure that our constituents' voices are heard and that Congress asserts its power.

It shocks me that any one of us here would even consider trading our power to help people in exchange for an empty promise. It shocks me that any one of us would be so eager to help an administration that is so dangerously willing to extort people, even lawmakers, to its own end.

Trump and Musk have made it painfully clear they want the exact power that this type of CR would give them. They want every Member of Congress, every Governor and mayor, every CEO, every Head Start program director to come groveling before them to get their funding turned back on.

That is not how this should work. That is not how this should work in America. They want you to come hat in hand and maybe—maybe—they won't fire as many veterans in their State. If you ask Elon really nicely and you also don't ask too many questions about his billions of dollars in conflicts of interest, maybe he won't kill the lifesaving research happening in your State; maybe he won't choke off the funding to the hospital your constituents need; maybe he won't pull the plug on those critical dam repairs the Army Corps was working on in your State. What sort of a deal is that, and what do they think is going to happen next?

Perhaps it is because I am one of the few preschool teachers here in the Congress, but I don't think enough of my colleagues have read ''If You Give a Mouse a Cookie'' because I have to think the lesson would be pretty darn relevant to what happens if you give a billionaire a slush fund—they just keep taking more.

And that is exactly what this bill does. It takes Federal funding and the money and the programs meant to help our constituents and gift wraps it for Trump and Musk to pick winners and losers, whether that means doling out stacks of cash to their billionaire buddies in their own company or whether that means punishing political enemies by cutting off money to blue States or blue cities.

And, look, just because you are a Republican and maybe you think you have an in with Elon's DOGE squad, don't think that means your constituents are safe because when your constituents are on the line, don't be surprised when Trump's rage at some mayor or Governor who puts your State's interests ahead of the President's ego wins out over any sense of obligation to thank you for giving him all this power in the first place, or when Elon Musk—the richest man in the world—stops making lame social media posts for long enough to hear you out. Don't be surprised when Musk values another billion dollars for one of his companies over the workers in your State he is firing left and right or the programs he is eliminating.

Look, my colleagues, this is not how it should be. Our constituents—our constituents—elected us to be their voice in Congress, not their voice on the phone with Elon Musk, but that is what House Republicans want to reduce us to.

My message here today to all my colleagues is that it doesn't have to be this way. Despite what Trump and Musk would have you believe, the choice is not simply between writing them a blank check or shutting down the government. Anyone who tells you that is flat wrong. We—we—have agency here. We have the power of the purse. We just need the common sense to use it. The path forward is not complicated. It is not unconventional. It is simple. We pass the short-term CR that I introduced the other day; we finish negotiating our bipartisan funding bills. By the way, that is not some impossible dream. We have done it before. In fact, we do it every year, even when it is incredibly hard. We were actually incredibly close before Republican leaders in the House left the negotiating room.

But we still have time to defuse this and to get back to the serious work writing bills that actually fund the programs our families rely on and actually make sure those funds get to where we—we as elected Members of Congress representing our constituents, our taxpaying constituents at home—where we intend them to go. We all agree Congress has the power of the purse, don't we? I am pretty sure that is a bipartisan principle. So we here in Congress should be able to find a bipartisan way to say that.

The true focus for me is transparency and accountability. No one has really explained to me why transparency is now a redline. How has that suddenly been too much to ask? I thought DOGE was all about transparency. I thought the whole idea was to hold government accountable. I thought we wanted to stop waste and fraud and abuse, not empower it and dismantle bipartisan guardrails.

Well, I just want to work that basic principle—accountability—into our bill, and I am open to different ideas on how we do that. I always have been.

By the way, while we are at it, it would seem like a pretty basic step in transparency and accountability for Elon Musk to come before a congressional hearing. So when are we going to work that out because I think at the barest minimum, it should be before we pass the CR that gives more power to him, not after.

So I strongly oppose the CR the House sent over. I hope my colleagues do the same. Defend your constituents. Defend your constituents, your taxpaying constituents, by protecting veterans, by defending cancer research, by the other investments and making sure that the infrastructure projects actually are built in your State. Defend your power as a Senator. Vote down this partisan bill that turns the government into a piggy bank for billionaires.

Let's immediately pass a short-term CR to prevent a government shutdown and finish writing those bills that keep our government working for the American people and to make sure our constituents have a voice in this process. I introduced a short-term CR to do just that. Democrats stand ready to work with Republicans to immediately get them done.

We are at a real turning point for how things will go. Isn't it worth taking a bit more time, working together a bit longer, and doing everything we can to keep us on a bipartisan path and to make sure we—we, each one of us—protect our power of the purse, our power to be a voice for the people back home? Especially when we are so close. Especially when I think we all know that it is going to lead to a much better outcome for our constituents that we represent, for the people who sent us here to fight for them, who trust us to work together, as we have in the past, to make their lives better—even when the work is hard.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas

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

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

VOTE ON SONDERLING NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sonderling nomination?

Mrs. BRITT. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 119 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	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	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Curtis	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—1

Duckworth

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). 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.

The Senator from Louisiana.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I want to talk about two subjects today. First, I want to talk about assets. We have been talking a lot about spending and the Federal budget and tax dollars. But there is another side to the ledger that sooner or later, in my judgment, we need to talk about.

Here is what I am getting at: Twenty-five percent of the land in the United States of America is owned by the Federal Government—25 percent. In some States, it is a lot more than 25 percent. That is just an average. It is 620 million acres.

Now, if you inherited 620 million acres, what would you do? Well, the first thing you would do is you would be careful to conserve it out of respect for the land. You would want to make sure that the land wasn't contaminated; that it is properly fenced. You would want to preserve it.

Second thing you would do is say: Well, how can I monetize this property? I have 620 million acres here. I am land poor. What can I do to have the land generate some income?

Under our Federal Government, the Bureau of Land Management is responsible for managing the 620 million acres. And the charge to our Bureau is to do a couple of things: No. 1, conserve the land; No. 2, make sure—because it belongs to the American people—make sure that people have an opportunity to recreate on the land; and, No. 3, see if you can manage the land in a way to generate cash.

Why is that important? Why is that especially important right now? Our debt is $36.5 trillion. What does that mean? I mean, we throw around this figure of a trillion. We can hardly get our mind around it—at least, I can hardly get mine around it. Our debt is so high, and we are paying so much interest that the debt grows by $1 trillion every 100 days. So this $36.5 trillion figure, 100 days from now—a little over 3 months—it is going to be $37.5 trillion. That is how fast the debt is growing.

This number is so high and we are paying so much in interest that the debt accrues at $10 billion a day—not million—$10 billion a day; $417 million it goes up an hour; $6.9 million—let's call it $7 million a minute. How long have I been talking, 3 minutes? The debt just increased $21 million. And we have got to pay that money back. This is not funny money.

We are talking about how to start paying it back by reducing our spending. But there is another way; it is to generate income through our 620 million acres of land.

Take our national parks, for example. The first thing we want to do to our national parks is preserve them. I mean, they are beautiful. That is why they are national parks. We want to preserve them and respect them and protect them environmentally and otherwise. We also want to allow people to enjoy them.

We do that by telling folks: Come on in. You have to pay an entrance fee—but it is reasonable—if you want to come in and camp or just walk around and enjoy the scenery, go on a hike. That generates some money. You don't want the entrance fee to be too high, but you want it to be reasonable.

Some of our national parks actually allow mining, oil and gas production, and timber production, so that increases income as well.

I have seen an estimate from the private sector—there are several of these—that our public land, our 620 million acres, if we managed that land properly, could generate $90 million in revenue. So $90 million could be generated by our public land. How? Through a mineral harvesting, natural gas production, oil drilling, grazing for agriculture, hunting licenses, fishing licenses, and camping permits.

Do you know what? Our Federal lands actually generate money. We know the potential: $90 billion a year. That would help us pay down this debt.

In 2023, our Federal lands actually lost money. They lost $13 billion. We went from a potential of $90 billion—according to land-use experts, that is what they ought to be generating—to a loss of $13 billion. It is embarrassing.

I don't want to blame all of it on the past administration. It wasn't all President Biden's fault, but some of it was. Under President Biden—not him, but his people; he appointed them—they banned offshore drilling for most of America's coastlines. They prohibited mining on over a million acres of lands. They canceled leases for oil and natural gas production. They paused all new permits for LNG, which Europe is hungry for. They restricted hunting. They restricted fishing. They restricted hiking. And they buried our Federal lands in redtape. That is why we lost $13 billion instead of gaining $90 billion a year.

It doesn't have to be this way. All you have to do is look at the States. The States have State land. They don't have 620 million acres like the Federal Government does, but they have got a lot of land. The States have worked very hard to increase the revenue on their State lands while preserving them.

Arizona, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico—all we have to do is copy them. Their activities, their preservation of their property, but their monetizing of their State lands has produced, over the past few years, an average return of $14.51 for every $1 those States have invested. So the States spend $1 on their State land, they get back 15 bucks—pretty good return. They haven't sacrificed air quality. They protected their lakes and rivers, and they have preserved their State land.

The Federal Government, for every $1 we spend on our public land, we get back 73 cents. So we put out a buck, and we get back 73 cents. You don't have to be Euclid to see that we are going backward here. We need to do better.

I know that the focus right now is on spending—it should be—and it is on designing a Tax Code that looks like somebody designed it on purpose—and it should be. All those things are important. But at some point, we need to recognize the enormous amount of assets that the American people own through their Federal Government and the fact that we are actually losing money by the way we are managing them instead of generating money.

Once again, you don't have to be an astrophysicist to figure this out. All we have to do is call Arizona, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, and probably West Virginia and just say: Would you all come up to Washington? We will buy you a soda and give you a nice hat if you will come on up here and tell us how you are doing it. And just copy what they are doing.

WOMEN'S SPORTS

Madam President, the second thing I want to talk about is less pleasant. But I don't mean it to be divisive. I don't.

There is a lady by the name of Laurel Libby—Laurel Libby. She happens to be from Maine. I love Maine—beautiful, beautiful State. She is in the State legislature. By all accounts, Ms. Libby is a very talented, accomplished legislator. She has beliefs, as we all do. One of her beliefs is that it is unfair to allow transgender women to play women's sports. In other words, Ms. Libby—I don't speak for her, but I have read her interviews—she believes it is unfair—fundamentally unfair, that it will destroy women's sports if transgender women—biologically males who identify as transgender women—are allowed to play women's sports. And she has said so.

In fact, she put up a Facebook post. The Facebook post highlighted a transgender athlete who 1 year placed fifth, I think, in the pole vault and then transitioned into—he placed fifth as a male athlete but then transitioned into a transgender woman and competed at the State level and came in first. She came in first. So when this individual was a biological male and competing, the biological male came in fifth in the State competition. The biological male transitioned into a transgender female and participated—was allowed to participate by the officials in Maine—in the pole vault in the women's sports and came in first.

Ms. Libby thought that was really unfair, so she posted a picture of the athlete—the transgender athlete—when she was a biological male and currently when she has now become a transgender woman. She posted the picture. She didn't put any phone numbers, any addresses, or any of that. She posted the picture of the athlete side by side, before transitioning and after.

Here is what she said:

> We have learned that just ONE year ago John—

The transgender athlete when she was a biological male—

> was competing in boys' pole vault . . . that is when he had his 5th place finish.

Then she went on to say:

> So all of this transpired in the last year, with the full blessing of the Maine Principals' Association.
>
> Two years ago, John tied for 5th place in boys' pole vault. Tonight—

John, now Katie, because John has transitioned into a transgender woman—

> Tonight, ''Katie'' won 1st place in the girls' Maine State Class B Championship.

Miss Libby thought that was unfair and so do many Americans. So do I, frankly.

Ms. Libby is in the State legislature, and her colleagues—Democrats, who are entitled to their opinion as much as Ms. Libby, who is a Republican, is entitled to hers—they got very angry. They wanted to throw her out. They wanted to throw Ms. Libby out of the Maine Legislature. They wanted to expel her, but they couldn't do it because that takes a two-thirds vote. They said: We are not going to expel her; we are going to censure her. That only takes a majority vote. But in censuring her, which they only needed Democratic votes to do, they added conditions that Ms. Libby could no longer vote and could no longer participate in any legislative committees. I guess she just has to sit there.

Well, that disenfranchises the constituents that Ms. Libby represents. And, frankly, they kind of went through the back door when they should have gone through the front door in a transparent way.

I am not here to try to meddle in the Maine State Legislature. Let me say it again, I love Maine. I think it is one of the most beautiful places in the world. And the way they handle their local politics is none of my business. That is not why I am here.

But I am here to say what Ms. Libby did—let me put it another way. Ms. Libby's belief about the fairness of transgender women participating in women's sports is based on science. It is. You may disagree with the science,

and you may disagree with her. If you do, you are entitled to do that. But Ms. Libby didn't just pluck this point of view out of thin air. A lot of Americans agree with her.

I think most Americans think that when you are 18 years of age, you are an adult. This is America. You can do anything you want to do, as long as it is not illegal or it doesn't hurt somebody else. You can be whomever you want to be. You can dress however you want to dress. You can't run around naked, but in terms of your dress, you can express yourself however you want if you are 18. I think most Americans don't have a problem with that. So long as it is perfectly legal, I don't. But when you are under 18, you are a minor. Adults get to make decisions because you are a minor, duh.

I also think that the American people have worked very hard through their elected representatives to try to lift up women's sports in America. We have worked very hard. We spent a lot of y'all's money lifting up women's sports so that women can be treated equally with men.

I also think, through no one's fault—I started to say only through God's fault, but I am not going to criticize God's decisions. Through nobody's fault—if you believe in God, it was a decision by God; if you just believe in nature, it was a decision by nature—men and women are different, and men have a physical advantage over women. And if you allow a male—no matter how the male identifies—to compete with a woman in women's sports, particularly when you are under 18, the male is going to win every single time. That is not just speculation, that is not just common sense, that is science.

The ACLU, which believes that transgender women—biological males who transition into transgender women—they say it is a fact that trans girls are girls.

And the ACLU and other activists have also said that it is a myth—they call it a myth—that transgender female athletes like Katie, formerly John—they say it is a myth that transgender female athletes have a physical advantage over girls. They are wrong. They are just wrong. You don't need a graduate degree in anatomy to know that. I mean, those claims are specious. Medical science and athletic data both demonstrate that the difference is obvious and that males, no matter how they identify, have a significant advantage over females in girls sports.

Even before birth, when the baby is in a mother's womb—this is a scientific fact—baby boys begin developing different hormones and skeletal structures than baby girls that help them outperform girls when they are older. That is just a fact. We can say we wish it weren't.

I am fine with it. Some people say: Oh, that is bad. Well, take it up with nature. Take it up with God. But it is a natural fact.

When that baby is in the womb, testosterone exposure for that baby boy alters his brain development. That improves that baby boy's motor skills and increases that baby boy's aggression vis-a-vis a baby girl. Both motor skills and aggression give that baby boy, when that baby boy grows up, an advantage over a girl in women's sports.

Boys, the science also shows, go through what is called a minipuberty. Still a baby boy in the mother's womb, the baby boy experiences a minipuberty—is what the scientists call it—right before birth that helps a baby boy, once that baby boy is born, to gain weight faster than if he were a baby girl. That ultimately is why boys tend to be taller than girls once they are born, on average, later in life.

Now, the differences between boys and girls—again, this is a law of nature or a law of God, depending on what you believe. The differences between boys and girls explode during puberty. I mean, I have a single child. He is a grown man now. But I remember puberty. I learned during puberty that there is nothing wrong with teenagers that reasoning with them will not aggravate. That is just also a law of nature, I think.

But boys and girls—the differences between them explode during puberty. Boys develop 14 percent larger hearts when they go through puberty and 12 percent larger lungs. So boy versus girl—the boy's heart is going to be 14 percent bigger and the lungs 12 percent larger, an obvious advantage in sports. That helps boys take in oxygen and pump blood more efficiently than girls can. That is just a fact. That gives them a clear edge in endurance sports: running, cycling, rowing, basketball.

Girls also, during puberty and afterwards, develop a wider pelvis. This decreases the amount of force their legs exert when they are lifting or when a girl is kicking or a girl is peddling, which also puts a girl, as an act of nature, at a relative disadvantage when you compare female athletes to male athletes.

Boys, during puberty and after puberty, on the other hand, develop broader shoulders than girls. I think we know that. When they develop those broader shoulders, that makes space for upper body muscle mass. It is hard to think of a sport in which a higher muscle-to-fat ratio—and boys have a higher muscle-to-fat ratio; it is just a scientific fact. It is hard to think of a sport in which a higher muscle-to-fat ratio is not helpful.

The average boy will also grow—again, scientific fact—5 inches taller than the average girl. Even when men and women are the same height, men have higher levels of bone density, which helps them move more forcefully and escape more injuries.

Again, boys just have a physical advantage over girls, and we see it in everyday life.

Top-ranked—let me put it another way. In 2016, there was an American sprinter. She was a great athlete—is a great athlete. Her name is Allyson Felix. She won an Olympic Gold Medal in the women's 400-meter race. Ran a hell of a race. She came in first. A year later, 285 teenage boys in America beat her time. She was the best in her class—in the world—as a female, but 285 guys in high school beat her time. Don't take my word for it; that was a study that was done by Duke University. The year she won the gold medal, there were 4,300 male athletes in America who clocked faster times in the 400 meters than she did.

I don't want to belabor this, but I think you can see why Ms. Libby feels that it is unfair—unfair to women—to allow biological males who have transitioned into a woman to compete in women's sports. It is not only unfair; it is dangerous. Again, I don't speak for Ms. Libby, but this is what I think she had on her mind when she exercised her First Amendment rights.

I will give you some examples. In May, a couple of years ago, a high school volleyball player in North Carolina—a female—sued her State high school athletics association. Why? Because they allowed a transgender player to play against her, and the transgender female—biological male, transgender female—spiked the ball in her face, gave her a concussion. Long-term physical injuries, long-term mental injuries.

Last October, a high school senior in California suffered a season-ending concussion after a transgender volleyball player spiked the ball, hit her in the face during the game, and it ended her final season of high school volleyball.

Last February, a girls basketball team in Massachusetts forfeited a game after a transgender athlete injured three female players in a single game. The biological male, who had transitioned into a transgender woman, was allowed to play in the basketball game and took three of the female players out. So the rest of the team said ''no mas,'' and the coach said: Nope. I am not going to let my players get hurt. They forfeited the game.

I raise this, Madam President, not to denigrate anyone. I am going to say it again. When you are an adult in America, you can be whomever you want to be. And about 90 percent of my personal philosophy is, don't hurt someone unless you have to defend yourself, don't take other people's stuff, and leave me alone because that is my right as an American. And I sort of feel that way about everybody.

But we are not talking about freedom here. We are talking about nature, and we are talking about fairness in women's sports, and we are talking about women getting hurt. And that is why I think Ms. Libby is right. It is fundamentally unfair because, if for no other reason—acts of God or nature or whatever you want to call it—boys are different from girls when it comes to

athletics, and there is nothing we can do about it. There is nothing I want to do about it, but some people do.

Ms. Libby has sued in Maine and said that her constitutional rights are being violated. I think she is right. I am not going to try to advise her judge how to rule. So I can't say whether her constitutional rights are being violated or not, but I can tell you this: Common sense and the laws of nature—or the laws of God, if you please—are certainly being violated because female young women are fundamentally different from male young boys, and that is just a natural fact.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 35.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Stephen Feinberg, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 35, Stephen Feinberg, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, Cynthia M. Lummis, Rick Scott of Florida, Kevin Cramer, Ted Budd, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Lindsey Graham, Markwayne Mullin, Marsha Blackburn, Thom Tillis, Tommy Tuberville, John R. Curtis, Chuck Grassley, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Todd Young.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS AND EXTENSIONS ACT, 2025—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. What is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 26, H.R. 1968, a bill making further continuing appropriations and other extensions for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 26, H.R. 1968, a bill making further continuing appropriations and other extensions for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, Cynthia M. Lummis, Rick Scott of Florida, Kevin Cramer, Ted Budd, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Lindsey Graham, Markwayne Mullin, Marsha Blackburn, Thom Tillis, Tommy Tuberville, John R. Curtis, Chuck Grassley, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Todd Young.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 36.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John Phelan, of Florida, to be Secretary of the Navy.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 36, John Phelan, of Florida, to be Secretary of the Navy.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, Cynthia M. Lummis, Rick Scott of Florida, Kevin Cramer, Ted Budd, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Lindsey Graham, Markwayne Mullin, Marsha Blackburn, Thom Tillis, Tommy Tuberville, John R. Curtis, Chuck Grassley, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Todd Young.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

SUNSHINE WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, every year, Sunshine Week is held around March 16, the birthday of James Madison, who not only is a former President, but the acclaimed ''Father of the Constitution.''

On its 20th anniversary, Sunshine Week continues to be a crucial reminder of the need for transparency and open government. To control a government as big as ours, it takes a lot of very bright light shining on every Agency. As Justice Brandeis wrote in 1913, ''Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants.''

Transparency brings accountability and the public's business ought to be public. That attitude and approach is an important check on the Federal Government. It reminds bureaucrats that they ultimately work for and answer to ''We the People.''

One transparency tool I value is the Freedom of Information Act. This law, first enacted in 1966, requires our government to proactively make material public and to respond to requests for documents, reports, and many other types of information. The presumption under this law is that government actions, rules, and work is public property. Putting this information in public hands helps us hold our government accountable. The Freedom of Information Act is one of the strongest tools we have to ensure that our government is doing what it should be doing and in ways that are best for us.

And speaking of records, a large part of my oversight work includes publicly releasing documents to hold current and former government officials accountable. To accomplish that, I often work with whistleblowers to get the information the government likes to hide. Whistleblowers are patriots and our most powerful tool in rooting out waste, fraud, abuse, and misconduct, including the weaponization of our government.

They are often targeted for retaliation and harassment. That must stop.

Time and again, I have come to the floor of the U.S. Senate to point out specific examples of retaliation. That is why I have called on every President since Ronald Reagan to hold a Rose Garden Ceremony to honor whistleblowers. I hope President Trump will be the first to set this historic precedent.

Unfortunately, there has been a growing trend among Federal Agencies to unlawfully silence whistleblowers by failing to include the anti-gag provision in their nondisclosure policies, forms, and similar agreements. The law requires Federal Agencies to include the anti-gag provision to notify employees of their whistleblower rights.

That is why last Congress, I called on 76 inspectors general to conduct a review of their parent Agency's nondisclosure agreements and similar documents to ensure the anti-gag provision was included. In response, so far, 36 IGs have completed reviews.

Thirty IGs found that their parent Agency's nondisclosure agreements were noncompliant with the law. Twenty-six IGs said their parent Agency updated or was in the process of updating these deficient agreements. The IG community has much work to do, and this Senator won't stop protecting whistleblowers.

Whistleblower disclosures proved that anti-Trump FBI agent Tim Thibault was involved in the genesis of Jack Smith's election interference case against President Trump. The FBI codenamed it Arctic Frost. Internal FBI records revealed Thibault acted outside of established FBI protocol and essentially opened and approved his own investigation into President Trump. This is just one of many instances of political infection at the Justice Department and FBI.

Whistleblowers also provided me with new information that, during the Biden administration, FBI leadership politicized investigations at the expense of saving victimized children. According to whistleblowers, agents working large caseloads on the Violent Crimes Against Children Unit were reassigned by FBI leadership to work January 6 cases.

Political infection isn't just a DOJ and FBI problem. Whistleblower disclosures provided to my office showed that the Obama-Biden administration's then-Secretary of State John Kerry obstructed arrests of indicted Iranian terrorists. Kerry did so to score political points with Iran for the failed nuclear deal.

My consistent efforts to let in sunshine continues across our government whether it is exposing flaws in the Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement that caused children to be placed in harm's way, pressing the FBI on issuing a memo about targeting Catholics, or fighting to obtain information from DOJ on the horrific January 1, 2025, attacks in New Orleans. We need more whistleblowers to shine light on political infection because we certainly can't count on the government to turn themselves in.

Now, the Federal Government isn't the only bad actor that whistleblowers provided sunlight on. The Simon Wiesenthal Center also disclosed to my office that Credit Suisse engaged in misconduct during in internal investigation. That investigation focused on the bank's Nazi-linked financial accounts. Turns out, Credit Suisse serviced more Nazi wealth than was known during and after World War II and tried to keep it hidden. Thanks to these whistleblowers, I discovered that Credit Suisse lied to Congress about all this, while smearing the reputation of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

My oversight list could go on and on thanks to whistleblowers.

In conclusion, we all ought to be thankful for Sunshine Week, which is an opportunity for the country to highlight the righteous fight for transparency. Shining a consistent light on the work of our government is essential to making it accountable to ''We the People.''

JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the rules of procedure for the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library for the 119th Congress be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

119TH CONGRESS JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY

RULES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY FOR THE 119TH CONGRESS

Rule 1.—Meetings of the Committee

(a) Regular meetings may be called by the Chair, with the concurrence of the Vice Chair, as may be deemed necessary or pursuant to the provision of paragraph 3 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

(b) Meetings of the committee, including meetings to conduct hearings, shall be open to the public, except that a meeting or series of meetings by the committee on the same subject for a period of no more than 14 calendar days may be closed to the public on a motion made and seconded to go into closed session to discuss only whether the matters enumerated in subparagraphs (A) through (F) would require the meeting to be closed followed immediately by a recorded vote in open session by a majority of the members of the committee when it is determined that the matters to be discussed or the testimony to be taken at such meeting or meetings—

(1) will disclose matters necessary to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or the confidential conduct of the foreign relations of the United States;

(2) will relate solely to matters of the committee staff personnel or internal staff management or procedures;

(3) will tend to charge an individual with crime or misconduct, to disgrace or injure the professional standing of an individual, or otherwise to expose an individual to public contempt or obloquy, or will represent a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy of an individual;

(4) will disclose the identity of any informer or law enforcement agent or will disclose any information relating to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense that is required to be kept secret in the interest of effective law enforcement;

(5) will disclose information relating to the trade secrets or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to a given person if—

(i) an Act of Congress requires the information to be kept confidential by Government officers and employees; or

(ii) the information has been obtained by the Government on a confidential basis, other than through an application by such person for a specific Government financial or other benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the competitive position of such person; or

(6) may divulge matters required to kept confidential under the provisions of law or Government regulation. (Paragraph 5(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.)

(c) Written notices of committee meetings will normally be sent by the committee's staff director to all members at least three days in advance. In addition, the committee staff will email or telephone reminders of committee meetings to all members of the committee or to the appropriate staff assistants in their offices.

(d) A copy of the committee's intended agenda enumerating separate items of committee business will normally be sent to all members of the committee by the staff director at least one day in advance of all meetings. This does not preclude any member of the committee from raising appropriate nonagenda topics.

(e) Any witness who is to appear before the committee in any hearing shall file with the clerk of the committee at least three business days before the date of their appearance, a written statement of their proposed testimony and an executive summary thereof, in such form as the Chair may direct, unless the Chair waived such a requirement for good cause.

Rule 2.—Quorums

(a) Pursuant to paragraph 7(a)(1) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules, four members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

(b) Pursuant to paragraph 7(a)(2) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules, two members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony; provided, however, once a quorum is established, any one member can continue to take such testimony.

(c) Under no circumstance may proxies be considered for the establishment of a quorum.

Rule 3.—Voting

(a) Voting in the committee on any issue will normally be by voice vote.

(b) If a third of the members present so demand, a recorded vote will be taken on any question by roll call.

(c) The results of roll call votes taken in any meeting upon a measure, or any amendment thereto, shall be stated in the committee report on that measure unless previously announced by the committee, and such report or announcement shall include a tabulation of the votes cast in favor and the votes cast in opposition to each measure and amendment by each member of the committee. (Paragraph 7(b) and (c) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules.)

Rule 4.—Delegation and Authority to the Chair and Vice Chair

(a) The Chair and Vice Chair are authorized to sign all necessary vouchers and routine papers for which the committee's approval is required and to decide on the committee's behalf on all routine business.

(b) The Chair is authorized to engage commercial reporters for the preparation of transcripts of committee meetings and hearings.

(c) The Chair is authorized to issue, on behalf of the committee, regulations normally promulgated by the committee at the beginning of each session.

TRIBUTE TO ADDIE BING

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Addie for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Addie is a native of Pinedale. She attends Casper College, where she is studying to obtain her associates of science in general studies and her private pilot license. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Addie for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.

TRIBUTE TO WILLOW LINDHOLM

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Willow for her hard work as an intern in my Sheridan office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Willow is a native of Sundance. She attends Sheridan College, where she is studying to obtain her associates of science in social science. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Willow for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.

TRIBUTE TO EIRINI MARINAKI

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Eirini for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, whip office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Eirini is a native of Athens, Greece. She attends Georgetown University, where she is studying to obtain her bachelor's in political science and economics. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Eirini for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.

TRIBUTE TO KASSIDY THOMAS

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Kassidy for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Kassidy is a native of Casper. She recently graduated from the University of Wyoming with a bachelor's in psychology and criminal justice. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Kassidy for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING GRANT SMITH

● Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, it is with a heavy heart that I would like to make a statement to honor the extraordinary life and service of a great advocate: Mr. Grant Smith. Grant spent a lifetime working on issues to advance fair justice system.

Most recently, Grant worked with my team on the Re-Entry Support Through Opportunities for Resources and Essentials Act, known as the RESTORE Act. In all of his work with my team, he showed great professionalism, dedication, and care.

Our movement for better drug policy is forever indebted to his service. Grant and his family are in my prayers.●

RECOGNIZING THE BRICK KITCHEN

● Ms. ERNST. Madam 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 The Brick Kitchen of Independence, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 2021, husband and wife Nate and Shelly Whited founded The Brick Kitchen in Independence, IA. Inspired by their love for cooking and spending time in the kitchen with their children Tia and Will, the couple envisioned a space where culinary enthusiasts could find high-quality kitchen tools and gadgets. Before opening, the couple purchased the historic King's Hall—the all-brick opera house originally built in 1876—and renamed part of it The Brick Kitchen. Through the help of friends and family and hard work, Nate and Shelly updated and refurbished the building, trying their best to keep its historic charm. In May 2021, The Brick Kitchen was officially open for business.

Today, The Brick Kitchen remains in its 20,000-square-foot building, offering a wide array of kitchen products and services, including cutlery, cookware, food preparation supplies, in-house knife sharpening, and more. The company also receives batches of flavor-infused olive oils and balsamic vinegar from a Montanta-based small business, which the team securely bottles, labels, and sells in-store. Most recently, in April 2023, The Brick Kitchen expanded its operation by opening an instructional kitchen for demonstrations and hands-on cooking classes. With a team of 12 community employees, The Brick Kitchen is committed to quality, durability, and ease of use products, making the store a beloved retail destination for residents and visitors alike.

The Brick Kitchen is a member of the Independence Chamber of Commerce, and in 2021, the chamber awarded the Entrepreneurs of the Year as well as the Business of the Year to both Shelly and Nate. The Brick Kitchen is also a member of the HTI Buying Group, supporting local initiatives and industry partnerships. In addition, Shelly served on the Independence School Board for 7 years, including a term as president. Nate serves on the city board of adjustments and contributes his time to coaching varsity soccer. He also serves on the Independence Aquatic Center Improvement Board. The Brick Kitchen actively supports local schools, events, and organizations through funding and gifts. Additionally, in 2000, Nate was a founding member of the Independence Fourth of July board, helping grow the event from hundreds of people to 30,000 attendees each year. In 2023, Shelly and Nate made NCAA history by signing 18 members of the University of Iowa Mellophone section of the marching band to a Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) deal, making The Brick Kitchen the first to provide this type of deal to student musicians. This May, The Brick Kitchen will celebrate its fourth anniversary in Iowa.

The Brick Kitchen's active community involvement as well as their commitment to excellence are clear. I want to congratulate Shelly and Nate Whited, their children, and their team for providing high-quality kitchen products and services to families across

Iowa. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:05 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 706. An act to improve the biodetection functions of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1156. An act to amend the CARES Act to extend the statute of limitations for fraud under certain unemployment programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1692. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enable secure and trustworthy technology through other transaction contracting authority, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, in which it request the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 25. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service relating to ''Gross Proceeds Reporting by Brokers That Regularly Provide Services Effectuating Digital Asset Sales''.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the resolution (H.Res. 212) returning to the Senate the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 3), providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service relating to ''Gross Proceeds Reporting by Brokers That Regularly Provide Services Effectuating Digital Asset Sales' '', and, in the opinion of this House, contravenes the first clause of the seventh section of the first article of the Constitution of the United States and is an infringement of the privileges of this House and that such joint resolution be respectfully returned to the Senate with a message communicating this resolution.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 706. An act to improve the biodetection functions of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1692. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enable secure and trustworthy technology through other transaction contracting authority, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following joint resolution was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.J. Res. 25. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service relating to ''Gross Proceeds Reporting by Brokers That Regularly Provide Services Effectuating Digital Asset Sales''.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 1156. An act to amend the CARES Act to extend the statute of limitations for fraud under certain unemployment programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1008. A bill to provide equitable treatment for the people of the Village Corporation established for the Native Village of Saxman, Alaska, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MORAN, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

Special Report entitled ''Legislative and Oversight Activities During the 118th Congress by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.'' (Rept. No. 119–2).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. RISCH for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Matthew Whitaker, of Iowa, to be United States Permanent Representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

Nominee: Matthew G. Whitaker.

Post: US Ambassador to NATO.

(The following is a list of members of my immediate family. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

Matthew Whitaker, $47.00, 10/28/2024, WINRED; $47.00, 10/27/2024, WINRED; $47.00, 10/17/2024, WINRED; $5,000, 07/15/2024, Trump 47 Committee; $200, 07/08/2024, Rep. Party of Iowa; $90, 07/01/2024, Rep. Party of Iowa; $50.00, 04/27/2024, WINRED; $68.00, 10/22/2023, WINRED; $50.00, 06/20/2024, WINRED; $1,000.00, 10/22/2022, CPAC ACTION PAC.

Alison Whitaker (daughter), $10, 10/22/2022, Kari Lake.

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*Christopher Landau, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

*Michael Rigas, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.

By Mr. GRAHAM for the Committee on the Budget.

*James Bishop, of North Carolina, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

By Mr. CRUZ for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Mark Meador, of Virginia, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the term of seven years from September 26, 2024.

*Michael Kratsios, of South Carolina, to be Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

By Mr. MORAN for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

*Paul Lawrence, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. LEE:

S. 973. A bill to establish a task force for regulatory oversight and review; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 974. A bill to direct the Secretary of the State to seek to enter into negotiations with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office to rename its office the ''Taiwan Representative Office'', and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 975. A bill to establish a grant program to support schools of medicine and schools of osteopathic medicine in underserved areas; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 976. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to reduce fraudulent enrollments in qualified health plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. BUDD, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. SHEEHY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BANKS, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LEE, Ms. LUMMIS, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 977. A bill to prohibit taxpayer-funded gender transition procedures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MOODY (for herself, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. 978. A bill to amend the National Housing Act to establish a mortgage insurance program for first responders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BANKS:

S. 979. A bill to promote defense innovation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. LUJÁN):

S. 980. A bill to establish an intermodal transportation infrastructure pilot program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. YOUNG, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 981. A bill to amend the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended to clarify that the obligation of individuals who formerly served as agents of foreign principals to register as foreign agents under the Act is continuing with respect to activities carried out previously on behalf of such foreign principals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BANKS (for himself and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. 982. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to disclose campus polices relating to responding to certain incidents of civil disturbance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 983. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to clarify that implanted active middle ear hearing devices are prosthetics and are not subject to the hearing aid coverage exclusion under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 984. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to establish an exception to certain payment limitations in the case of person or legal entity that derives income from agriculture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. HAGERTY:

S. 985. A bill to prohibit entities integral to the national interests of the United States from participating in any foreign sustainability due diligence regulation, including the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive of the European Union, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 986. A bill to address and take action to prevent bullying and harassment of students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. HYDE–SMITH (for herself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. LEE, and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 987. A bill to prohibit the Federal Government from conducting, funding, approving, or otherwise supporting any research involving human fetal tissue that is obtained pursuant to an induced abortion, and to prohibit the solicitation or knowing acquisition, receipt, or acceptance of a donation of such issue; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 988. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to provide for greater spousal protection under defined contribution plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. RISCH, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 989. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that income received by a regulated investment company from precious metals shall be treated as qualifying income; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. ERNST, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. JUSTICE, and Mr. LEE):

S. 990. A bill to prohibit the enforcement of a rule with respect to emissions, to amend the Clean Air Act to ensure that tailpipe regulations do not limit the availability of new motor vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 991. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to eliminate certain requirements relating to the award of construction subcontracts within the county or State of performance; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

S. 992. A bill to authorize funding for the creation and implementation of infant mortality pilot programs in standard metropolitan statistical areas with high rates of infant mortality, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FETTERMAN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. WELCH):

S. 993. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to cancel existing school meal debt, to expand the authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation for use in nutrition assistance programming, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 994. A bill to provide for accountability in higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. ERNST, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. JUSTICE, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. LUMMIS, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 995. A bill to repeal a rule of the Environmental Protection Agency with respect to multi-pollutant emissions standards, to amend the Clean Air Act to ensure that tailpipe regulations do not limit the availability of new motor vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. BUDD, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. LUMMIS, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. RISCH, Mr. JUSTICE, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 996. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to prevent the elimination of the sale of motor vehicles with internal combustion engines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. REED, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. KAINE, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. SMITH, Mr. COONS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 997. A bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and stability of the transportation security workforce by applying the personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 998. A bill to authorize the President to enter into trade agreements for the reciprocal elimination of duties or other import restrictions with respect to medical goods to contribute to the national security and public health of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHMITT (for himself and Mr. LEE):

S. 999. A bill to reform the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, limit the scope of public health authorities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. KING, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. WELCH, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. SLOTKIN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 1000. A bill to establish an Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mr. SCHMITT):

S. 1001. A bill to develop and disseminate a civic education curriculum and oral history resources regarding certain political ideologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SANDERS, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 1002. A bill to require on-time delivery of periodicals to unlock additional rate authority, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. BRITT (for herself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WARNOCK, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. TUBERVILLE, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1003. A bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue an order providing that a shark attack is an event for which a wireless emergency alert may be transmitted, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LUJÁN (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 1004. A bill to reauthorize the program to support residential treatment programs for pregnant and postpartum women, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO:

S. 1005. A bill to provide for conservation and economic development in the State of Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. LEE):

S. 1006. A bill to prohibit Federal employees from organizing, joining, or participating labor unions for purposes of collective bargaining or representation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 1007. A bill to amend title V of the Public Health Service Act to secure the suicide prevention lifeline from cybersecurity incidents, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 1008. A bill to provide equitable treatment for the people of the Village Corporation established for the Native Village of Saxman, Alaska, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. KING, Ms. SLOTKIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. GALLEGO):

S. 1009. A bill to establish the Baltic Security Initiative for the purpose of strengthening the defensive capabilities of the Baltic countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LANKFORD:

S. 1010. A bill to prohibit the use of funds for universities that provide support to the People's Liberation Army, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LANKFORD:

S. 1011. A bill to establish the position of Country China Officer in the Department of State to monitor and counter financing projects around the world that are backed by the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 1012. A bill to increase oversight of foreign direct investment in agricultural land in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. Res. 124. A resolution recognizing the 250th anniversary of the United States Marine Corps; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. WARNOCK, and Mr. LEE):

S. Res. 125. A resolution commemorating the centennial of Delta Air Lines; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. Res. 126. A resolution calling on the United Nations Security Council to enforce the existing arms embargo on Darfur and extend it to cover all of Sudan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 110

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 110, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to exclude extensions of credit made to veterans from the definition of a member business loan.

S. 128

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 128, a bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require proof of United States citizenship to register an individual to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 214

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 214, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the rate of the special pension payable to Medal of Honor recipients, and for other purposes.

S. 272

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 272, a bill to improve the safety of infant formula through testing of infant formula for microorganisms and toxic elements, and for other purposes.

S. 297

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 297, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to require group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group or individual health insurance coverage to provide coverage for prostate cancer screenings without the imposition of cost-sharing requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 315

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to issue a rule requiring access to AM broadcast stations in passenger motor vehicles, and for other purposes.

S. 339

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 339, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multi-cancer early detection screening tests.

S. 410

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BANKS) 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.

At the request of Mr. WARNOCK, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 410, supra.

S. 424

At the request of Mrs. BRITT, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 424, a bill to amend the Federal securities laws to enhance 403(b) plans, and for other purposes.

S. 470

At the request of Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 470, a bill to amend the CARES Act to remove a requirement on lessors to provide notice to vacate, and for other purposes.

S. 475

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. JUSTICE) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 475, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure appropriate access to non-opioid pain management drugs under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 725

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 725, a bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to issue reports after activation of the Disaster Information Reporting System and to make improvements to network outage reporting, to categorize public safety telecommunicators as a protective service occupation under the Standard Occupational Classification system, and for other purposes.

S. 763

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 763, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the exemption for telehealth services from certain high deductible health plan rules.

S. 858

At the request of Mr. JUSTICE, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 916

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 916, a bill to safeguard the humane treatment of pregnant and postpartum women by ensuring the presumption of release and prohibiting shackling, restraining, and other inhumane treatment, and for other purposes.

S. 963

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 963, a bill to establish the Space National Guard.

S. 970

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 970, a bill to establish a pilot program to improve the family self-sufficiency program, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 18

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 18, a joint

resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to ''Overdraft Lending: Very Large Financial Institutions''.

S. RES. 86

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 86, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 (XXVI) and the harmful conflation of China's ''One China Principle'' and the United States' ''One China Policy''.

S. RES. 91

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 91, a resolution acknowledging the third anniversary of Russia's further invasion of Ukraine and expressing support for the people of Ukraine.

AMENDMENT NO. 1258

At the request of Mr. WARNOCK, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1258 intended to be proposed to S. 331, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 984. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to establish an exception to certain payment limitations in the case of person or legal entity that derives income from agriculture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the bipartisan Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act. This legislation would ensure all farmers can access critical U.S. Department of Agriculture disaster relief programs.

Increasingly frequent and catastrophic floods, fires, freezes, and other disasters are threatening the long-term sustainability of agriculture across the country.

The impact has been particularly acute for California's agricultural communities, who face year-round threats from drought, heat, floods, and fires—even in January.

The farm bill authorizes safety net programs to help producers recover, but outdated adjusted gross income, AGI, limits exclude many specialty crop growers, despite facing the same extreme weather challenges as other farmers.

As a result, producers from California to North Carolina are blocked from vital disaster assistance.

The Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act adopts flexibility used in the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program to waive the AGI limitation for producers that derive 75 percent of their AGI from farming, ranching, or related farming practices.

What are referred to as specialty crops are just that—special. Specialty crops, which include fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops that are cultivated for food and medicine, require overall higher input costs and specialized processes for planting, growing, and harvesting.

Did you know that it costs more than $30,000 to produce an acre of strawberries? The cost of production for specialty crops is typically thousands of dollars per acre.

As a result, both large and small producers of specialty crops end up exceeding the AGI limitations put in place to means-test critical disaster assistance.

That is why we need to pass the Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act to ensure farmers and ranchers can access agricultural safety net programs in the wake of increasingly more frequent and catastrophic disasters.

I would like to thank Senator TILLIS for joining me to introduce this bill, and I forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act as quickly as possible.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 994. A bill to provide for accountability in higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 994

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Preventing Risky Operations from Threatening the Education and Career Trajectories of Students Act of 2025'' or the ''PROTECT Students Act of 2025''.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Except as otherwise expressly provided in this Act, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or a repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to that section or other provision of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.).

TITLE I—STUDENT AND TAXPAYER PROTECTIONS

SEC. 101. GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCIAL VALUE TRANSPARENCY.

(a) DEFINING GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.—

(1) ADDITIONAL INSTITUTIONS.—Section 101(b) (20 U.S.C. 1001(b)) is amended in paragraph (1), by inserting '', including that meets the standards for debt-to-earnings and earnings premium in section 498C,'' after ''gainful employment in a recognized occupation''.

(2) PROPRIETARY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—Section 102(b)(1)(A)(i) (20 U.S.C. 1002(b)(1)(A)(i)) is amended, by inserting '', including that meets the standards for debt-to-earnings and earnings premium in section 498C'' after ''gainful employment in a recognized occupation''.

(3) POSTSECONDARY VOCATIONAL INSTITUTION.—Section 102(c)(1)(A) (20 U.S.C. 1002(c)(1)(A)) is amended, by inserting '', including that meets the standards for debt-to-earnings and earnings premium in section 498C'' after ''gainful employment in a recognized occupation''.

(4) ELIGIBLE PROGRAM.—Section 481(b)(1)(A)(i) (20 U.S.C. 1088(b)(1)(A)(i)) is amended, by inserting '', including that meets the standards for debt-to-earnings and earnings premium in section 498C'' after ''gainful employment in a recognized profession''.

(b) DEBT-TO-EARNINGS AND EARNINGS PREMIUM.—Subpart 3 of part H of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1099c et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 498C. DEBT-TO-EARNINGS AND EARNINGS PREMIUM.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ANNUAL DEBT-TO-EARNINGS RATE.—The term 'annual debt-to-earnings rate' means the rate that is calculated for a cohort of students by taking the annual loan payment for such cohort, as calculated by the Secretary, divided by the median annual earnings for such cohort.

''(2) ANNUAL LOAN PAYMENT.—The term 'annual loan payment' means, for a cohort of students, as defined by the Secretary, who

completed an eligible program, their total annual payment on loans borrowed to enroll in the institution that offered the eligible program, measured not less than 2 and not more than 4 years after their completion.

''(3) DISCRETIONARY DEBT-TO-EARNINGS RATE.—The term 'discretionary debt-to-earnings rate' means the rate that is calculated for a cohort of students by taking the annual loan payment for such cohort, as calculated by the Secretary, divided by the discretionary earnings for such cohort.

''(4) DISCRETIONARY EARNINGS.—The term 'discretionary earnings' means, for a cohort of students, as defined by the Secretary, who completed an eligible program, the median annual earnings minus the amount that is 150 percent of the poverty level for an individual, as determined by the Department of Health and Human Services.

''(5) EARNINGS PREMIUM.—The term 'earnings premium' means the amount by which the median annual earnings exceed the median earnings for working adults with not more than a high school diploma, as determined using data from the Bureau of the Census—

''(A) in the State where the institution that provides the eligible program is located; or

''(B) if fewer than half of the students in the eligible program are from the State where the institution that provides the eligible program is located, or if the institution is a foreign institution, nationally.

''(6) MEDIAN ANNUAL EARNINGS.—The term 'median annual earnings' means, for a cohort of students, as defined by the Secretary, who completed an eligible program, the midpoint of their annual earnings measured not less than 2 and not more than 4 years after their completion.

''(b) STANDARDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible program does not meet the standards for debt-to-earnings or earnings premium if it fails the debt-to-earnings rates or fails the earnings premium, as described in paragraph (2), in 2 out of any 3 consecutive years.

''(2) FAILING.—An eligible program—

''(A) fails the debt-to-earnings rates if it has—

''(i) a discretionary debt-to-earnings rate equal to or greater than 20 percent; and

''(ii) an annual debt-to-earnings rate equal to or greater than 8 percent; and

''(B) fails the earnings premium if it has an earnings premium of zero or a negative amount.

''(c) PROCESS.—

''(1) DATA MATCH.—In order to ensure compliance with paragraph (2), the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, and the head of any other Federal agency that administers the database of individual-level earnings data shall, in coordination with the Secretary, timely ensure secure, annual data matches of earnings data with Department of Education data to produce the median annual earnings of each eligible program.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS OF THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall—

''(A) on an annual calendar year basis—

''(i) for each eligible program—

''(I) calculate for each award year the discretionary debt-to-earnings rate, the annual debt-to-earnings rate, and the earnings premium for the program; and

''(II) publish the discretionary debt-to-earnings rate, the annual debt-to-earnings rate, and the earnings premium for the eligible program for each award year on a website established and maintained by the Secretary;

''(ii) for each eligible program that is a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation or a graduate or professional degree program offered by an institution of higher education described in section 101(a), issue a notice of determination not later than 45 days after completing the data match described in paragraph (1), informing the institution that provides the program—

''(I) of the final discretionary debt-to-earnings rate, the annual debt-to-earnings rate, and the earnings premium for the program, which may not be appealed by the institution unless the institution believes that the Secretary erred in the calculation of any such measure;

''(II) of the final determination regarding whether the program fails the debt-to-earnings rates or fails the earnings premium, as described in subsection (b)(2);

''(III) whether the program does not meet the standards for debt-to-earnings or earnings premium as described in subsection (b)(1) or could not meet such standards in the next year if it fails the debt-to-earnings rates or fails the earnings premium, as described in subsection (b)(2), in such next year; and

''(IV) whether the institution is required to provide warnings to enrolled students and prospective students of the program's failure, or risk of failure, to meet the standards, as determined under subclause (III); and

''(iii) for each eligible program that is a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation that does not meet the standards for debt-to-earnings and earnings premium as described in subsection (b)(1), enforce the consequences under subsection (d); and

''(B) develop processes to verify, on an annual calendar year basis—

''(i) that each eligible program that is a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation or a graduate or professional degree program offered by an institution of higher education described in section 101(a), provides the warning described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(IV), if applicable; and

''(ii) that each eligible program that is a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation that does not meet the standards for debt-to-earnings or earnings premium as described in subsection (b)(1), does not receive funds as described in subsection (d).

''(d) CONSEQUENCES OF NOT MEETING STANDARDS.—

''(1) NO DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS FOR ENROLLMENT IN INELIGIBLE PROGRAMS.—An institution may not disburse program funds under this title to students enrolled in a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation that does not meet the standards for debt-to-earnings and earnings premium as described in this section.

''(2) TIME PERIOD TO REESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY.—An institution may not seek to reestablish the eligibility of a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation that does not meet the standards for debt-to-earnings and earnings premium as described in this section or establish the eligibility of a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation that is substantially similar to the program that did not meet such standards until the date that is 3 years after the date of the notice of determination issued under subsection (c)(2)(A)(ii) that the program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation does not meet the standards.

''(e) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall issue regulations to carry out this section not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Preventing Risky Operations from Threatening the Education and Career Trajectories of Students Act of 2025, except that such regulations shall not be subject to the requirements of sections 482 or 492.''.

SEC. 102. BORROWER DEFENSE AND SUBSTANTIAL MISREPRESENTATIONS.

(a) BORROWER DEFENSE TO REPAYMENT.—Section 455(h) (20 U.S.C. 1087e(h)) is amended to read as follows:

''(h) BORROWER DEFENSES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of State or Federal law, the Secretary shall discharge a covered loan in repayment made to a borrower with a defense to repayment of the loan, as described in this section.

''(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) REPAYMENT.—The term 'repayment' means the period after any in-school deferment or grace period and before a loan is paid in full other than by a consolidation loan made under this title, including, without limitation, a loan in default.

''(B) COVERED LOAN.—The term 'covered loan' means a loan made, insured, or guaranteed under this title that has an outstanding balance comprised in whole or in part by repayment obligations incurred to cover the cost of attendance at an institution of higher education.

''(3) BASIS FOR DEFENSE TO REPAYMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of discharge under this section, a borrower defense to repayment is established when the Secretary concludes by a preponderance of the evidence that a qualifying act, omission, or event occurred, and the student whose cost of attendance was paid in whole or in part by the proceeds of a covered loan suffered detriment in the nature and degree warranting a borrower defense discharge.

''(B) QUALIFYING ACTS, OMISSIONS, OR EVENTS.—A qualifying act, omission, or event includes without limitation any of the following:

''(i) The institution, one of its representatives, or a third-party servicer of the institution made a substantial misrepresentation (as described in section 481(g)), directly or indirectly, to the borrower in connection with the borrower's decision to attend, or to continue attending, the institution or the borrower's decision to take out a covered loan.

''(ii) The institution failed to perform its obligations under the terms of a contract with the student and such obligation was undertaken as consideration or in exchange for the borrower's decision to attend, or to continue attending, the institution, for the borrower's decision to take out a covered loan, or for funds disbursed in connection with a covered loan.

''(iii) The institution engaged in aggressive and deceptive recruitment conduct or tactics in connection with the borrower's decision to attend, or to continue attending, the institution or the borrower's decision to take out a covered loan. Aggressive and deceptive recruitment tactics or conduct include actions by the institution, any of its representatives, or any entity, organization, or person with whom the institution has an agreement to provide educational programs, marketing, recruitment, or lead generation services that pressure a student to make enrollment or loan-related decisions, take unreasonable advantage of a student's lack of knowledge, discourage a student or prospective student from consulting an advisor prior to making enrollment or loan-related decisions, use threatening or abusive language, or repeatedly engage in unsolicited contact.

''(iv) The borrower, whether as an individual or as a member of a class, or a governmental agency has obtained against the institution a favorable judgment based on

State or Federal law in a court or administrative tribunal of competent jurisdiction based on the institution's act or omission relating to the making of a covered loan, or the provision of educational services for which the loan was provided, notwithstanding any possible appeal.

''(v) The Secretary sanctioned or otherwise took adverse action against the institution at which the borrower enrolled, based on the institution's acts or omissions that could give rise to a borrower defense under clause (i), (ii), or (iii).

''(vi) The institution committed any act or omission that relates to the making of the covered loan for enrollment at the institution or the provision of educational services for which the covered loan was provided that would give rise to a cause of action against the institution under applicable State law without regard to any statute of limitations.

''(C) DETERMINATION WHETHER DETRIMENT WARRANTS DISCHARGE.—In determining whether the nature and degree of detriment warrants a borrower defense discharge, the Secretary shall consider the totality of the circumstances, including the nature and degree of detriment shown by previous recipients of borrower defense discharge, and drawing all inferences and presumptions warranted by the evidence under the circumstances.

''(4) EFFECT OF DISCHARGE.—To effectuate a borrower defense discharge of a covered loan in repayment, the Secretary shall carry out the following:

''(A) Discharge all amounts owed to the Secretary, including interest and fees, on the covered loan, subject to the limitation in paragraph (5). In the case of a covered loan that is a Federal Direct Consolidation Loan or a Federal Consolidation Loan under section 428C comprised only in part of repayment obligations incurred to cover the cost of attendance at the institution whose acts or omissions are the basis of the discharge, the Secretary may discharge less than the total amount of the covered loan when loan account records clearly establish the portion of the covered loan not subject to the defense to repayment.

''(B) Reimburse all payments previously made to the Secretary on the covered loan, subject to the limitation in paragraph (5).

''(C) For borrowers in default, determine that the borrower is not in default on the covered loan and therefore not ineligible to receive assistance under this title on the basis of default on the covered loan.

''(D) Update or delete adverse reports the Secretary previously made to consumer reporting agencies regarding the covered loan.

''(E) Remove the discharged covered loan and any grant made under this title related to the student's attendance at the institution whose acts are omissions are the basis of the discharge from the borrower's loan history for purposes of calculating eligibility for further grants and loans under this title.

''(5) LIMITATION ON DISCHARGE AND REIMBURSEMENT.—The Secretary may reduce the amount of discharge and reimbursement provided for in paragraph (4) if the borrower received a money payment from the institution or related entity in compensation for the acts or omissions forming the basis of the borrower defense. In deciding whether a reduction is warranted, and in what amount, the Secretary shall consider the extent to which the payment received by the borrower compensated for non-economic damages, out-of-pocket expenses, or payments previously made directly to the institution, and whether the borrower has non-Federal student loans as a result of attending the institution. The Secretary may not reduce the amount of discharge and reimbursement provided for in a covered loan in paragraph (4) because the borrower received funds from a State tuition recovery fund.

''(6) FINALITY.—A borrower defense discharge is final upon the Secretary's notification to the borrower. The Secretary may not thereafter revoke or reduce the amount of discharge or reimbursement, absent a finding of fraud on the part of the borrower.

''(7) GROUP PROCESS.—Where substantial misrepresentations are widespread, the Secretary shall seek to assess the eligibility of all potentially affected borrowers as a group or in multiple groups to expedite the process. If such discharges are approved, the Secretary shall discharge the covered loans of all eligible borrowers in the group, in accordance with the processes in this section and without requiring application materials, to the extent practicable.

''(8) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may promulgate regulations or otherwise prescribe procedures in relation to borrower defense discharge, consistent with the provisions of this section. Nothing in this section modifies or displaces existing powers, authorities, and obligations of the Secretary, including obligations imposed under chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the 'Administrative Procedures Act').''.

(b) SUBSTANTIAL MISREPRESENTATION.—Section 481 (20 U.S.C. 1088) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) SUBSTANTIAL MISREPRESENTATION.—In this title, the term 'substantial misrepresentation', when used with respect to an institution of higher education, includes—

''(1) any statement about the nature of the institution's educational program, its financial charges, or the employability or earnings of its graduates that is false, erroneous, or has the likelihood or tendency to mislead under the circumstances, on which the person to whom it was made could reasonably be expected to rely, or has reasonably relied, to that person's detriment; and

''(2) any omission of fact, such as the concealment, suppression, or absence of material information about the nature of the institution's educational program, its financial charges, the employability or earnings of its graduates, the availability of enrollment openings in the student's desired program, the factors that would prevent an applicant from meeting the legal or other requirements to be employed, licensed, or certified in the field for which the training is provided which a reasonable person would have considered in making a decision to attend, or to continue attending, the institution or to take out a covered loan.''.

SEC. 103. CLOSED SCHOOL DISCHARGE.

Section 437(c)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1087(c)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If a borrower who received, on or after January 1, 1986, a loan made, insured, or guaranteed under this part and the student borrower, or the student on whose behalf a parent borrowed, is unable to complete the program in which such student is enrolled due to the closure of the institution or if such student's eligibility to borrow under this part was falsely certified by the eligible institution or was falsely certified as a result of a crime of identity theft, or if the institution failed to make a refund of loan proceeds which the institution owed to such student's lender, then the Secretary shall discharge the borrower's liability on the loan (including interest and collection fees) by repaying the amount owed on the loan.

''(B) ADDITIONAL DISCHARGE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the authorization of discharge under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall discharge a borrower's (including an endorser's) liability on a Federal Direct Loan made under part D if—

''(I) the institution at which the borrower who took the loan (or on whose behalf it was taken or endorsed) was enrolled, ceased to provide educational instruction as a whole, or ceased to provide instruction in the programs in which more than 50 percent of the students were enrolled; or

''(II) the borrower who took the loan (or on whose behalf it was taken or endorsed) was enrolled in an institution at any time within the period not earlier than 180 days before the date of the closure of the institution.

''(ii) EXTENSION OF 180 DAYS.—The Secretary may extend the 180 day period described in clause (i)(II) in cases where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, including if—

''(I) the institution was placed on probation or order to show cause or approval was withdrawn or terminated by an accrediting agency or association or an institution's institutional accreditor, or a State authorizing or licensing authority;

''(II) the institution was placed on Heightened Cash Monitoring status by the Department or was placed on Provisional Program Participation Approval status, or the institution's participation in a program under this title was terminated by the Department;

''(III) the institution was found to have violated Federal or State law related to enrolling or providing education services to students by a Federal or State Government agency, or is the subject of a Federal or State court judgment that the institution violated laws related to enrolling or providing education services to students;

''(IV) the teach-out plan (as required under section 487(f)) of the borrower's educational program exceeds the 180 day period described in clause (i)(II);

''(V) the institution responsible for the teach-out of the borrower's educational program fails to perform the material terms of the teach-out plan (as required under section 487(f)), such that the borrower does not have a reasonable opportunity to complete the borrower's program of study; and

''(VI) the institution permanently closed all or most of its in-person locations while maintaining online programs or permanently closed many programs.

''(C) NO APPLICATION REQUIREMENT.—A borrower who took a loan (or on whose behalf it was taken or endorsed) that is eligible for discharge under this paragraph due to institutional closure is entitled to discharge without an application or statement from the borrower 1 year after the institution's closure date if the student did not complete the program at the institution.

''(D) PURSING CLAIMS.—After discharging liability on a loan under this paragraph, the Secretary shall pursue any claim available to a borrower against the institution and its affiliates and principals or settle the loan obligation pursuant to the financial responsibility authority under subpart 3 of part H.''.

SEC. 104. PROHIBITION ON INSTITUTIONS LIMITING STUDENT LEGAL ACTION.

(a) ENFORCEMENT OF ARBITRATION AGREEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 9, United States Code, (relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements) shall not apply to an enrollment agreement made between a student and an institution of higher education.

(2) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given such term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

(b) PROHIBITION ON LIMITATIONS ON ABILITY OF STUDENTS TO PURSUE CLAIMS AGAINST

CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—Section 487(a) (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(30) The institution—

''(A) will not require any student to agree to, and will not enforce, any limitation or restriction (including a limitation or restriction on any available choice of applicable law, a jury trial, or venue) on the ability of a student to pursue a claim, individually or with others, against an institution in court; and

''(B) will provide written notification to students enrolled at the institution that any limitation or restriction on the ability of a student to pursue a claim, individually or with others, against an institution in court contained in any enrollment or other agreement with a student will not be enforced.''.

(c) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—A violation described in subparagraph (B) shall be subject to a private right of action enforceable by a student or former student of an institution of higher education, on behalf of such individual or such individual and a class, in an appropriate district court of the United States or any other court of competent jurisdiction that also has jurisdiction over the defendant. The student or former student may seek any relief provided under section 455(h) for such violation, or any remedies otherwise available to the individual under law and equity.

(B) VIOLATIONS.—A violation described in this subparagraph is any of the following:

(i) A substantial misrepresentation, including a substantial omission of fact.

(ii) A violation of section 487(a)(20) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(20)).

(iii) A violation of the default rate regulations promulgated by the Secretary under section 435(m)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1085(m)(3)).

(iv) A violation of the program integrity regulations promulgated by the Secretary under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), including regulations promulgated to carry out section 102, section 455, and part H of such Act.

(2) AMOUNT OF DAMAGES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any institution of higher education, third party servicer that contracts with such institution, or third party contractor that commits a substantial misrepresentation may be held liable to a student or former student of that institution in an amount equal to the sum of—

(i) any actual damage sustained by such individual as a result of each substantial misrepresentation;

(ii) any additional damages as the court may allow; and

(iii) in the case of any successful action to enforce the foregoing liability, the costs of the action, together with a reasonable attorney's fee as determined by the court.

(B) ABILITY TO ASSESS PUNITIVE DAMAGES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—On a finding by the court that an institution of higher education, third party servicer that contracts with such institution, or third party contractor has committed a violation described in paragraph (1)(B) with actual or constructive knowledge or reckless disregard for such violation, the court may assess punitive damages not to exceed threefold the sum of actual damages sustained by the plaintiff or class, including court costs and a reasonable attorney's fee.

(ii) FACTORS CONSIDERED BY THE COURT.—In determining the amount of liability in any action under clause (i), the court shall consider, among other relevant factors—

(I) in any individual action under this subsection, the frequency and persistence of noncompliance by the institution of higher education, third party servicer that contracts with such institution, or third party contractor and the nature of such noncompliance; or

(II) in any class action under this subsection, in addition to the factors listed in subclause (I), the financial resources of the institution of higher education, third party servicer that contracts with such institution, or third party contractor and the number of persons adversely affected.

(3) JURISDICTION.—An action to enforce any liability created by this subsection may be brought in any appropriate United States district court without regard to the amount in controversy, or in any other court of competent jurisdiction.

(d) PROHIBITION ON TRANSCRIPT WITHHOLDING.—Section 487(a) (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)), as amended by subsection (b), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(31) The institution—

''(A) will not withhold official transcripts related to a balance owed by the student to the institution; and

''(B) will provide an official transcript to a student upon request by the student.''.

SEC. 105. INCENTIVE COMPENSATION.

(a) INCENTIVE COMPENSATION.—

(1) REVOCATION.—Example 2–B of Question 2 of the Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter GEN-11-05 (March 17, 2011) is revoked.

(2) PROHIBITION.—The Department of Education may not issue a regulation or subregulatory guidance that would establish an exception to the prohibition provided in section 487(a)(20) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(20)).

(b) INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE WITH THE INCENTIVE COMPENSATION BAN.—Section 487(a)(20) (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(20)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The institution'' and inserting ''(A) The institution''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Preventing Risky Operations from Threatening the Education and Career Trajectories of Students Act of 2025, the institution shall attest to the Secretary that the institution is in compliance with subparagraph (A) notwithstanding the guidance provided in Department of Education Example 2–B of Question 2 of Dear Colleague Letter GEN–11–05 (March 17, 2011), in such form as required by the Secretary. If the institution is not in compliance as of the date of enactment of the Preventing Risky Operations from Threatening the Education and Career Trajectories of Students Act of 2025, the Secretary shall revoke the institution's program participation agreement under this section.

''(C) Following the attestation required under subparagraph (B), the institution shall annually provide verification from an independent auditor that the institution is in compliance with subparagraph (A).''.

TITLE II—ENSURING INTEGRITY AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTRACTORS

SEC. 201. UPDATING FEDERAL OVERSIGHT OF THIRD-PARTY SERVICERS.

Section 481(c)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1088(c)(1)) is amended by inserting '', including related to the delivery of funds under this title, recruitment or retention of students, compliance with cohort default rate (as defined in section 435(m)) requirements, the development and delivery of instructional content, and other applicable activities as described by the Secretary'' after ''title''.

SEC. 202. JOB PLACEMENT RATES.

(a) DEFINITION.—Section 481 (20 U.S.C. 1088), as amended by section 102(b), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(h) JOB PLACEMENT RATES.—The Secretary shall establish a single definition of 'job placement rate' for purposes of this Act that ensures consistent determinations across institutions and accrediting agencies regarding when students are placed in a job, to improve accuracy and minimize the opportunity for misleading or deceptive information.''.

(b) PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT.—Section 487(a)(8) (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(8)) is amended to read as follows:

''(8) In the case of an institution that advertises or discloses job placement rates to prospective students or that is required to provide regular reporting of job placement rates to an accrediting agency, State authorizer, or other regulator, the institution will utilize the definition provided under section 481(h), and shall make available to prospective students, at or before the time of application—

''(A) the most recent available data concerning employment statistics, graduation statistics, the methodology used by the institution to calculate the job placement rate, and any other information necessary to substantiate the truthfulness of the advertisements or disclosures, and

''(B) relevant State licensing requirements of the State in which such institution is located for any job for which the course of instruction is designed to prepare such prospective students.''.

(c) ACCREDITING AGENCY RECOGNITION.—Section 496(a)(5)(A) (20 U.S.C. 1099b(a)(5)(A)) is amended by inserting '', as defined pursuant to section 481(h)'' before the semicolon.

(d) NONAPPLICABILITY OF RULEMAKING REQUIREMENTS.—The amendments made under this section shall not be subject to the requirements provided under section 492 (20 U.S.C. 1098a).

SEC. 203. ALLOCATION OF TUITION AND FEE REVENUE BY TITLE IV INSTITUTIONS.

Section 498(c) (20 U.S.C. 1099c(c)) is amended by inserting at the end the following:

''(7) REQUIREMENT TO SPEND REVENUE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—

''(i) Beginning in academic year 2026–2027 and in each academic year thereafter through 2031–2032, each institution of higher education, in order to be eligible to participate in programs under this title, shall spend an amount equal to not less than 30 percent of their tuition and fee revenue (net of allowances and discounts) on instruction.

''(ii) Beginning in academic year 2027–2028 and in each academic year thereafter through 2030–2031, the Secretary shall assess the data described in subparagraph (B) and issue a report that identifies the following:

''(I) The total amount of spending on instruction for each institution.

''(II) The total amount of spending on student services for each institution, excluding advertising, recruiting, marketing, compensation of executives or officers, lobbying, and other pre-enrollment expenses, consistent with section 132(1).

''(III) Tuition and fee revenue (net of allowances and discounts) for each institution.

''(IV) The median increase in total spending on student services and instruction combined relative to spending on instruction relative to tuition and fee revenue (net of allowances and discounts).

''(V) Other relevant information the Secretary determines appropriate to include.

''(iii) In academic year 2031–2032, the Secretary shall issue a regulation that establishes a minimum threshold percentage for institutional spending on instruction and student services combined that shall be—

''(I) not less than 30 percent; and

''(II) consistent with the median increase in total spending, as identified under clause (ii)(IV) averaged across academic years 2028–2029, 2029–2030, and 2030–2031.

''(iv) Beginning in academic year 2031–2032 and in each academic year thereafter, each institution of higher education, in order to be eligible to participate in programs under this title, shall spend an amount equal to not less than the threshold percentage established under clause (iii) of their tuition and fee revenue (net of allowances and discounts) on instruction and student services combined.

''(B) REPORTING FROM INSTITUTIONS.—The Secretary shall use data from reports received and definitions established under section 132(l) to carry out this paragraph.

''(C) WARNINGS.—The Secretary shall—

''(i) establish through regulation appropriate thresholds for an institution of higher education that meets the spending requirements under clauses (i) and (iv) of subparagraph (A), but which is at risk of missing such thresholds; and

''(ii) require each institution of higher education that is at risk of missing such thresholds to provide warnings to prospective students and enrolled students of the institution regarding the low instructional spending.

''(D) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall issue such regulations as determined necessary by the Secretary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this paragraph, taking into consideration cost and convenience.''.

SEC. 204. PAST PERFORMANCE.

Section 487(a)(16) (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(16)) is amended by inserting at the end the following:

''(C) The institution will not knowingly employ an individual who was an owner, director, officer, or employee who exercised substantial control over an institution that owes a liability.

''(D) The institution will not knowingly—

''(i) employ an individual who was—

''(I) an owner, director, officer, or employee of an institution that has—

''(aa) been found to have engaged in fraud, misuse of funds, or any material violation of law; or

''(bb) had its participation in programs under this title terminated, its certification revoked, or its application for certification or recertification for participation in such programs denied; or

''(II) a 10 percent-or-higher equity owner, director, officer, principal, or executive of, or contractor affiliated with, another institution in any year in which the other institution incurred a loss of Federal funds, as determined by the Secretary, in excess of 5 percent of the other institution's annual funds under this title; or

''(ii) contract with any institution, third-party servicer, individual, agency, or organization that has, or whose owners, officers, or employees have—

''(I) been found to have engaged in fraud, misuse of funds, or any material violation of law;

''(II) had its participation in programs under this title terminated, its certification revoked, or its application for certification or recertification for participation in such programs denied; or

''(III) been a 10 percent-or-higher equity owner, director, officer, principal, executive of, or contractor affiliated with, another institution in any year in which the other institution incurred a loss of Federal funds, as determined by the Secretary, in excess of 5 percent of the other institution's annual funds under this title.''.

SEC. 205. RECOUPMENT.

(a) CLARIFYING THE AUTHORITY TO RECOUP LIABILITIES FROM TITLE IV INSTITUTIONS.—Section 487(c)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1094(c)(1)) is amended by striking subparagraph (F) and inserting the following:

''(F) the limitation, suspension, or termination of the participation in any program under this title of an eligible institution, the recoupment of liabilities established pursuant to section 493E, or the imposition of a civil penalty under paragraph (3)(B) whenever the Secretary has determined, after reasonable notice and opportunity for hearing, that such institution has violated or failed to carry out any provision of this title, any regulation prescribed under this title, or any applicable special arrangement, agreement, or limitation, except that no period of suspension under this section shall exceed 60 days unless the institution and the Secretary agree to an extension or unless limitation or termination proceedings are initiated by the Secretary within that period of time.''.

(b) RECOUPMENT OF LIABILITIES.—Part G of title IV (20 U.S.C. 1088 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 493E. RECOUPMENT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall assess liabilities and seek to recoup funds provided under this title from an institution of higher education as a result of student loan discharges, findings from program reviews or compliance audits, or due to other forms of misconduct or noncompliance.

''(b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may waive some or all of the liabilities described in subsection (a) based on the individual circumstances of the institution.''.

(c) OWNER SIGNATURES.—Section 498(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1099c(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) requires both an authorized representative of the institution and, if applicable, an authorized representative of any entity with ownership and substantial control over the institution to sign the program participation agreement, as described under section 487, for the institution, which shall ensure that the institution and its owner, if applicable, agree to repay any liabilities assessed against the institution by the Secretary.''.

TITLE III—IMPROVING OVERSIGHT

SEC. 301. ENFORCEMENT IN THE OFFICE OF FEDERAL STUDENT AID.

(a) ENFORCEMENT UNIT ESTABLISHED IN THE OFFICE OF FEDERAL STUDENT AID.—Section 141 (20 U.S.C. 1018) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (g) through (i) as subsections (h) through (j), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (f) the following:

''(g) ENFORCEMENT UNIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Secretary, shall establish an enforcement unit within the PBO (referred to in this section as the 'enforcement unit').

''(2) APPOINTMENT.—

''(A) CHIEF ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Secretary, shall appoint a Chief Enforcement Officer as a senior manager, in accordance with subsection (e), to perform the functions described in this subsection. The Chief Enforcement Officer shall report solely and directly to the Chief Operating Officer.

''(B) BONUS.—Notwithstanding subsection (e), the Chief Enforcement Officer may receive a bonus, separately determined from the methodology which applies to the calculation of bonuses for other senior managers, based upon the Chief Operating Officer's evaluation of the Chief Enforcement Officer's performance in relation to the goals set forth in a performance agreement related to the specific duties of the enforcement unit.

''(3) DUTIES.—The enforcement unit shall—

''(A) receive, process, and analyze allegations and complaints regarding the potential violation of Federal or State law (including civil and criminal law) or other unfair, deceptive, or abusive acts or practices, by institutions of higher education, third-party servicers that contract with such institutions, and loan servicers;

''(B) investigate and coordinate investigations of potential or actual misconduct of institutions of higher education, third-party servicers that contract with such institutions, and loan servicers, including engaging in a regular program of secret shopping at online and campus-based institutions of higher education;

''(C) develop and implement a written policy for the enforcement of the ban on prohibited incentive compensation not less than annually, which may include automatic triggers for inquiries by the Department or regular 'secret shopper' or audit-based investigations, and shall update such policy as needed; and

''(D) enforce compliance with laws governing Federal student financial assistance programs under title IV, including through the use of an emergency action in accordance to section 487(c)(1)(I), the limitation, suspension, or termination of the participation of an eligible institution in a program under title IV, or the imposition of a civil penalty in accordance with section 487(c)(3)(B).

''(4) COORDINATION AND STAFFING.—The enforcement unit shall—

''(A) coordinate with relevant Federal and State agencies and oversight bodies, including the For-Profit Education Oversight Coordination Committee established under section 124; and

''(B) hire staff, (including by appointing not more than 10 individuals in positions of excepted service, as described in subsection (h)(3)) with such expertise as is necessary to conduct investigations, respond to allegations and complaints, and enforce compliance with laws governing Federal student financial assistance programs under title IV.

''(5) DIVISIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The enforcement unit shall have separate divisions with the following focus areas:

''(i) An investigations division to investigate potential or actual misconduct at institutions of higher education, third-party servicers that contract with such institutions, and loan servicers.

''(ii) A division focused on evaluating the claims of borrowers who assert a defense to repayment of Federal student loans, or groups of borrowers who qualify to assert such a defense to repayment, under section 455(h).

''(iii) A division focused on oversight of the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, the reporting of crime and fire statistics by institutions of higher education, and the oversight and enforcement of section 120 (relating to drug and alcohol abuse prevention).

''(iv) A division to administer the Secretary's authority to fine, limit, suspend, terminate, or take action against institutions of higher education, and third-party servicers that contract with such institutions, participating in the Federal student financial assistance programs under title IV.

''(v) A division that administers a program of compliance monitoring and oversight of institutions of higher education, and third-party servicers that contract with such institutions, including systems and procedures to support the eligibility, certification, and

oversight of program participants, for all institutions of higher education participating in the Federal student financial assistance programs under title IV.

''(vi) Any other division that the Chief Enforcement Officer, in coordination with the Chief Operating Officer and the Secretary, determines is necessary.

''(B) REPORTING.—The staff of each division described in subparagraph (A) shall report to the Chief Enforcement Officer.

''(6) ACTIONS RECOMMENDED.—The Chief Enforcement Officer may recommend, as appropriate to the particular circumstance, that the Chief Operating Officer—

''(A) terminate, suspend, or limit an institution of higher education or a third-party servicer that contracts with such institution from participation in 1 or more programs under title IV (in accordance with section 487), or provisionally certify such participation (in accordance with section 498(h));

''(B) impose a civil penalty in accordance with section 487(c)(3)(B);

''(C) for a student loan servicer, obtain all relief, including any penalties and suspension or termination of the agreement, provided in the loan servicer agreement to the contract of the servicer; or

''(D) make a recommendation to the Secretary about whether to approve or deny the claims of borrowers, including groups of borrowers, who assert a defense to repayment in accordance with section 455(h).''.

(b) EXTEND SUBPOENA POWER TO ASSIST WITH INVESTIGATIONS.—Section 490A(a) (20 U.S.C. 1097a(a)) is amended to read as follows:

''(a) AUTHORITY.—To assist the Secretary in the conduct of investigations of possible violations of the provisions of this title, the Secretary is authorized to—

''(1) require by subpoena the production of information, documents, reports, answers, records, accounts, papers, and other documentary evidence pertaining to participation in any program under this title, the production of which may be required from any place in a State; and

''(2) require by subpoena oral testimony by any person, including any legal entity, concerning information pertaining to participation in any title IV program, the appearance for which may be required at any place in a State.''.

(c) PROGRAM REVIEWS.—Section 498A of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1099c–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''and financial responsibility'' and inserting '', financial responsibility, and other eligibility-related''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (F) as subparagraphs (B) through (G), respectively;

(ii) by inserting before subparagraph (B), as so redesignated, the following:

''(A) identified as 'high-risk' institutions based on a risk-review process developed by the Department that shall include risk factors, including—

''(i) significant changes in enrollment;

''(ii) high volumes of student complaints or borrower defense claims;

''(iii) indicators of issues related to financial capability;

''(iv) low completion rates;

''(v) indications of misleading or deceptive practices, aggressive recruiting, or substantial misrepresentation;

''(vi) significant completion gaps between students of different demographic groups; or

''(vii) other indicators of risk to students or taxpayers;''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (G), as so redesignated, by striking ''or financial responsibility'' and inserting '', financial responsibility, or other eligibility-related'';

(2) in subsection (d), by striking ''criminal investigative training'' and inserting ''criminal and civil investigative training (including training in identifying misrepresentations in marketing and recruitment materials)'';

(3) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(4) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e) PROGRAM REVIEWS.—Program reviews shall, at minimum, include a review of all—

''(1) recruiting and marketing materials, including scripts and training materials provided to institution and third-party servicer staff involved in recruiting, admissions, or financial aid;

''(2) consumer complaints held by the institution and consumer agencies, borrower defense claims, the institution's response to such complaints or claims, and any related investigative materials;

''(3) actions against the institution by State or Federal regulators or enforcement agencies, including State authorizing agencies and State attorneys general, or through qui tam actions; and

''(4) actions against the institution by accreditors.''.

(d) ENHANCED CIVIL PENALTIES.—Section 487(c)(3)(B) of the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1094(c)(3)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) by inserting ''or its third-party servicer'' after ''eligible institution''; and

(B) by striking ''$25,000 for each violation or misrepresentation'' and inserting ''$100,000 for each violation or misrepresentation, or—

''(I) in the case of an institution, 1.0 percent of the amount of funds the institution received through this title in the most recent award year prior to the determination for each such violation; and

''(II) in the case of a third-party servicer that contracts with such institution, the amount of the contract with the institution.'';

(2) by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii);

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

''(ii) The Secretary may consider each time a substantial misrepresentation is viewed or experienced, including static or standing misrepresentations, as a separate violation or misrepresentation.''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) For the purpose of determining the amount of civil penalties under this subsection, any violation by a particular institution will accrue against all institutions or affiliates with common ownership.''.

SEC. 302. FOR-PROFIT EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COORDINATION COMMITTEE.

Part B of title I (20 U.S.C. 1011 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 124. FOR-PROFIT EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COORDINATION COMMITTEE.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the executive branch a committee to be known as the 'For-Profit Education Oversight Coordination Committee' (referred to in this section as the 'Committee') and to be composed of the head (or the designee of such head) of each of the following Federal entities:

''(A) The Department of Education.

''(B) The Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.

''(C) The Department of Justice.

''(D) The Securities and Exchange Commission.

''(E) The Department of Defense.

''(F) The Department of Veterans Affairs.

''(G) The Federal Trade Commission.

''(H) The Department of Labor.

''(I) The Internal Revenue Service.

''(J) The enforcement unit of the Performance-Based Organization established under section 141(g).

''(K) At the discretion of the Chairperson of the Committee, any other relevant Federal agency or department.

''(2) PURPOSES.—The Committee shall have the following purposes:

''(A) Coordinate Federal oversight of for-profit institutions of higher education to—

''(i) improve enforcement of applicable Federal laws;

''(ii) increase accountability of for-profit institutions of higher education to students and taxpayers; and

''(iii) ensure the promotion of quality education programs.

''(B) Coordinate Federal activities to protect students from unfair, deceptive, abusive, unethical, fraudulent, or predatory practices, policies, or procedures of for-profit institutions of higher education.

''(C) Encourage information sharing among agencies related to Federal investigations, audits, program reviews, inquiries, complaints, financial statements, and other information relevant to the oversight of for-profit institutions of higher education.

''(D) Develop binding memoranda of understanding that the Federal entities represented on the Committee will use regarding the sharing of information to exercise the oversight described in this section.

''(E) Increase coordination and cooperation between Federal and State agencies (including State authorizing agencies, State attorneys general, and State approving agencies designated under section 3671 of title 38, United States Code) with respect to improving oversight and accountability of for-profit institutions of higher education.

''(F) Develop best practices and consistency among Federal and State agencies in the dissemination of consumer information regarding for-profit institutions of higher education to ensure that students, parents, and other stakeholders have easy access to such information.

''(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary of Education or the designee of the Secretary shall serve as the Chairperson of the Committee.

''(b) MEETINGS.—

''(1) COMMITTEE MEETINGS.—The members of the Committee shall meet regularly, but not less than once during each quarter of each fiscal year, to carry out the purposes described in subsection (a)(2).

''(2) MEETINGS WITH STATE AGENCIES AND STAKEHOLDERS.—The Committee shall meet not less than once each fiscal year, and shall otherwise interact regularly, with State authorizing agencies, State attorneys general, State approving agencies designated under section 3671 of title 38, United States Code, veterans service organizations, and consumer advocates to carry out the purposes described in subsection (a)(2).

''(c) DIRECTOR.—The Chairperson shall appoint a full-time executive director to support the Committee and may appoint and fix the pay of additional staff as the Chairperson considers appropriate.''.

SEC. 303. ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF COMPLAINT RESOLUTION AND TRACKING SYSTEM.

(a) COMPLAINT TRACKING SYSTEM.—Title I (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''PART F—COMPLAINT TRACKING SYSTEM

''SEC. 161. COMPLAINT TRACKING SYSTEM.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) COMPLAINANT.—The term 'complainant' means an individual making a complaint, or report of suspicious activity, through the complaint tracking system.

''(2) COMPLAINT TRACKING SYSTEM.—The term 'complaint tracking system' means the tracking system established under subsection (b).

''(3) THIRD-PARTY SERVICER.—The term 'third-party servicer' has the meaning given the term in section 481(c).

''(b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

''(1) establish and operate, in coordination with the Student Loan Ombudsman, a complaint tracking system that includes a single, toll-free telephone number and a website to facilitate the centralized collection of, monitoring of, and response to complaints or reports of suspicious activity regarding—

''(A) Federal student financial aid and the servicing of postsecondary education loans by loan servicers;

''(B) educational practices and services of institutions of higher education or third-party servicers; and

''(C) the recruiting and marketing practices of institutions of higher education or third-party servicers; and

''(2) ensure that—

''(A) complaints or reports submitted by students, borrowers of student loans, staff of loan servicers, institutions of higher education, or third-party servicers, or the general public—

''(i) may remain anonymous if the complainant so chooses, including by providing complainants with an option for the individual complaint to not be reported to the loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer, as the case may be; and

''(ii) may describe problems that are systematic in nature and not associated with a particular student or institution;

''(B) complaints and reports are provided to the loan servicers, institutions of higher education, or third-party servicers that are the subject of such complaints or reports;

''(C) such loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third-party servicer provides a timely response to the complainant; and

''(D) the complaint tracking system has the capacity to retrieve, search, and categorize complaints or reports for purposes of identifying problematic trends and systemic practices.

''(c) HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS OR REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish, in consultation with the heads of appropriate agencies (including the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection), reasonable procedures to provide a timely response to individuals who file a complaint or report of suspicious activity in the complaint tracking system.

''(2) TIMELY RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS.—The Secretary shall provide a response to a complainant not more than 90 days after receiving the complaint, or report of suspicious activity, through the system, in writing where appropriate. Each response shall include a description of—

''(A) the steps that have been taken by the Secretary in response to the complaint or report;

''(B) any responses received by the Secretary from the loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third-party servicer; and

''(C) any additional actions that the Secretary has taken, or plans to take, in response to the complaint or report.

''(3) TIMELY RESPONSE TO SECRETARY BY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION OR SERVICER.—

''(A) NOTICE.—If the Secretary determines that it is necessary, the Secretary shall—

''(i) notify a loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third-party servicer that is the subject of a complaint, or report of suspicious activity, through the complaint tracking system regarding the complaint or report; and

''(ii) directly address and resolve the complaint or report in the system.

''(B) INSTITUTION OR SERVICER RESPONSE.—Not later than 60 days after receiving a notice under subparagraph (A), a loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third-party servicer shall provide a response to the Secretary concerning the complaint or report, including—

''(i) the steps that have been taken by the loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer to respond to the complaint or report;

''(ii) all responses received by the loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer from the complainant; and

''(iii) any additional actions that the loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer has taken, or plans to take, in response to the complaint or report.

''(C) FURTHER INVESTIGATION.—In the event that a complaint or report received by the complaint tracking system is not adequately resolved or addressed by the responses of the loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third-party servicer under subparagraph (B), the Secretary may—

''(i) ask additional questions of such loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer; or

''(ii) seek additional information from or action by the loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer.

''(4) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third-party servicer shall, in a timely manner, comply with a request by the Secretary for information in the control or possession of such loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer, respectively, concerning a complaint or report of suspicious activity received by the Secretary under the complaint tracking system, including supporting written documentation, subject to subparagraph (B).

''(B) EXCEPTIONS.—A loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third-party servicer shall not be required to make available under this paragraph—

''(i) any nonpublic or confidential information, including any confidential commercial information;

''(ii) any information collected by the loan servicer, institution, or third-party servicer for the purpose of preventing fraud or detecting or making any report regarding other unlawful or potentially unlawful conduct; or

''(iii) any information required to be kept confidential by any other provision of law.

''(5) COMPLIANCE.—A loan servicer, institution of higher education, or third party servicer shall comply with the requirements to provide responses and information, in accordance with this subsection, as a condition of receiving funds under title IV or as a condition of the contract with the Department, as applicable.

''(d) TRANSPARENCY.—

''(1) DATA PUBLICATION.—The Secretary shall, on an annual basis, publish data on the website of the Department that shall include, for each loan servicer, institution, and third-party servicer—

''(A) the number of complaints and reports received;

''(B) the types of complaints and reports received;

''(C) information about the resolution of the complaints and reports; and

''(D) if the complainant consents, the narrative content of the complaint or report.

''(2) REPORT.—Each year, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the authorizing committees a report describing—

''(A) the types and nature of complaints or reports the Secretary has received under the complaint tracking system;

''(B) the extent to which complainants are receiving adequate resolution pursuant to this section;

''(C) whether particular types of complaints or reports are more common in a given sector of institutions of higher education or with particular loan servicers or third-party servicers;

''(D) any concerning trends or systemic practices identified;

''(E) any legislative recommendations that the Secretary determines are necessary to better assist students and families regarding the activities described in subsection (c)(1); and

''(F) the loan servicers, institutions of higher education, and third-party servicers with the highest volume of complaints and reports, as determined by the Secretary.''.

(b) PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT REQUIREMENT.—Section 487(a) (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(32) The institution will comply with any requirement under section 161, or any other requirement by the Department, to provide information or responses with respect to a complaint or report of suspicious activity about the institution.''.

SEC. 304. REFORMS TO ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES.

(a) ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES.—Section 498 (20 U.S.C. 1099c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking ''For purposes'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes'';

(B) by striking ''status, and'' and inserting ''status,'';

(C) by inserting '', and the institution's compliance with all other eligibility requirements in accordance with paragraph (2),'' after ''an institution of higher education''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) COMPLIANCE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In making a determination of institutional eligibility under this section, the Secretary shall—

''(i) require that an institution demonstrate compliance with each provision required under this title in order to receive a full, non-provisional certification of eligibility for purposes of this section;

''(ii) reflect that an institution is not entitled to continued participation in programs under this title absent a demonstration of full compliance; and

''(iii) determine that an institution is not eligible for participation in programs under this title if it is not in full compliance with section 487(a)(16).''; and

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking ''The Secretary shall ensure'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure''; and

(B) by striking ''The personnel'' and inserting the following: ''The Secretary shall not automatically certify or recertify an institution for participation in a program under this title as a result of delay in conducting a full review of the institution's application.

''(2) SITE VISITS.—The personnel''.

(b) PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATION OF HIGH-RISK INSTITUTIONS.—Section 498 (20 U.S.C. 1099c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) in clause (ii), by striking ''or'' after the semicolon;

(ii) in clause (iii), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) the institution has violated any requirement of this title;

''(v) the institution has violated the terms of its program participation agreement under section 487; or

''(vi) the Secretary determines that the institution's continued participation in programs under this title poses a significant risk to students and taxpayers.'';

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS.—The Secretary shall require a provisionally certified institution to comply with such additional conditions as the Secretary determines necessary or appropriate based on the circumstances of the institution, as specified in the institution's program participation agreement under section 487.'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (i), (j), and (k) as subsections (j), (k), and (l), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (h) the following:

''(i) TERMINATION ACTION.—If an institution that is provisionally certified under subsection (h) is unable to meet its responsibilities under its program participation agreement or is in violation of any requirement established under this title (including if the institution has engaged in substantial misrepresentations), or if a final administrative finding or judicial judgment determines that the institution violated a State or Federal consumer protection law or regulation, the Secretary may terminate the institution's participation in the programs under this title.''.

(c) PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT CLAIMS.—

(1) FALSE CLAIMS.—Section 487(c) (20 U.S.C. 1094(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(8) FALSE CLAIMS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—An institution that submits a misrepresentation or false claim on an application for funds under this title, or knowingly (as defined in section 3729 of title 31, United States Code) fails to comply with the requirements of the program participation agreement under this section, shall be subject to sections 3729 through 3733 of such title.

''(B) AMOUNT OF DAMAGES.—For purposes of section 3729(a) of title 31, United States Code, the amount of damages that the Government sustains because of the act of the institution described in subparagraph (A) shall be the total amount of funds distributed to the institution for loans made to students under part D during the period beginning on the date of the submission of the application or the failure to comply (as the case may be) and ending on the date on which a final decision finding a violation of section 3729 of such Code is made.''.

(2) CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE.—Paragraph (21) of section 487(a) (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(21)) is amended to read as follows:

''(21) The institution—

''(A) acknowledges that the agreement certifies the institution's compliance with all terms of the program participation agreement and all applicable Federal laws and regulations that govern an institution's eligibility to receive funds under this title;

''(B) agrees that any violation of the terms of a program participation agreement or any other Federal law or regulation described in subparagraph (A) constitutes material noncompliance with a condition of payment; and

''(C) will meet the requirements established by the Secretary and accrediting agencies or associations, and will provide evidence to the Secretary that the institution has the authority to operate within a State.''.

SEC. 305. STATE OVERSIGHT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101 (20 U.S.C. 1001) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (4), (5), and (6), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) if providing education through distance education or correspondence in a State in which the institution is not located—

''(A) meets the requirements of such State for offering postsecondary education; or

''(B) if the institution is authorized by a State pursuant to an interstate reciprocity agreement—

''(i) the institution must have fewer than 200 students in such State enrolled annually;

''(ii) the agreement must allow States to enforce all non-registration and non-fee laws with respect to out-of-State institutions; and

''(iii) decisions regarding eligibility to participate in the reciprocity agreement and the standards that apply to participating institutions shall be made exclusively by representatives of member State regulatory agencies or State attorneys general offices;''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5) of subsection (a)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (5), and (6) of subsection (a)''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 102 (20 U.S.C. 1002) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)(A), by striking ''section 101(a)(4)'' each place the term appears and inserting ''section 101(a)(5)'';

(2) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 101(a)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of section 101(a)''; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''paragraph (4) of section 101(a)'' and inserting ''paragraph (5) of section 101(a)''; and

(3) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by striking ''requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5) of section 101(a)'' and inserting ''requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (5), and (6) of section 101(a)''.

SEC. 306. ACCREDITING AGENCY OVERSIGHT.

Section 496(c) ((20 U.S.C. 1099b(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (8), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (9)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(10)(A) assesses the risk to students of any institution or program, including assessing the risk to students and institutions of any program managed by a third-party servicer, in accordance with factors provided by the Secretary;

''(B) effectively determines whether each such institution or program warrants additional oversight or action; and

''(C) provides adequate monitoring of the quality and risk of such institutions or programs.''.

SEC. 307. MANDATORY SPENDING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF OPERATING THE STUDENT AID PROGRAMS.

Paragraph (3) of section 458(a) (20 U.S.C. 1087h(a)(3)) is amended to read as follows:

''(3) FUNDS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each fiscal year, there shall be available to the Secretary from funds not otherwise appropriated, funds to be obligated for administrative costs under this part, including the costs of the student loan program under this part, except that the total expenditures by the Secretary under this subparagraph shall not exceed 5 percent of the amount of the average outstanding Federal student loan portfolio under this part for the preceding fiscal year.

''(B) AVAILABILITY.—Funds made available under subparagraph (A) shall remain available until expended. The Secretary is authorized to use funds available under this paragraph for a fiscal year for a subsequent fiscal year.

''(C) BUDGET.—No funds may be expended under this paragraph unless the Secretary includes in the annual budget request of the Department to Congress a detailed description of—

''(i) the specific activities for which the funds made available by this paragraph have been used in the most recent fiscal year;

''(ii) the activities and costs planned for the fiscal year for which the request is made; and

''(iii) the projection of activities and costs for the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which administrative expenses under this paragraph are made available.''.

TITLE IV—IMPROVING ACCESS TO STUDENT AND TAXPAYER INFORMATION

SEC. 401. REPORTING AND DISCLOSURES FROM INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCIAL VALUE TRANSPARENCY DISCLOSURES AND WARNINGS.—Section 498C, as added by section 101(b), is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e) DISCLOSURES AND WARNINGS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For each gainful employment program or graduate or professional degree program of an institution that does not meet the standards described in subsection (b), the institution shall—

''(A) provide warnings to prospective students and enrolled students of the institution regarding the failing program status in a manner specified by the Secretary; and

''(B) shall require prospective students to acknowledge receipt of the warning.

''(f) DISCLOSURE.—An institution of higher education shall provide the link to the website described in subsection (c)(2)(A)(ii) to prospective and enrolled students in a manner specified by the Secretary.''.

(b) INSTRUCTIONAL SPENDING DATA AND DISCLOSURES.—Section 132 (20 U.S.C. 1015a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (l) as subsection (n); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (k) the following:

''(l) INVESTMENTS IN INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT SERVICES.—

''(1) INSTITUTIONAL EXPENDITURES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish definitions for calculating instructional expenditures that shall separately account for the expenditures of an institution of higher education on each of the following:

''(i) Instruction.

''(ii) Student services.

''(iii) Marketing.

''(iv) Recruitment.

''(v) Advertising.

''(vi) Lobbying.

''(B) EXCLUSIONS.—Expenditures on instruction and student services, as defined in accordance with clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A), shall not include expenditures on marketing, recruitment, advertising, compensation of executives or officers, or lobbying, or other pre-enrollment expenditures.

''(2) REPORTING.—Each institution of higher education receiving Federal funds under title IV shall report to the Secretary—

''(A) the total dollar amount of title IV funds received by the institution;

''(B) the proportion of title IV funds spent on recruitment activities and marketing activities;

''(C) the proportion of title IV funds spent on instruction and student services; and

''(D) for each program of education or division of the institution for which the tuition is charged, the price of tuition relative to the institution's allocation of revenues to spending on instruction and student services.

''(3) DISCLOSURES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.—The Secretary shall make the disclosures reported under paragraph (2) publicly available on the College Navigator website.''.

(c) TRANSPARENCY OF ONLINE PROGRAMS.—Section 132 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as amended by subsection (b), is further amended by inserting after subsection (l), as added by subsection (b)(2), the following:

''(m) IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY FOR ONLINE AND CONTRACTED PROGRAMS.—

''(1) ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR THIRD-PARTY SERVICER ACTIVITIES.—Each institution of higher education that receives Federal funds under title IV shall report annually to the Secretary—

''(A) the name of each third-party servicer with which the institution contracts; and

''(B) for each such third-party servicer—

''(i) the names of any programs for which each such third-party servicer is contracted to provide support;

''(ii) the services each such third-party servicer is contracted to offer for each program;

''(iii) the number of students enrolled in any program for which the third-party servicer is contracted to provide services;

''(iv) whether the third-party servicer administers or provides any private or institutional student loan products; and

''(v) the third-party servicer's total expenditures on advertising, marketing, and recruiting on behalf of the institution.

''(2) DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS.—If an institution of higher education receiving Federal funds under title IV contracts with a third-party servicer to offer one or more programs of education, and such third-party servicer provides recruitment activities, retention activities, or similar activities (as specified by the Secretary) for the program—

''(A) the institution and third-party servicer shall prominently disclose for each such program of education, in a manner specified by the Secretary and using language developed by the Secretary, the nature of the relationship between the institution and third-party servicer—

''(i) in advertisements;

''(ii) in marketing materials; and

''(iii) on the website of the institution; and

''(B) individuals who are employed by the third-party servicer to provide admissions, recruitment, retention, or advising activities shall prominently disclose to prospective or enrolled students that the individuals are employees of that third-party servicer and not the institution, including in any communication about the program of education.

''(3) ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE EDUCATION.—Each institution of higher education receiving Federal funds under title IV shall report annually to the Secretary—

''(A) the institution's expenditures on activities to secure enrollments for each online, on-campus, and hybrid program, and its total expenditures for all activities of the institution;

''(B) the status of each student receiving Federal student aid as enrolled online, on-campus, or in a combination of both modalities, sufficient for the Secretary to calculate the total student enrollment, retention and completion rates, student loan borrowing levels, student loan repayment outcomes, and median earnings for each such program; and

''(C) the annual net price charged for each such program.''.

(d) DISCLOSURE OF MATERIAL FACTS FOR PROPRIETARY INSTITUTIONS.—Section 498(c) (20 U.S.C. 1099c(c)), as amended by section 203, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(8)(A) The Secretary shall require each proprietary institution of higher education (as defined in section 102(c)) to file promptly with the Secretary—

''(i) all public filings that the institution files with the Securities and Exchange Commission that include references to matters that affect students, including—

''(I) mergers and acquisitions;

''(II) changes of ownership;

''(III) changes of leadership and board membership;

''(IV) school or campus closings;

''(V) civil lawsuits;

''(VI) law enforcement actions, investigations, subpoenas, and demand letters; and

''(VII) material change in financial status; and

''(ii) in the case of an institution that is not required to make disclosures to the Securities and Exchange Commission, notifications regarding matters that affect students similar to the filings described in clause (i), in a form and manner determined by the Secretary.

''(B) The Secretary shall promptly make all information received under subparagraph (A) available on the website of the Department.''.

SEC. 402. TRANSPARENCY OF OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES.

(a) BORROWER DEFENSE CLAIMS AND DISCHARGES DATA.—Section 455(h) (20 U.S.C. 1087e(h)), as amended by section 102(a), is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (8) as paragraph (9); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following:

''(8) TRANSPARENCY.—The Secretary shall make publicly available, and keep regularly updated, information regarding the number of borrower defense claims filed and discharges granted, disaggregated by institution of attendance, State of residence as of the date of the claim, student loan servicer, and the amount of discharge and reimbursement, based on increments of not less than $10,000.''.

(b) 90/10 RULE TRANSPARENCY.—Paragraph (3) of section 487(d) (20 U.S.C. 1094(d)(3)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins appropriately;

(2) by striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting the following:

''(A) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF FAILURE TO MEET REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF 90/10 DATA.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall publicly disclose on the website of the Department the data provided by proprietary institutions for purposes of this subsection (referred to in this subparagraph as the '90/10 database') in a prompt, comprehensive, and user-friendly manner.

''(ii) TEMPORARY OMISSIONS.—If any data for a proprietary of institution required to be disclosed under clause (i) is omitted because of issues unresolved at a given deadline of the Secretary, the Secretary shall—

''(I) include, in the 90/10 database on the College Navigator website, a notice that the information is omitted for such proprietary institution and a clear explanation of the reason for the delay; and

''(II) timely amend the 90/10 database to include the information required to be disclosed for the relevant reporting period.''.

(c) CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP AND CONVERSION TRANSPARENCY.—Section 498(j) (20 U.S.C. 1099c(j)), as redesignated by section 304(b)(2), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) The Secretary shall promptly disclose on the website of the Department—

''(A) any application for a change of ownership of an institution or for a conversion of an institution from proprietary to nonprofit status; and

''(B) any decision by the Secretary regarding approval or disapproval of a change of ownership application, or an application for conversion from proprietary to nonprofit status, and all external communications describing or explaining those decisions.''.

(d) TRANSPARENCY IN FINANCIAL STANDING OF INSTITUTIONS.—Section 498(c) (20 U.S.C. 1099c(c)), as amended by section 401(d), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(9) The Secretary shall promptly post on the Department website, for all institutions participating in a program under this title—

''(A) the annual audited financial statements submitted by each institution under this section and a list of any institutions that have failed to timely submit audited financial statements;

''(B)(i) the terms, amounts, and withdrawals for letters of credit and other sureties required of institutions of higher education under paragraph (3), including by providing updates as new financial guarantees are required and as changes are made to existing agreements; and

''(ii) all external communications between institutions of higher education and the Department describing or implementing the Secretary's requirements or determinations regarding financial guarantees under paragraph (3); and

''(C)(i) each decision of the Secretary as to the imposition or removal of heightened cash monitoring status and other financial protections regarding an institution; and

''(ii) all external communications between institutions of higher education and the Department describing or implementing such decisions.''.

(e) INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE TITLE IV PROGRAMS.—Section 498 (20 U.S.C. 1099c) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) TRANSPARENCY.—The Secretary shall post on the Department website the full program participation agreement under section 487 for each institution that enters into such an agreement and shall indicate if the institution is on provisional, temporary provisional, or expired certification status.''.

(f) ACCREDITING AGENCY TRANSPARENCY.—Section 496 (20 U.S.C. 1099b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (o)—

(A) by inserting after ''REGULATIONS.—'' the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) DISCLOSURES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall publicly disclose on the Department's website—

''(i) all of the Department's draft and final accrediting agency or association recognition reports, and monitoring reports and investigations of any accrediting agency or association, under this section; and

''(ii) the reports and accompanying exhibits that each accreditation agency or association submits to the Department in the course of recognition and re-recognition reviews under this section.

''(B) DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall disclose the information required under subparagraph (A) promptly, so

that members of the public may thoroughly and timely respond via public comment in the course of Department reviews of accrediting agencies and associations.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(r) TRANSPARENCY OF ACCREDITING AGENCY OR ASSOCIATION ACTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An accrediting agency or association recognized by the Secretary under this section shall promptly post on the website of the accrediting agency or association and shall submit to the Department, all communications sent from the accrediting agency or association to an institution explaining, or informing an institution of, an action taken by the agency with respect to the institution, including—

''(A) to impose or remove a status of probation, warning, concern, stipulation, or reporting, or similar status;

''(B) to impose or revoke a show cause order; or

''(C) to impose or revoke a limitation, suspension, or termination action.

''(2) NO REDACTION.—The communication posted and submitted under paragraph (1) shall be without redaction, except for personally identifiable information.

''(3) DISCLOSURE BY THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall promptly publicly disclose on the website of the Department all communications submitted pursuant to paragraph (1).''.

By Mrs. BRITT (for herself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WARNOCK, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. TUBERVILLE, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1003. A bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue an order providing that a shark attack is an event for which a wireless emergency alert may be transmitted, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about something that I have spoken about on this floor before.

Last September, an incredible young woman named Lulu Gribbin really came on to the scene with regard to a piece of legislation that we put forth before this body. You see, her life changed forever in July of last year. She is an incredible young woman from Mountain Brook, AL. She brought her entire community, her State, and now our Nation together.

On June 7 of last year, out of the blue, she was attacked by a shark. She and a friend were looking for sand dollars, and obviously all of this came unexpectedly. What happened next was nothing short of a miracle. The doctors, nurses, EMTs, and everyday people on the beach that day saved Lulu's life.

But the real miracle was just beginning. When Lulu woke up from surgery that day and got taken off of her ventilator, her very first words were ''I made it.'' That has become a mantra not just in how she reemerged but in the way that she has pushed forward.

After a long rehabilitation, she came back to Alabama 3 months after the accident. She was determined. When you talk with her parents, they tell you about her aggressiveness. When other amputees would come and visit her and tell her how long it took them to walk or to do other things, she would say: I am going to do it faster. I am going to do it better.

She was back outclassing golfers there at a driving range, not too long after. She refused letting losing an arm or a leg stop her.

Just last week, Lulu spoke publicly for the very first time since the shark attack. Her grace, her faith, her strength, her perseverance—it was an inspiration to all of us. Lulu told a crowd that morning that she wakes up ready to conquer the day every day, and that she is motivated to keep getting better.

She launched a foundation called Lulu Strong to help others in need get the prosthetic technologies that will make their lives easier. After visiting Walter Reed just a few weeks ago, you can tell how this advocacy can actually change lives.

When the unimaginable changed her world, what Lulu decided to do was change our world for the better. Lulu is a modern-day American hero. The courage she has shown, the fight, the resolve that she has demonstrated are truly remarkable, and not just for a 16-year-old but for anyone.

But it shouldn't have to be this way. Lulu is, indeed, an inspiration, but this tremendous battle that she has fought and won could have been prevented in the first place. You see, when I heard Lulu's story, I learned that there was another shark attack that happened just right down the shore, 90 minutes earlier. Elisabeth Foley, a mother of three, from Virginia, tragically lost her hand to a shark bite and suffered other terrible injuries resulting in 26 surgeries.

After talking with Lulu and her family, we said: It doesn't have to be this way. They knew there was something that could have been done. And after talking, we knew that there had to be a better way to get information out there to warn beachgoers about shark attacks in the area. That is when we introduced Lulu's Law, and it is why I am reintroducing this bill in this Congress today.

This bill, which I am proud to share, has bipartisan support. It would empower local authorities to issue wireless emergency alerts warning beachgoers of potential shark attacks through the already existing wireless emergency system. This has the potential to make a real difference in Americans' lives. When we are given the opportunity to do something simple that can make such a big difference, I believe we have to take it.

So, Lulu, I want you to know how much you inspire all of us. Your bravery in the face of the unimaginable is just amazing, and your taking what happened to you and saying: How can I make others' lives better? How can we make sure that this doesn't happen to someone else?

We want to honor the strength that you have shown over the past 9 months.

To Lulu's parents Ann Blair and Joe Gribbin, the way you have all rallied our State and our country to support Lulu on her road to recovery is truly unbelievable.

To my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle, whether you represent a State on the coast or you represent citizens of the interior, there is no doubt we want to keep our citizens safe, whether they live there or they are visiting. Making sure that we put safeguards in place that can prevent another tragedy from occurring is imperative.

Let's pass this law. Let's celebrate this amazing young woman, and let's prevent this from happening again.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. KING, Ms. SLOTKIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. GALLEGO):

S. 1009. A bill to establish the Baltic Security Initiative for the purpose of strengthening the defensive capabilities of the Baltic countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

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

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

S. 1009

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 ''Baltic Security Initiative Act''.

SEC. 2. BALTIC SECURITY INITIATIVE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Pursuant to the authority provided in chapter 16 of title 10, United States Code, the Secretary of Defense shall establish and carry out an initiative, to be known as the ''Baltic Security Initiative'' (in this section referred to as the ''Initiative''), for the purpose of deepening security cooperation with the military forces of the Baltic countries.

(b) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—The Initiative required by subsection (a) shall be carried out pursuant to the authorities provided in title 10, United States Code.

(c) OBJECTIVES.—The objectives of the Initiative shall be—

(1) to achieve United States national security objectives by—

(A) deterring aggression by the Russian Federation; and

(B) implementing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's new Strategic Concept, which seeks to strengthen the alliance's deterrence and defense posture by denying potential adversaries any possible opportunities for aggression;

(2) to enhance regional planning and cooperation among the military forces of the Baltic countries, particularly with respect to long-term regional capability projects, including—

(A) long-range precision fire systems and capabilities;

(B) integrated air and missile defense;

(C) maritime domain awareness;

(D) land forces development, including stockpiling large caliber ammunition;

(E) command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance;

(F) special operations forces development;

(G) coordination with and security enhancements for Poland, which is a neighboring North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally; and

(H) other military capabilities, as determined by the Secretary of Defense; and

(3) with respect to the military forces of the Baltic countries, to improve cyber defenses and resilience to hybrid threats.

(d) STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report setting forth a strategy for the Department of Defense to achieve the objectives described in subsection (b).

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The strategy required by this subsection shall include a consideration of—

(A) security assistance programs for the Baltic countries authorized as of the date on which the strategy is submitted;

(B) the ongoing security threats to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's eastern flank posed by Russian aggression, including as a result of the Russian Federation's 2022 invasion of Ukraine with support from Belarus; and

(C) the ongoing security threats to the Baltic countries posed by the presence, coercive economic policies, and other malign activities of the People's Republic of China.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Defense $350,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2026, 2027, and 2028 to carry out the Initiative.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should seek to require matching funds from each of the Baltic countries that participate in the Initiative in amounts commensurate with amounts provided by the Department of Defense for the Initiative.

(f) BALTIC COUNTRIES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Baltic countries'' means—

(1) Estonia;

(2) Latvia; and

(3) Lithuania.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 124—RECOGNIZING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 124

Whereas November 10, 2025, marks the 250th anniversary of the United States Marine Corps;

Whereas the United States Marine Corps holds a unique place in the history of this country and in the hearts of our people;

Whereas the United States Marine Corps embodies the values of honor, courage, and commitment, inspiring generations of people of the United States to serve and defend their country;

Whereas the United States Marine Corps has earned a distinguished reputation for readiness in its role and faithfulness in its mission, both in times of war and in times of peace;

Whereas the United States Marine Corps has distinguished itself as a premier fighting force that is consistently prepared to face the challenges of tomorrow and adapt to the evolving character of warfare;

Whereas the United States Marine Corps has consistently demonstrated its ability to adapt to emerging threats and to respond to the security needs of the United States from its founding to the present day;

Whereas tradition has it that the United States Marine Corps had its beginning at Tun Tavern in the city of Philadelphia on the 10th day of November 1775, 250 years ago; and

Whereas this historic milestone is the result of the skill of the United States Marine Corps in battle, its distinguished leadership, its extraordinary courage, and its selfless sacrifice in every major war of the United States from the Revolution to the Global War on Terrorism, including service at such historic battles as Princeton, Derna, Chapultepec, First Bull Run, Belleau Wood, Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Peleliu, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, the Chosin Reservoir, Khe Sanh, Hue, the liberation of Kuwait, and Fallujah: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 250th anniversary of the United States Marine Corps;

(2) remembers and venerates the Marines and Navy corpsmen who gave their last full measure of devotion on the battlefield;

(3) affirms the motto Semper Fidelis, embodying the honorable commitment of every Marine, past and present, who remain Always Faithful;

(4) honors the service and sacrifice of the men and women who serve the United States today carrying on the proud tradition of the Marines who came before them;

(5) reaffirms the bonds of friendship and shared values between the United States Marine Corps and allied fighting forces;

(6) salutes the 250th year since the founding of the United States Marine Corps;

(7) invites the people of the United States to join in the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States Marine Corps by attending commemorative events, sharing stories of United States Marine Corps valor and achievement, and recognizing those who have earned the title of United States Marine over the past 250 years; and

(8) encourages communities across the United States to recognize and honor the contributions of local Marines, and to partner with the United States Marine Corps to promote civic engagement and mutual support.

SENATE RESOLUTION 125—COMMEMORATING THE CENTENNIAL OF DELTA AIR LINES

Mr. OSSOFF (for himself, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. WARNOCK, and Mr. LEE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 125

Whereas, on March 2, 2025, Delta Air Lines turns 100 years old, becoming the first United States airline to reach the centenarian milestone;

Whereas Delta Air Lines was founded on March 2, 1925, as Huff Daland Dusters—the world's first aerial crop-dusting company;

Whereas Delta Air Service and the airline's first flights took off 4 years later;

Whereas, in 2025, Delta Air Lines's team of 100,000 people supports up to 5,000 daily flights serving more than 200,000,000 travelers per year;

Whereas Delta Air Lines maintains hubs from coast to coast, including in Georgia, Massachusetts, New York, Washington, California, Michigan, Minnesota, and Utah;

Whereas, with thousands of peak-day departures to more than 290 global destinations on 6 continents, Delta Air Lines connects millions of people around the globe to and through the United States daily and helps keep the United States a top country for business and the economy of the United States strong;

Whereas, for the past 100 years, the mission of Delta Air Lines to connect the world has included a commitment to being a strong partner in the communities where its people live, work, and serve; and

Whereas, in 2025, Delta was named North America's most on-time airline by Cirium, the Top United States Airline by the Wall Street Journal, the World's Most Admired Airline by Fortune, and the top-ranked airline on Time's inaugural World's Best Companies List: Now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes Delta Air Lines for 100 years of connecting people to the world and to each other; and

(2) commemorates the centennial of Delta Air Lines.

SENATE RESOLUTION 126—CALLING ON THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL TO ENFORCE THE EXISTING ARMS EMBARGO ON DARFUR AND EXTEND IT TO COVER ALL OF SUDAN

Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 126

Whereas the conflict between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, that began on April 15, 2023, has resulted in tens of thousands of Sudanese civilian casualties, and likely more, 12,500,000 million people forcibly displaced, and millions of Sudanese people exposed to unspeakable trauma;

Whereas the violence and genocide taking place in Sudan against civilians echoes the horrors of the genocide in the country's Darfur region that began in the early 2000s;

Whereas, in July 2004, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution United Nations Security Council Resolution 1556 (2004), which imposed an arms embargo against all non-governmental entities and individuals, including the Janjaweed, operating in Darfur, and mandated that all states shall take the necessary measures to prevent their nationals or entities operating from their respective territories or using their flag vessels or aircraft, from supplying non-governmental entities or individuals operating in Darfur arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts;

Whereas, in March 2005, the United Nations Security Council arms embargo under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1591 (2005) was expanded to include all belligerents in Darfur, including the Government of Sudan;

Whereas, in October 2010, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1945 (2010) was adopted, which strengthened the arms embargo by deciding that all states shall ensure that any sale or supply of arms and related materiel to Sudan not prohibited by United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1591 (2005) are made conditional

upon the necessary end user documentation so that states may ascertain that any such sale or supply is conducted consistent with the measures imposed by those resolutions;

Whereas, on September 11, 2024, the United Nations Security Council renewed United Nations Security Council Resolution 1556 (2004);

Whereas state actors and non-state actors across the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Europe are providing weapons and material support to the RSF and SAF for operations in Darfur and across Sudan;

Whereas a September 9, 2024, report from Human Rights Watch noted that according to the Arms Trade Database, maintained by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), weapons and equipment from other countries have arrived in Sudan between 2004 and 2023;

Whereas, on January 15, 2024, the United Nations Panel of Experts on Sudan presented credible reports to the United Nations Security Council of newly established supply lines to the RSF through neighboring countries.

Whereas there are credible reports that multiple countries are supplying weapons and other dual-use items to the SAF;

Whereas a 2024 report by the Department of State-affiliated Conflict Observatory describes regular cargo plane deliveries of weapons from foreign nations to the RSF in Darfur via Amdjarass, Chad, and to the SAF via Port Sudan, Sudan;

Whereas two 2024 reports by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch identified defense articles in Sudan, including 8 kinds of small arms manufactured in 6 different foreign countries, 6 kinds of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) manufactured in 8 different foreign countries, 5 kinds of ordnances and projectiles manufactured in 6 different foreign countries, and several other types of materiel related to weapons manufactured in 7 different foreign countries, which increase the lethality of the conflict;

Whereas these weapons have been observed both inside and outside Darfur, including Gedaref, Northern and Southern Kordofan, Khartoum, and El Gezira state, all areas that are under either SAF or RSF control and where the fact-finding mission documented atrocities, child recruitment, heavy shelling, or sexual violence;

Whereas a January 16, 2025, Yale Humanitarian Lab report observed the proliferation of cargo flights to RSF-controlled airports, followed by extensive satellite sightings of advanced UAV systems used for lethal attacks and surveillance;

Whereas the conflict has led to the partial or complete destruction of cities across Sudan, including El Geneina, El Fasher, El Obeid, Kadugli, Nyala, Wad al-Noura, Zalingei, and even the capital Khartoum;

Whereas one or both parties to the conflict have participated in mass atrocities in all of these cities;

Whereas, on February 12, 2025, the RSF attacked the camp for internally displaced persons in Zamzam, Darfur, dropping aerial munitions, firing upon crowds, killing humanitarian workers, setting fires, committing atrocities against camp residents, and driving some to flee on foot;

Whereas the provision of armaments to the RSF and SAF prolongs this conflict and the needless suffering among civilians in Sudan;

Whereas both the RSF and SAF have continued to use internet shutdowns as a tool of control and repression, further isolating and exacerbating the suffering of civilians and the ongoing humanitarian crisis;

Whereas, on December 6, 2023, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken determined that the SAF and the RSF have committed war crimes and that the RSF and its allies have committed crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing;

Whereas, on January 7, 2025, the Secretary of State determined that the RSF is committing genocide;

Whereas, in January 2025, the Department of Treasury sanctioned Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti) and Abdel Fattah al-Burhan for ''destabilizing Sudan and undermining the goal of a democratic transition'';

Whereas, in September 2024, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan, authorized by the United Nations Human Rights Council, reported that it had found reasonable grounds to believe that both the SAF and the RSF have committed war crimes and the RSF and allied militias have committed crimes against humanity;

Whereas the fact-finding mission has documented the use of explosives with wide area effects in densely populated areas, particularly in Khartoum and Darfur, that has resulted in deaths, injuries, extensive destruction of homes, hospitals, schools and other critical infrastructure, and the fact-finding mission has found that the SAF and the RSF have failed to take sufficient measures to minimize the impact of attacks on civilians;

Whereas the supply and provision of weapons to parties involved in crimes against humanity and other atrocities could implicate state and non-state actors supplying weapons used in such atrocities;

Whereas, while no reliable fatality figures exist, according to the United States Special Envoy for Sudan, as many as 150,000 people may have died in the first year of the war, and according to advanced statistical estimates from researchers at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, at least 60,000 people have died in Khartoum state alone;

Whereas, a Cholera outbreak declared in August 2024 has garnered more than 550,000 cases and over 1,500 deaths across multiple states in Sudan;

Whereas women and children have been subjected to torture and extreme sexual violence in Darfur, Northern and Southern Kordofan, Khartoum, and El Gezira states;

Whereas, in March 2025, UNICEF reports indicated more than 220 cases of child rape since the start of 2024;

Whereas the fact-finding mission reports that children are being forcibly recruited, trained, and armed by the SAF in Khartoum, River Nile, Kassala, Gedaref, Sennar, and Red Sea states, and by the RSF in the Darfur, Kordofan, and Khartoum states;

Whereas the draft resolution contained in document S/2024/826, submitted to the United Nations Security Council on November 18, 2024, by Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom, and calling for a nationwide ceasefire, increased protection of civilians and the unhindered flow of humanitarian aid across Sudan and garnered support from 14 out of 15 United Nations Security Council members;

Whereas only one individual has ever been sanctioned for violating the Darfur arms embargo pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1591 (2005); and

Whereas the fact-finding mission has recommended that the United Nations arms embargo be expanded to cover the entire country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the atrocities committed by all warring parties in Sudan;

(2) condemns the genocide by the RSF and allied militias against the Masalit people and other non-Arab ethnic groups in Darfur;

(3) calls for an immediate end to the war and all violence and atrocities in Sudan;

(4) calls on the United Nations Security Council—

(A) to expand the Darfur arms embargo to apply to all territory and actors within the internationally recognized borders of Sudan;

(B) to expand the Darfur arms embargo to include dual-use equipment under the list of prohibited material;

(C) to establish a more stringent sanctions enforcement regime to ensure actors violating the current Darfur arms embargo are held accountable; and

(D) to establish a mechanism for unfettered delivery of humanitarian aid and a mechanism to protect civilians;

(5) calls on the United Nations General Assembly to pass a resolution that calls for a nationwide ceasefire, recognizes the atrocities taking place in Sudan, and calls for a more effective and inclusive arms embargo on Sudan, unfettered delivery of humanitarian aid across Sudan, and a mechanism to protect civilians; and

(6) calls on the United States Government—

(A) to increase support for civil society and local organizations that are monitoring and documenting atrocities and weapons deliveries into Sudan as well as delivering humanitarian resources to vulnerable communities;

(B) to increase and develop improved mechanisms for monitoring and documenting atrocities and weapons supply chains into and across Sudan;

(C) to resume funding and implementation of United States foreign assistance to the famine-stricken and war-torn areas of Sudan;

(D) to develop mechanisms for psychosocial support for women, men, and children who are victims of conflict related sexual violence; and

(E) to press the United Nations, the African Union, and other allies and partners—

(i) to condemn the atrocities taking place in Sudan;

(ii) to call for a more effective and inclusive arms embargo on Sudan;

(iii) to work to ensure unfettered delivery of humanitarian aid across Sudan;

(iv) to support a mechanism to protect civilians;

(v) to use their influence to pressure the SAF and RSF to end this conflict; and

(vi) to exert pressure on external actors to adhere to the arms embargo in Sudan.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1259. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1260. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1261. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1262. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1263. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1264. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1265. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the

bill S. 331, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1266. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1968, making further continuing appropriations and other extensions for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1267. Ms. ALSOBROOKS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1968, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1259. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. LIMITATIONS.

Section 401(b) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 841(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(8) Notwithstanding section 3282 of title 18, United States Code, no person shall be prosecuted, tried, or punished for any violation of subsection (a) described in paragraph (1) of this subsection if death or serious bodily injury results from the use of such substance, unless the indictment is found or the information is instituted within 10 years next after such violation shall have been committed.''.

SA 1260. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1998.—The Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 702 (21 U.S.C. 1701)—

(A) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (L), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (M), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(N) tertiary prevention support or services, including opioid antagonists or overdose reversal agents such as naloxone, and other harm reduction activities such as overdose and drug detection testing.'';

(B) by amending paragraph (7) to read as follows:

''(7) EMERGING DRUG THREAT.—The term 'emerging drug threat' means the occurrence of a new and growing trend in the illicit use or misuse of a drug, class of drugs, or noncontrolled substance, or a new or evolving method of drug consumption or trafficking, including rapid expansion in the supply of or demand for such a drug or substance.''.

(C) in paragraph (9), by striking ''drug laws'' and inserting the following: ''drug, trade, and illicit drug trafficking laws'';

(D) in paragraph (10), by inserting after ''demand reduction,'' the following: ''illicit drug trafficking,'';

(E) by redesignating paragraphs (15), (16), and (17) as paragraphs (17), (18), and (19), respectively;

(F) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following new paragraph:

''(15) PRECURSOR CHEMICAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'precursor chemical' includes a listed chemical and an unregulated precursor.

''(B) LISTED CHEMICAL.—The term 'listed chemical' has the meaning given that term in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

''(C) UNREGULATED PRECURSOR.—The term 'unregulated precursor'—

''(i) means any chemical used in the production of illicit drugs that has not been identified as a listed chemical under the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.); and

''(ii) does not include a solvent or reagent.

''(16) STATE.—The term 'State' means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, and each territory or possession of the United States.'';

(G) in paragraph (19), as so redesignated—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (G) and (H) as subparagraphs (H) and (I), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the following:

''(G) activities to map, track, dismantle, and disrupt the financial enablers of drug trafficking organizations, transnational criminal organizations, and money launderers involved in the manufacture and trafficking of drugs in the United States and in foreign countries;''; and

(H) by inserting at the end the following:

''(20) UNITED STATES.—The term 'United States', when used in a geographical sense, means all of the States, the District of Columbia, and the territories and possessions of the United States, and any waters within the jurisdiction of the United States.

''(21) EVIDENCE.—The term 'evidence' has the meaning given that term in section 3561 of title 44, United States Code.'';

(2) in section 703(d) (21 U.S.C. 1702(d))—

(A) in paragraph (5)(B), by striking ''accepted by a contractor to be used in its performance of a contract for the Office.'' and inserting the following: ''accepted—

''(i) by a contractor (or subcontractor thereof at any tier) for use in its performance of a contract for the Office; or

''(ii) by a grant recipient (or subgrantee thereof at any tier) for use in carrying out an award related to a fund administered by the Office.''; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by inserting after ''paragraph (5)'' the following: ''and the registry shall be sent to the appropriate congressional committees'';

(3) in section 704 (21 U.S.C. 1703)—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)(C), by striking ''shall'' and inserting ''may'';

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (16), by inserting after ''to treat addiction'' the following: '', encourage primary substance use prevention, and increase accessibility and effectiveness of life-saving opioid antagonists or reversal agents, such as naloxone'';

(ii) by striking paragraph (20);

(iii) by redesignating paragraph (21) as paragraph (20);

(iv) in paragraph (20), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(v) by adding at the end the following:

''(21) shall coordinate with the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of State regarding the status of the enforcement of clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A) and subparagraph (B) of section 237(a)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1227(a)(2)) and subparagraphs (A) and (C) of section 212(a)(2) of that Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(2)) for the purposes of ensuring such drug control and illicit drug trafficking enforcement activities are adequately resourced.'';

(C) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking ''supply reduction, and State, local, and tribal affairs, including any drug law enforcement activities'' and inserting the following: ''supply reduction, accessibility to life-saving opioid antagonists or reversal agents, such as naloxone, and State, local, and Tribal affairs, including any drug related law enforcement activities'';

(ii) in paragraph (3)(C)—

(I) in clause (ii), by inserting after ''United States'' the following: '', including at and between the ports of entry,'';

(II) in clause (iii), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(III) in clause (iv), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

''(v) requests funding for activities that facilitate illicit drug use, but not including overdose reversal medications, drug checking, or testing technology.'';

(D) in subsection (d)(8)(F)(ii), by striking ''and at United States ports of entry by officers and employees of National Drug Control Program agencies and domestic and foreign law enforcement officers'' and inserting the following: ''and at and between United States ports of entry by officers and employees of National Drug Control Program agencies and domestic and foreign law enforcement officers'';

(E) in subsection (i)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''to address illicit drug use issues'' and inserting the following: ''to address illicit drug use, prevention and treatment of overdose and addiction, and law enforcement activities''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking ''2023'' and inserting ''2031''; and

(F) in subsection (k)—

(i) in the heading, by striking ''HARM REDUCTION PROGRAMS'' and inserting ''SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION, HARM REDUCTION, AND LIFE-SAVING TREATMENT PROGRAMS''; and

(ii) in the first sentence, by inserting after ''drug addiction and use'' the following: ''with the primary goal being the prevention of initial or continued use and the fostering of life-saving opioid antagonists or reversal agents, such as naloxone'';

(4) in section 705 (21 U.S.C. 1704)—

(A) in subsection (a)(3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting after ''Federal Government'' the following: ''and such lands owned by a foreign principal (as such term in defined in section 1(b) of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended (22 U.S.C. 611(b)))'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting after ''the preceding year'' the following: '', along with historical comparisons over the prior 20 years,'';

(II) in clause (i)—

(aa) by inserting after ''seizing drugs,'' the following: ''including precursor chemicals,''; and

(bb) by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(III) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) the effects of trends of encounters of inadmissible aliens at and between the ports of entry, and the effect of any increases or changes in the level of trade and travel, on the capacity and ability of the Department of Homeland Security components to interdict and prevent the unlawful entry of illicit

drugs into the United States by any means.''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (D)—

(I) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting after ''the preceding year'' the following: '', along with historical comparisons over the prior 20 years,''; and

(II) in clause (iii), by inserting after ''seizing drugs,'' the following: ''including precursor chemicals,'';

(B) in subsection (e)(2), by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''and $3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2031''; and

(C) in subsection (f)—

(i) in paragraph (2), by inserting after ''agency shall'' the following: '', in accordance with guidelines issued by the Director for standard definitions, identification, and review procedures,''; and

(ii) by striking paragraph (4);

(5) in section 706 (21 U.S.C. 1705)—

(A) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) by striking subparagraph (D);

(II) in subparagraph (H)—

(aa) by inserting after ''identifying existing'' the following: ''evidence and''; and

(bb) by striking ''will obtain such data'' and inserting ''will ensure such data is obtained'';

(III) in subparagraph (J)(ii), by inserting ''evidence,'' before ''data'';

(IV) in subparagraph (L), by striking ''statistical data'' and inserting ''evidence, statistical data,''; and

(V) in subparagraph (M)(iv), by inserting ''storing and retrieving,'' after ''collecting,'';

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) and (F) as subparagraphs (G) and (H), respectively; and

(II) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

''(E) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

''(F) The Chief Data Officers Council.'';

(iii) in paragraph (3)—

(I) in subparagraph (B)(ii)—

(aa) in subclause (I), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(bb) in subclause (II), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(cc) by adding at the end the following:

''(III) an analysis of the effects of trends of encounters of inadmissible aliens at and between the ports of entry, and the effect of any increases or changes in the level of trade and travel, on the capacity and ability of the Department of Homeland Security to interdict and prevent the unlawful entry of illicit drugs into the United States by any means.''; and

(II) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) REQUIREMENT FOR CARIBBEAN BORDER COUNTERNARCOTICS STRATEGY.—

''(i) PURPOSES.—The Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy shall—

''(I) set forth the strategy of the Federal Government for preventing the illegal trafficking of drugs through the Caribbean region into the United States, including through ports of entry, between ports of entry, and across air and maritime approaches;

''(II) state the specific roles and responsibilities of each relevant National Drug Control Program agency for implementing the strategy;

''(III) identify the specific resources required to enable the relevant National Drug Control Program agencies to implement the strategy, to the extent practicable; and

''(IV) be designed to promote, and not hinder, legitimate trade and travel.

''(ii) SPECIFIC CONTENT RELATED TO PUERTO RICO AND THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS.—The Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy shall include—

''(I) a strategy to prevent the illegal trafficking of drugs to or through Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands, including measures to substantially reduce drug-related violent crime on such islands; and

''(II) recommendations for additional assistance or authorities, if any, needed by Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies relating to the strategy, including an evaluation of Federal technical and financial assistance, infrastructure capacity building, and interoperability deficiencies.''; and

(iv) in paragraph (5), by striking ''data'' each place it appears and inserting ''evidence, data,'';

(B) in subsection (f)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking ''publicly available in a machine-readable format'' and inserting the following: ''publicly available as an open Government data asset (as such term is defined in section 3502 of title 44, United States Code)'';

(ii) in paragraph (2), by inserting after ''searchable format'' the following: ''available for bulk download to the extent practicable''; and

(iii) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) DATA.—The data included in the Drug Control Data Dashboard shall be updated annually with final data, and to the extent practicable, updated quarterly with provisional data, that aligns with the goals of the performance measurement system required under subsection (h) and include, at a minimum, the following:

''(A) For each substance identified by the Director as having a significant impact on illicit drug use in the United States, data sufficient to—

''(i) assess supply reduction efforts, including, to the extent practicable, the total amount of substances seized;

''(ii) assess drug use behaviors;

''(iii) estimate the prevalence of substance use disorders;

''(iv) show the number of fatal and nonfatal overdoses; and

''(v) assess the provision of substance use disorder treatment.

''(B) Any quantifiable measures the Director determines to be appropriate to detail progress toward the achievement of the goals of the National Drug Control Strategy, including, to the extent practicable, data disaggregated by specific geographic areas or sub-populations of interest.

''(C) Data sufficient to assess the effectiveness of such substance use disorder treatments.

''(D) To the extent practicable, data sufficient to show the extent of prescription drug diversion, trafficking, and misuse in the calendar year and each of the previous 3 calendar years.

''(E) Any quantifiable measures the Director determines to be appropriate to detail progress toward the achievement of the goals of the National Drug Control Strategy, including to the extent practicable, data disaggregated by specific geographic areas or sub-populations of interest.''; and

(C) in subsection (g)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''narcotics'' and inserting ''drugs'';

(ii) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''drug use'' and inserting ''illicit drug use and misuse''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''drug use'' and inserting ''illicit drug use and misuse'';

(6) in section 707 (21 U.S.C. 1706)—

(A) in subsection (l)(2)(F), by inserting ''and authorities enforcing illicit drug trafficking laws'' after ''task forces'';

(B) in subsection (m)(2), by inserting '', and authorities enforcing illicit drug trafficking laws,'' after ''agencies'';

(C) in subsection (p)—

(i) in paragraph (5), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) $298,579,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2031.'';

(D) in subsection (r)(3), by striking ''addiction'';

(E) in subsection (s)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''The Director'' and inserting ''Except as provided in subsection (t)(2), the Director'';

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(iii) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) enhancing fentanyl seizure and interdiction activities.''; and

(F) by adding at the end the following:

''(t) SUPPLEMENTAL GRANTS FOR FENTANYL INTERDICTION ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) MINIMUM ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR FENTANYL INTERDICTION ACTIVITIES.—Of the amounts allocated for grants under subsection (s), not less than $5,000,000 shall be allocated for the purpose of making grants under subsection (s)(4).

''(2) ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—In addition to amounts allocated under subparagraph (A) for the purpose of making grants under subsection (s)(4), the Director may use amounts otherwise appropriated to carry out this section for such purpose.

''(u) ADDITIONAL JUDICIARY PROSECUTORIAL RESOURCES.—

''(1) TEMPORARY REASSIGNMENT OF ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS.—

''(A) AUTHORITY.—The Attorney General may identify assistant United States attorneys who may be made available for temporary reassignment under subsection (b)(2) for a period of time determined by the Attorney General in coordination with the Director, during which an assistant United States attorney shall prioritize the investigation and prosecution of organizations and individuals trafficking in fentanyl or fentanyl analogues.

''(B) EXTENSION OF REASSIGNMENT.—Such reassignment may be extended by the Attorney General for such time as may be necessary to conclude any ongoing investigation or prosecution in which the assistant United States attorney is engaged.

''(2) PROCESS FOR TEMPORARY REASSIGNMENT.—The Attorney General may establish a process under which the Director, in consultation with the Executive Boards of each designated high intensity drug trafficking area, may request such an assistant United States attorney to be so temporarily reassigned.

''(v) USE OF FUNDS TO COMBAT FENTANYL TRAFFICKING.—

''(1) REQUIREMENT.—As part of the documentation that supports the President's annual budget request for the Office, the Director shall submit to Congress a report describing the use of HIDTA funds for the purposes of enhancing fentanyl seizure and interdiction activities under subsection (s)(4) or (t) and to investigate and prosecute organizations and individuals trafficking in fentanyl or fentanyl analogues in the prior calendar year.

''(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

''(A) the amounts of fentanyl or fentanyl analogues seized by HIDTA-funded initiatives in the area during the previous year; and

''(B) law enforcement intelligence and predictive data from the Drug Enforcement Administration showing patterns and trends in abuse, trafficking, and transportation in fentanyl and fentanyl analogues.

''(w) PROTECTION FROM UNREASONABLE SEARCH AND SEIZURE.—Any program or activity that receives funds made available under this section shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

''(x) REPORT ON DATA ANALYTICAL SERVICES PROGRAM.—

''(1) REPORT.—With respect to the Data Analytical Services program (formally known as Hemisphere), and any successor program, the Director shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, a report every 2 years on any activities of the program—

''(A) funded by the Office; and

''(B) carried out in 2 years prior to the submission of the report.

''(2) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

''(A) A documentation of any activities of the Data Analytical Services program, including—

''(i) the amount of searches conducted for each HIDTA; and

''(ii) each requesting local law enforcement jurisdiction.

''(B) Information on how the program was funded and how funds were expended under the program, including information on any—

''(i) funding sources derived from each HIDTA's funding allocation for a HIDTA, or any other source of funding, for the program; and

''(ii) payments made by the program to any non-governmental entity or external vendor.

''(C) A description of any policies and guidelines provided to HIDTA personnel and local law enforcement jurisdictions governing the operation of the program in order to ensure that such program does not infringe on rights protected under the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States or violate legally protected privacy of United States citizens or individuals legally in the United States, along with any recommendations by the Director to strengthen such policies and guidelines.'';

(7) in section 709 (21 U.S.C. 1708)—

(A) in subsection (f)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''shall'' and inserting ''may'';

(II) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''abuse'' and inserting ''use or misuse''; and

(III) in subparagraph (D)(i), by striking ''addiction issues'' and inserting ''substance use disorders''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)(B)(iii)(IV), by inserting after ''professionals'' the following: ''including experts in evidence-based media campaigns, education, and evaluation''; and

(B) in subsection (g), by striking ''2023'' and inserting ''2031'';

(8) in section 711 (21 U.S.C. 1710), including the headings, by striking ''Command and Control Plan'' each place it appears and inserting ''Strategic Plan''; and

(9) in section 714 (21 U.S.C. 1711), by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''and $20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2031''.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO THE ANTI-DRUG ABUSE ACT OF 1988.—Chapter 2 of subtitle A of title I of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 (21 U.S.C. 1521 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 1024 (21 U.S.C. 1524)—

(A) in subsection (a), by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''and $109,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2031''; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking ''8 percent'' and inserting ''10 percent''; and

(2) in section 1032(b) (21 U.S.C. 1532(b))—

(A) by striking ''$125,000'' each place the term appears and inserting ''$150,000''; and

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (F), the Administrator may award up to 2 additional grants under this paragraph to an eligible coalition awarded a grant under paragraph (1) or (2) for any first fiscal year after the end of the 4-year or 9-year period following the period of the initial or subsequent grant under paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be.'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''a renewal grant'' and inserting ''up to 2 renewal grants'';

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''an additional grant'' and inserting ''the additional grants''; and

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

''(D) RENEWAL GRANTS.—Subject to subparagraph (F), the Administrator may award a renewal grant to a grant recipient under this paragraph for each fiscal year of the 4-fiscal-year period following the first fiscal year for which an additional grant under this paragraph is awarded in an amount not to exceed the amount of non-Federal funds raised by the coalition, including in-kind contributions, for that fiscal year.''.

(c) REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY ANTI-DRUG COALITION INSTITUTE.—Section 4(d) of Public Law 107–82 (21 U.S.C. 1521 note) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) DISBURSEMENT.—The Director shall, using amounts authorized to be appropriated by section 1024 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 (21 U.S.C. 1524), disburse $2,500,000 made available under subsection (a) of this section, for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2031.''.

(d) REAUTHORIZATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.—Section 103 of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (21 U.S.C. 1536) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the heading, by striking ''ADMINISTRATOR'' and inserting ''ASSISTANT SECRETARY'';

(ii) by striking ''Administrator'' each place it appears and inserting ''Assistant Secretary''; and

(iii) by striking ''of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration'' and inserting ''for Mental Health and Substance Use'';

(B) in paragraph (4)(B), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''abuse'' and inserting ''use or misuse''; and

(C) in paragraph (5)(A), by striking ''abuse'' and inserting ''use or misuse'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''Administrator'' and inserting ''Assistant Secretary'';

(3) in subsection (h), by striking ''Administrator'' and inserting ''Assistant Secretary''; and

(4) in subsection (i), by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''and $5,200,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2031''.

(e) REPORT REGARDING LIFE-SAVING OPIOID ANTAGONISTS OR REVERSAL AGENTS.—

(1) AMENDMENT.—The Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–469; 120 Stat. 3502) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 1121. REQUIREMENT FOR LIFE SAVING OPIOID OVERDOSE REVERSAL STUDY.

''(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that it is vital to support access to treatment and emergency intervention tools to address drug addiction while also pursuing strategies to ensure communities have readily available access to life-saving drug overdose reversal medications, including opioid antagonists or reversal agents, such as naloxone, in case of an emergency.

''(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy shall submit to Congress a report that contains the following:

''(1) A summary of the relevant roles, responsibilities, and authorities of each relevant National Drug Control Program agency to ensure that life-saving drug overdose reversal medications are readily available in case of an emergency, including life-saving opioid antagonists or reversal agents, such as naloxone, across the United States.

''(2) A strategy for the Federal Government to ensure that State, local, and Tribal governments, and agencies thereof including law enforcement and public health and safety entities, have life-saving drug overdose reversal medications readily available in case of an emergency, including life-saving opioid antagonists or reversal agents, such as naloxone, which at a minimum identifies—

''(A) any Federal and State policies and actions necessary for the relevant National Drug Control Program agencies to take to address—

''(i) the challenges faced by pharmacists, prescription drug providers, dispensers (including manufacturers, distributors, and retailers), and other health care providers, to make such medications readily available to patients over the counter for emergency use;

''(ii) the challenges faced by pharmacists, health care providers, and State health officials to educate the public on the risks and benefits of such medications, including how to effectively use such medications; and

''(iii) the appropriate training of State and local health care providers and first responders on the use of such medications; and

''(B) identifies any budgetary resources, personnel resources, licensing requirements, and legal authorities that relevant National Drug Control Program agencies need to enable the availability of such life-saving emergency drug overdose medications.

''(3) A summary of policies in effect before the submission of the report that are administered by—

''(A) the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy;

''(B) the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

''(C) each National Drug Control Program agency, as applicable.

''(4) A summary of the specific actions taken over the previous 10 years before the submission of the report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Drug Enforcement Administration to coordinate with one another and with State health agencies to ensure that—

''(A) such treatments, including medications, are accessible to the public; and

''(B) appropriate public education on the use of, and the risks and benefits of, such treatments, including medications, are readily available.

''(c) UPDATES.—Any significant update made to the strategy included in the report required by subsection (b) after such report is submitted shall be included in the next National Drug Control Strategy submitted to Congress after such update is made.''.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(c)

of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–469; 120 Stat. 3502) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''Sec. 1121. Requirement for life saving opioid overdose reversal study.''.

(f) REPORT ON PILL PRESS MACHINES.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy shall make public a report that includes an analysis of and a description of strategic ways to regulate the shipment of pill press machines and their critical parts using reports previously prepared by the Office.

SA 1261. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end add the following.

''This Act shall take effect 1 day after the date of enactment.''

SA 1262. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike ''1 day'' and insert ''2 days''

SA 1263. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

This Act shall take effect 3 days after the date of enactment

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SA 1264. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike ''3 days'' and insert ''4 days''

SA 1265. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 331, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike ''4 days'' and insert ''5 days''

SA 1266. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1968, making further continuing appropriations and other extensions for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 77, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

SEC. 11209. (a) Notwithstanding section 1101, the levels for the following accounts in title II of division F of Public Law 118–47 shall be as follows:

(1) ''Operating Expenses'', $288,150,000, of which up to $43,222,500 may remain available until September 30, 2026.

(2) ''Capital Investment Fund'', $44,047,000.

(3) ''Office of Inspector General'', $14,535,000, of which up to $2,180,250 may remain available until September 30, 2026.

(b) Notwithstanding section 1101, the levels for the following accounts in title III of division F of Public Law 118–47 shall be as follows:

(1) ''Global Health Programs'', $677,526,500.

(2) ''Development Assistance'', $668,270,000.

(3) ''International Disaster Assistance'', $812,430,000, of which $127,500,000 is designated by Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(4) ''Transition Initiatives'', $12,750,000, and up to an additional $2,550,000 of the funds appropriated to carry out the provisions of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 if the Secretary of State determines that it is important to the national interest of the United States to provide transition assistance in excess of such base amount.

(5) ''Complex Crises Fund'', $9,350,000.

(6) ''Economic Support Fund'', $661,368,000, of which $51,000,000 is designated by Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(7) ''Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance'', $23,800,000.

(8) ''Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia'', $130,956,780, of which $52,700,000 is designated by Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SA 1267. Ms. ALSOBROOKS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1968, making further continuing appropriations and other extensions for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 49, between lines 14 and 15, insert the following:

SEC. 1609. (a) Notwithstanding section 1101, the District of Columbia may expend local funds made available under the heading ''District of Columbia—District of Columbia Funds'' for such programs and activities under the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2024 (title IV of division B of Public Law 118–47) at the rate set forth in the Fiscal Year 2025 Local Budget Act of 2024 (D.C. Law 25–218), as modified as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) Section 816 of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118–47; 138 Stat. 592) is amended by striking ''fiscal year 2025'' each place it appears and inserting ''fiscal year 2026''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I have 10 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct an executive session.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct an executive session.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 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 12, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

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 12, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 3:30 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 12, 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 session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., to receive testimony.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to the following

members of my staff: Sami Hollinshead and Julia Wascher.

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1008, H.R. 1156

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk and ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1008) to provide equitable treatment for the people of the Village Corporation established for the Native Village of Saxman, Alaska, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 1156) to amend the CARES Act to extend the statute of limitations for fraud under certain unemployment programs, and for other purposes.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Thursday, March 13; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed, and the Senate resume consideration of Calendar No. 30; further, at 10:45 a.m., the Senate vote on cloture on the Pulte nomination; that if cloture is invoked on the Pulte nomination, the postcloture time expire at 1 p.m. and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Pulte nomination; further, if cloture is invoked on the Kessler nomination, the postcloture time expire at 4:30 p.m. and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination; finally, 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. THUNE. For the information of all Senators, Senators should expect one vote at 10:45 a.m., two votes at 1 p.m., and two votes at 4:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:31 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 12, 2025:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

STEPHEN MIRAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

KEITH SONDERLING, OF FLORIDA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF LABOR.