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No. 149

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Shepherd of love, as we begin today's legislative session, we pause to acknowledge Your sovereignty. You are a God of might and miracles, and we are sustained by Your mercy. Today, lead our lawmakers beside still waters and replenish their spirits with Your power. As they grapple with the challenges of our time, give them a faith that will not shrink though pressed by many a foe. Lord, provide them with the wisdom to hear Your voice and the courage to obey Your precepts. Let Your hand rest on our Nation and lead it to a greatness that glorifies You.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2023.
To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4366, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 198, H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

AI INSIGHT FORUM

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, Senators from both sides of the aisle participated in one of the most informative and historic discussions ever held in the Congress.

Many of us came out of our first AI Insight Forum exhilarated. The debate was illuminating; the discussions, candid and unvarnished, and direct.

I want to thank Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, and YOUNG for joining me in leading the discussion. They helped make yesterday an all-out success.

I want to thank every Senator who attended. We had great turnout. I am told about 70 Senators from both parties attended, and I think we all left with a greater understanding and appreciation of AI's importance and complexity.

By the end of the day, everyone in the room did reach a consensus on a few important points.

First, Congress must play a role—must play a role—in regulating AI. One of the most striking moments at the forum was when I asked all of the participants—the critics, the experts, the developers alike—to raise their hands if they agreed that government had to be involved, and we had universal support. Not one person had their hand down.

Second, most everyone agreed that the government must also play a role promoting what we call transformational innovation. Bill Gates talked about AI's potential for combating hunger worldwide. Eric Schmidt talked about the way AI could help doctors do their job. Senator ROUNDS, in a touching moment, talked about losing his wife to cancer, which hit home to a lot of people in the room, as it does with millions and millions of Americans. And it led to a conversation about how AI can be used one day to model never-before-seen drugs to do the unthinkable: cure cancer.

But at the same time and with equal vehemence—maybe even more—we had a consensus on the need for guardrails for a sustainable innovation, because just as AI can be used to design cancer cures, it could also, if things went wrong, be used to make terrible bio-weapons or other dangers.

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



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I think everyone at the forum agreed that if we don't do anything on AI, then the lowest common denominator can occur: Racial bias that is in our society would be enshrined in AI; massive job displacement and even more unthinkable doomsday scenarios. So we talked about the need for not only transformational innovation that does the positive but for sustainable innovation, where the government installs guardrails to minimize these risks.

It is called sustainable because AI won't be able to go forward if we don't have guardrails to prevent the very serious downsides. And we agreed that only the government can fill the hole of creating and enforcing these guardrails, because even if a good number of private companies do the responsible thing and regulate themselves, there will always be outlier companies that don't, and that brings the lowest common denominator way down.

Finally, there was a consensus that we need to find balance between innovation and guardrails. This won't be easy, but it is essential. You can't go too far in either direction. We want to both maximize the benefits and minimize the risks, and if you go too far on one side, you may hurt the other. So Congress must pay attention to both. That ain't easy. This is going to be one of the toughest jobs the Congress has ever undertaken but one of the most important and one of the most necessary.

To be sure, we didn't cover everything in today's forum. We are just at the beginning. The conversation that began yesterday will continue into the fall and beyond when we host even more AI Insight Forums. Our committees, which will have to do the work—the real work—of crafting legislation, have already held a dozen hearings and are going to hold a lot more, using what we learn at the forums to help craft legislation.

Well, we have a lot of work in front of us, but yesterday's conversation gave the Senate a strong sense of where to begin, and it was a decided blow to the ostriches around here who might put their heads in the sand and say: It is too complicated. It is too difficult. Let's do nothing.

Thanks to all of our participants who came to yesterday's AI forum. Thanks to Senators ROUNDS and YOUNG and HEINRICH for hosting with me, and thanks to all of my colleagues who joined. Let's now look ahead to our second day AI Insight Forum, which will happen very soon.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Now, Mr. President, on Senate business, today, the Senate will take the next step in our bipartisan appropriations process. Later this morning, we will hold a vote on the motion to proceed to the minibus, which contains three spending bills: MILCON-VA, Agriculture, and Transportation-Housing, affectionately known around here as T-HUD.

Earlier this week, the first vote on this bill got an overwhelming 85-to-12

vote. That is yet another example of the bipartisan nature of our work here in the Senate to date, and I hope both sides come out in strong support of the vote in a few minutes. We should not slow this process down because once we are on the bill, I look forward to a constructive debate where both sides can secure votes on amendments.

Off the floor, the work of advancing the President's highly qualified nominees also continues. Today, the Judiciary Committee will hold a markup on another seven district judges, two U.S. attorneys, and other nominees.

I thank Chairman DURBIN and my colleagues on the Judiciary for their work. They have helped the U.S. Senate confirm over 140 judges, including 36 circuit judges, 104 district court judges, and, of course, Ketanji Brown Jackson, the historic nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court.

REPUBLICAN AGENDA

Mr. President, on Republican extremism, a lot has changed since I first arrived in Congress but nothing more so than the seismic shift in the Republican Party's support for the members of our great Armed Forces.

When I arrived in the House, Republican Representatives used to fall over each other to give speeches expressing support for those in uniform—the same when I arrived in the Senate. Their policies didn't always match the rhetoric, but the support truly seemed real and genuine. It no longer does. Oh, some of them may still use the rhetoric, but these days, the actions we see on the other side say more than all of the patriotic rhetoric on Earth.

Look at where we are. In the House, the Republicans can't even agree to debate a bill to fund the Defense Department and the intelligence community, and they balk at providing emergency aid to a democratic partner fighting off a Russian invasion. In the Senate, our Republican colleagues are more supportive of our Ukrainian friends, to their credit, but extremists in their ranks are blocking the promotion of hundreds of military leaders. And what does the Republican leadership do? Nothing—tacit approval of this nakedly cynical tactic. They are shrugging their shoulders and letting it go forward. The result? Real lives—real lives, families—trapped in limbo because a select few want to push the MAGA hard line on women's choice.

To my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, these servicemembers—the finest our military has to offer—are seemingly just numbers on the Senate calendar. The Senator from Alabama claims that no one is being harmed by his obstruction and that the leadership of his conference supports him.

Well, I say to my friends: These are not just numbers. Our armed services members are real people who have dedicated their lives to serving and defending our great country. They are real families, spouses, children whose lives have been put in limbo by the callous calculation of the Senator from

Alabama; officers who cannot assume their new assignments, spouses who cannot find jobs in new locations, families who cannot get settled in their new homes; kids who have to go to a new school can't start.

The bottom line is this: This is a Republican problem. It was created by the Senator from Alabama—no one else—and it is up to Republicans to put pressure on him to back off, plain and simple.

We already see that pressure mount. Last week, one of the major Republican Presidential candidates said that the Senator from Alabama ought to back off. Just a few days ago, the House chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee—one of the most respected, conservative Members of the House—said the same thing. But Senate Republican leaders need to step up. Yet here we are with extremists—extremists—of one party choosing to upend the lives of hundreds of dedicated and honorable military families.

I will continue to find a way to break this logjam and get these lives back on track.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, America's example and the threats posed by Russia and China are leading major allies and partners in Europe and Asia to step up their commitments to collective security and dramatically increase investments in their own defense.

It is worth pointing out once again that the United States is not—I repeat “not”—shouldering the burden for European free riders. In fact, when it comes to security assistance to Ukraine as a share of GDP, 14 of our European allies are actually giving more.

Lithuania—a small nation by any measure—has sent tens of thousands of rifles, handguns, and grenade launchers and millions of rounds of ammunition. Denmark and Estonia have sent their entire inventory of certain critical artillery. Larger allies, like the United Kingdom and France, are making remarkable contributions themselves, including longer range systems than the United States has provided. Even Germany, despite slow and sometimes agonizing decision making, has provided historic support to Ukraine and is the continent's largest provider of security assistance to Ukraine. Europe has more than doubled American economic and humanitarian assistance, not to

mention the massive cost of hosting millions of Ukrainian refugees.

But, like America, our allies are not in the business of philanthropy. As far away as Tokyo and Seoul, leaders are making a sober calculation about their interests. Our friends are making historic new investments in growing their arsenals and modernizing their militaries.

More than half of our NATO allies are now on track to hit the alliance's 2 percent spending target by the end of next year. Sweden, not yet a full-fledged NATO member, is increasing its defense spending next year by nearly 30 percent to invest in modern capabilities and meet its 2 percent of the GDP target. Lithuania, which spent less than 1 percent of its GDP on defense back in 2014, is set to spend over 2.5 percent next year.

To bolster their security, many of our allies are buying American. Since Russia's escalation began last February, our allies and partners across the globe have purchased over \$120 billion in advanced, American-made weapons systems.

Germany, Switzerland, Finland, and the Czech Republic have all moved quickly to sign contracts to purchase F-35s. Indonesia has signed up for nearly \$14 billion in F-15 fighter aircraft made in St. Louis, MO. Bulgaria—an economy roughly the size of the State of Maine—has spent \$1.5 billion on Stryker combat vehicles that are produced in Lima, OH, and Anniston, AL. Poland has ordered \$12 billion worth of Apache helicopters produced in Mesa, AZ, and is planning to buy 486 HIMARS launchers. They will have the biggest HIMARS inventory in the world.

Here is the most important part: When our friends and allies "Buy American," they are buying into a closer security relationship with the United States. They are building more interoperable militaries to strengthen deterrence. They are also lowering costs for the American taxpayer as we rebuild our own capabilities. They are sharing the burden of collective defense.

These investments are not a coincidence; they are a demonstration of the confidence our allies have in American leadership. But make no mistake, that confidence is perishable. As we saw with the disastrous retreat from Afghanistan, America can lose trust far more quickly than we can earn it.

If we pull the plug on our commitment to stand with Europe, our largest trading partner, I can guarantee it will shred our credibility as a security partner worldwide. It will make it harder to convince our allies to stand together against Chinese aggression—the single biggest threat to our own security and prosperity.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE DUNCAN

Mr. President, today, I join folks in my home State in thanking Mike Duncan for his decades-long service to the Kentucky Republican Party as he steps down as our national committeeman.

In Washington, it is rare to find an individual equally skilled at navigating the worlds of business and politics, but my good friend Mike is just that rare hybrid. Despite his success in standing up a chain of community banks, Mike chose to commit his considerable talents to public service. He would serve terms as Governor of the U.S. Postal Service, chairman of the Republican National Committee, and chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, on top of a number of impressive positions under five Republican Presidents. In my home State, Mike has served as a national committeeman for the Kentucky GOP since 1992, advising the Republican leaders at the local, State, and national levels his entire career.

Early on, Mike had a gift for giving that he shared generously with the people of my home State. When Mike and his wife Joanne first moved to East Kentucky, they committed to spending at least 1 day a week doing something to benefit their community.

Since then, Mike has devoted decades to student mentorship, training young people in Appalachia, and sponsoring their continued education. His lifetime of civic service has been recognized by a number of prestigious organizations.

Somehow, between raising a family and serving his country, Mike found time to develop a close circle of friends, which I am grateful to be a part of. Mike has been a trusted source of counsel, and I am thankful to always have him in my corner.

So as Mike steps away from his national role, I am grateful he will continue to be a leader in our State party and in his own community.

Thank you, Mike. Thank you for your decades of friendship and your service to our country. Elaine and I wish you and Joanne all the best.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

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

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

APPROPRIATIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I urge all of our colleagues who have come to me and to the Senator from Maine to talk about the need for regular order to vote yes now on this motion to proceed. I will have more to say about what we all need to do to keep this process moving, but this vote is important if we want to make sure that Senators will have the opportunity to speak out for their values and their constituents.

So I urge a yes vote on the motion to proceed, and let's get going on an agreement, as soon as possible, so Sen-

ators can vote and debate and act on amendments. That is what regular order is, and that is what everyone has told me is exactly what they want and what I have been hearing all year from Senators on both sides of the aisle.

Let's keep up the bipartisanship. Let's get to work.

VOTE ON MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 228 Leg.]

YEAS—91

Baldwin	Grassley	Reed
Barrasso	Hagerty	Risch
Bennet	Hassan	Romney
Blackburn	Heinrich	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Booker	Hirono	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sanders
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Brown	Johnson	Schumer
Budd	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Cantwell	Kelly	Shaheen
Capito	Kennedy	Sinema
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Lankford	Sullivan
Cassidy	Lee	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Thune
Coons	Markey	Tillis
Cornyn	Marshall	Tuberville
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Van Hollen
Cotton	Menendez	Vance
Cramer	Merkley	Warner
Crapo	Moran	Warnock
Daines	Mullin	Warren
Durbin	Murkowski	Welch
Ernst	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wicker
Fetterman	Ossoff	Wyden
Fischer	Padilla	Young
Gillibrand	Paul	
Graham	Peters	

NAYS—7

Braun	Lummis	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Ricketts	
Hawley	Schmitt	

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth	Luján
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The motion was agreed to.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4366) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 1092

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I call up substitute amendment, No. 1092, and ask that it be reported by number. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER], for Mrs. MURRAY and Ms. COLLINS, proposes an amendment numbered 1092.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask to dispense with further reading of the amendment.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of September 7, 2023, under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

AMENDMENT NO. 1205 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1092

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I call up my amendment, No. 1205, and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Washington [Mrs. MURRAY] proposes an amendment numbered 1205 to amendment No. 1092.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C, add the following:

SEC. 422. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MOTION TO COMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 1207

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to commit H.R. 4366 to the Appropriations Committee, with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] moves to commit the bill H.R. 4366 to the Appropriations Committee with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment numbered No. 1207.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To change the effective date)

At the end of division C, add the following:

SEC. 422. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 8 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask to dispense with further reading.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 4366

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the substitute amendment No. 1092 be considered an Appropriations Committee amendment for purposes of rule XVI, with no other rule XVI points of order waived by this agreement; that H.R. 4366, H.R. 4368, as reported in the House of Representatives on June 27, 2023, and H.R. 4820, as reported in the House of Representatives on July 24, 2023, serve as the basis for defense of germaneness under rule XVI for any floor amendments and that it be in order for floor amendments to amend the substitute in more than one place; further, that it be in order for the following amendments to be made pending and that, at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate vote on the following amendments to the Murray-Collins substitute amendment No. 1092, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption and with no further amendments or motions in order to the amendments: Paul No. 1157, Vance No. 1125, Ernst No. 1123, Blackburn No. 1155, Lee No. 1121, Stabenow No. 1115, Peters-Cornyn No. 1122, Rosen No. 1117, Padilla No. 1139, and Schatz No. 1120.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am both surprised and disappointed that the Senator from Wisconsin is objecting to this unanimous consent agreement. The Senator from Wisconsin has repeatedly said—and I agree with him—that we should not end up with an omnibus bill—a 4,000-page bill—at the end of the year, with little consideration and having been largely drafted by a small group of people.

So why is the Senator from Wisconsin objecting to proceeding to three appropriations bills that were reported unanimously—unanimously, each one of them—by the Senate Appropriations Committee after a great deal of work? Furthermore, the Senator is objecting to Republican amendments being offered to this package—amendments by Senator PAUL, Senator VANCE, Senator ERNST, Senator BLACKBURN, Senator LEE—and that is just the first tranche of amendments.

Negotiations are ongoing, and there will be additional amendments; but if we cannot proceed to consider this bill and the other two appropriations bills unanimously reported by the Senate committee, then those amendments offered by some of our Members cannot be considered.

Is the Senator from Wisconsin opposed to the amendments that are offered by Senators PAUL, VANCE, ERNST, BLACKBURN, and LEE? Because, by objecting, he is preventing them from being considered by the full Senate.

We have worked very hard to clear amendments for consideration by this body, but if we can't even get passed the procedural amendments that allow us to bring the Transportation and Housing appropriations bill and the Agriculture appropriations bill to add to the MILCON-VA bill, then the Senate is broken once again.

Senator MURRAY and I, along with all the members of the Appropriations Committee, have worked so hard to achieve bipartisan consensus. We held nearly 50 hearings and briefings, asking tough questions, reviewing the President's budget request, evaluating the numbers in the budget. And we worked hard to develop, draft, and approve all 12 of the appropriations bills for the first time in 5 years.

How can a Member stand up and object and, at the same time, say: Oh, I don't want an omnibus bill. Well, that is what we are heading for.

We lost last week. I wish that the Democratic leader had brought this to the floor last week. We are now losing this week, and needlessly so.

There has been a great openness by my Democratic colleagues to consider Republican amendments. We just asked unanimous consent for the first five to be considered. Yet that is objected to.

Members cannot have it both ways. They cannot block floor consideration of appropriations bills that were unanimously reported by the committee and yet maintain that they don't want an omnibus bill. It is one or the other, or a government shutdown—even worse.

So I would ask my colleague from Wisconsin to think through this and think about the fact that he is blocking Republican amendments from getting a vote on the Senate floor. He is setting us up for either an omnibus bill or a government shutdown, and none of those outcomes serve the American people well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, let's be clear. To all of my colleagues who told me and Senator COLLINS and the American people that we have to get back to regular order, that is exactly what we are working to do here. We have been working in good faith to set up amendment votes and to get the ball rolling on this bill. Now there are a few colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are dismissing all of this out of hand, any kind of reasonable agreement to move this process forward, and blocking all of the agreements we put together to move forward.

Listen to this. If we all want regular order, a key part of this is allowing Senators to come down, have amendments voted on, and moving forward

with an amendment process so Senators can make their voices heard on our funding bills. So we can't move at a glacial pace, and we can't have Senators obstructing this process needlessly.

I do hope they reconsider and work with us on a timely, serious process so all Senators, especially those who do not serve on the Appropriations Committee, can come here and speak up for their values and their constituents.

I know colleagues are ready to bring forward amendments, some of which I don't agree with and will likely vote against, all of which I am prepared, with my colleague from Maine, to discuss and debate. But the Senate should be allowed to work its will and to debate these issues here on the floor, and the American public should be able to see for themselves where their elected leaders stand on those issues as we consider the legislation that will fund the U.S. Government.

That is regular order, but that cannot happen until everybody in this body gets serious about coming to this agreement about how we move this process forward, period.

Now, I want to be clear. While there are a few Senators who are determined now to derail this process—this bipartisan process—the vast majority of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle have put forward serious efforts into crafting these genuine bipartisan bills. I know that because the Senator from Maine and I took great pains to make sure everyone could weigh in here. We made extraordinary progress in the Senate Appropriations Committee. I have heard about it from so many of you, on both sides of the aisle, all week.

How did we do it? We agreed early on to have an open, bipartisan process for our funding bills—exactly what many Senators have been calling for. We said: Let's stick to the bipartisan debt limit deal, which we all passed in July, and let's keep out partisan poison pills, and let's give Members a chance to weigh in and make their constituents' voices heard. In other words, let's show the American people Congress can actually work.

Let's be clear. The bills we are considering aren't Democratic or Republican spending bills. They are bills both sides—Democrats and Republicans—wrote after a lot of negotiation and compromise. Together, this package that we have reflects input from Senators from across the country and across the political spectrum, working on behalf of the people who sent them here. That is exactly why all of these bills in this package passed our committee unanimously.

The American people are watching. They are wondering can Congress still work, if we can actually come together and reach common ground, even on something as fundamental as funding our government. They do not want to see grandstanding or chaos. They want to see results. The vast majority of

this body wants to show them that we take this job seriously, that we take their problems seriously, which the Senator from Maine and I greatly appreciate.

I hope that the few holdouts who are now keeping us from moving forward and reaching an agreement so we can line up amendments and votes will see reason. Let us show the American people that Congress is still capable of working in good faith to help people and solve problems, just like they sent us here to do.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, so ordered.

H.R. 4366

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I am very happy to join Senator MURRAY today in presenting the fiscal year 2024 and 2025 appropriations bill for the Department of Veterans Affairs and for the Department of Defense military construction.

I am proud to be a part of this first minibus as we continue the fiscal year 2024 appropriations process and the return to regular order. As in years past, this subcommittee crafted the bill in an open and bipartisan way, and I expect to continue that today as we consider this bill on the floor.

This bill takes into consideration the needs of our veterans, their families, and our servicemembers, and, within that framework, we have created a thoughtful and responsible path for both Departments and our related Agencies.

This bill provides \$154.352 billion in discretionary spending, which is \$184 million over last year's level. Within that, the Department of Veterans Affairs is provided \$134.8 billion in discretionary funding, which is \$85 million over last year's level. Included in that level is \$121 billion for veterans' medical care, a \$2.3 billion increase over last year.

This bill funds priority accounts to prevent veteran suicide, increase rural access to healthcare, and support critical mental health programs. It helps to prevent veterans' homelessness and provides funding for innovative medical research.

The bill provides \$19.07 billion to support military construction and family housing needs and funds a total of 163 major military construction projects, which we desperately need.

This bill will give the Department of Defense the resources it needs to project power globally, enhance our warfighting capabilities, and train the forces. This bill also provides \$1.9 billion to improve the quality of life for servicemembers and their families.

I also want to note that the bill includes \$471.3 million for our related

Agencies, which include the American Battle Monuments Commission, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, Arlington National Cemetery, and the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

I want to thank Chair MURRAY and Vice Chair COLLINS for their leadership with the total committee, and also I want to specifically thank Chair MURRAY and her staff and my staff for the hard work they have done in crafting this bill to get us to where we are at today. So we appreciate them.

Also, we will be encouraging votes so that we can actually get these bills across the finish line.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator BOOZMAN for being such a great partner and for his work on this bill and all the appropriations bills. I look forward to working with him as we continue to try to bring this up and get it rolling and moving on the floor. So I thank him very much.

Mr. President, as I said, we are working in good faith to set up amendment votes and get this ball rolling on the bipartisan appropriations package that the senior Senator from Maine and I assembled, along with all of our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, so we can return the Senate to regular order for the first time in a long time, which many of our colleagues have called for.

In the meantime, today, I want to talk about the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies bill that is included in this funding package and why the investments in this bill are so important for our military readiness, for our military families, and especially for veterans across our Nation who have sacrificed so much for us.

As chair of the MILCON-VA Subcommittee, I worked closely with the senior Senator from Arkansas, who just spoke, to get input from our colleagues on both sides of the aisle and draft the strongest possible bill, even under tough top lines from the debt limit deal. I am very pleased that the bill we put together, which did pass our committee unanimously, makes crucial investments and gets our military and our veterans the support they need.

This bill provides \$19.1 billion for military construction—that is an increase over the fiscal year 2023 level—and supports hundreds of construction projects at base installations so we can improve the quality of life for our servicemembers and families, modernize maintenance and training facilities, and make military installations more resilient against growing threats like climate disasters.

The \$2.4 billion for quality-of-life improvements in this bill will support projects like building new barracks and housing and, just as critically, maintaining existing housing so that the

homes military families are living in right now do not fall into disrepair. I am proud that our bill provides funding for eight new child development centers so we can expand childcare access for our military families. These types of quality-of-life investments are essential to our recruiting and retention and overall readiness. More importantly, they are what our troops deserve and what we owe them for the sacrifices they make.

This bill also funds other essential military construction projects like training and vehicle maintenance, improving energy resilience on bases, and making sure that our installations are better prepared to face severe weather events because, as our generals and admirals have made crystal clear, climate change is a national security threat, and we absolutely cannot afford to let it undermine our troops and our military readiness.

The bill we are considering also includes investments to strengthen our alliances and partnerships around the world, including by supporting NATO infrastructure projects and providing funding to strengthen our global presence, including over half a billion for this work in the Indo-Pacific.

I am also glad we were able to include funding to address PFAS and other toxins—forever chemicals—at former installations that could put our communities and military families especially in harm's way. PFAS are a serious health hazard, and they have been found in the water supply at hundreds of military bases across our country, including in my home State.

Then, of course, there is the VA funding in this bill, which is just as essential. I am someone who previously chaired the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. I specifically asked to be assigned to that committee as soon as I came to Congress, and I am really honored to have been the first woman ever to serve on that committee because, as the daughter of a World War II veteran, I take our Nation's commitment to care for our veterans personally.

When my father was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which eventually forced him to stop working, his VA benefits were crucial to making sure he could get the care he needed. So I know firsthand how essential VA care is for veterans and their families, and I am constantly meeting with veterans in my State about their experiences too.

Living up to our obligation to those who served our country is simply non-negotiable for me. I know many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle feel the exact same way, and that is especially true for my partner across the dais on our subcommittee, the senior Senator from Arkansas. We have worked closely together for many years on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, so I knew when we started on this bill that he was someone who cares deeply about our men and women in the military and takes our obliga-

tions to our veterans seriously. In other words, he is exactly the kind of partner you want across the table to negotiate a bill like this with.

I am pleased to say we were able, together, to draft a bill that ensures that we keep our promises to servicemembers and veterans by fully funding the VA's budget request.

That means increasing funding for mental health and suicide prevention programs since we know, tragically, that suicide is the leading cause of death for veterans, especially our younger veterans.

It means increased funding for rural healthcare so veterans in every corner of the country can get the care they need, homelessness prevention programs that help with the challenges of returning to civilian life, and for the caregivers program, which I fought to expand along with so many of my colleagues last year.

Of course, it means increased funding for women veterans' care. Women are the fastest growing demographic of our veterans.

I am also especially pleased to say this bill includes funding to expand the childcare pilot program that I helped establish because, as I always remind my colleagues, we have a childcare crisis in this country, which is why I worked to include funding to expand childcare sites at our VA facilities so lack of childcare doesn't keep our veterans from getting the care they need.

In addition to the VA funding in here, let's not forget that last year we actually passed the largest expansion of VA care in decades by passing the bipartisan PACT Act, and earlier this year, Congress worked to live up to that expansion by passing more than \$20 billion in funding for the Toxic Exposures Fund, as part of the Fiscal Responsibility Act. This is already making a difference for veterans who were exposed to burn pits and other toxins.

Another crucial investment in this bill is the funding increase for VA infrastructure because we cannot let veterans' healthcare be undermined by the challenges related to VA's aging medical facilities or, for that matter, jeopardized by botched rollouts like we saw with the electronic health record modernization program. I was glad to see that the VA did put a pause on the rollout of the EHR earlier this year—something I had been pushing them to do—and we made sure that pause was reflected in our funding bill because I was raising the alarm from day one about how the botched EHR rollout was hurting Washington State veterans. It is a challenging situation now with EHR. We can't just flip on a switch and fix it, much as I wish we could.

But I am watching closely to make sure we see changes that provide real results for our veterans and our VA providers because, at the end of the day, these investments are not just about programs and contracts; this is about our promise to get our veterans

the benefits they earned and need to stay healthy—prescriptions, mental health care, cancer screenings, and so much more—and to make sure every woman and man who serves our country in uniform gets the support and the training and the equipment they need to be at their best.

Before I wrap up, I also want to say a little bit more about some of the items in this bill I fought hard for that are especially important in my State.

When it comes to military construction, there are several projects that I worked very hard to get funding for, like new barracks and a parachute rigging facility at Joint Base Lewis-McChord; bulk storage tanks at the fuel supply in Point Manchester; updated electrical infrastructure at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard to help prevent unexpected power outages; and funding to advance other projects across my home State, like equipment, maintenance, and platoon training facilities.

When it comes to support for our veterans and our VA facilities, I pushed to make sure this bill includes funding to help the American Lake VA Medical Center upgrade its facilities and provide quality care and funding for the Tahoma National Cemetery and its work to ensure we honor the veterans we have lost.

It is worth noting that while those are some of the projects I am most excited about in my State, we made sure that all Senators on both sides of the aisle could weigh in on this bill, and I know many other Members worked very hard to support similar projects and get funding that is important to their States.

So I urge my colleagues to come to the floor and talk about some of the projects you have in this bill and why this funding is so important to your families back home. I also invite them to talk to me and the Senator from Maine about amendments and ideas for how we can make these bills better. Our staffs are working around the clock, and so are we.

We do want to set up a managers' package. We do want to set up votes on amendments. We want to get this funding package passed in the Senate and passed into law because—let's be clear—this is a bill that can actually be passed into law, and that is because of all of the hard work and careful consideration and, in many cases, compromise that went into producing this bipartisan bill.

This is a responsible bill that we wrote together, Democrats and Republicans. How? By listening to our communities and listening to each other so we can help people solve problems. That is how this process should work. That is what we were all sent here to do.

So let's work together and show the American people that Congress can do its job, that it can actually give our communities the resources they need in a timely and responsible way and help people and solve problems.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BIPARTISAN PRIMARY CARE AND HEALTH
WORKFORCE ACT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me begin by thanking Senator MARSHALL of Kansas for his very hard work on the bill that we have introduced today after being on the floor with me this afternoon to briefly discuss it. And I also want to thank his staff and my staff for putting in an enormous amount of time on this bill over the last several months.

Most Americans understand that our healthcare system is broken. We are spending nearly \$13,000 a year per capita on healthcare. That is an astronomical sum of money, almost twice as much as most other countries. And yet despite all of that spending, some 85 million Americans are uninsured or underinsured. And there are estimates out there, believe it or not, that some 60,000 Americans die each year because they do not receive the healthcare they need when they need it. And our life expectancy as a nation is actually in decline, despite all of that spending.

Frankly, as broken as our general healthcare system is, our primary healthcare system is in even worse shape. As everyone knows, I don't think there is any debate on this, we face a major shortage of doctors, nurses, mental health professionals, and dentists. And those shortages will only grow as a result of the COVID burnout that many providers experience and the aging of our healthcare workforce.

According to the most recent estimates that I have seen, over the next decade, our country faces a shortage of over 120,000 doctors, including a huge number of primary care physicians. The nursing shortage may be worse. Over the next 2 years alone, it is estimated that we will need more than 200,000 nurses. And despite the very serious mental health crisis we face, we are facing a massive shortage of mental health providers—psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, et cetera.

Now, that is not the point that BERNIE SANDERS is making or Senator MARSHALL has made. This is a point of view of virtually every major medical organization in the country.

And on this matter, let me quote from a recent Washington Post op-ed by Elisabeth Rosenthal, a contributing editor at Kaiser Family Foundation Health News. This is what she writes—and I hope our colleagues hear this:

American physicians have been abandoning traditional primary care practice—internal and family medicine—in large numbers.

Those who remain are working fewer hours. And fewer medical students are choosing a field that once attracted some of the best and brightest because of its diagnostic challenges and the emotional gratification of deep relationships with patients. The percentage of US doctors in adult primary care has been declining for years and is now about 25%—a tipping point beyond which many Americans won't be able to find a family doctor at all.

She writes:

Already, more than 100 million Americans don't have usual access to a primary care doctor—a number that has nearly doubled since 2014.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the full article.

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

[From the Washington Post]

THE SHRINKING NUMBER OF PRIMARY-CARE
PHYSICIANS IS REACHING A TIPPING POINT

(By Elisabeth Rosenthal)

I've been receiving an escalating stream of panicked emails from people telling me their longtime physician was retiring, was no longer taking their insurance or had gone concierge and would no longer see them unless they ponied up a hefty annual fee. They said they couldn't find another primary-care doctor who could take them on or who offered a new-patient appointment sooner than months away.

Their individual stories reflect a larger reality: American physicians have been abandoning traditional primary-care practice—internal and family medicine—in large numbers. Those who remain are working fewer hours. And fewer medical students are choosing a field that once attracted some of the best and brightest because of its diagnostic challenges and the emotional gratification of deep relationships with patients.

The percentage of U.S. doctors in adult primary care has been declining for years and is now about 25 percent—a tipping point beyond which many Americans won't be able to find a family doctor at all.

Already, more than 100 million Americans don't have usual access to primary care, a number that has nearly doubled since 2014. The fact that so many of us no longer regularly see a familiar doctor we trust is likely one reason our coronavirus vaccination rates were low compared with those in other countries.

Another telling statistic: In 1980, 62 percent of doctor's visits for adults over 65 were for primary care and 38 percent were for specialists, according to Michael L. Barnett, a health systems researcher and primary-care doctor in the Harvard Medical School system. By 2013, that ratio had exactly flipped and has likely "only gotten worse," he said, noting sadly, "We have a specialty-driven system. Primary care is seen as a thankless, undesirable backwater." That's "tragic," in his word—studies show that a strong foundation of primary care yields better health outcomes overall, greater equity in health-care access and lower per capita health costs.

One explanation for the disappearing primary-care doctor is financial. The payment structure in the U.S. health system has long rewarded surgeries and procedures while shortchanging the diagnostic, prescriptive and preventive work that is the province of primary care. Furthermore, the traditionally independent doctors in this field have almost no power to negotiate sustainable payments with the mammoth insurers in the U.S. market.

Faced with this situation, many independent primary-care doctors have sold their practices to health systems or commercial management chains (some private-equity-owned) so that, today, three-quarters of doctors are now employees of those outfits.

One of them was Bob Morrow, who practiced for decades in the Bronx. For a typical visit, he was most recently paid about \$80 if the patient had Medicare, with its fixed-fee schedule. Commercial insurers paid significantly less. He just wasn't making enough to pay the bills, which included salaries of three employees, including a nurse practitioner. "I tried not to pay too much attention to money for four or five years—to keep my eye on my patients and not the bottom line," he said by phone from his former office, as workers carted away old charts for shredding.

He finally gave up and sold his practice last year to a company that took over scheduling, billing and negotiations with insurers. It agreed to pay him a salary and to provide support staff as well as supplies and equipment.

The outcome: Calls to his office were routed to a call center overseas, and patients with questions or complaining of symptoms were often directed to a nearby urgent care center owned by the company—which is typically more expensive than an office visit. His office staff was replaced by a skeleton crew that didn't include a nurse or skilled worker to take blood pressure or handle requests for prescription refills. He was booked with patients every eight to 10 minutes.

He discovered that the company was calling some patients and recommending expensive tests—such as vascular studies or an abdominal ultrasound—that he did not believe they needed.

He retired in January. "I couldn't stand it," he said. "It wasn't how I was taught to practice."

Of course, not every practice sale ends with such unhappy results, and some work out well.

But the dispirited feeling that drives doctors away from primary care has to do with far more than money. It's the lack of respect for non-specialists. It's the rising pressure to see and bill more patients: Employed doctors often coordinate the care of as many as 2,000 people, many of whom have multiple problems.

And it's the lack of assistance. Profitable centers such as orthopedic and gastroenterology clinics usually have a phalanx of support staff. Primary-care clinics run close to the bone.

"You are squeezed from all sides," said Barnett.

Many ventures are rushing in to fill the primary-care gap. There had been hope that nurse practitioners and physician assistants might help fill some holes, but data shows that they, too, increasingly favor specialty practice. Meanwhile, urgent care clinics are popping up like mushrooms. So are primary care chains such as One Medical, now owned by Amazon. (Jeff Bezos, Amazon's founder, owns The Post.) Dollar General, Walmart, Target, CVS and Walgreens have opened "retail clinics" in their stores.

Rapid-fire visits with a rotating cast of doctors, nurses or physician assistants might be fine for a sprained ankle or strep throat. But they will not replace a physician who tells you to get preventive tests and keeps tabs on your blood pressure and cholesterol. The doctor who knows your health history—and has the time to figure out whether the pain in your shoulder is from your basketball game, an aneurysm or a clogged artery in your heart.

Some relatively simple solutions are available, if we care enough about supporting this

foundational part of a good medical system. Hospitals and commercial groups could invest some of the money they earn by replacing hips and knees to support primary-care staffing; giving these doctors and patients more face time with each other will be good for their customers' health and loyalty if not (always) the bottom line.

Reimbursement for primary-care visits could be increased to reflect their value—perhaps by enacting a national primary-care fee schedule, so these doctors won't have to butt heads with insurers. And policymakers could consider forgiving the medical school debt of doctors who chose primary care as a profession.

They deserve support that allows them to do what they were trained to do: diagnosing, treating and getting to know their patients.

The United States already ranks last among wealthy countries in health outcomes. The average life span in America is decreasing, even as it increases in many other countries. If we fail to address the primary-care shortage, our country's health will be even worse for it.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, now, what this article points out is certainly not news to the people in America. In Vermont and all over this country, our people often have to wait months in order to get an appointment with a doctor; and in some cases, they have to travel very long distances to get the healthcare they need.

And let us be clear: There is no debate upon this. Some people think we don't have to act on it now; let's do it next year, next year, following year. Wrong. The crisis is only going to get worse, and every day we delay it, it becomes even worse.

Now, why is this happening? Well, there are a lot of reasons why. One of the reasons is that it turns out that the United States—despite all of our spending on healthcare—spends about half of what other nations do on primary healthcare. We spend approximately 7 percent; most of the country spends at least twice as much.

And the absurdity of that situation is that everybody knows that “an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure.” And if there is anything that Senator MARSHALL and I are talking about, that is exactly what we are talking about. You spend money—we are spending money to save money. Keeping people healthy saves money. In other words, common sense tells us that if we can prevent disease, do a better job keeping our young people healthy, if people can access the medical care when they need it not when they are just very, very sick—if we can do those things, we can keep them out of the hospital. And hospital costs are just extremely, extremely high.

Common sense also tells us that it is literally insane that millions of Americans with nonemergency healthcare needs get their primary care in a hospital emergency room, which, in some cases, is 10 times more than the care provided them in a community health center.

Let me just give one other example of the irrationalities of our current system. In my own small State of Vermont, last year, our major hos-

pitals spent \$125 million in 1 year on traveling nurses because we don't have enough local nurses to support the needs of the hospital and many other facilities in Vermont. Meanwhile, young people want to become nurses. They are applying to nursing school, but the nursing schools don't have the faculty to educate them.

I recently talked to a Senator who told me that, in her State, some 1,100 young people were applying for a space in nursing school; the school could only provide 80 openings.

So we have a nursing crisis. We are not addressing it. Hospitals are spending three, four times as much money on traveling nurses as they are on homegrown nurses because we are not educating our young people at nursing school. This may make sense to somebody; it does not make great sense to me.

The legislation that Senator MARSHALL and I have introduced today does not solve, by any means, all of the healthcare crises we face. But if this legislation is passed, it will not only save us substantial sums of money, not only provide a medical home for millions more Americans, not only significantly increase the number of doctors and nurses that we desperately need, but it will go a long way toward transforming primary healthcare in America—something that is so long overdue.

With that, I want to turn the floor over to Senator MARSHALL.

And I would say this, that Senator MARSHALL has a unique perspective on this. Not only is he a Senator from a rural State, he is also a practicing physician and has interesting insight into the crises in healthcare that many of us don't.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Thank you so much for sharing this moment with us. You know, one of my mentors here on the Hill has a saying that some Senators come here to make a point and others come to make a difference. The first time Senator SANDERS and I sat down together, he said: ROGER, do you want to make a difference?

We have worked so hard on this issue together, developing rapport, confidence in each other, in our staff—they have all done an incredible job—as we try to get through this riddle from healthcare challenges throughout this great Nation.

I think as both of us travel back to our home States of Vermont and Kansas, what we found is that not everybody has meaningful, affordable access to primary care. So we went out and tried to find the best actors, what is the best outcome, who is making a dent? And I think we both discovered that our community health centers were doing a great job. They had taken many pilot programs, and they were improving them.

I am not sure what Senator SANDERS would talk about some of his, but what I saw was this meeting patients where

they are a concept, integrating all the different elements of primary care—not just your blood pressure, not just your Accu-Chek, but also your mental health. Dental needs, as well, are just a few more things we are seeing being integrated into the community health centers—nutrition coaching, something that has seldom been done in clinics before. So I think we saw these community health centers as doing a great job. And we asked each other: How can we improve upon that?

And Senator SANDERS and I agreed on this lofty goal that we could get more Americans into these clinics, and that was a great solution for primary care. So for the past 3 months, we have had a very thoughtful approach to this problem. And even before then, our committees had multiple hearings with different folks as they tried to address the problem as well. And then we had multiple Zooms and meetings with folks back home: How do we solve this primary care problem and, again, this mental health epidemic slapping us in the face every time we go back?

And, certainly, I think most of our committee would agree that the community health centers are a great solution, but they need to be bolstered and need to continue that mission across this great Nation.

So I am proud of the work that we have done on the community health centers in this legislation—again, thoughtful legislation. And our goal is to make sure it doesn't cost American taxpayers any more.

Again, Senator SANDERS and I both said many times this country is spending plenty of money on healthcare, but maybe we need to refocus a little bit more of it to primary care. That is what we have done with this legislation, again, with a thoughtful approach. And our goal, again, is to make sure it is all paid for and it doesn't cost the American taxpayer any more.

I think the other big issue that we found in common with folks back home is a nursing shortage and a primary care doctor shortage. If there is one thing that this bill would do, it would turn around the nursing crisis in a matter of just 3 years.

My own wife is a community college graduate nurse. Ninety percent of the nurses in our hospitals in Kansas, especially the rural hospitals, are 2-year community college graduates. So what we have done with this legislation is bolster more money for nursing programs. And the other program, like Senator SANDERS said, the other challenge, is colleges cannot afford the faculty, the nursing faculty. So we have some money to help bolster that program up as well.

We have young men and women standing in line for incredible jobs in healthcare, but we don't have the faculty to bring them in. So we help with scholarships. We help with the faculty. That alone will change the dynamics across America if we have more nurses who are just the glue to this healthcare

system. And then the next challenge of the attack here is just a shortage of primary care doctors in so many ways as well.

So the legislation addresses that. It is great steps forward. I have been very proud, again, to work with Senator SANDERS and his team, finding common ground. And I think we made incredible strides.

Senator SANDERS and I have talked many times about our community health centers. I might just ask him about the successes that you are seeing in your community health centers and what your vision going forward looks like.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this is an issue I have worked on since I have been in Congress. And one of the results of that—working with others—is that, in my State of Vermont, I think—I think—we are leading the Nation in terms of the number of people per capita who participate in the community health center program.

Senator MARSHALL, my understanding is that in Vermont, one out of three Vermonters get their primary healthcare or dental care at a community health center. And one of the things that I love about community health centers is that they really are community health centers. In Vermont, they are not just for low-income people, as important as that is. They are for everybody in the community. We used to have a Supreme Court Justice of the United States of America who vacationed in Vermont. Guess where he went? To a community health center.

My understanding is, the Governor of the State of Vermont gets his primary healthcare at a community health center, and that is what I love about them.

And as you well know and as you mentioned, what they do is not only provide primary healthcare, many of them provide dental care, which is a huge issue. Many of them provide mental health counseling, which, as you indicated, we have a major crisis in. And they also provide lower cost prescription drugs.

What they say is that, regardless of your income, if you have Medicare, come on in; if you have Medicaid, come on in; if you have private insurance, fine; if you have no health insurance, we will work on a sliding scale.

By expanding these community health centers all over America, we are going to provide millions of people the opportunity to get the healthcare they need. That is what exists in Vermont right now, and we want to see that expanded all over the country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Senator SANDERS and I discussed this vision of what primary care looks like in the future, making sure we are meeting patients where they are.

Some of our community health centers back home are bringing in the food

bank; they are bringing in the WIC Programs, social services, basic mammography. We lose track of the patients when we have to say: Come back in a month for your mammogram. Instead, it is a great thing to say: Let's get it done today.

One of the biggest underserved areas of medicine is dental. I know that one of Senator SANDERS' visions, specifically, in this legislation is to address the dental crisis. As an obstetrician myself, the only known cause of preterm labor is poor dental health, caries, cavities, whatever you want to call it. There are lots of links to having cavities and poor gum health to having heart attacks as well. It is a way underrecognized challenge for primary care.

I can't tell you how many times I have been called at 10 at night or 2 in the morning on a Saturday with one of my OB patients who is obviously very pregnant, but she has a cavity, and now, it turned into an abscess. I can't get her into a dentist. I call all my buddies. It is Saturday, 10 p.m., and all my buddies, the dentists, are gone.

Share your vision on dental and how this bill impacts that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Thank you very much for raising the issue of dental crisis in America. I can tell you that in Vermont, we have a crisis. We made progress, but we have a serious problem. The cost of dental care is very, very high. In the southern part of my State, Bennington County, if you are a poor child, you are probably on Medicaid. You probably can't find a dentist.

What we have done in this bill is put \$3 billion one time—just one time—into capital improvements for community health centers. That is long overdue because if you want to expand community health centers, they need money for their own expansion and infrastructure.

Building a dental operatory—and that is the dental chairs and the good equipment that dentists need—is a very expensive proposition. So by putting \$3 billion into capital improvements, much of which I suspect will be going to those dental operatories, we are going to be able to provide communities all over this country with the ability to access dental care in a way they are not doing it today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. I want to turn this discussion to what our vision is for these primary care community health centers.

I think we all realize we have an obesity epidemic in this country, too, and a type 2 diabetic epidemic in this country that we need to address on the front end.

I am so happy to see some of my community health centers coming in and doing nutrition classes. They are doing cooking classes. I think so many

folks of our current generation maybe learned how to do some cooking, but fast foods were a little bit too easy. It is that out-of-the-box thinking you get with different programs. I call it coaching. We need to be coaching folks up and teaching them but also give them the opportunities. So whether we are on the Ag Committee and working on food programs, we try to bring all these pieces together in the program as well.

I know Senator SANDERS is also certainly committed to helping us address this. He has been a leader on this issue, trying to take care of folks with diabetes as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Senator MARSHALL raised this issue from almost the first time we sat down and seriously discussed it. If we are going to talk about prevention, we have to talk about obesity, among other things, because we are looking at a major—you tell me if I am wrong, Doctor—we are looking at a major diabetic epidemic in this country that will not only cost massive amounts of suffering, but it is also going to be a very expensive healthcare bill. Certainly, one of many of the contributing factors is obesity. What Senator MARSHALL has talked about from the very beginning is we have to do a better job in nutrition education. Community health centers are very well situated to be able to do that.

At Senator MARSHALL's insistence—and I was delighted to work with him—we have language in here that will make it easier for community health centers to work on nutrition programs in a variety of ways with their clients.

Mr. MARSHALL. I might close with a couple of thoughts. Again, we came in with the lofty expectations that we could make a difference in primary care for people across the Nation. I think our bill accomplishes just that.

Again, I can't thank the staff enough for their support through this. Senator SANDERS and I spent most of the August recess—and our staff spent every moment of every hour of every day on this August recess—working on this legislation. I think it is a good product. I think there is always opportunity for improvement. We are welcome to those ideas.

I appreciate the Senator using traditional Hyde protections at the appropriate places, so we maintained that, which is important to many folks, including to myself. I think we addressed primary care issues. I think we have a plan to increase the nursing workforce. Again, in 3 years' time, we can turn that problem around and long-term address some of the primary care issues. Addressing dental, as well, I think will be a huge improvement.

At the end of the day, you cannot overestimate how much money this will save in programs like Medicare and Medicaid and the health insurance back home and help drive the cost of healthcare down for people. I am glad

to see us try to emphasize maybe some better ways to spend the American taxpayer moneys.

But most importantly to me, the physician, is just this is the right thing to do. This is absolutely the right thing to do. It is a chance to improve the health of Americans. I am just proud to stand here beside Senator SANDERS and introduce this legislation. Thank you.

Mr. SANDERS. Let me thank Senator MARSHALL and his staff so much for their hard work and say, as he just said, we think there are other ideas that can improve it. We are open to new ideas. We hope to be marking up and intend to be marking up this bill next Thursday. We look forward to talking to all of the members on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pension Committee for doing what is really important.

Senator MARSHALL started his remarks off by saying, I think, exactly the right thing. We can come here and all give great speeches. We can all talk about how next year, we are going to get to something or, 5 years from now, we will get to something.

Everybody in America—in Vermont, Kansas, and all over this country—understands we have a primary healthcare crisis. This is the greatest country on Earth. We spend more money on healthcare than any other country. It is not asking too much that when you get sick, you are able to find a doctor, that you are able to find a dentist. It is not asking too much that when you are in a hospital, there are enough nurses there, that our young people who want to become nurses are able to get that education so they go out and get really good jobs. That is not too much. That is all we are doing in this legislation. We are looking at the real world as it exists.

Senator MARSHALL is a physician and understands that world quite well. We are looking at that world saying: You know what, let's not wait 5 years from now. We have a crisis today. Let's deal with it. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Ohio.

UNITED AUTO WORKERS NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I hope my colleagues will join me, as I know the Senator from Michigan, the Presiding Officer, does, in standing in solidarity with thousands of UAW workers in Ohio and Michigan and around the country who demand that automakers—a simple demand really—respect the work they do to make these companies successful. There is still time, the rest of the day and, really, beyond this, for the Big Three to avert

a strike, which we know is always a last resort for workers.

My wife is the daughter of a utility worker in Ashtabula, in the far northeast corner of the State. She, first of all, credits her dad's union card with saving her life. She was 16 years old and had an asthma attack, I believe at school, and was picked up in an ambulance and taken to the Cleveland Clinic and spent more than a week there—something she could not afford without her dad's union card and her dad's healthcare benefits from the utility workers union and from that company.

She also said that, twice during her growing up, the union struck because their backs were against the wall; they thought they had no choice. She acknowledges that the workers never really recover the lost wages from a strike.

These UAW members in Michigan and Ohio, in Toledo, in Cincinnati, in Dayton, and all over our State and in other States, they want to be on the job. They don't want to strike. They don't want to be on the picket line. But when companies refuse to recognize the work they do, workers are backed into a corner.

It is why union cards matter. A union card means workers can stand together for fair pay and benefits, for better working conditions, for safer workplaces, for control over their schedules, for a voice in their company, and a voice in their community—because, to be clear, autoworkers surely are the engines behind these companies' success. GM, Ford, and Stellantis—people around the country know Stellantis as the old Chrysler—the Big Three wouldn't be making a dime, of course, in profits without the workers who actually make their cars and trucks.

Remember, autoworkers—this is the most important thing. Autoworkers stood up and made sacrifices a decade ago, especially at GM and Chrysler—Stellantis—because those companies were in trouble. And taxpayers stood up, and government stood, finally, on the side of those companies, and the workers made sacrifices to help the American auto industry when times were tough.

Who remembers the depths of the recession? UAW workers stood behind the Big Three when a whole lot of politicians in this town wanted to abandon these companies. Now that times are good, all that workers are asking for is their fair share.

Let's be clear, times now are very, very good for these companies and very, very, very good for these CEOs. We know auto executives—I don't know how many. But I know auto executives in all three companies—many, many of them—make more than a million dollars a year. Some of them make tens of millions of dollars a year.

Together GM, Ford, and Stellantis brought in \$21 billion—that is with a "b," a thousand million—\$21 billion in profits the first half of the year alone.

Think about that. These companies were struggling a decade ago. They

were in real trouble. They were losing money. They were in trouble during the recession. Workers gave them major kinds of givebacks, gave them major kinds of concessions. They took less money for themselves and set up a three-tiered rate structure that hurt workers, but they had to do it to save these companies. They agreed to do that.

But, now, times are really, really good for these companies. Again, GM, Ford, and Stellantis together brought in \$21 billion of profits just in the first half of 2023, but they don't want to share those profits with these workers.

And who makes these profits possible? Again, the history: These companies were in trouble. The government helped them. Workers gave up a lot. Workers sacrificed. Workers gave back money they shouldn't have had to give back because they wanted to save the companies. Now, the companies are doing well. Now, the executives are doing very, very well with \$21 billion in profits, and the company is not willing to appreciably share in those profits.

The CEO of GM makes 362 times what its median worker makes. With Ford, it is only a modest 281 times that. Think of that. The GM CEO—a company that, when struggling, was saved because of worker concessions—is making 362 times what the median—not the lowest paid worker but the median—worker of that company makes. So, frankly, I hesitate to call names, and I am really not. I don't want to hear whining from companies that they can't afford to pay workers what they are worth. And that goes for all workers, all autoworkers making all kinds of vehicles—cars and trucks and SUVs.

I know what the future is. I know these companies. These companies plan to be overwhelmingly making batteries, making electric vehicles. That is their decision, to be sure. But I don't want those—because some politicians whine about, "Well, we don't want electric vehicles"—these are the companies' decisions, the companies' plans, the companies' futures. But I don't want those jobs—those politicians that whine, if they get their way, they are going to see these electric vehicles made in Japan and China and Taiwan and overseas.

We went through that already. We know what my hometown of Mansfield, OH, looked like. I know what Dayton, OH, looked like. I know what Hamtramck and cities in the Presiding Officer's State looked like. I know what happens to those counties, those workers. And do you know what? I know what happens to those cities, those communities.

I grew up in Mansfield, OH, a town of 50,000. I went to Johnny Appleseed Junior High School. That was really its name—Johnny Appleseed Pioneers. And I went to school with sons and daughters of autoworkers at GM, rubberworkers at Mansfield Tire, electrical IUE members at Westinghouse—there were several thousand at one

point—machinists at Tappan Stove, and the sons of daughters of pipefitters and plumbers and electricians and bricklayers, millwrights, insulators, and laborers and—I am forgetting others—and operating engineers.

And do you know what? Within 10 or 20 years, most of those jobs were gone. They were gone because companies, always looking for lower wages, wanted to go to non-union States.

First, they went to Alabama. That wasn't good enough. So then they jammed, and I mean "jammed"—sorry to say it this way—by buying off a whole lot of politicians—they jammed these trade agreements, like NAFTA, through the Congress, and then it got worse.

It wasn't just the companies going to Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Then they weren't greedy enough; they wanted even cheaper labor. Then they went to China and Mexico. That means that in my community of 50,000, where I grew up, you just don't see the prosperity there that you did when I went to school with those kids.

So, as I said, we have heard a lot of politicians blaming electrical vehicles for the dispute, as if, somehow, corporations wanting to squeeze their workers was a new development.

I will make it clear. I don't care what kind of car Americans drive. My wife and I drove Chevy Cruzes for a while, and they were made in Lordstown, OH, by GM, about an hour and a half from our home. Now, we each drive a Jeep Cherokee, made about 2 hours from our home, in the other direction, in Toledo. So people can drive what they are going to drive. I always hope, and I know the Presiding Officer thinks the same way, that people buy union-made cars made in the United States. But I see what happens when both parties—both parties—frankly, unfortunately, it wasn't a partisan thing. My party was almost as guilty as Republicans on this—the push for NAFTA—which sent thousands of jobs overseas.

We fought them. When politicians said, "Let these companies die; they are not worth saving; foreign automakers can do this better," we fought them every step of the way.

Now, today, for anyone who doubts that autoworkers in Ohio are the future of this industry, for anyone who wants to give up on these plants or force workers to settle for less, we will fight the way I fought NAFTA my first year in Congress, the way I fought permanent normal trade relations, the giveaway to the Chinese—not Chinese workers, but giveaway to Chinese Communist Party officials and corrupt leaders—a different kind of corruption from American leaders who sold them short, but nonetheless.

We know this industry is changing. Forty years ago, when Jeep rolled out the Jeep Cherokee—Chrysler now—most people had never heard of an SUV. Now they dominate the market. Twenty-three years ago, hybrids came

along. Whatever the auto industry looks like in 20 years, in 50 years, in 100 years—I am not an auto expert. I don't know what they are going to look like 20 or 50 or 100 years from now, but I do know this: Ohio autoworkers, American innovation will be leading it, if we let them, if we reward these workers and don't let companies searching for cheap labor and going to anti-union States, moving overseas—as long as we don't let them run the show.

I was in Lordstown a couple of weeks ago. That is where the Chevy Cruze plant was, near Youngstown. I was at UAW Local 1112. I have been to that union, I don't know, 50 times in my life, with my friend Dave Green, a UAW superstar who came up through that plant. There were two locals at that plant. I don't remember if he came from 1112 or the other one. These are the workers now at the new Ultium cell battery plant. Many of them worked for the Cruze plant before GM closed it. There are reminders everywhere of what bad trade deals did to the Mahoning Valley.

But, do you know what? GM was paying. This was a joint venture. This was GM and a Korean company called LG. This was a joint venture, 50-50. Those workers at this Ultium plant were making \$16 an hour. And I said to GM: Well, how can you do this?

They voted for a union, by the way, the UAW there, just recently, by a 90-plus percent vote.

I said to GM: How can you pay them \$16 an hour when you have the national UAW contract? It is much more generous than that and negotiated, earned together.

They said: Well, we can't do anything because this is a jointly owned plant, and we are just half of it.

Well, they are General Motors. Of course, they can do something about it, and, of course, they need to do something about it.

Well, we were able—I hate to say it. We were able—partly by shining a light on General Motors and what they had done and what their history is—we were able to get a \$4- to \$5-an-hour raise working with Dave Green of UAW Local 1112 and getting thousands of dollars in stock buybacks for those workers that had been there a year or more.

These workers are, again, at the forefront of their industry, and they are not getting paid like it. America should continue to lead the global auto industry, but the Big Three can't do it without their workers. There is still time for this to happen, for these autoworkers and auto companies to agree to a fair contract. There is still time for these great American companies to do the right thing.

It means something we probably don't do enough of here. It means listening to their workers. It means foregoing strike-busting tactics, like we saw the last time, when UAW workers were forced to picket. In 2019, GM cut off striking workers' health insurance,

a bad-faith tactic that not only hurts their most vulnerable asset, their workers, but it hurts their families and really hurts their communities.

I was at Local 14 in Toledo, talking to one worker. Here is what happens when an auto company uses its prowess and its power and its anti-union fervor, when they do that and take away healthcare. There was one worker whose healthcare was cut off at the Local 14 in Toledo, at the Chrysler plant. His 4-year-old daughter Chesney needed surgery, but she couldn't get it because GM canceled the family's health insurance.

They are workers who had a contract. They paid in. They were picketing because they didn't think over these 10 years GM and Chrysler and Ford lived up to their side of the bargain.

I have a bill with Senator CASEY, who sits next to me, to make sure it doesn't happen again, the Striking Workers Healthcare Protection Act. We shouldn't need that. We shouldn't need for companies to be strong-armed or forced by government to honor the dignity of work. That shouldn't be necessary when these iconic companies have done so well, paid good dividends, and rewarded their executives with compensation nobody would have dreamed up a generation ago. We shouldn't have to do that. But until these companies understand, "You should respect the dignity of work," if they don't, then maybe it is time that government says: OK, we are going to have a Striking Workers Healthcare Protection Act. It is time to do the right thing, to bargain in good faith, and to agree to a contract that indeed honors the dignity of work.

I yield the floor.

CONFIRMATION OF MICHAEL C. CASEY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I want to thank my good friend the Senator from Oklahoma, who is also a member of the Intelligence Committee, a subject of which I am going to speak to, and I appreciate the courtesy of allowing me to go first.

Today, Mr. President, I rise to say a few words about someone who has been an essential part of the Senate community for many, many years.

I am proud to note that earlier this week—as a matter of fact, on Tuesday evening—with the support from the Senator from Oklahoma, the Senate unanimously confirmed the nomination of Mike Casey to serve as Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center. We know, at a time when the United States is facing tremendous foreign intelligence and security threats, it is important to have a Senate-confirmed leader as the head of the NCSC, which is charged with protecting against insider threats, supply chain risks, and other counterintelligence issues.

The truth is, the position has been vacant since the end of the last administration. So, as chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I am glad that we will finally now have a Senate-confirmed leader in place to lead the efforts to protect against foreign threats, to protect U.S. critical infrastructure, to advance the counterintelligence and security mission, and—maybe most importantly—to be on constant call of the Senate Intelligence staff to make sure that efforts to reform security clearances is at the top of the agenda.

But while I recognize that this is a great step for our country and our national security, it is a real loss to me personally, to members on both sides of the aisle on the Intelligence Committee, and to our staff, because we are losing Mike Casey, who has been the staff director for the last 8 years. And while he doesn't look Medicare-eligible, the truth is, he has been working up here for 28 years, starting in the House of Representatives and, eventually, joining the staff of the House Armed Services Committee before Senator FEINSTEIN brought him over to the upper Chamber as staff director for the Senate Intel Committee in 2016.

I have worked extraordinarily closely with Mike over my years as a member of the committee but particularly when I bumped up to the position of vice chair. I think a lot about our kind of bonding and, in many ways, I think of the committee's bonding when, under the able leadership of then-chairman Richard Burr, the committee took on the responsibility of the investigation into the outside interference of the 2016 national elections. Our staff and, at that point, the majority committee's staff worked so seamlessly together.

While we got a lot of grief from folks all across the political spectrum—and a lot of this was due to Mike Casey—one of the things that I was most proud of was, as a variety of people came before the committee to testify on what could have been, otherwise, a totally partisan matter as it was in the House of Representatives, witness after witness said they didn't know, as they were being questioned, whether they were being questioned by majority or minority staff. A lot of that was due to Mike Casey's leadership.

The truth, as well, is that Mike—I had to push him at times. You know, he used to think that the job of the Intelligence Committee was basically just to do oversight on the 17, 18, 19—depending on the week—number of IC Agencies that we oversee. He didn't realize that, actually, the IC's responsibility—and I know sometimes the Presiding Officer and I have had clashes—was literally everything that touched technology in our country.

Again, Mike, while sometimes reluctant, has stepped up to that task. And I am proud of the fact that it was our committee that initially worked on the CHIPS bill and that it was our committee that first pointed out some of

the challenges with 5G and Huawei as well as some of the more recent work.

One of the ways we were able to do that—and we have got a lot of the committee staff behind us—is because, literally, Mike Casey knew everyone in the IC and the DOD. He knew where they were. He knew where the bodies were buried, both literally and figuratively, and could make sure that, as we tried to go off into other directions, that basic core function of oversight was never, never undermined. Again, he did this always—after a little nudging—in a bipartisan way.

I am extraordinarily proud of that and proud of the service that he has provided in educating me on a lot of issues that I was not that familiar with as I came on to the committee and in keeping our Intel Committee staff together. That bipartisan nature has continued under his leadership in our workings with Vice Chair RUBIO and his team as well.

So, while we say goodbye to Mike, we also wish him well as he embarks on his critical new role. As Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, Mike will face many of the same challenges we have wrestled with on the Intelligence Committee.

As we all know, the truth is that national security is no longer simply about who has got the most tanks and guns and ships and planes. It really is about who is going to lead in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, 5G, cyber security, synthetic biology. All of these are areas in which Mike, in his new job, will also have to point out threats, both external and internal, to America's leadership.

He will—as I mentioned, he is committed—respond to our staff member John Rosenwasser at any moment, day or night, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, to make sure that we finally finish security clearance reform and make sure, in terms of insider threats, that we don't see repeats of what has happened, unfortunately, too many times. So while Mike Casey might be leaving our staff, it is safe to say he will not be leaving my speed dial.

We will miss you, Mike.

Most importantly, I give him these final words of advice: Don't screw it up.

I yield the floor to my good friend, the Senator from Oklahoma.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

MR. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I do appreciate the leadership on the Intelligence Committee and for the leadership that has been there.

I would concur. You have a spot to be able to lead and a task to be able to be done. You have studied this, so that must mean you know it. We look forward to your leadership in the days ahead. I appreciate that very much.

NATIONAL DEBT

MR. President, I do want to speak on a very different subject as well, and it is a subject that we are all going to face in the days ahead. It is this wonderful issue of a government shutdown.

We seem to forget, at times in this body, the issues that press around us, but the one that seems to get slipped under the rug most of the time is that of national debt: where we are and how we are going to try to address this in the days ahead. The conversation comes up—it seems to be on a regular basis now—about are we going to have a government shutdown; and the conversation of a government shutdown ends up being a very small portion of the very large debt that we face.

The challenge is, how do we actually address that based on its size? Well, let me just give you a little bit of context as to what I am talking about.

We are, right now, preparing, within days, to cross into \$33 trillion in total Federal debt—\$33 trillion. To give some context of that acceleration of Federal debt and what is happening during this time period, from the time of Andrew Jackson—who was the last President who was President when we had no debt at all. From the time of Andrew Jackson until Ronald Reagan, our Nation accumulated \$1 trillion in total debt. From Andrew Jackson to Reagan, there was \$1 trillion in total debt. From Reagan to the present, now we are \$33 trillion in total debt. We are in a rapid acceleration of debt that has not slowed.

To give you again the picture of where things have gone just in the last several years, if you go back 20 years ago to 2003, our total spending was just over \$2 trillion. If you go back to 2013, which was 10 years ago, our total spending was less than \$3.5 trillion. Our spending this year will be right at \$6.5 trillion. So in the past 20 years, our spending has increased from just over \$2 trillion to \$6.5 trillion.

To give you the acceleration in spending just in the last few years, if I were to go back to 2018—before COVID, the 2018 time period—our total spending was just over \$4 trillion. This year's estimated spending is just under \$6.5 trillion. That is \$2.5 trillion of accelerated spending just from 2018 until now. Again, to set this in context, the revenue that is coming into the Federal Treasury this year is estimated at \$4.8 trillion—\$4.8 trillion. We are spending an estimated \$6.4 trillion.

Now, I know these are a lot of numbers, but let me give you one just as a takeaway. We have almost \$1.5 trillion of deficit—that is, overspending—just this year. By some estimates, depending on what happens in the next few weeks, it could be almost \$2 trillion in total overspending just this year.

To put this in context, with the record revenue that is coming in this year at about \$4.8 trillion, if we were spending the same this year as we did in 2018, which is a short 5 years ago—if we were spending the same this year as we were in 2018, prior to COVID, we would have a \$700 billion surplus this year rather than an almost \$2 trillion deficit this year. Because of the record amount of revenue coming in this year compared to what our spending was 5

years ago, we would have been in surplus this year; but we are not, and it is \$1.5 trillion over that.

We have a very serious issue. We should have very hard conversations about our revenue, about our spending, about the direction in which we are actually heading, and about how we get out of a \$33 trillion debt. This is not going to take 1 year or 2 years.

There are folks I have talked to recently even who have talked about the time in the early nineties—when we were at a balance of around \$100 billion—of the work that was done by the Bush administration and the Clinton administration—two administrations in a row—to be able to get us back to a balance. Two administrations in a row had to work on that. But here is the frightening thing: Our overspending this year is more than the total spending during the Clinton administration—just our overspending this year. This is not going to be a simple process to be able to come out of. This is not even going to be two administrations in a row making agreements to be able to get back to balance. This is going to take decades. My concern is that many here are not willing to start the first year of decades of work to be able to get us out. So we have work to do on this.

Myself and Senator MAGGIE HASSAN, a Democrat from New Hampshire, sat down several years ago and started having a conversation about how do we end government shutdowns and actually get into a real dialogue about how do we actually deal with debt and deficit issues. From those productive conversations, she and I created a piece of legislation that is designed just to prevent government shutdowns. All of the conversation right now among the media seems to be about if a government shutdown is coming at the end of this year. We should not have one at the end of this month, at the end of the fiscal year. We should continue to be able to keep going, but we should also have a debate of what direction we are going to go.

So Senator HASSAN and I came up with a very simple proposal. It is not a partisan proposal. It is a completely nonpartisan proposal. It is a simple proposal, quite frankly, that is equivalent to two things I had growing up. One was, if you don't finish your homework at school, you have to actually stay after class to be able to finish it. If you don't finish all of your work that you had to get done there, stay after class; keep finishing it; and when you are done, you can leave. The second one was, when my older brother and I would get into an argument—which, of course, as brothers, we never did get into an argument—but in that rare moment we got into an argument, my mom would put the two of us in a room and say: You guys settle this, and when you are done, you can come out.

We slammed those two ideas together into one simple proposal on how to end government shutdowns. If we get to the

end of the fiscal year and the appropriations work is not done, like it is this year, we stay in session 7 days a week, and the only bills that can actually come up, that actually can be called up during that time period, are appropriations bills. The second part of it is, there is no travel for anyone, so we couldn't fly home and fly back. No official or campaign funds could be used to be able to travel.

So we are in session 7 days a week. The only bills that are allowed to be brought up are appropriations bills. There is no travel.

The next part of it is simple. There is what is called a continuing resolution to maintain the government to be open so that the American people and Federal workers are held harmless. It puts the pressure on this room, not on Federal workers who are working for FAA, not on people who are working for the Housing Administration, not on our Border Patrol. Those individuals don't get a vote on this. They should not feel the pressure of a government shutdown.

We can keep the system moving while we still have our arguments to be able to resolve those things.

Why is this so important? A couple of reasons. One is, we are the United States of America. We should actually have an organized system because the rest of the world watches us to try to figure out how to do government. When we look dysfunctional, the rest of the world says: How are we going to figure this out if even the Americans can't figure this out? We, as Americans, lose track of that at times, but the rest of the world is watching us.

We should have our arguments. We are a representative republic. Every single voice counts, and we don't all agree. Great. Bring it. That demonstrates us at our best. But let's actually resolve those issues rather than having government shutdowns and chaos ensuing, because we need to set a better example for the world.

The second issue is much closer to home. We need to stop having government shutdowns because the American people are calling Federal Agencies and expecting someone to answer the phone, expecting to get help with passports or permits or whatever process it may be that they have to interact with the Federal Government. They need to be able to get somebody to answer the phone to be able to resolve that. This puts the American people struggling to be able to just get basic answers.

The third is the Federal workforce. We have millions of people who work in the Federal family. They work all over the country. When there is a government shutdown, there are two sets of things that actually occur. If you are a contractor, you are just out. Those contractors may be doing janitorial services in one of our buildings or they may be supplying food services to someone. They are just out. They don't get repaid; they just lose money, period.

Those who are actually on the Federal payroll—they don't get their check during that time period. They have this crazy, weird, essential, non-essential, some people laid off, some people not, but everyone is in chaos in that process.

For those folks who are in the Federal family, even though they may be declared essential or nonessential, do you know what—their car payments still come in, their mortgage still comes in, they still have to put food on the table, but they are not getting a check during the time of a government shutdown. So those individuals who live paycheck to paycheck, like many Americans do, suddenly have a gap—not by fault of their own but because this body couldn't resolve what we were going to do on the budgeting issues.

The fourth issue I have already partially mentioned, and that is the contractors. Let me just give you an example of what this means. Our southern border right now has the worst border crisis that we have ever faced as a nation. To give you a perspective on it, in the last few days, we have had up to 9,000 people illegally crossing our border a day—a day in the last few days. We have one border crossing area just in Tucson where they had 2,000 people who crossed in a day. Those folks are being cut loose and released into the country. It is chaos along our border.

Our Border Patrol and CBP and all those folks who are in law enforcement are doing their best to be able to help watch for safety and security of Americans while literally thousands of people are being cut loose into the country. They depend on some folks who are contractors in that area to help sometimes with transportation, with processing, with food, with medical care—all those things. Those contractors are very important to be able to help our Border Patrol in the chaos of what is actually happening. When there is a government shutdown, those contractors aren't going to be there, and the chaotic border we have now will be even more chaotic at that moment. That should not happen because we can't resolve our differences here. We need the national security on that.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. LANKFORD. I would yield to Senator CORNYN.

Mr. CORNYN. I just want to ask the Senator from Oklahoma—9,000 a day. I had to get out my calculator to figure out what that means. Are you talking about 3 million, 3.285 million—

Mr. LANKFORD. That is possible.

Mr. CORNYN.—a year—

Mr. LANKFORD. That is possible.

Mr. CORNYN.—if the current rate—

Mr. LANKFORD. If the current rate sustains, yes.

Yielding back my time for Senator CORNYN and for others as well, 2 weeks ago, our Nation crossed a threshold that most people just missed. We have just over 6 million people who have illegally crossed our southern border in

less than 3 years under the Biden administration—just over 6 million people. That 6 million number is the same as both terms of the Obama administration and the Trump administration combined. The Biden administration has allowed more people to illegally cross our border in less than 3 years than the previous 12 years along our border.

Border Patrol needs help right now. They don't need a government shutdown; they need help coming alongside them.

So what Senator HASSAN and I have done is proposed a very simple proposal. Let's stop government shutdowns. Let's end those. Let's not have the drama and the countdown clocks on 24-hour cable news TV. Let's have the arguments we need to have. Let's talk through the appropriations that need to be done. That is work we are required to do. But let's hold the Federal workers harmless in the process, and let's hold Federal contractors harmless in the process so we can settle the issues and do real planning.

This ending-government-shutdowns bill is very straightforward. We just want to prevent government shutdowns. We just want to be able to stop the chaos and actually show the American people that this body can have the arguments, resolve our differences, and move forward.

This is something we should be bringing to a vote. This is something that has wide bipartisan support. Let's resolve this piece while we still have more to be done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The senior Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, here we are, 16 days before the end of the fiscal year, and the Senate has finally begun—we are not finishing; we are just beginning—taking up the annual appropriations process.

Just to remind everybody, there are 12 individual appropriations bills. There is no time for us to finish this process before the end of the fiscal year, which is actually part of the majority leader's plan. He never intended to have a normal process by which the appropriations bills would be considered because what we call the regular order around here means you take them up one at a time, all 12. It is a transparent, open process where the American people can see it, where every Senator—all 100 Senators—gets to participate in crafting those bills. If they believe the spending needs to be cut in a certain area, they can offer an amendment to do that. If we need different priorities in the spending bills, well, you can do that by offering an amendment and getting it passed.

Earlier today, the Senate voted 91 to 7 to begin debating this legislation that funds military construction projects and supports America's veterans. This bill is important because it bolsters our military readiness by in-

vesting in new and existing facilities at our military bases around the world. That includes, in Texas, places like Fort Bliss, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, and Fort Cavazos. It also helps us fulfill the promise we made to America's veterans by investing in mental health care, telehealth, housing, and other critical services.

Today, Texas is the proud home of 1½ million veterans, and this is one important way we keep our commitment and honor their service and the many sacrifices they have made for our country.

This legislation passed the Appropriations Committee earlier this summer with unanimous support. Every Democrat, every Republican voted for it—all 28 members. But this is just 1 of 12 funding bills the committee passed this summer with strong bipartisan support.

Earlier this week, the majority leader, the Senator from New York, spoke about the Senate appropriations process thus far, and he referred to it as “the gold standard in good governance.” When I read that, I nearly fell out of my chair. He calls this process, which is doomed to failure because of his refusal to bring these bills to the floor on a timely basis, the gold standard of good governance.

Given the fact that we are 16 days from a government shutdown unless the House and the Senate can agree on a continuing resolution, I would say this is far from the “gold standard.” As a matter of fact, I think you could say we have sunk about as far as we can.

But it is important to remember that this funding deadline didn't surprise us. It didn't pop up out of nowhere. It arrives every year on September 30. So the majority leader had plenty of time to plan, prepare, and to carve out time to pass all 12 appropriations bills, just like the rules contemplate. But here we are, September 14, 16 days ahead of the funding deadline, and the Senate has not passed a single funding bill for the government.

If the majority leader's gold standard comment had been in reference to the committee process, I would have agreed with him. The Appropriations Committee did their job. Senator MURRAY, the chair of the Appropriations Committee, Senator COLLINS, the ranking member, and all 28 Senators on a bipartisan basis did their job on a timely basis—the first time they have done that in 5 years. But the committee's productivity was no accident. The chair and vice chair of the committee, Senator MURRAY and Senator COLLINS, promised to return to regular order, and that is exactly what they delivered.

Our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee worked across the aisle, which is the way you are supposed to work around here, to pass all of these bills by the end of July. They put the Senate in a strong position to debate, vote, amend, and then finally pass appropriations bills before the end of this month. So the committee process cer-

tainly was the gold standard of good governance, but that outstanding product has been squandered. You might even say this whole process was designed to fail because the majority leader refused to bring those bills to the floor on a timely basis.

Let's look at the MILCON-VA—Military Construction-VA—funding bill as an example. This legislation was approved by the committee on June 22, more than 2½ months ago. The majority leader, the Senator from New York, could have brought this legislation to the floor anytime between then, June 22, and now. He could have said, well, this is important work, so we maybe need to shorten the Senate's 2-week recess for the Fourth of July so we can get our work done, or he could have scheduled a vote during the July 4th period instead of working on nominations.

He could have canceled or—my preference would have been—delayed the 5-week August recess. If we had to cut that back to 4 weeks, do you think anybody would have suffered? Well, it would have given us an extra week to actually get our work done. But that didn't happen.

He could have adjusted the Senate work schedule in any number of ways and would have gotten cooperation from the minority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, because we all understand—or at least most of us understand—the importance of getting our work done on a timely basis. But, as we know, none of that happened.

Days, weeks, months have passed as the Senate did nothing—nothing—to advance any of the 12 bipartisan appropriations bills. And I want to be just crystal clear: It didn't have to be that way.

Again, this end-of-the-fiscal-year deadline is not a surprise to any of us. It is not as if the appropriations bills weren't ready on time—they were—or that the Senate has been preoccupied with other priorities. The majority leader is the only person who can set the agenda of the Senate. He is the only one who could call up these bills and schedule a vote, but he has done nothing but squandered the opportunity.

I know that many of our colleagues are frustrated that the Senate has not obtained consent to consider two additional funding bills as part of a so-called minibus, bundling three bills together, but that is the rule. Rule XVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate requires a unanimous consent vote before you can bundle those individual appropriations bills together. But the majority leader knew that. He knew what the Senate rules were, and all along he was taking the risk that one Senator—maybe a handful of Senators—would want to consider the bills one at a time, which is the normal process. It is just not normal to do it starting 16 days before the end of the fiscal year.

Well, while the majority leader has preached the virtues of regular order,

he has refused to actually engage in a process where we can be successful. As a matter of fact, he knows, by delaying the appropriations bills to this point, that we will not be successful because he has undermined it; he has sabotaged it.

Now, you might ask: Why would the majority leader do that? Well, two reasons. One is when you do a continuing resolution, it actually maximizes the power of the leadership because they are the ones that actually negotiate it, and then rank-and-file Members get to vote up or down. But the other reason he did it was because he wants to point to the House and claim that somehow they are trying to shut down the government.

Now, admittedly, the House is having their challenges, but Speaker MCCARTHY has pulled a rabbit out of the hat more than once this year, and I am hoping he can do so again. But if we do have a shutdown because the House and the Senate can't agree, it will be a Schumer shutdown—a Schumer shutdown.

Well, Members on both sides of the aisle want an opportunity to participate in the process. They want an opportunity to shape this legislation, even at this late hour, to do as much as we can in the truncated time that the majority leader has allowed us. So I urge the leader to let the Senate vote on this underlying bill, the MILCON-VA bill. It is important. We shouldn't act like it is a throwaway or inconsequential. We ought to do our work, even under the impossible timeframe that the majority leader has given us.

I think it is dangerous when Congress circumvents the normal process when it comes to funding the government. It is no secret that our debt is about 100 percent of our GDP. We are going to spend more money just paying interest to bondholders on our debt that is at some point more than we spend on national defense. Interest rates are high, we know, because the Federal Reserve is fighting inflation caused by too much reckless spending, but, as a result, we are also paying more money to our creditors to finance our national debt. And I think that is another symptom of the broken system by which we fund the government.

It has become all too common for short-term funding bills and large spending packages to be negotiated by a handful of leaders and rushed through both Chambers before the clock runs out. There is a growing sense of frustration among Members of this body on both sides of the aisle and a strong appetite to return to a normal, regular, transparent, participatory process, one that will give us at least a chance to try to get our fiscal house in better shape. But we have no chance to do that when, in essence, the majority leader creates an emergency situation, claims that he is the gold standard, and tries to blame the House and say they want a shutdown.

Well, I am not for a shutdown. I agree with the Senator from Oklahoma. The same problems that cause you to shut down the government are always there staring you in the face when you reopen. So we need to do our work. We need to solve those problems and avoid a shutdown, but it is really hard to do when the majority leader of the U.S. Senate, the only one who can schedule votes on the floor and the agenda of the Senate, sabotages the process.

The majority leader has purposely wasted more than 80 days that could have been spent debating funding bills and left the Senate with only two options: shut down the government or kick the can down the road with a continuing resolution. Of course, that is just a temporary measure, and then, when that expires, we have to deal with the consequences of that by figuring out, OK, how do we continue to fund the government at some appropriate level.

He knows we can't move 12 appropriations bills through the Senate and the House in the next 16 days, so this exercise will certainly end with another spending bill that is crafted at the last minute and jammed through both Houses. If this is the gold standard for anything, it is a gold standard for political theater. This is drama scripted by the majority leader. He is trying to put on a show or, I would say, a pretense of regular order in the Senate so he won't get the blame if the government shuts down; he can blame his political opponents in the House.

Well, suffice it to say, I am disappointed we find ourselves where we do, especially in light of the hard work done by our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee. They have done their job, but the majority leader has blown that up.

This is not an accident. This is by design. If the government shuts down at the end of the month, the majority leader won't be able to escape the blame for what will be a Schumer shutdown. Despite the political theater and the Kabuki dance, he will have to own that shutdown because he will have been the primary author of it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 265.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Vernon D. Oliver, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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 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. 265, Vernon D. Oliver, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard Blumenthal, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mark Kelly, Jack Reed, John W. Hickenlooper, Elizabeth Warren, Tammy Duckworth, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Jeanne Shaheen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mazie Hirono, Tina Smith, Edward J. Markey, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Christopher Murphy.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. 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. SCHUMER. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 37.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Rita F. Lin, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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 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. 37, Rita F.

Lin, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tina Smith, Christopher Murphy, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Baldwin, Margaret Wood Hassan, John W. Hickenlooper, Sheldon Whitehouse, Catherine Cortez Masto, Brian Schatz, Gary C. Peters, Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet.

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, September 14, be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

TRIBUTE TO WAYNE "COACH" GORDON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, over the August recess, the North Lawndale community on the West Side of Chicago witnessed the end of an era. Founding pastor of the Lawndale Community Church, the Reverend Doctor Wayne "Coach" Gordon passed the torch to the church's new lead pastor, Pastor Jonathan Brooks, or as the congregation affectionately knows him, Pastor J.

Pastor Gordon first heard the call to serve when he was a junior in high school in Fort Dodge, IA. The call came so clear that he woke his mother in the middle of the night to share his newfound purpose and let her know that he was ready to forgo his studies and get started immediately. His mother heard him out and arranged for him to meet with the local pastor. That call set in motion a lifetime of service and selfless commitment to helping others.

He listened to his mother and finished his studies. In 1971, he graduated from Fort Dodge Senior High School. He attended Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL, where he played football. From there, he attended the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, and he later would go on to obtain his doctorate in ministry from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

By 1975, Pastor Gordon had moved to North Lawndale, a predominantly Black community that at the time was ranked the 15th poorest neighborhood in the United States. He took a job as a teacher and coach at Farragut High School. Pastor Gordon, a White guy from Iowa teaching and coaching in a predominantly Black community, immediately stood out. His players and

students called him "Coach," a nickname that has stuck with him to this day.

In 1977, Pastor Gordon would marry the woman of his dreams, his lovely wife Anne. On their first night together in North Lawndale, their home was broken into. Unfortunately, this would not be the only time. Many would question what the couple was thinking. Why would they want to continue to live in such a dangerous neighborhood?

But as one of his mentors, the late-Reverend Tom Skinner would say, Pastor Gordon and Anne "continued to continue." They refused to live amongst their neighbors in fear. When others saw a dangerous neighborhood stricken by poverty, violence, and drug addiction, Pastor Gordon and Anne saw a community desperate for opportunity. Many turned their back on North Lawndale, but Pastor Gordon and Anne would not do the same. They heeded their call to help and made the conscious choice to live where they served—and they wasted no time getting to work.

They set up a Bible study through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. The Farragut High students enjoyed it so much that they talked Pastor Gordon and Anne into starting their very own church. While it took some convincing, Pastor Gordon agreed, and the Lawndale Christian Community Church began its mission of building a better North Lawndale.

He assembled the congregation before a blackboard and asked what were the top issues facing the community. No. 1 was a safe place for residents to do their laundry, since the local laundromats were often sites of violence. The church made room in its basement using donated equipment to give residents a safe place to do their laundry.

The second issue on the congregation's list was access to quality, affordable health services in the area. Through several grants from charitable organizations in Chicago, countless volunteer hours, and faith, in September 1984, they were able to transform a run-down Cadillac dealership into the Lawndale Christian Health Center. This clinic, which started with a staff of just five, has now grown to have more than 100 medical providers across six locations, transforming access to healthcare in the area.

Apart from providing services through the church, Pastor Gordon and other community leaders knew for the Lawndale area to thrive, they would need a strong economic base capable of attracting businesses, employing residents, providing goods and services, and supporting the community. With that goal in mind, Lawndale Community Church began reaching out to businesses encouraging them to set up shop in the neighborhood.

Their outreach efforts would pay off. In 1995, the iconic Lou Malnati's Pizzeria opened a branch of its restaurant in North Lawndale. Lawndale Community Church owned the property in

which the restaurant operated, and the church converted the four apartments above the pizzeria into affordable housing units for families. Aside from proving that North Lawndale could sustain mainstream businesses, Lou Malnati's also committed to staffing the restaurant with local employees and donating its profits to the community. And more than 25 years later, Lou Malnati's remains open for business in North Lawndale.

They did not stop there. To promote homeownership and build wealth, they opened the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation, which purchased and rehabilitated abandoned homes and then sold them to members of the community at a discount. To support health and wellness in the community, they opened the 60,000-square-foot Lawndale Christian Health and Fitness Center. And to expand access to legal services, education, social services, employment, and training opportunities to young people, they opened the Lawndale Christian Legal Center.

These successful community development efforts have come to be known as the Lawndale Miracle—and it has laid the foundation for future investment in North Lawndale and served as a model for community development efforts in other disadvantaged communities.

But while these achievements may be divine, they are far from unexplainable. They are a testament to the leadership of Pastor Gordon and his congregation. They have renovated apartments, built fitness centers, mentored students, established medical clinics, started businesses, and helped breathe a new energetic life into the entire community.

Through it all, Pastor Gordon has remained a dedicated husband to Anne; a loving father to their three children: Angela, Andrew, and Austin; father-in-law to Nate and Stacy; and grandfather to Mack, Brooke, and Langston. I have had the pleasure of knowing Pastor Gordon and Anne, and I have been fortunate to witness much of the progress they have helped make. Pastor Gordon is no ordinary preacher. His work does not end with his sermon. He has used his faith to power a lifetime of service to help his neighbors and community. While Pastor Gordon may have passed his torch, I am certain the work of the Lawndale Community Church is not finished.

Loretta and I thank Pastor Gordon and Anne for their service to the community, and we wish Pastor J. the best of luck in carrying on the legacy of the Lawndale Community Church.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision

stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY,
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 23-65, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of the Republic of Korea for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$5.06 billion. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-65

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of the Republic of Korea.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment * \$3.08 billion.

Other \$1.98 billion.

Total \$5.06 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Up to twenty-five (25) F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Conventional Take Off and Landing (CTOL) Aircraft

Up to twenty-six (26) Pratt & Whitney F135-PW-100 Engines (25 installed, 1 spare)

Non-MDE: Also included are AN/PYQ-10 Simple Key Loaders (SKL); KIV-78 Cryptographic Appliques; Electronic Warfare (EW) Reprogramming Lab support; Cartridge Actuated Devices/Propellant Actuated Devices (CAD/PAD); classified software delivery and support; Contractor Logistics Support (CLS); aircraft and munitions support and support equipment; spare parts, consumables, accessories, and repair/return support; aircraft engine component improvement program (CIP) support; secure communications, precision navigation, and cryptographic devices; major modifications, maintenance, and maintenance support, to include Block 4 upgrade; transportation, ferry, and refueling support; personnel training and training equipment, including simulators; classified and unclassified publications and technical documents; studies and surveys; U.S. Government and engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (KS-D-SAF).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: KS-D-SAC, KS-D-QGC.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: September 13, 2023.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Republic of Korea (ROK)—F-35 Aircraft

The Government of the Republic of Korea has requested to buy up to twenty-five (25) F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Conventional Take Off and Landing (CTOL) aircraft; and up to twenty-six (26) Pratt & Whitney F135-PW-100 engines (25 installed, 1 spare). Also included are AN/PYQ-10 Simple Key Loaders (SKL); KIV-78 Cryptographic Appliques; Electronic Warfare (EW) Reprogramming Lab support; Cartridge Actuated Devices/Propellant Actuated Devices (CAD/PAD); classified software delivery and support; Contractor Logistics Support (CLS); aircraft and munitions support and support equipment; spare parts, consumables, accessories, and repair/return support; aircraft engine component improvement program (CIP) support; secure communications, precision navigation, and cryptographic devices; major modifications, maintenance, and maintenance support, to include Block 4 upgrade; transportation, ferry, and refueling support; personnel training and training equipment, including simulators; classified and unclassified publications and technical documents; studies and surveys; U.S. Government and engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is \$5.06 billion.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy goals and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a major ally that is a force for political stability and economic progress in the Indo-Pacific region.

The proposed sale will improve the Republic of Korea's capability to meet current and future threats by providing credible defense capability to deter aggression in the region and ensure interoperability with U.S. forces. The proposed sale will augment Korea's operational aircraft inventory and enhance its air-to-air and air-to-ground self-defense capability. Korea already has F-35s in its inventory and will have no difficulty absorbing these articles and services into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractors will be Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company, Fort Worth, TX, and Pratt & Whitney Military Engines, East Hartford, CT. The purchaser typically requests offsets. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to the Republic of Korea.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-65

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The F-35A aircraft is a single seat, single engine, all-weather, stealth, fifth-generation, multirole aircraft. It contains sensitive technology including the low observable air-

frame/outer mold line, the Pratt and Whitney F135 engine, AN/APG-81 radar, an integrated core processor central computer, a mission systems/electronic warfare suite, a multiple sensor suite, technical data/documentation and associated software. Sensitive elements of the F-35A are also included in operational flight and maintenance trainers. Sensitive and classified elements of the F-35A aircraft include hardware, accessories, components, and associated software for the following major subsystems:

a. The Pratt and Whitney F135 engine is a single 40,000-pound thrust class engine designed for the F-35 and assures highly reliable, affordable performance. The engine is designed to be utilized in all F-35 variants, providing unmatched commonality and supportability throughout the worldwide base of F-35 users.

b. The AN/APG-81 Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) is a high processing power/high transmission power electronic array capable of detecting air and ground targets from a greater distance than mechanically scanned array radars. It also contains a synthetic aperture radar (SAR), which creates high-resolution ground maps and provides weather data to the pilot, and provides air and ground tracks to the mission system, which uses it as a component to fuse sensor data.

c. The Electro-Optical Targeting System (EOTS) provides long-range detection and tracking as well as an infrared search and track (IRST) and forward-looking infrared (FLIR) capability for precision tracking, weapons delivery and bomb damage assessment (BOA). The EOTS replaces multiple separate internal or podded systems typically found on legacy aircraft.

d. The Electro-Optical Distributed Aperture System (EODAS) provides the pilot with full spherical coverage for air-to-air and air-to-ground threat awareness, day/night vision enhancements, a fire control capability and precision tracking of wingmen/friendly aircraft. The EODAS provides data directly to the pilot's helmet as well as the mission system.

e. The F-35 Electronic Warfare (EW) system is a reprogrammable, integrated system that provides radar warning and electronic support measures (ESM) along with a fully integrated countermeasures (CM) system. The EW system is the primary subsystem used to enhance situational awareness, targeting support and self-defense through the search, intercept, location and identification of in-band emitters and to automatically counter JI and IF threats.

f. The F-35 Communications, Navigation, and Identification (CNI) system provides the pilot with unmatched connectivity to flight members, coalition forces and the battlefield. It is an integrated subsystem designed to provide a broad spectrum of secure, anti-jam voice and data communications, precision radio navigation and landing capability, self-identification, beyond visual range target identification and connectivity to off-board sources of information. It also includes an inertial navigation and global positioning system (GPS) for precise location information. The functionality is tightly integrated within the mission system to enhance efficiency.

g. The F-35 CNI system includes two data links: Multi-Function Advanced Data Link (MADL) and Link 16. MADL is designed specifically for the F-35 and allows for Low Probability of Intercept (LPI) communications between F-35s. Link 16 is a command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) system incorporating jam-resistant, digital communication links for exchange of near real-time tactical information, including both data and voice, among air, ground,

and sea elements. It provides the warfighter key theater functions such as surveillance, identification, air control, weapons engagement coordination, and direction for all services and allied forces. Link-16 equipment allows the F-35 to communicate with battlespace participants using widely-distributed J-series message protocols.

h. The F-35 Autonomic Logistics Global Sustainment (ALGS) provides a fully integrated logistics management solution. ALGS integrates a number of functional areas, including supply chain management, repair, support equipment, engine support and training. The ALGS infrastructure employs a state-of-the-art information system that provides real-time, decision-worthy information for sustainment decisions by flight line personnel. Prognostic health monitoring technology is integrated with the air system and is crucial to predictive maintenance of vital components.

i. The F-35 Operational Data Integrated Network (ODIN) provides an intelligent information infrastructure that binds all the key concepts of ALGS into an effective support system. ALIS establishes the appropriate interfaces among the F-35 Air Vehicle, the warfighter, the training system, government information technology (IT) systems, and supporting commercial enterprise systems. Additionally, ALIS provides a comprehensive tool for data collection and analysis, decision support and action tracking.

j. The F-35 Training System includes several training devices to provide integrated training for pilots and maintainers. The pilot training devices include a Full Mission Simulator (FMS) and Deployable Mission Rehearsal Trainer (DMRT). The maintenance training devices include an Aircraft Systems Maintenance Trainer (ASMT), Ejection System Maintenance Trainer (ESMT), Outer Mold Line (OML) Lab, Flexible Linear Shaped Charge (FLSC) Trainer, F135 Engine Module Trainer and Weapons Loading Trainer (WLT). The F-35 Training System can be integrated, where both pilots and maintainers learn in the same Integrated Training Center (ITC). Alternatively, the pilots and maintainers can train in separate facilities (Pilot Training Center and Maintenance Training Center).

k. Other subsystems, features, and capabilities include the F-35's low observable air frame, Integrated Core Processor (ICP) Central Computer, Helmet Mounted Display System (HMDS), Pilot Life Support System (PLSS), Off-Board Mission Support (OMS) System, and publications/maintenance manuals. The HMDS provides a fully sunlight readable, binocular display presentation of aircraft information projected onto the pilot's helmet visor. The use of a night vision camera integrated into the helmet eliminates the need for separate Night Vision Goggles. The PLSS provides a measure of Pilot Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Protection through use of an On-Board Oxygen Generating System (OBOGS); and an escape system that provides additional protection to the pilot. OBOGS takes the Power and Thermal Management System (PTMS) air and enriches it by removing gases (mainly nitrogen) by adsorption, thereby increasing the concentration of oxygen in the product gas and supplying breathable air to the pilot. The OMS provides a mission planning, mission briefing, and a maintenance/intelligence/ tactical debriefing platform for the F-35.

2. The AN/APQ-10 Simple Key Loader is a handheld device used for securely receiving, storing, and transferring data between compatible cryptographic and communications equipment.

3. The KIV-78 is, a cryptographic applique for IFF. It can be loaded with Mode 5 classified elements.

4. The Electronic Warfare Reprogramming Lab is used by USG engineers in the reprogramming and creation of shareable Mission Data Files for foreign F-35 customers.

5. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

6. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

7. A determination has been made that the Republic of Korea can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy justification.

8. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Republic of Korea.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY,
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 23-64, concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Poland for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$4.0 billion. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-64

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Poland.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment * \$1.5 billion.

Other \$2.5 billion.

Total \$4.0 billion.

Funding Source: National Funds.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: The Government of Poland has requested to buy phase two of a two-phase program for an Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Battle Command System (IBCS) enabled PATRIOT Configuration-3+ with modernized sensors and components, including:

Major Defense Equipment (MOE):

Ninety-three (93) Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Battle Command System (IBCS) Engagement Operation Centers (EOCs).

One hundred seventy-five (175) IBCS Integrated Fire Control Network (IFCN) Relays.

Non-MDE: Also included are network encryptors; IBCS software development and component integration; U.S. Government and contractor technical support; System Integration Lab (SIL) infrastructure; SIL test tools and equipment; U.S. Government and contractor technical support for SIL; flight test infrastructure and equipment; flight test targets; flight test range costs and fees; U.S. Government and Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) flight test services and support; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (PL-B-UEN).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: PL-8-UCJ, PL-B-UEK, PL-8-UEL, PL-B-UEM.

(vi) Sales Commission. Fee, etc, Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: September 11, 2023.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Poland-Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Battle Command System (IBCS)

The Government of Poland has requested to buy phase two of a two-phase program for an Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Battle Command System (IBCS) enabled PATRIOT Configuration-3+ with modernized sensors and components; the sale includes ninety-three (93) Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Battle Command System (IBCS) Engagement Operation Centers (EOCs) and one hundred seventy-five (175) IBCS Integrated Fire Control Network (IFCN) relays. Also included are network encryptors; IBCS software development and component integration; U.S. Government and contractor technical support; System Integration Lab (SIL) infrastructure; SIL test tools and equipment; U.S. Government and contractor technical support for SIL; flight test infrastructure and equipment; flight test targets; flight test range costs and fees; U.S. Government and Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) flight test services and support; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The total estimated program cost is \$4.0 billion.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy goals and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization Ally that is a force for political stability and economic progress in Europe.

The proposed sale will improve Poland's missile defense capability and contribute to Poland's goal of updating its military capability while further enhancing interoperability with the United States and other allies. Poland will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Northrup Grumman, Huntsville, AL. The purchaser has requested offsets. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor(s).

Implementation of this proposed sale will require approximately forty (40) U.S. Government and/or forty-five (45) contractor representatives to travel to Poland for an extended period for equipment deprocessing and fielding, system checkout, training, and technical and logistics support.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

Transmittal No. 23-64

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Battle Command System (IBCS) is the centerpiece of the U.S. Army's modernization strategy for air and missile defense capability. The system's resilient, open, modular, scalable architecture is foundational to deploying a truly integrated network of all available assets in the battlespace, regardless of source, service, or domain. IBCS enables the efficient and affordable integration of current and future systems, including assets deployed over IP-enabled networks, counter-unmanned aerial systems (UAS), 4th and 5th-generation aircraft, space-based sensors, and more. It senses, identifies, tracks, and defeats evolving air and missile threats, enabling revolutionary "multi-domain, any sensor, best effecter" operations.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the Government of Poland can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Poland.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter

references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 23-67, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Poland for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$389 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-67

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Poland.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment * \$0 million.
Other \$389 million.
Total \$389 million.

Funding Source: National Funds.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case PL-D-QBC was below the congressional notification threshold at \$82 million (\$0 in MDE), and included non-MDE items and services in support of F-16 aircraft sustainment. The Government of Poland has requested the case be amended to include additional non-MDE items and services as indicated below. This amendment will push the current case above the total case value notification threshold and thus requires notification of the entire case.

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.

Non-MDE: Included are Electronic Warfare database reprogramming support; classified and unclassified software delivery and support; classified and unclassified publications and technical documentation; spare parts, consumables, accessories, and repair and return support; computer program identification numbers; engine Component Improvement Program support; minor modifications; maintenance and maintenance support; studies and surveys; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (PL-D-QBC).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: PL-D-QAW, PL-D-QAR, PL-D-QAO.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None known at this time.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: September 13, 2023.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Poland—F-16 Sustainment

The Government of Poland has requested to buy additional non-MDE articles and serv-

ices, as indicated below, that will be added to a previously implemented case whose value was under the congressional notification threshold. The original FMS case, valued at \$82 million, included articles and services in support of F-16 aircraft sustainment. This notification is for the combined non-MDE F-16 sustainment articles and services, which includes Electronic Warfare database reprogramming support; classified and unclassified software delivery and support; classified and unclassified publications and technical documentation; spare parts, consumables, accessories, and repair and return support; computer program identification numbers; engine Component Improvement Program support; minor modifications; maintenance and maintenance support; studies and surveys; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is \$389 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy goals and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization Ally that is a force for political stability and economic progress in Europe.

The proposed sale will improve Poland's capability to meet current and future threats by increasing the reliability of their F-16 fleet. Poland has purchased sustainment support for the F-16s in its inventory for many years, and will have no difficulty absorbing these articles and services into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Lockheed Martin, Fort Worth, TX. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Poland.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-67

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Electronic Warfare Integrated Reprogramming Database (EWIRDB) is used by U.S. Government engineers in the reprogramming and creation of shareable Mission Data Files for the exported EW systems.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that Poland can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Poland.

TRIBUTE TO GRACE POTTER

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Grace Potter, a talented singer-songwriter who was born and raised in Fayston, VT. She is a Grammy-nominated artist and has been described by Spin Magazine as "one of the greatest living voices in rock today." As her career as a musician has reached remarkable heights, she has continued to be a beacon of hope for her community back home in Vermont.

Music and the arts bring people together and foster healing through difficult times. Ms. Potter has always used her musical talent to build community, which is what Vermonters do best. She has consistently uplifted young musicians and worked to create opportunities for the arts to flourish in Vermont. These efforts are critical to strengthening both local economies and the social fabric of our great State.

Ms. Potter has also spent her career bringing attention to causes that she is passionate about, including promoting fair trade labeling and supporting local farmers. At the height of the pandemic, Ms. Potter hosted a virtual benefit concert with proceeds going to Shift Meals, an organization which delivers locally grown food to food-insecure households throughout the State.

After Hurricane Irene devastated Vermont communities in 2011, Ms. Potter performed benefit concerts to support flood relief efforts. Catastrophic flooding again hit Vermont this past July and August, destroying downtowns, damaging businesses, and forcing Vermonters to evacuate their homes. Thanks to Vermont's indomitable spirit, communities have come together to rebuild from the flooding. Ms. Potter has been a critical part of this rebuilding, again hosting multiple benefit concerts to bring aid to those most impacted by the floods.

Ms. Potter is a source of inspiration for so many, and she stands in solidarity with those in need of assistance during an incredibly challenging time. As Vermonters continue to recover from this summer's floods, we are grateful for Ms. Potter's dedication to the place we call home.

Thank you, Grace Potter, for your contribution to flood relief efforts in Vermont and for your embodiment of Vermont values.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAVID SMITH

• Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and celebrate the career and legacy of Mr. David Smith.

In the realm of visionary leadership in the independent grocery industry, few names shine as brightly as David Smith's. David has had a long and successful career in the food industry, beginning as an independent store owner and then rising the ranks to work in various assignments at the wholesale

level in leadership positions, and serving as an officer on the National Grocers Association board of directors executive committee.

David's ascent to the helm of Associated Wholesale Grocers marked a pivotal moment in the company's strategic direction. Guided by an unwavering commitment to excellence, he steered AWG to new horizons of growth and prosperity. His strategic acumen and forward-thinking approach not only expanded the company's reach but also fostered an environment of collaboration and empowerment.

A true luminary, David's leadership extended beyond the boardroom. His emphasis on cultivating strong partnerships transformed suppliers into allies, fostering a sense of unity within the industry. David's ability to foresee trends and adapt to evolving market dynamics was nothing short of remarkable.

David's legacy extends far beyond business success. His philanthropic endeavors exemplify his compassionate heart and commitment to giving back to the community. His leadership in charitable initiatives served as a beacon of hope, illuminating the path toward positive change and societal betterment.

As we reflect on his remarkable journey, we pay homage to a servant leader who redefined mentorship, innovation, and corporate responsibility. His legacy serves as a testament to the transformative power of visionary thinking and unwavering determination. In commemorating David Smith, we pay tribute to his shining example of what is possible when passion, purpose, and leadership converge.

I now ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the legacy and career of Mr. David Smith, as well as congratulate him on his upcoming retirement.●

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHASE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

• Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, the Chase County Courthouse is a striking monument situated in Cottonwood Falls and visible across much of the surrounding prairie. Built in 1873, the courthouse's limestone exterior, walnut staircase, and distinctive red roof have made it a landmark on the plains. Designed in French Renaissance style by John G. Haskell of Leavenworth, the courthouse is the oldest Kansas courthouse still in use.

This year marks the courthouse's 150th anniversary of service to the community. In 1856, several families moved to the south side of Cottonwood River, and soon after, the Chase County boundaries were drawn. The pioneers who established Cottonwood Falls decided to build a local courthouse and workers began construction on the courthouse. The community chose a courthouse that would stand 113-feet tall, containing a three-story spiral staircase made from trees near the Cottonwood River. The limestone

used to construct the courthouse came from Chase County and is known as Cottonwood limestone. This same limestone was used in the Kansas State Capitol, Kansas State University, and can be found in the U.S. Capitol forming the base for the statue of Amelia Earhart. In 1917, the courthouse was entered in the National Registry of Historic Places and the Kansas Historical Site Register and serves as a tribute to the pioneers who made the Flint Hill their home and the builders who constructed the courthouse.

I have visited downtown Cottonwood Falls many times and have seen the community grow over the years. Rural county courthouses play an important role in preserving these communities. The courthouse is a place where justice is administered, wedding vows are made, election votes are tallied, wills are signed, and disputes are resolved.

On the 150th anniversary of the Chase County Courthouse, I am honored to recognize and commemorate this courthouse which is the pride of Cottonwood Falls and a monument on the plains.●

TRIBUTE TO ASTA SPURGIS

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, in Alaska, we have no shortage of scenic wilderness to explore. From the unrivaled beauty of a bluebird day in the Prince William Sound, to the peaks of the Denali National Park and Preserve, to the winding tributaries of the glacier-fed Tanana river, my bias may be showing, but Alaska is the Nation's undisputed leader in outdoor recreational opportunities, both in sum and splendor.

But one of Alaska's most treasured locales is not just an exemplary jewel case of our outdoors, but a labor of love from the outstanding volunteers and employees who have put their heart and soul into making it a world-class nature center. The Eagle River Nature Center is the crowning centerpiece of the Chugach State Park, located in Southcentral Alaska within the municipality of Anchorage. And the driving force behind the Eagle River Nature Center has been its cofounder and executive director, Asta Spurgis. Sadly, for the many Alaskans and out-of-state visitors who frequent the Eagle River Nature Center, Asta is leaving her post.

From 1993 through 1995, the park's budget was dropping off, and the center could no longer afford to operate year-round, forcing them to have limited hours only in the summer. In stepped the Friends of Eagle River Nature Center, Inc., a nonprofit formed in 1996 that revived the park by forging new trails, offering maintenance for public use facilities, and stepping up in the day-to-day operations of the park that helped it become a destination for guests across the world. At the head of that effort was Asta Spurgis, whose passion and dedication for ensuring

that the park was accessible and pristine meant finding new and innovative ways to fund the operations.

From its inception as a bold experiment to where it stands now, as a shining model of what public-private partnership can look like, Asta Spurgis has been at the helm. Alaskans will miss her commitment and leadership, but her legacy can be seen in the students who visit and get firsthand classes on natural sciences and the tens of thousands of Alaskans and tourists who get to explore the Chugach State Park. I commend Asta for her lifetime of work in making Alaska's wilderness a more beautiful and more accessible space to explore.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.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. 1567. An act to require that the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior submit accurate reports regarding hazardous fuels reduction activities, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3324. An act to extend the authority to collect Shasta-Trinity Marina fees through fiscal year 2029.

ENROLLED BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

The message further announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill and joint resolution:

H.R. 2544. An act to improve the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network, and for other purposes.

S.J. Res. 24. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Northern Long-Eared Bat".

The enrolled bill and joint resolution were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

The message also announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH) has signed the following enrolled joint resolution:

S.J. Res. 9. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Lesser Prairie-Chicken; Threatened Status With Section 4(d) Rule for the Northern Distinct Population Segment and Endangered Status for the Southern Distinct Population Segment".

The enrolled joint resolution was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1567. An act to require that the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of

the Interior submit accurate reports regarding hazardous fuels reduction activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3324. An act to extend the authority to collect Shasta-Trinity Marina fees through fiscal year 2029; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2085. A communication from the Policy Advisor, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Seizure and Forfeiture Procedures" (RIN1018-BG73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2086. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Threatened Species Status With Section 4(d) Rule for Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl" (RIN1018-BF25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2087. A communication from the Administrative Assistant, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removal of the Okaloosa Darter From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife" (RIN1018-BE57) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2088. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.249 Rev 0, 'Use of ARCON Methodology for Calculation of Accident-Related Offsite Atmospheric Dispersion Factors'" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2089. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Guide (RG) 5.83 Rev 1, 'Cyber Security Event Notifications'" received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2090. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.28 Rev 6, 'Quality Assurance Program Criteria (Design and Construction)'" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2091. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regu-

latory Guide (RG) 4.26 Rev 1, 'Volcanic hazards Assessment for Nuclear Power Reactor Sites'" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 11, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2092. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Inflation Adjustments to the Price-Anderson Act Financial Protection Regulations" (RIN3150-AL01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 8, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2093. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report Describing the Administrator's Use of the Ranking Criteria Described CERCLA 104(k)(6)(C) in Awarding Brownfields Grants"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2094. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment: the Seventh Report to Congress"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2095. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; AK; Revisions to Ice Fog and Sulfur Dioxide Regulations" (FRL No. 10419-02-R10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2096. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Second 10-Year Maintenance Plan for the Coso Junction PM-10 Planning Area; California; Correcting Amendment" (FRL No. 10529-03-R9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2097. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Pennsylvania; Revisions to Plan Approval and Operating Permit Fees Rule and Title V Operating Permit Program" (FRL No. 10673-02-R3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2098. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "New Source Performance Standards Review for Steel Plants: Electric Arc Furnaces Constructed After 10/21/74 & On or Before 8/17/83; Standards of Performance for Steel Plants: Electric Arc Furnaces & Argon-Oxygen Decarburization Constructed After 8/17/83 And On Or Before May 16, 2022; Standards of Performance for Steel Plants: Electric Arc Furnaces and Argon-Oxygen Decarburization Vessels Constructed After May 16, 2022" ((RIN2060-AU96) (FRL No. 8150-01-OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on August 23, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2099. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Volatile Organic Compound Regulations; Corrections" (FRL No. 9242-03-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2100. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of the Clean Air Act, Authority for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Air Emissions Standards for Halogenated Solvent Cleaning Machines; State of Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management" (FRL No. 10498-02-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2101. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Connecticut; New Source Review Permit Program State Plan Revision" (FRL No. 10876-02-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2102. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Bulk Gasoline Plants, Terminals Vapor Recovery Systems; Correction" (FRL No. 10991-03-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2103. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; New Hampshire; Reasonable Available Control Technology for the 2008 and 2015 Ozone Standards" (FRL No. 11025-02-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2104. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Rhode Island; Organic Solvent Cleaning Regulation" (FRL No. 11046-02-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2105. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendments to the 'Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States"' (FRL No. 11132-01-OW) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2106. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Priorities List" (FRL No. 11235-02-OLEM) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 6, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2107. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Freedom of Information Act Regulations Update; Phase II" ((RIN2025-AA38)

(FRL No. 5630-01-OGC)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 8, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2108. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Pennsylvania; Liberty Borough Area Second 10-Year PM10 Limited Maintenance Plan" (FRL No. 10907-02-R3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 8, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2109. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Quality Implementation Plan; California; El Dorado County Air Quality Management District; Stationary Source Permits" (FRL No. 10564-03-R9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 8, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2110. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Approval of the Muskingum River SO2 Attainment Plan" (FRL No. 11047-02-R5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 8, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2111. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Texas; Clean Air Act Requirements for Enhanced Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance" (FRL No. 11279-01-R6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 8, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2112. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; South Carolina; New Source Review Updates" (FRL No. 10011-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2113. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; California; San Diego County Air Pollution Control District; Oxides of Nitrogen" (FRL No. 10126-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2114. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Texas; Updates to Public Notice and Procedural Rules and Removal of Obsolete Provisions" (FRL No. 10892-02-R6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2115. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Alternate PCB Extraction Methods and Amendments to PCB

Cleanup and Disposal Regulations" (FRL No. 7122-03-OLEM) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2116. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) Program: Standards for 2023-2025 and Other Changes: Correction" ((RIN2060-AV14) (FRL No. 8514-03-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2117. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Volatile Organic Compound Regulations" (FRL No. 9242-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2118. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Air Quality Control, Revisions to Particulates from Fugitive Dust Emissions Sources Rule" (FRL No. 9991-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2119. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; WA; Smoke Management Plan Update" (FRL No. 10545-02-R10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2120. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Texas; Oil and Natural Gas Reasonably Available Control Technology in the Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Ozone Nonattainment Areas" (FRL No. 10583-02-R6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2121. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Florida; Revision of Excess Emissions Provisions and Emission Standards; Amendments to Stationary Sources - Emission Standards" (FRL No. 10928-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2122. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Bulk Gasoline Plants, Terminals Vapor Recovery Systems" (FRL No. 10991-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2123. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection

Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Georgia; Miscellaneous Rule Revisions to Gasoline Dispensing Facility - Stage I" (FRL No. 11008-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2124. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; TN; 2010 1-Hour SO₂ NAAQS Transport Infrastructure" (FRL No. 11020-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2125. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference" (FRL No. 10177-01-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 12, 2023; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-44. A concurrent memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the United States Congress to support hunting, angling, and wildlife conservation; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL NO. 2005

Whereas, states are the primary caretakers of fish and wildlife through the public trust doctrine; and

Whereas, the American system of conservation funding depends heavily on the financial support of hunters and anglers, who make the largest monetary contributions to the conservation of fish and wildlife through their purchases of licenses and hunt permits and excise taxes on ammunition and outdoor recreation equipment; and

Whereas, the historic uses of Arizona's rivers, lakes, streams, forests and rural lands over several centuries have included hunting and angling; and

Whereas, Arizona has a rich, historic tradition of hunting and angling that dates back to before statehood and continues to this day; and

Whereas, Arizona's wildlife is held in the public trust, one of the core concepts guaranteeing opportunities for all citizens to participate in hunting, angling and wildlife conservation; and

Whereas, Arizona's sportsmen and sportswomen were among the first conservationists to support the establishment of the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) to conserve fish and wildlife and their habitats and to help fund state efforts to provide for healthy natural resources; and

Whereas, Arizona sportsmen and sportswomen continue to provide the funding for the AZGFD, which is the primary steward of the state's fish and wildlife resources; and

Whereas, more than 500,000 hunters and anglers in Arizona represent an economic powerhouse with spending that exceeds \$900 million per year and an economic impact of \$1.34 billion to this state; and

Whereas, Arizona's hunting and angling industries are a vital economic driver, supporting more than 17,000 jobs that generate \$314 million in salaries and wages and cre-

ating economic opportunity, particularly in rural communities; and

Whereas, the annual spending by Arizona's hunters and anglers generates \$58 million in state revenue; and

Whereas, AZGFD successfully conserves and protects more than 800 native wildlife species; and

Whereas, hunting and angling provide the financial backbone for world-class stewardship of natural resources through a "user pays-public benefits" approach that represents the world's most effective system of fish and wildlife management; and

Whereas, hunters and anglers must respect private property rights while they are engaged in their hunting and angling endeavors; and

Whereas, National Hunting and Fishing Day was established in 1972 and is celebrated the fourth Saturday of each September to recognize hunters and anglers for their immense contributions to fish and wildlife conservation and to society; and

Whereas, hunting and angling in Arizona are a vital part of the state and local historic customs, culture, heritage and economies. Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

1. That the United States Congress respect the historic and current use of Arizona's recreational areas by sportsmen and sportswomen, support the time-honored Arizona traditions of hunting and angling, the very backbone of conservation, and respect the administration of wildlife conservation through the sound science delivered by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and science-based policies developed by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

2. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.

POM-45. A concurrent memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to halt the imposition of unrealistic ozone standards on the state of Arizona; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL NO. 2008

Whereas, on September 16, 2022, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reclassified Maricopa County as a moderate nonattainment area for ozone limits under the Clean Air Act; and

Whereas, the EPA under the Biden Administration is trying to force the adoption of ozone control measures on the State of Arizona and its individual citizens, motorists and businesses that would devastate the economy; and

Whereas, the main contributor to non-attainment for Maricopa County was the adoption of the 2015 EPA guidelines, which dropped acceptable ozone levels from 75ppb to 70ppb; and

Whereas, multiple studies have shown that higher ozone levels in Maricopa County are being caused by natural events and that external activity outside the state is beyond the scope and control of the citizens of this state; and

Whereas, there is no evidence that any of the control measures being considered, including additional regulations on business, expanding transit, adopting vision-zero zoning programs or vehicle trip reduction requirements will result in Maricopa County reaching attainment; and

Whereas, the Maricopa Association of Governments has issued public statements ac-

knowledging that the removal of all 4,000,000 internal combustion vehicles in the metropolitan Phoenix area would not bring Maricopa County into compliance with the ozone requirements mandated by the EPA; and

Whereas, during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 ozone levels increased from 79ppb to 87ppb despite the fact that most vehicular and business activity was halted in Maricopa County; and

Whereas, the imposition of fines and penalties or the withholding of Arizona's share of federal transportation dollars by the EPA for nonattainment would be coercive and unfairly punitive to the citizens of this state. Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

1. That the Biden Administration and the United States Congress stop the United States Environmental Protection Agency from imposing coercive and likely unconstitutional penalties on Arizona to comply with an ozone standard that is impossible to attain through any of the control measures being considered.

2. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.

POM-46. A concurrent memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the United States Congress to appropriate monies and federal entities to develop solutions to eradicate salt cedars in Arizona waterways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL NO. 2006

Whereas, the salt cedar tree, also known as the tamarisk, was brought to the United States in the 1800s as an ornamental plant to stabilize soil and control erosion; and

Whereas, salt cedars are now listed as an invasive species by the United States Department of Agriculture; and

Whereas, salt cedars spread prolifically by both seed and sprouting, congesting thousands of acres of river land in Arizona; and

Whereas, the density of salt cedars creates dangerous conditions by congesting flood-prone areas, impeding water flow and exacerbating the impact of flooding; and

Whereas, by increasing the frequency and intensity of wildfires, salt cedars threaten existing and future infrastructure in surrounding communities; and

Whereas, this invasive plant out-competes native cottonwood, mesquite and willow and displaces riparian and other wildlife habitats by altering the ecology and hydrology of native systems; and

Whereas, each salt cedar tree consumes 200 to 300 gallons of water a day, which lowers the water table and creates large deposits of salt in the soil; and

Whereas, salt cedars negatively impact Arizona's economy by jeopardizing agriculture due to high water usage, tending to obstruct irrigation canals and limiting recreational opportunities; and

Whereas, eliminating salt cedars will sustain precious water supplies, reduce the risk of environmental disasters and minimize structural and ecological damage and loss of life.

Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

1. That the United States Congress appropriate monies to the State of Arizona to eradicate salt cedars from Arizona waterways.

2. That the United States Department of the Interior and the United States Department of Agriculture develop innovative solutions to control the proliferation of salt cedars.

3. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.

POM-47. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan urging the United States Congress to allocate 425 million dollars for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in the fiscal year 2024 budget; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 15

Whereas, The Great Lakes are a critical resource for our nation, supporting the economy and a way of life in Michigan and the other seven states within the Great Lakes region. The Great Lakes hold 21 percent of the world's surface freshwater and 84 percent of the United States' surface freshwater supply. This globally significant freshwater resource provides drinking water for more than 30 million people and directly supports 1.3 million jobs, generating \$82 billion in wages; and

Whereas, The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) has provided crucial funding to support long overdue work to protect and restore the Great Lakes. In partnership with the states, local governments, and other organizations, the federal government has invested more than \$3 billion and supported over 6,800 projects since 2010, including over \$600 million for more than 2,100 projects in Michigan. These projects have cleaned up toxic pollution, reduced runoff from cities and farms, combatted invasive species, and restored fish and wildlife habitats; and

Whereas, The GLRI has made a significant difference and represents a sound investment in both the environment and the economies of the Great Lakes region. A 2018 study calculated that for every federal dollar invested in Great Lakes restoration there is an additional \$3.35 in economic activity, with older industrial cities like Detroit seeing an even higher return on investment; and

Whereas, Far more work needs to be done. Whether toxic algal blooms contaminating water supplies of Lake Erie, invasive carp threatening billion-dollar fisheries, or contaminated sediments restricting recreational opportunities, substantial limitations and threats to the use of the Great Lakes remain. These problems require a collaborative effort to solve; and

Whereas, The United States Congress allocated \$368 million to the GLRI as part of the federal spending bill for Fiscal Year 2023. While a \$279.8 million increase from Fiscal Year 2022, this allocation is less than the \$400 million that the GLRI was authorized to receive. This shortfall ignores the national significance of our country's largest reserve of drinkable, surface freshwater and jeopardizes the momentum from more than a decade of unprecedented regional cooperation. It is a short-sighted, short-term cost-savings measure with long-term implications. Restoration efforts will only become more expensive and more difficult if they are not addressed in the coming years. The federal government needs to remain an active partner with the Great Lakes Region; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the United States Congress to allocate \$425 mil-

lion for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-48. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana urging the United States Environmental Protection Agency to take such actions as are necessary to timely review and grant the State of Louisiana's application for primacy in the administration of Class VI injection well permitting and to express this body's support in furtherance thereof to maintain and extend Louisiana's global leadership in transformative energy innovation; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 229

Whereas, for well over a century the people of Louisiana, through their elected representatives in the Louisiana Legislature and executive branch regulatory agencies, have capably and conscientiously overseen the state's oil and gas industry, including enactment of the first conservation laws in 1906 and the establishment of the office of conservation in 1921; and

Whereas, since the state's first successful oil well was completed in a Jennings rice field more than one hundred twenty years ago, Louisiana has been a leader in exploring the next energy frontier and pioneering the necessary technologies and capabilities, including: the first over-the-water oil well in Caddo Lake, the first long-distance pipeline from Shreveport to a Baton Rouge refinery, the first fluid catalytic cracker unit critical to boost fuel production and octane during World War II, and the first offshore drilling rig and producing well out of sight of land in the Gulf of Mexico; and

Whereas, in 2009 the members of the Louisiana Legislature had the foresight to enact the Louisiana Geologic Sequestration and Carbon Dioxide Act and thus create the statutory and regulatory framework enabling the Department of Natural Resources to request that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) allow the state of Louisiana to administer and enforce the Class VI injection well permitting program; and

Whereas, the Department of Natural Resources, office of conservation, submitted its primacy request in the fall of 2021, after more than two years of preparation and coordination with EPA Region 6 as well as two public comment periods; and

Whereas, the EPA published a proposed rule to grant Louisiana primacy in the Federal Register in early May 2023; and

Whereas, for decades Louisiana state government agencies have been effectively administering a number of federal regulatory programs to which the EPA has either delegated authority or granted primacy to the state of Louisiana; and

Whereas, in 1982, the office of conservation, Underground Injection Control Section was granted primacy by the EPA to administer the approved regulatory and permitting program for Class I, Class II, Class III, Class IV, and Class V wells; and

Whereas, for more than forty years it has been a core duty of state agency leaders and employees to protect underground sources of drinking water, surface waters, and the land from endangerment by regulating the subsurface injection of hazardous and nonhazardous waste fluids; subsurface storage of liquid, liquefied, and gaseous fluids; mineral

solution mining; and injection for enhanced oil recovery; and

Whereas, Louisiana citizens employed at the appropriate state government agencies are best qualified to evaluate Class VI permit applications in light of Safe Drinking Water Act requirements due to decades-long experience and knowledge of Louisiana's subsurface geology; and

Whereas, Louisiana's Class VI primacy application incorporates a memorandum of agreement with EPA Region 6 reaffirming the state's commitment to inclusive participation during the permitting process with a sensitivity to potential impacts on susceptible sub-populations; and

Whereas, there are currently twenty administratively complete Class VI permit applications pending at the federal agency representing tens of billions of dollars in potential capital investment, tens of millions in metric tons of captured carbon dioxide emissions, and untold thousands of Louisiana jobs; and

Whereas, the EPA has yet to issue a single Class VI permit from a Louisiana applicant; and

Whereas, Louisiana embraces an all-the-above approach to the nation's energy supply as well as the ongoing energy transition, of which carbon capture and sequestration plays an integral part; and

Whereas, Louisiana is committed to maintaining its position as a national leader in energy production, job growth in the energy sector, and innovative climate technologies; and

Whereas, a recent PricewaterhouseCoopers economic analysis showed that Louisiana's natural gas and oil industry supported three hundred forty-six thousand jobs, provided \$25.8 billion in labor income and contributed more than \$54 billion toward the state's economy; and

Whereas, the anticipated carbon capture, utilization, and storage activity in Louisiana, coupled with new infrastructure and retrofitting needs, is critical to retaining, sustaining, and growing the state's oil, natural gas, pipeline, petrochemical, biofuel, liquefied natural gas, and hydrogen economy as it transforms into an increasingly decarbonized future; and

Whereas, Louisiana serves a national strategic purpose in protecting our country's energy security as it produces sixteen per cent of domestic energy, and supports America's allies across the world with energy exports; and

Whereas, Louisiana officials have been in an active, years-long collaboration with the EPA to establish robust regulatory requirements and oversight of Class VI wells in order to ensure the safe implementation of carbon capture and sequestration projects in the state: Now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Environmental Protection Agency to take such actions as are necessary to timely review and grant the state of Louisiana's application for primacy in the administration of Class VI injection well permitting and to express support in furtherance thereof to maintain and extend Louisiana's global leadership in transformative energy innovation; and

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America, to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation, and submitted for inclusion in the comments for Docket Number EPA-HQ-OW-2023-0073.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF
COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. DURBIN for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Jerry Edwards, Jr., of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana.

Brandon S. Long, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

Matthew James Maddox, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

Philip S. Hadji, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Jennifer L. Hall, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the District of Delaware.

Brandy R. McMillion, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Karoline Mehalchick, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Joseph Albert Laroski, Jr., of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Lisa W. Wang, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Rebecca C. Lutzko, of Ohio, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio for the term of four years.

April M. Perry, of Illinois, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois for the term of four years.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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. WELCH (for himself and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2798. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to clarify land eligible for enrollment in the conservation reserve program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2799. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish an Office of Rural Health, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RICKETTS:

S. 2800. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a temporary reduction of the inclusion in gross income for old-age and survivors insurance benefit payments under the Social Security Act, as well as tier 1 railroad retirement benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. COONS, Ms. WARREN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2801. A bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to certain members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. LEE, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. VANCE, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 2802. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to remove a prohibition on the use of funds relating to the provision of a dangerous weapon or training in the use of a dangerous weapon; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 2803. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for the electronic request of certain records, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. SANDERS, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2804. A bill to restore protections for Social Security, Railroad retirement, and Black Lung benefits from administrative offset; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2805. A bill to amend chapter 111 of title 28, United States Code, to increase transparency and oversight of third-party funding by foreign persons, to prohibit third-party funding by foreign states and sovereign wealth funds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. VANCE, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 2806. A bill to repeal certain provisions relating to taxpayer subsidies for home electrification, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. KING, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2807. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish and carry out a grant program to conserve, restore, and manage kelp forest ecosystems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. PADILLA, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 2808. A bill to provide Federal-local community partnership construction funding to local educational agencies eligible to receive payments under the Impact Aid program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 2809. A bill ensure references to opioid overdose reversal agents in certain grant programs of the Department of Health and Human Services are not limited to naloxone; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. MULLIN):

S. 2810. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to improve access by Indian Tribes to support from universal service programs of the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Ms. LUMMIS (for herself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. RISCH, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. LEE, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 2811. A bill to require the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to withdraw proposed rules relating to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. COONS, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WELCH):

S. 2812. A bill to support carbon dioxide removal research and development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2813. A bill to promote and support collaboration between Hispanic-serving institutions and local educational agencies with high enrollments of Hispanic or Latino students, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 2814. A bill to direct the Secretary of Education to make grants to support early college high schools and dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2815. A bill to provide for a wage differential program to support new nursing school faculty members; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 2816. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to make all children eligible for Medicaid from birth until age 19, to require States to automatically enroll children under age 19 in the State Medicaid program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2817. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to prohibit employers from paying employees in the garment industry by piece rate, to require manufacturers and contractors in the garment industry to register with the Department of Labor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HAWLEY:

S. 2818. A bill to amend the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, to make unlawful acquisitions that would create monopolies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DURBIN (for Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Mr. RUBIO)):

S. 2819. A bill to protect and expand access to pasteurized, donor human milk, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. RISCH, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2820. A bill to amend the Antiquities Act to increase congressional oversight with respect to the designation of national monuments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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

S. 2821. 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; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2822. A bill to strengthen and expand the Green Ribbon Schools Program at the Department of Education by boosting the capacity of participating States to expand the number of schools, applicants, and nominees engaged around environmental, environmental literacy, and environmental health goals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 2823. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to safeguard beneficial tax treatment on certain expenses from bolstering the research and development sectors in foreign entities of concern; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. VANCE, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. LEE, Mr. BUDD, Mr. DAINES, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 2824. A bill to secure the borders of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KAINÉ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2825. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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

S. 2826. A bill to prevent energy poverty and ensure that at-risk communities have access to affordable energy; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WELCH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. SMITH, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. KAINÉ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COONS, Ms. WARREN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S.J. Res. 45. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the

United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. Res. 342. A resolution congratulating the people of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic on the 30th anniversary of their independence and recognizing their substantial support to Ukraine against Russian aggression; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. KAINÉ, and Mr. REED):

S. Res. 343. A resolution supporting the designation of September 17, 2023, as "National Physician Suicide Awareness Day" to raise awareness of, and promote a national discussion about, physician suicide and to reduce the stigma of mental health issues; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. Res. 344. A resolution urging all members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to spend a minimum of 2 percent of gross domestic product on defense; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 345. A resolution supporting the designation of September 15, 2023, as "National Concussion Awareness Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 76

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 76, a bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to furnish tailored information to expecting mothers, and for other purposes.

S. 204

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 204, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

S. 219

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 219, a bill to provide that Members of Congress may not receive pay after October 1 of any fiscal year in which Congress has not approved a concurrent resolution on the budget and passed the regular appropriations bills.

S. 448

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 448, a bill to codify the existing Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partner-

ship Program of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 610

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 610, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to modify the frequency of board of directors meetings, and for other purposes.

S. 1102

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1102, a bill to protect the dignity of fetal remains, and for other purposes.

S. 1351

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1351, a bill to study and prevent child abuse in youth residential programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1573

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1573, a bill to reauthorize the Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who deliver Infants Early Act.

S. 1624

At the request of Mr. KAINÉ, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1624, a bill to require certain civil penalties to be transferred to a fund through which amounts are made available for the Gabriella Miller Kids First Pediatric Research Program at the National Institutes of Health, and for other purposes.

S. 1706

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for qualified business income.

S. 1714

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1714, a bill to provide paid family leave benefits to certain individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1829

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1829, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to persons engaged in the import of petroleum from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 2035

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2035, a bill to amend the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 to make additional coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program available for crops

and grasses used for grazing, and for other purposes.

S. 2221

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2221, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that all provisions shall apply to legally married same-sex couples in the same manner as other married couples, and for other purposes.

S. 2258

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2258, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to permit supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits to be used to purchase additional types of food items.

S. 2315

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2315, a bill to provide for the creation of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel Records Collection at the National Archives, to require the expeditious public transmission to the Archivist and public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, and for other purposes.

S. 2372

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2372, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines, and for other purposes.

S. 2444

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2444, a bill to establish an interactive online dashboard to improve public access to information about grant funding related to mental health and substance use disorder programs.

S. 2518

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2518, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make investment income of certain foreign governments subject to tax.

S. 2519

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2519, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose an asset test on professional sports leagues qualifying for 501(c)(6) status.

S. 2589

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2589, a bill to amend the Research Facilities Act and the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Re-

form Act of 1998 to address deferred maintenance at agricultural research facilities, and for other purposes.

S. 2645

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2645, a bill to reduce the health risks of heat by establishing the National Integrated Heat Health Information System within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Integrated Heat Health Information System Interagency Committee to improve extreme heat preparedness, planning, and response, requiring a study, and establishing financial assistance programs to address heat effects, and for other purposes.

S. 2669

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2669, a bill to require the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network to issue guidance on digital assets, and for other purposes.

S. 2790

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2790, a bill to reform rural housing programs, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 43

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 43, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Improving Income Driven Repayment for the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program and the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program".

S. CON. RES. 7

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 7, a concurrent resolution condemning Russia's unjust and arbitrary detention of Russian opposition leader Vladimir Kara-Murza who has stood up in defense of democracy, the rule of law, and free and fair elections in Russia.

S. RES. 334

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana

(Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 334, a resolution recognizing September 11, 2023, as a "National Day of Service and Remembrance".

AMENDMENT NO. 1115

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1115 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1117

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1117 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1122

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1122 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1139

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1139 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1140

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1140 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1141

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1143

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1143 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the

Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1181

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1181 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1193

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1193 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4366, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

S. 2803. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow for the electronic request of certain records, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise to introduce the Wounded Warrior Access Act, along with Senator BRAUN.

This legislation would streamline the process for veterans to submit a claim for benefits by giving them electronic access to their benefit claim file.

This legislation would require the VA to establish and maintain a secure online tool or website to enable a veteran or their representative to submit a request to receive their claims file, or C-File, electronically.

Allowing veterans to access their C-File electronically would allow veterans to access their information in a faster and more efficient manner.

When a veteran submits a claim for benefits to the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, a C-File is created. C-Files contain a veteran's service records, results of VA exams, additional information submitted by the veteran, and any material the VA deems necessary to decide a claim.

Currently, a veteran must travel to a regional VA location or mail in a form

to request a paper copy of their C-File, slowing down the process for individuals to gain access to their information.

The Wounded Warrior Access Act would require the VA to offer an online alternative for veterans to request their C-File. Online requests would dramatically modernize the C-File collection, decrease processing time, and reduce unnecessary appeals since more veterans will have access to all the information the VA used to decide their claims, ultimately saving the VA time and money.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact the Wounded Warrior Access Act as quickly as possible, and I thank Congressman PETE AGUILAR for his partnership on this legislation.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2813. A bill to promote and support collaboration between Hispanic-serving institutions and local educational agencies with high enrollments of Hispanic or Latino students, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of the Hispanic Educational Resources and Empowerment Act of 2023, which I reintroduced today.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions, HSIs, provide incredible opportunities for millions of low-income and first-generation students. I am proud that my State of California is home to 170 HSIs and 47 emerging HSIs, the most in the country. That is why I launched the first-ever Senate HSI Caucus with my colleague, Senator MENENDEZ—to spotlight and advocate for the 572 HSIs across our country. These critical institutions educate our future leaders and help to build a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

During the pandemic, the number of HSIs in our country declined for the first time in two decades due to a decrease in higher education enrollment among Latino students during the pandemic. While the number of HSIs has since increased above prepandemic levels, this previous decrease illustrates the need for further investments in Latino youth. That is why I am reintroducing the HERE Act.

If enacted, this bill would support Latino students throughout secondary and postsecondary education. Specifically, the HERE Act would provide \$150 million for grants to create partnerships between HSIs and K-12 school districts that serve large populations of Latino students.

Schools could use this funding to provide academic support that better prepares students for postsecondary education. They could create new programs to foster a college-going culture

by exposing students and their families to postsecondary opportunities. And they could better support students through the college application and transition process. Additionally, schools could use grants to address non-academic needs that serve as barriers to college enrollment and completion—such as childcare, food insecurity, financial hardship, and more.

Latinos are the largest, youngest, and second fastest growing minority population in the United States. While making up about 20 percent of our country's population, Latinos comprise 26 percent of prekindergarten through grade 12 enrollment. Latino students are going to college more than ever before, but they still face lower educational outcomes, including lower grades, lower scores on standardized tests, and higher dropout rates.

As a Senator representing one of the most diverse States in the country, I am proud to work with my colleagues to ensure the American dream is a reality for every student.

I want to thank Congressman JOAQUIN CASTRO for introducing this bill with me, and I hope our colleagues will join us in support of this effort to empower Latino youth.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2815. A bill to provide for a wage differential program to support new nursing school faculty members; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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. 2815

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 "Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. NURSE FACULTY GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 846A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 296n-1) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by adding "AND NURSING FACULTY GRANT PROGRAM" after "LOAN PROGRAM";

(2) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) IN GENERAL.—To increase the number of qualified nursing faculty, the Secretary, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, may—

"(1) enter into an agreement with any accredited school of nursing for the establishment and operation of a student loan fund in accordance with subsection (b); and

"(2) award nurse faculty grants in accordance with subsection (c).";

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) by redesignating clauses (A) through (D) of paragraph (2) as clauses (i) through (iv), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (5) as subparagraphs (A) through (E), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking “subsection (c)” and inserting “paragraph (2)”;

(D) by striking “(b) AGREEMENTS—Each agreement entered into under subsection (a) shall—” and inserting the following:

“(b) SCHOOL OF NURSING STUDENT LOAN FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each agreement entered into under subsection (a)(1) shall—”

(4) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “subsection (a)” each place it appears and inserting “subsection (a)(1)”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in paragraph (6), by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly; and

(D) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (6) as subparagraphs (A) through (F), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly; and

(E) in subparagraph (F)(ii), as so redesignated, by striking “subsection (e)” and inserting “paragraph (4)”;

(5) in subsection (e), by striking “subsection (c)(6)(B)” and inserting “paragraph (2)(F)(ii)”;

(6) by redesignating subsections (c) through (e) as paragraphs (2) through (4), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) NURSE FACULTY GRANT PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out a program described in subsection (a)(2) under which eligible schools of nursing receive a grant for purposes of supplementing the salaries to enhance recruitment and retention of nursing faculty members.

“(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an entity shall—

“(A) be a school of nursing; and

“(B) submit an application to the Secretary, at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including—

“(i)(I) to the extent such information is available to the school of nursing, the salary history of nursing faculty at such school who previously were nurses in clinical practice, for the most recent 3-year period ending on the date of application, adjusted for inflation as appropriate and broken down by credentials, experience, and levels of education of such nurses; or

“(II) if the information described in subclause (I) is not available, information on the average local salary of nurses in clinical practice, adjusted for inflation as appropriate and broken down by credentials, experience, and levels of education of the individual nurses, in accordance with such requirements as the Secretary may specify;

“(ii) an attestation of the average nursing faculty salary at the school of nursing during the most recent 3-year period prior to the date of application, adjusted for inflation, as appropriate, broken down by credentials, experience, and levels of education of such faculty members;

“(iii) the number of nursing faculty member vacancies at the entity at the time of application, and the entity’s projection of such vacancies over the ensuing 5-year period; and

“(iv) a description of the entity’s plans to identify funding sources to sustainably continue, after the 3-year grant period, the salary available to the eligible nursing faculty member pursuant to the program under this subsection during such grant program and to retain eligible nursing faculty members after the end of the grant period.

“(3) AWARDS.—A grant awarded under this subsection, with respect to supporting eligible nursing faculty members, shall—

“(A) be awarded to the school of nursing to supplement the salaries of eligible faculty members at the school of nursing, annually, for up to a 3-year period, in an amount equal to, for each eligible nursing faculty member at the eligible entity during the grant period, the difference between—

“(i) the average salary of nurses in clinical practice submitted under subclause (I) or (II) of paragraph (2)(B)(i); and

“(ii) the greater of—

“(I) the salary for the eligible nursing faculty member at the school of nursing; or

“(II) the average nursing faculty salary submitted under paragraph (2)(B)(ii) for faculty members with the same or similar credentials and level of education;

“(B) notwithstanding section 803(a), be used in its entirety to supplement the eligible faculty member’s salary; and

“(C) be conditioned upon the school of nursing maintaining, for each year in which the award is made as described in subparagraph (A), a salary for such faculty member at a level that is not less than the greater of the amount under subclause (I) or (II) of subparagraph (A)(ii).

“(4) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall ensure the equitable geographic distribution of awards, and shall give priority to applications from schools of nursing that demonstrate—

“(A) the greatest need for such grant, which may be based upon the financial circumstances of the school of nursing, eligible nurse faculty members, the planned number of students to be trained or admitted off a wait list;

“(B) training or partnerships to serve vulnerable patient populations, such as through the location or activity of a school in a health professional shortage area;

“(C) recruitment and retention of faculty from underrepresented populations; or

“(D) other particular need for such grant, including public institutions of higher education that offer 4-year degrees but at which the predominant degree awarded is an associate degree.

“(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection precludes a school of nursing or an eligible nursing faculty member receiving an award under this section from obtaining or receiving any other form of Federal support or funding.

“(6) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Nurse Faculty Shortage Reduction Act of 2023, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, a report that evaluates the program established under this subsection, including—

“(A) the impact of such program on recruitment and retention rates of nursing faculty, as available, and specifically for each faculty member participating in the program; and

“(B) recommendations and considerations for Congress on continuing the program under this section through the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

“(7) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) ELIGIBLE NURSING FACULTY MEMBER.—The term ‘eligible nursing faculty member’ means a nursing faculty member who—

“(i) was hired by a school of nursing within the 2-year period preceding the submission of an application under paragraph (2), or a prospective nursing faculty member;

“(ii) is currently employed at the school of nursing and who demonstrates the need for such support;

“(iii) previously worked as a nurse in clinical practice or as a nurse faculty member at another school of nursing; or

“(iv) may work on a part-time basis as a nursing faculty member, for whom such award amounts described in paragraph (3) shall be prorated relative to the amount of time participating in part-time teaching.

“(B) INFLATION.—The term ‘inflation’ means the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers (all items; U.S. city average).

“(8) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this subsection, there is authorized to be appropriated \$28,500,000 for each of fiscal year 2024 through 2028.”

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 342—CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND RECOGNIZING THEIR SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT TO UKRAINE AGAINST RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RISC, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. RICKETTS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 342

Whereas, on January 8, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson called for the free “autonomous development” of the peoples of Austria-Hungary in the “Fourteen Points” address to a joint session of Congress, contributing to the support of an independent Czech and Slovak nation state;

Whereas the peoples of the present-day Czech Republic and Slovak Republic proclaimed independence on October 28, 1918, and October 30, 1918, respectively, forming the common state of the Republic of Czechoslovakia;

Whereas, on November 12, 1918, the United States and Czechoslovakia established formal diplomatic relations;

Whereas, in February 1948, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia seized power from the democratically elected government of Czechoslovakia;

Whereas, on August 20, 1968, 20 Soviet and Warsaw Pact military divisions invaded Czechoslovakia to crush the Prague Spring, a period of increased political and economic liberty following the appointment of Alexander Dubcek as First Secretary of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party;

Whereas, in the nonviolent Velvet Revolution of November 1989, the peoples of both nations overthrew 40 years of totalitarian communist rule and ended two decades of Soviet occupation;

Whereas, after the Velvet Revolution, the peoples of Czechoslovakia established vibrant, pluralistic, democratic political systems based on free-market economics, freedom of speech, a free press, free and fair elections, the rule of law, and respect for human rights—values embodied by Vaclav Havel, the first president of Czechoslovakia after the fall of communism in that country;

Whereas, on February 21, 1990, Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel delivered his historic address before the joint session of the United States Congress on Czechoslovakia’s path to democracy;

Whereas, on January 1, 1993, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic were formally created as independent nation states after the peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia;

Whereas the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, owing to substantial support from the United States, joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on March 12, 1999, and March 29, 2004, respectively, and have made significant contributions to collective defense and the operations of NATO as well as international coalitions led by the United States around the world;

Whereas the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic continue to demonstrate their strong commitment to advancing democracy, free trade, respect for human rights, international peace and security, and the rules-based international order through their membership in the European Union and other international organizations;

Whereas the peoples of the United States, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic have forged a special relationship based on their shared historic ties, mutual respect, close cooperation, and the shared values of democracy, free trade, respect for human rights, international peace and security, and the rules-based international order;

Whereas, in 2023, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic are celebrating the 30th anniversary of the National Guard State Partnership Program with the National Guards of Texas, Nebraska, and Indiana, a program which has contributed to military readiness and interoperability between the United States, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic;

Whereas the United States, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic stand united in support of the people and Government of Ukraine against Russia's unjustified and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine; and

Whereas the United States, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic are major contributors to political, humanitarian, economic, and military assistance to Ukraine: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the peoples of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic for overthrowing totalitarian communist rule in 1989 and asserting their right to self-determination and affirming their allegiance to the values of democracy, free-market economics, and respect for human rights through the peaceful, nonviolent Velvet Revolution;

(2) celebrates the lasting contributions of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic to science, the arts, culture, music, literature, politics, trade, and international affairs;

(3) applauds the achievements of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic in building free, open, democratic, and prosperous societies over the past 30 years;

(4) congratulates the peoples of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic on the 30th anniversary of their independence and the 105th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic;

(5) congratulates the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic for their leadership in the European Union;

(6) expresses gratitude for the solidarity of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic as they stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine in their fight against Russia's brutal, unprovoked, and illegal invasion;

(7) reaffirms the historical and transnational ties that bind together the countries and peoples of the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, and the United States as freedom-loving peoples and members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

(8) recognizes the importance of the United States, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic partnership, as long-standing partners and as NATO allies, in addressing common threats and challenges, including in the areas of climate change, energy security, advanced technologies, cyber security, and resilience to disinformation and hybrid threats;

(9) applauds the commitment of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic to spend two percent of their gross domestic products on defense by 2024, an important commitment they have made as NATO allies; and

(10) expresses the United States commitment to further strengthen transatlantic ties and regional security through NATO, supports a faster pace of modernization of the Czech and Slovak armed forces in light of the clear threat to transatlantic peace and security posed by Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and reaffirms commitment to continue working to address new and emerging threats to our security, including the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and other authoritarian actors.

SENATE RESOLUTION 343—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2023, AS “NATIONAL PHYSICIAN SUICIDE AWARENESS DAY” TO RAISE AWARENESS OF, AND PROMOTE A NATIONAL DISCUSSION ABOUT, PHYSICIAN SUICIDE AND TO REDUCE THE STIGMA OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. REED) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

Whereas physicians work under intense pressure and are exposed to trauma on the job;

Whereas the risk of suicide within the medical profession is among the highest rates of any occupation;

Whereas each year in the United States roughly 300 to 400 physicians die by suicide;

Whereas the suicide rate—

(1) among male physicians is 1.41 times higher than the general male population; and

(2) among female physicians is even more pronounced, being 2.27 times higher than the general female population;

Whereas difficult working conditions, burdensome administrative tasks, long hours, grief over losing patients, and watching the families of patients suffer add a layer of extreme stress for many frontline workers;

Whereas mental health and physical health are equally important components of overall health;

Whereas there are structural barriers in place that discourage self-care and mental health help-seeking behaviors among physicians; and

Whereas a day of public awareness and education campaigns is held on September 17 each year to shine a light on the tragedy of physician suicide: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goal of National Physician Suicide Awareness Day to bring national attention to the mental health crisis affecting physicians in the United States;

(2) dedicates a day of reflection to honor the memory of physicians who have died by suicide;

(3) recognizes the need for greater research into understanding and addressing the issues surrounding physician suicide, including the barriers to treatment, help-seeking behav-

iors to address burnout, and mental care options to prevent physician suicide; and

(4) encourages the President to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe National Physician Suicide Awareness Day with appropriate awareness and educational activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 344—URGING ALL MEMBERS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION TO SPEND A MINIMUM OF 2 PERCENT OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT ON DEFENSE

Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 344

Whereas, in 2006, member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (commonly known as “NATO”) first agreed to spend 2 percent of gross domestic product on defense;

Whereas, in 2014 at the NATO Summit in Wales, all member countries once again committed to maintain or move toward meeting the 2-percent defense spending minimum within 10 years;

Whereas, by 2022, only 11 member countries met the 2-percent minimum, including the United States and the United Kingdom, which were the only 2 major economies;

Whereas many member countries issued statements pledging to meet the 2-percent minimum following the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, yet many member countries are projected to not reach the minimum until as late as 2035; and

Whereas, despite increased spending by some member countries, the United States, which accounts for more than 50 percent of the combined gross domestic product of NATO, ultimately pays 70 percent of the combined defense expenditures of NATO: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) agrees that the lack of sufficient progress towards 2-percent gross domestic product defense spending by member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (commonly known as “NATO”) is politically and economically unsustainable;

(2) views the failure of many of United States allies, including some of the largest member countries of NATO, to meet the 2-percent defense spending minimum has the potential—

(A) to undermine support for NATO by the people of the United States;

(B) to severely limit the ability of countries in Europe to contribute to a shared interest in defending against the Russian Federation; and

(C) to become a source of long-term instability in Europe and frustration for taxpayers in the United States;

(3) commends member countries, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, whose individual contributions constitute 10 percent or more of the NATO direct funding and programs budget;

(4) commends member countries that have contributed significant weapons and equipment at substantial individual cost in support of Ukraine against the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and the morally reprehensible destruction of civilian lives and infrastructure by the Russian Federation;

(5) commends member countries, such as Greece, the United Kingdom, Finland, Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, that have taken strides to either meet or exceed the spending commitment; and

(6) urges all member countries to prioritize defense spending and to meet their obligations to NATO.

SENATE RESOLUTION 345—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2023, AS “NATIONAL CONCUSSION AWARENESS DAY”

Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 345

Whereas mild traumatic brain injury, otherwise known as a concussion, is an important health concern for children, teens, and adults;

Whereas, according to information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—

(1) there are as many as 1,600,000 to 3,800,000 sports-related concussions annually;

(2) as many as 5,300,000 individuals live with the long-term effects of a traumatic brain injury;

(3) between 2010 and 2016, an estimated 2,000,000 children under age 18 visited an emergency department because of a traumatic brain injury sustained during sports- or recreation-related activities;

(4) each year an estimated 283,000 children seek care in emergency departments in the United States for a sports- or recreation-related traumatic brain injury, with traumatic brain injuries sustained in contact sports accounting for approximately 45 percent of those visits;

(5) research suggests that many children with a traumatic brain injury do not seek care in emergency departments or do not seek care at all, resulting in a significant underestimate of prevalence; and

(6) approximately 15 percent of all high school students in the United States self-reported 1 or more sports- or recreation-related concussions within the preceding 12 months;

Whereas the seriousness of concussions should not be minimized in athletics, and return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols can help ensure recovery;

Whereas concussions can affect physical, mental, and social health, and a greater awareness and understanding of proper diagnosis and management of concussions is critical to improved outcomes; and

Whereas the Senate can raise awareness about concussions among the medical community and the public: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of September 15, 2023, as “National Concussion Awareness Day”;

(2) recognizes that mild traumatic brain injury, otherwise known as a concussion, is an important health concern;

(3) commends the organizations and individuals that raise awareness about mild traumatic brain injury;

(4) encourages Federal, State, and local policymakers to work together—

(A) to raise awareness about the effects of concussions; and

(B) to improve the understanding of proper diagnosis and management of concussions; and

(5) encourages further research and prevention efforts to ensure that fewer individuals experience the most adverse effects of mild traumatic brain injury.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1194. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1195. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1196. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1197. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1198. Mr. CRAMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1199. Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HASSAN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1200. Mr. HAWLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1201. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1202. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1203. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1204. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1205. Mrs. MURRAY proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra.

SA 1206. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1207. Mr. SCHUMER proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 4366, supra.

SA 1208. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1209. Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 pro-

posed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1210. Mr. VANCE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1211. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1212. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1213. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1214. Mr. WARNOCK (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. KAINE, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. OSSOFF, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1215. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1216. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. ROSEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1217. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1218. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1219. Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. WELCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1220. Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1221. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. LUMMIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1222. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. TESTER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1223. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1224. Ms. ERNST (for herself and Mr. MARSHALL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1225. Mr. HAWLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1226. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1194. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “OPERATIONS AND RESEARCH” under the heading “NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION” in title I of division C, strike the period at the end and insert the following: “: *Provided*, That none of the funds made available under this heading may be used to issue, implement, or enforce a new final rule relating to corporate average fuel economy standards or fuel efficiency standards.”.

SA 1195. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the matter preceding division A, insert the following:

SEC. 4. PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR SURGICAL OR NON-SURGICAL TREATMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 RELATING TO GENDER TRANSITIONS.

None of the funds made available by division A, B, or C of this Act may be used for surgical or non-surgical treatments for individuals under the age of 18 relating to gender transitions.

SA 1196. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 164, lines 16 through 19, strike “: *Provided further*, That funds may be transferred from one specified activity to another with the prior approval of the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress”.

SA 1197. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds appropriated by this division may be used to implement any of the following:

(1) Executive Order 13990 (42 U.S.C. 4321 note; relating to protecting public health and the environment and restoring science to tackle the climate crisis).

(2) Executive Order 14008 (42 U.S.C. 4321 note; relating to tackling the climate crisis at home and abroad).

(3) Section 6 of Executive Order 14013 (8 U.S.C. 1157 note; relating to rebuilding and enhancing programs to resettle refugees and planning for the impact of climate change on migration).

(4) Executive Order 14030 (15 U.S.C. 2901 note; relating to climate-related financial risk).

(5) Executive Order 14057 (42 U.S.C. 4321 note; relating to catalyzing clean energy industries and jobs through Federal sustainability).

(6) Executive Order 14082 (87 Fed. Reg. 56861; relating to implementation of the energy and infrastructure provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022).

(7) Executive Order 14096 (88 Fed. Reg. 25251; relating to revitalizing our nation's commitment to environmental justice for all).

SA 1198. Mr. CRAMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title I of division C, insert after section 127 the following:

SEC. 128. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to finalize, implement, administer, or enforce the proposed rulemaking entitled “National Performance Management Measures; Assessing Performance of the National Highway System, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Measure” (87 Fed. Reg. 42401 (July 15, 2022)) or a successor regulation.

SA 1199. Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HASSAN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “SALARIES AND EXPENSES” under the heading “RURAL DEVELOPMENT” in title III of division B, strike “\$351,087,000” and insert “\$527,182,000”.

SA 1200. Mr. HAWLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR PROVIDING GRANTS, FUNDING, OR ANY FINANCIAL BENEFIT TO CHINESE ENTITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to provide grants, funding, or any financial benefit to any entity, including any corporation, that—

(1) is organized under the laws of, is headquartered in, or has its principal place of business in the People's Republic of China, including any Special Administrative Region; or

(2) is subject to the control (as defined in section 800.208 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act)) of an entity described in paragraph (1).

(b) DEFINITION OF CORPORATION.—In this section, the term “corporation”—

(1) means an entity with the business structure of a corporation, a company, a limited liability company, a limited partnership, a business trust, a business association, or another similar entity; and

(2) includes any subsidiary or branch of an entity described in paragraph (1).

SA 1201. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. ____. PROHIBITION ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO REPORT CERTAIN INFORMATION TO NATIONAL INSTANT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK SYSTEM.

None of the funds made available by this Act for the Department of Veterans Affairs may be obligated or expended for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report a determination under section 5502 of title 38, United States Code, and section 3.353 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, to the Department of Justice for use by the national instant criminal background check system established pursuant to section 103 of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (34 U.S.C. 40901).

SA 1202. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other

purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) For an additional amount for “Agricultural Programs—Agricultural Research Service—Salaries and Expenses”, there is appropriated, out of amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended, for research on East Coast shellfish.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the amount made available by this Act under the heading “Farm Production and Conservation Programs—Farm Service Agency—State Mediation Grants” in title II shall be \$6,000,000.

SA 1203. Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. MORAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Of the funds made available in this Act under the heading “Department of Transportation—Federal Aviation Administration—Facilities and Equipment”, \$29,350,000 shall be for the aeronautical information management program, which includes Federal notices to air missions (“NOTAM”) sustainment, enhancements, and modernization in support of the NOTAM Improvement Act of 2023 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note).

SA 1204. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title I of division C, insert the following after section 119C:

SEC. 119H. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act may be used to operate, procure, or enter into a contracting action related to acquiring any unmanned aircraft system (as defined in section 44801(12) of title 49, United States Code) manufactured by an entity that is—

(1) included on the Consolidated Screening List or Entity List as designated by the Secretary of Commerce;

(2) included in the Chinese Military-Industrial Complex list by the Secretary of the Treasury;

(3) included in the 1260H list by the Secretary of Defense;

(4) domiciled in the People’s Republic of China;

(5) subject to influence or control by the Government of the People’s Republic of China; or

(6) a subsidiary or affiliate of an entity described in paragraphs (1) through (5).

(b) Any restrictions under subsection (a) are exempted if the operation, procurement, or contracting action is for the purposes of counter-UAS testing, analysis, training, or aviation safety testing and research and notification is provided in writing not later than 15 days after making such an expenditure to the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Com-

mittee on Appropriations of the Senate in a manner that identifies the unmanned aircraft system or systems and its intended use, provided that such report may include a classified annex as necessary.

SA 1205. Mrs. MURRAY proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of division C, add the following:

SEC. 422. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 1206. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. **THRIFTY FOOD PLAN COST ADJUSTMENTS FOR HAWAII DURING DISASTER DECLARATION.**

For the period during which the Presidential declaration of a major disaster for the State of Hawaii is in effect, no cost adjustments shall be made to the thrifty food plan with respect to Hawaii (as defined in section 3(u) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(u))) pursuant to paragraph (2) of that section.

SA 1207. Mr. SCHUMER proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of division C, add the following:

SEC. 422. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 8 days after the date enactment of this Act.

SA 1208. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act—

(1) the amount made available under this Act for necessary expenses of the Agricultural Marketing Service shall be \$239,891,000;

(2) of the amount made available under paragraph (1), \$25,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be to carry out section 12513 of Public Law 115-334, of which

\$23,000,000 shall be for dairy business innovation initiatives established in Public Law 116-6; and

(3) the amount appropriated by this Act under the heading “Farm Production and Conservation Programs—Farm Production and Conservation Business Center—Salaries and Expenses” in title II shall be \$239,684,000.

SA 1209. Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. **REPORT ON IMPACT OF PROPOSED RULE ON ACCESS OF VETERANS TO LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the impact of the proposed rule submitted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services relating to “Medicare and Medicaid programs; minimum staffing standards for long-term care facilities and Medicaid institutional payment transparency reporting” (88 Fed. Reg. 61352; published September 6, 2023) on the access of veterans to long-term care facilities under the laws administered by the Secretary, which shall include the following:

(1) The number of State homes at which current staffing would not meet the threshold for minimum staffing outlined in such proposed rule.

(2) The number of veterans who reside in a State home described in paragraph (1).

(3) The number of community nursing homes currently contracted with the Department of Veterans Affairs that would not meet the threshold for minimum staffing outlined in such proposed rule.

(4) The number of veterans who reside in a community nursing home described in paragraph (3).

(5) An assessment of whether or not such proposed rule would have any impact on community living centers of the Department.

(6) An analysis of whether the Department will be able to adequately meet the long-term care needs of veterans after the full implementation of such proposed rule, including veterans in—

(A) rural and highly rural areas;

(B) medically underserved areas;

(C) territories of the United States; or

(D) Tribal areas.

(7) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) STATE HOME.—The term “State home” has the meaning given that term in section 101(19) of title 38, United States Code.

SA 1210. Mr. VANCE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to

amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title I of division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds appropriated or made available by this division for the Department of Transportation for fiscal year 2024 may be used to enforce a mask mandate in response to the COVID-19 virus.

SA 1211. Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS RELATED TO GRANTS FOR VETERANS' CEMETERIES THAT ALLOW THE INTERMENT OF HMONG VETERANS.

None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to recover grant funds made to a State, county, or tribal organization under section 2408 of title 38, United States Code, nor deny an application by a State, county, or tribal organization for a grant under such section, for a veterans' cemetery owned by that State or county or on trust land owned by, or held in trust for, that tribal organization solely on the basis that the State, county, or tribal organization allows the interment of individuals described in section 2402(a)(10) of title 38, United States Code, in such cemetery.

SA 1212. Mr. MORAN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Of the amount appropriated under the heading "OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY" under the heading "PROCESSING, RESEARCH, AND MARKETING" under the heading "AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS" in title I, \$1,000,000 shall be used to carry out section 4208 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (7 U.S.C. 2026a), in addition to the amount made available for that section under the heading "SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM" under the heading "FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE" under the heading "DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS" in title IV.

SA 1213. Mr. ROUNDS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction,

the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading "HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY" under the heading "HOUSING PROGRAMS" under the heading "DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT" in title II of division C, insert "or to facilitate the prepayment of any indebtedness relating to any remaining principal interest under the loan made under section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. 1701q) (as in effect on November 27, 1990)" after "development of such units".

SA 1214. Mr. WARNOCK (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. KAINE, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. OSSOFF, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division C, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Using amounts made available for the Federal Aviation Administration under this Act that are not otherwise obligated, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on whether, and the degree to which, the Federal Aviation Administration's workforce development programs authorized in section 625 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-254) have: (1) helped to expand the pool of prospective applicants to the industry; (2) strengthened aviation programs at minority-serving institutions, public institutions of higher education, and public postsecondary vocational institutions; and (3) encouraged the participation of populations that are underrepresented in the aviation workforce, including women, minorities, and individuals in economically disadvantaged geographic areas and rural communities. In submitting this report, the Federal Aviation Administration shall also provide recommendations on how it can better use its workforce development grant programs to: (1) expand the pool of prospective applicants to the industry; (2) strengthen aviation programs at minority-serving institutions, public institutions of higher education, and public postsecondary vocational institutions; and (3) encouraged the participation of populations that are underrepresented in the aviation workforce, including women, minorities, and individuals in economically disadvantaged geographic areas and rural communities.

SA 1215. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 232 of title II of division A, add the following:

(D) include a review of methods used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs through

the hotline, and the ability of the hotline, to reach individuals in rural communities who may not have reliable telecommunications access.

SA 1216. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. ROSEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PRIORITIZATION OF USE OF FUNDS FOR CERTAIN TELEHEALTH SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall prioritize the use of any amounts provided to the Department of Veterans Affairs under this division for telehealth services or mental health programs, including for suicide prevention outreach and treatment programs or the Veterans Crisis Line established under section 1720F(h) of title 38, United States Code, in States with the highest rate of suicide among members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

SA 1217. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. AUDIT REFORM AND TRANSPARENCY FOR THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 714 of title 31, United States Code, or any other provision of law, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete an audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks under subsection (b) of that section not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the audit required pursuant to subsection (a) is completed, the Comptroller General of the United States—

(A) shall submit to Congress a report on the audit; and

(B) shall make the report described in subparagraph (A) available to the Speaker of the House, the majority and minority leaders of the House of Representatives, the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, the Chair and Ranking Member of the committee and each subcommittee of jurisdiction in the House of Representatives and the Senate, and any other Member of Congress who requests the report.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include a detailed description of the findings and conclusion of the Comptroller General of the United States with respect to the audit that is the subject of the report, together with such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Comptroller General of the

United States may determine to be appropriate.

(c) **REPEAL OF CERTAIN LIMITATIONS.**—Subsection (b) of section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the second sentence.

(d) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)(3), by striking “or (f)” each place the term appears;

(B) in subsection (e), by striking “the third undesignated paragraph of section 13” and inserting “section 13(3)”; and

(C) by striking subsection (f).

(2) **FEDERAL RESERVE ACT.**—Subsection (s) (relating to “Federal Reserve Transparency and Release of Information”) of section 11 of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 248) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking “has the same meaning as in section 714(f)(1)(A) of title 31, United States Code” and inserting “means a program or facility, including any special purpose vehicle or other entity established by or on behalf of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or a Federal reserve bank, authorized by the Board of Governors under section 13(3), that is not subject to audit under section 714(e) of title 31, United States Code”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking “or in section 714(f)(3)(C) of title 31, United States Code, the information described in paragraph (1) and information concerning the transactions described in section 714(f) of such title,” and inserting “the information described in paragraph (1)”; and

(C) in paragraph (7), by striking “and section 13(3)(C), section 714(f)(3)(C) of title 31, United States Code, and” and inserting “, section 13(3)(C), and”.

SA 1218. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PILOT PROGRAM FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM.

Using \$10,000,000 of the discretionary funds of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Agriculture shall establish a pilot program to provide remote delivery of school meals to students eligible for free or reduced price meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) or the summer food service program under section 13 of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1761) as part of the child and adult care food program under section 17 of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1766).

SA 1219. Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. WELCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . HOT FOOD UNDER SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012) is amended—

(1) in subsection (k)(1), by striking “consumption except alcoholic beverages, tobacco, hot foods or hot food products ready for immediate consumption other than those authorized pursuant to clauses (3), (4), (5), (7), (8), and (9) of this subsection” and inserting “consumption, including hot foods or hot food products ready for immediate consumption and excluding alcoholic beverages, tobacco”; and

(2) in subsection (o)(1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “and consumption” and inserting “or home or immediate consumption”; and

(B) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking the subparagraph designation and all that follows through “offers” and inserting the following:

“(A)(i) offers”;

(ii) in clause (i) (as so designated), by striking “or” at the end and inserting “and”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) of which not more than 50 percent of the total gross sales are from hot foods or hot food products ready for immediate consumption; or”;

(3) in subsection (q)(2)—

(A) by striking “include accessory” and inserting the following: “include—

“(A) accessory”;

(B) in subparagraph (A) (as so designated), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) hot foods or hot food products ready for immediate consumption.”.

SA 1220. Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 104 of the amendment, line 11, insert “, and of which \$6,000,000 shall be for the suppression and control of Mormon crickets in western States” before the semicolon.

SA 1221. Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. LUMMIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 747 of division B, insert “or seafood” after “poultry products”.

SA 1222. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. LUJAN, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. TESTER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND)

submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of division C, add the following:

TITLE V

REFORMING DISASTER RECOVERY ACT

SHORT TITLE

SEC. 501. This title may be cited as the “Reforming Disaster Recovery Act”.

FINDINGS

SEC. 502. Congress finds that—

(1) following a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170), the subset of communities that are most impacted and distressed as a result of the disaster face critical social, economic, and environmental obstacles to recovery, including insufficient public and private resources to address disaster-related housing and community development needs for lower income households and distressed communities;

(2) unmet disaster recovery needs, including housing assistance needs, can be especially widespread among persons with extremely low, low, and moderate incomes;

(3) economic, social, and housing hardships that affect communities before disasters are exacerbated during crises and can delay and complicate long-term recovery, especially after catastrophic major disasters;

(4) States, units of local government, and Indian Tribes within the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from major disasters benefit from flexibility to design programs that meet local needs, but face inadequate financial, technical, and staffing capacity to plan and carry out sustained recovery, restoration, and mitigation activities;

(5) the speed and effectiveness considerations of long-term recovery from catastrophic major disasters is improved by predictable investments that support disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of housing and infrastructure, and economic revitalization, primarily for the benefit of low- and moderate-income persons;

(6) undertaking activities that mitigate the effects of future natural disasters and extreme weather and increase the stock of affordable housing, including affordable rental housing, as part of long-term recovery can significantly reduce future fiscal and social costs, especially within high-risk areas, and can help to address outstanding housing and community development needs by creating jobs and providing other economic and social benefits within communities that further promote recovery and resilience; and

(7) the general welfare and security of the nation and the health and living standards of its people require targeted resources to support State and local governments in carrying out their responsibilities in disaster recovery and mitigation through interim and long-term housing and community development activities that primarily benefit persons of low and moderate income.

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 503. In this Act:

(1) **DEPARTMENT.**—The term “Department” means the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(2) **FUND.**—The term “Fund” means the Long-Term Disaster Recovery Fund established under section 505.

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 504. (a) IN GENERAL.—The offices and officers of the Department shall be responsible for—

(1) leading and coordinating the disaster-related responsibilities of the Department under the National Response Framework, the National Disaster Recovery Framework, and the National Mitigation Framework;

(2) coordinating and administering programs, policies, and activities of the Department related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, resiliency, and mitigation, including disaster recovery assistance under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);

(3) supporting disaster-impacted communities as those communities specifically assess, plan for, and address the housing stock and housing needs in the transition from emergency shelters and interim housing to permanent housing of those displaced, especially among vulnerable populations and extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income households;

(4) collaborating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Small Business Administration, and across the Department to align disaster-related regulations and policies, including incorporation of consensus-based codes and standards and insurance purchase requirements, and ensuring coordination and reducing duplication among other Federal disaster recovery programs;

(5) promoting best practices in mitigation and land use planning, including consideration of traditional, natural, and nature-based infrastructure alternatives;

(6) coordinating technical assistance, including mitigation, resiliency, and recovery training and information on all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, to entities that receive disaster recovery assistance under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) that demonstrate capacity constraints; and

(7) supporting State, Tribal, and local governments in developing, coordinating, and maintaining their capacity for disaster resilience and recovery, and developing pre-disaster recovery and hazard mitigation plans, in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other Federal agencies.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND RESILIENCY.—Section 4 of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Act (42 U.S.C. 5353) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(1) OFFICE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND RESILIENCY.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established, in the Office of the Secretary, the Office of Disaster Management and Resiliency.

“(2) DUTIES.—The Office of Disaster Management and Resiliency shall—

“(A) be responsible for oversight and coordination of all departmental disaster preparedness and response responsibilities; and

“(B) coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Small Business Administration, and the Office of Community Planning and Development and other offices of the Department in supporting recovery and resilience activities to provide a comprehensive approach in working with communities.”.

LONG-TERM DISASTER RECOVERY FUND

SEC. 505. (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States an account to be known as the Long-Term Disaster Recovery Fund.

(b) DEPOSITS, TRANSFERS, AND CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Fund shall consist of amounts appropriated, transferred, and credited to the Fund.

(2) TRANSFERS.—The following may be transferred to the Fund:

(A) Amounts made available through section 106(c)(4) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5306(c)(4)) as a result of actions taken under section 104(e), 111, or 123(j) of such Act.

(B) Any unobligated balances available until expended remaining or subsequently recaptured from amounts appropriated for any disaster and related purposes under the heading “Community Development Fund” in any Act prior to the establishment of the Fund.

(3) USE OF TRANSFERRED AMOUNTS.—Amounts transferred to the Fund shall be used for the eligible uses described in subsection (c).

(c) ELIGIBLE USES OF FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts in the Fund shall be available—

(A) to provide assistance in the form of grants under section 123 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as added by section 506; and

(B) for activities of the Department that support the provision of such assistance, including necessary salaries and expenses, information technology, capacity building and technical assistance (including assistance related to pre-disaster planning), and readiness and other pre-disaster planning activities that are not readily attributable to a single major disaster.

(2) SET ASIDE.—Of each amount appropriated for or transferred to the Fund, 2 percent shall be made available for activities described in paragraph (1)(B), which shall be in addition to other amounts made available for those activities.

(3) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—Amounts made available for use in accordance with paragraph (2)—

(A) may be transferred to the account under the heading for “Program Offices—Community Planning and Development”, or any successor account, for the Department to carry out activities described in paragraph (1)(B); and

(B) may be used for the activities described in paragraph (1)(B) and for the administrative costs of administering any funds appropriated to the Department under the heading “Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund” for any major disaster declared under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) in any Act before the establishment of the Fund.

(d) INTERCHANGEABILITY OF PRIOR ADMINISTRATIVE AMOUNTS.—Any amounts appropriated in any Act prior to the establishment of the Fund and transferred to the account under the heading “Program Offices Salaries and Expenses—Community Planning and Development”, or any predecessor account, for the Department for the costs of administering funds appropriated to the Department under the heading “Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund” for any major disaster declared under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) shall be available for the costs of administering any such funds provided by any prior or future Act, notwithstanding the purposes for which those amounts were appropriated and in addition to any amount provided for the same purposes in other appropriations Acts.

(e) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—Amounts appropriated, transferred and credited to the Fund shall remain available until expended.

(f) FORMULA ALLOCATION.—Use of amounts in the Fund for grants shall be made by formula allocation in accordance with the requirements of section 123(a) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as added by section 506.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Fund such sums as may be necessary to respond to current or future major disasters declared under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5179) for grants under section 123 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as added by section 506.

ESTABLISHMENT OF CDBG DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM

SEC. 506. Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 102(a) (42 U.S.C. 5302(a))—

(A) in paragraph (20)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(ii) in subparagraph (C), as so redesignated, by inserting “or (B)” after “subparagraph (A)”; and

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) The term ‘persons of extremely low income’ means families and individuals whose income levels do not exceed household income levels determined by the Secretary under section 3(b)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(2)(C)), except that the Secretary may provide alternative definitions for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the United States Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(25) The term ‘major disaster’ has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122).”;

(2) in section 106(c)(4) (42 U.S.C. 5306(c)(4))—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “declared by the President under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act”; and

(ii) by inserting “States for use in non-entitlement areas and to” before “metropolitan cities”; and

(iii) by inserting “major” after “affected by the”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) by striking “metropolitan city or” and inserting “State, metropolitan city, or”; and

(ii) by striking “city or county” and inserting “State, city, or county”; and

(iii) by inserting “major” before “disaster”;

(C) in subparagraph (D), by striking “metropolitan cities and” and inserting “States, metropolitan cities, and”; and

(D) in subparagraph (F)—

(i) by striking “metropolitan city or” and inserting “State, metropolitan city, or”; and

(ii) by inserting “major” before “disaster”; and

(E) in subparagraph (G), by striking “metropolitan city or” and inserting “State, metropolitan city, or”; and

(3) in section 122 (42 U.S.C. 5321), by striking “disaster under title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act” and inserting “major disaster”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 123. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM.

“(a) AUTHORIZATION, FORMULA, AND ALLOCATION.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary is authorized to make community development

block grant disaster recovery grants from the Long-Term Disaster Recovery Fund established under section 505 of the Reforming Disaster Recovery Act (hereinafter referred to as the 'Fund') for necessary expenses for activities authorized under subsection (f)(1) related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of housing and infrastructure, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a catastrophic major disaster.

“(2) GRANT AWARDS.—Grants shall be awarded under this section to States, units of general local government, and Indian tribes based on capacity and the concentration of damage, as determined by the Secretary, to support the efficient and effective administration of funds.

“(3) SECTION 106 ALLOCATIONS.—Grants under this section shall not be considered relevant to the formula allocations made pursuant to section 106.

“(4) FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall issue a notice in the Federal Register containing the latest formula allocation methodologies used to determine the total estimate of unmet needs related to housing, economic revitalization, and infrastructure in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a catastrophic major disaster.

“(B) PUBLIC COMMENT.—If the Secretary has not already requested public comment on the formula described in the notice required by subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall solicit public comments on—

“(i) the methodologies described in subparagraph (A) and seek alternative methods for formula allocation within a similar total amount of funding;

“(ii) the impact of formula methodologies on rural areas and Tribal areas;

“(iii) adjustments to improve targeting to the most serious needs;

“(iv) objective criteria for grantee capacity and concentration of damage to inform grantee determinations and minimum allocation thresholds; and

“(v) research and data to inform an additional amount to be provided for mitigation depending on type of disaster, which shall be no more than 30 percent of the total estimate of unmet needs.

“(5) REGULATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, by regulation, establish a formula to allocate assistance from the Fund to the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a catastrophic major disaster.

“(B) FORMULA REQUIREMENTS.—The formula established under subparagraph (A) shall—

“(i) set forth criteria to determine that a major disaster is catastrophic, which criteria shall consider the presence of a high concentration of damaged housing or businesses that individual, State, Tribal, and local resources could not reasonably be expected to address without additional Federal assistance, or other nationally encompassing data that the Secretary determines are adequate to assess relative impact and distress across geographic areas.

“(ii) include a methodology for identifying most impacted and distressed areas, which shall consider unmet serious needs related to housing, economic revitalization, and infrastructure;

“(iii) include an allocation calculation that considers the unmet serious needs resulting from the catastrophic major disaster and an additional amount up to 30 percent for activities to reduce risks of loss resulting from other natural disasters in the most impacted and distressed area, primarily for the

benefit of low- and moderate-income persons, with particular focus on activities that reduce repetitive loss of property and critical infrastructure; and

“(iv) establish objective criteria for periodic review and updates to the formula to reflect changes in available science and data.

“(C) MINIMUM ALLOCATION THRESHOLD.—The Secretary shall, by regulation, establish a minimum allocation threshold.

“(D) INTERIM ALLOCATION.—Until such time that the Secretary issues final regulations under this paragraph, the Secretary shall—

“(i) allocate assistance from the Fund using the formula allocation methodology published in accordance with paragraph (4); and

“(ii) include an additional amount for mitigation equal to 15 percent of the total estimate of unmet need.

“(6) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

“(i) except as provided in clause (ii), not later than 90 days after the President declares a major disaster, use best available data to determine whether the major disaster is catastrophic and qualifies for assistance under the formula in paragraph (4) or (5), unless data is insufficient to make this determination; and

“(ii) if the best available data is insufficient to make the determination required under clause (i) within the 90-day period described in that clause, the Secretary shall determine whether the major disaster qualifies when sufficient data becomes available, but in no case shall the Secretary make the determination later than 120 days after the declaration of the major disaster.

“(B) ANNOUNCEMENT OF ALLOCATION.—If amounts are available in the Fund at the time the Secretary determines that the major disaster is catastrophic and qualifies for assistance under the formula in paragraph (4) or (5), the Secretary shall immediately announce an allocation for a grant under this section.

“(C) ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.—If additional amounts are appropriated to the Fund after amounts are allocated under subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall announce an allocation or additional allocation (if a prior allocation under subparagraph (B) was less than the formula calculation) within 15 days of any such appropriation.

“(7) PRELIMINARY FUNDING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—To speed recovery, the Secretary is authorized to allocate and award preliminary grants from the Fund before making a determination under paragraph (6) if the Secretary projects, based on a preliminary assessment of impact and distress, that a major disaster is catastrophic and would likely qualify for funding under the formula in paragraph (4) or (5).

“(B) AMOUNT.—

“(i) MAXIMUM.—The Secretary may award preliminary funding under subparagraph (A) in an amount that is not more than \$5,000,000.

“(ii) SLIDING SCALE.—The Secretary shall, by regulation, establish a sliding scale for preliminary funding awarded under subparagraph (A) based on the size of the preliminary assessment of impact and distress.

“(C) USE OF FUNDS.—The uses of preliminary funding awarded under subparagraph (A) shall be limited to eligible activities that—

“(i) in the determination of the Secretary, will support faster recovery, improve the ability of the grantee to assess unmet recovery needs, plan for the prevention of improper payments, and reduce fraud, waste, and abuse; and

“(ii) may include evaluating the interim housing, permanent housing, and supportive service needs of the disaster impacted com-

munity, with special attention to vulnerable populations, such as homeless and low- to moderate-income households, to inform the grantee action plan required under subsection (c).

“(D) CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING.—Preliminary funding awarded under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) is not subject to the certification requirements of paragraph (h)(1); and

“(ii) shall not be considered when calculating the amount of the grant used for administrative costs, technical assistance, and planning activities that are subject to the requirements under subsection (f)(2).

“(E) WAIVER.—To expedite the use of preliminary funding for activities described in this paragraph, the Secretary may waive or specify alternative requirements to the requirements of this section in accordance with subsection (i).

“(F) AMENDED AWARD.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—An award for preliminary funding under subparagraph (A) may be amended to add any subsequent amount awarded because of a determination by the Secretary that a major disaster is catastrophic and qualifies for assistance under the formula.

“(ii) APPLICABILITY.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (D), amounts provided by an amendment under clause (i) are subject to the requirements under subsections (h)(1) and (f)(1) and other requirements on grant funds under this section.

“(G) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Concurrent with the allocation of any preliminary funding awarded under this paragraph, the Secretary shall assign or provide technical assistance to the recipient of the grant.

“(b) INTERCHANGEABILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary—

“(A) is authorized to approve the use of grants under this section to be used interchangeably and without limitation for the same activities in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a declaration of another catastrophic major disaster that qualifies for assistance under the formula established under paragraph (4) or (5) of subsection (a) or am major disaster for which the Secretary allocated funds made available under the heading ‘Community Development Fund’ in any Act prior to the establishment of the Fund; and

“(B) shall establish requirements to expedite the use of grants under this section for the purpose described in subparagraph (A).

“(2) EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.—Amounts repurposed pursuant to this subsection that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 or a concurrent resolution on the budget are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 951(b)(2)(A)(i)).

“(c) GRANTEE PLANS.—

“(1) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary announces a grant allocation under this section, unless an extension is granted by the Secretary, the grantee shall submit to the Secretary a plan for approval describing—

“(A) the activities the grantee will carry out with the grant under this section;

“(B) the criteria of the grantee for awarding assistance and selecting activities;

“(C) how the use of the grant under this section will address disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of housing and infrastructure, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas

“(D) how the use of the grant funds for mitigation is consistent with hazard mitigation plans submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency under section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165);

“(E) the estimated amount proposed to be used for activities that will benefit persons of low- and moderate-income;

“(F) how the use of grant funds will repair and replace existing housing stock for vulnerable populations, including low- to moderate-income households;

“(G) how the grantee will address the priorities described in paragraph (5);

“(H) how uses of funds are proportional to unmet needs, as required under paragraph (5);

“(I) for State grantees that plan to distribute grant amounts to units of general local government, a description of the method of distribution; and

“(J) such other information as may be determined by the Secretary in regulation.

“(2) PUBLIC CONSULTATION.—To permit public examination and appraisal of the plan described in paragraph (1), to enhance the public accountability of grantees, and to facilitate coordination of activities with different levels of government, when developing the plan or substantial amendments proposed to the plan required under paragraph (1), a grantee shall—

“(A) publish the plan before adoption;

“(B) provide citizens, affected units of general local government, and other interested parties with reasonable notice of, and opportunity to comment on, the plan, with a public comment period of not less than 14 days;

“(C) consider comments received before submission to the Secretary;

“(D) follow a citizen participation plan for disaster assistance adopted by the grantee that, at a minimum, provides for participation of residents of the most impacted and distressed area affected by the major disaster that resulted in the grant under this section and other considerations established by the Secretary; and

“(E) undertake any consultation with interested parties as may be determined by the Secretary in regulation.

“(3) APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall—

“(A) by regulation, specify criteria for the approval, partial approval, or disapproval of a plan submitted under paragraph (1), including approval of substantial amendments to the plan;

“(B) review a plan submitted under paragraph (1) upon receipt of the plan;

“(C) allow a grantee to revise and resubmit a plan or substantial amendment to a plan under paragraph (1) that the Secretary disapproves;

“(D) by regulation, specify criteria for when the grantee shall be required to provide the required revisions to a disapproved plan or substantial amendment under paragraph (1) for public comment prior to resubmission of the plan or substantial amendment to the Secretary; and

“(E) approve, partially approve, or disapprove a plan or substantial amendment under paragraph (1) not later than 60 days after the date on which the plan or substantial amendment is received by the Secretary.

“(4) LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME OVERALL BENEFIT.—

“(A) USE OF FUNDS.—Not less than 70 percent of a grant made under this section shall be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income unless the Secretary—

“(i) specifically finds that—

“(I) there is compelling need to reduce the percentage for the grant; and

“(II) the housing needs of low- and moderate-income residents have been addressed; and

“(ii) issues a waiver and alternative requirements pursuant to subsection (i) to lower the percentage.

“(B) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall, by regulation, establish protocols consistent with the findings of section 502 of the Reforming Disaster Recovery Act to prioritize the use of funds by a grantee under this section to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income persons and businesses serving primarily persons of low and moderate income.

“(5) PRIORITIZATION.—The grantee shall prioritize activities that—

“(A) assist persons with extremely low, low, and moderate incomes and other vulnerable populations to better recover from and withstand future disasters, emphasizing those with the most severe needs;

“(B) address affordable housing, including affordable rental housing, needs arising from a disaster or those needs present prior to a disaster;

“(C) prolong the life of housing and infrastructure;

“(D) use cost-effective means of preventing harm to people and property and incorporate protective features, redundancies, energy savings; and

“(E) other measures that will assure the continuation of critical services during future disasters.

“(6) PROPORTIONAL ALLOCATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A grantee under this section shall allocate grant funds proportional to unmet needs between housing activities, economic revitalization, and infrastructure, unless the Secretary—

“(i) specifically finds that—

“(I) there is a compelling need for a disproportional allocation among those unmet needs; and

“(II) the disproportional allocation described in subclause (I) is not inconsistent with the requirements under paragraph (4); and

“(ii) issues a waiver and alternative requirement pursuant to subsection (i) to allow for the disproportional allocation described in clause (i)(I).

“(B) HOUSING ACTIVITIES.—With respect to housing activities described in subparagraph (A)(i), grantees should address proportional needs between homeowners and renters, including low-income households in public housing and federally subsidized housing.

“(7) DISASTER RISK MITIGATION.—

“(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term ‘hazard-prone areas’—

“(i) means areas identified by the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, at risk from natural hazards that threaten property damage or health, safety, and welfare, such as floods, wildfires (including Wildland-Urban Interface areas), earthquakes, lava inundation, tornados, and high winds; and

“(ii) includes areas having special flood hazards as identified under the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4002 et seq.) or the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

“(B) HAZARD-PRONE AREAS.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, shall establish minimum construction standards, insurance purchase requirements, and other requirements for the use of grant funds in hazard-prone areas.

“(C) SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARDS.—For the areas described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the insurance purchase requirements established under subparagraph (B) shall meet or exceed the requirements under section 102(a) of the

Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(a)).

“(D) CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE RISKS.—The Secretary may consider future risks to protecting property and health, safety, and general welfare, and the likelihood of those risks, when making the determination of or modification to hazard-prone areas under this paragraph.

“(8) RELOCATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.) shall apply to activities assisted under this section to the extent determined by the Secretary in regulation, or as provided in waivers and alternative requirements authorized in accordance with subsection (i).

“(B) POLICY.—Each grantee under this section shall establish a relocation assistance policy that—

“(i) minimizes displacement and describes the benefits available to persons displaced as a direct result of acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition in connection with an activity that is assisted by a grant under this section; and

“(ii) includes any appeal rights or other requirements that the Secretary establishes by regulation.

“(9) TREATMENT AS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—All grants under this section shall be treated as financial assistance for purposes of section 3(a)(3) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003(a)(3)).

“(d) CERTIFICATIONS.—Any grant under this section shall be made only if the grantee certifies to the satisfaction of the Secretary that—

“(1) the grantee is in full compliance with the requirements under subsection (c)(2);

“(2) for grants other than grants to Indian tribes, the grant will be conducted and administered in conformity with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a et seq.) and the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.);

“(3) the projected use of funds has been developed so as to give maximum feasible priority to activities that will benefit extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income families and activities described in subsection (c)(5), and may also include activities that are designed to aid in the prevention or elimination of slum and blight to support disaster recovery, meet other community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs, and alleviate future threats to human populations, critical natural resources, and property that an analysis of hazards shows are likely to result from natural disasters in the future;

“(4) the grant funds shall principally benefit persons of low and moderate income as described in subsection (c)(4);

“(5) for grants other than grants to Indian tribes, within 24 months of receiving a grant or at the time of its 3 or 5-year update, whichever is sooner, the grantee will review and make modifications to its non-disaster housing and community development plans and strategies required by subsections (c) and (m) of section 104 to reflect the disaster recovery needs identified by the grantee and consistency with the plan under subsection (c)(1);

“(6) the grantee will not attempt to recover any capital costs of public improvements assisted in whole or part under this section by assessing any amount against properties owned and occupied by persons of low and moderate income, including any fee charged or assessment made as a condition

of obtaining access to such public improvements, unless—

“(A) funds received under this section are used to pay the proportion of such fee or assessment that relates to the capital costs of such public improvements that are financed from revenue sources other than under this chapter; or

“(B) for purposes of assessing any amount against properties owned and occupied by persons of moderate income, the grantee certifies to the Secretary that the grantee lacks sufficient funds received under this section to comply with the requirements of subparagraph (A);

“(7) the grantee will comply with the other provisions of this title that apply to assistance under this section and with other applicable laws;

“(8) the grantee will follow a relocation assistance policy that includes any minimum requirements identified by the Secretary; and

“(9) the grantee will adhere to construction standards, insurance purchase requirements, and other requirements for development in hazard-prone areas described in subsection (c)(7).

“(e) PERFORMANCE REVIEWS AND REPORTING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, on not less frequently than an annual basis, make such reviews and audits as may be necessary or appropriate to determine whether a grantee under this section has—

“(A) carried out activities using grant funds in a timely manner;

“(B) met the performance targets established by paragraph (2);

“(C) carried out activities using grant funds in accordance with the requirements of this section, the other provisions of this title that apply to assistance under this section, and other applicable laws; and

“(D) a continuing capacity to carry out activities in a timely manner.

“(2) PERFORMANCE TARGETS.—The Secretary shall develop and make publicly available critical performance targets for review, which shall include spending thresholds for each year from the date on which funds are obligated by the Secretary to the grantee until such time all funds have been expended.

“(3) FAILURE TO MEET TARGETS.—

“(A) SUSPENSION.—If a grantee under this section fails to meet 1 or more critical performance targets under paragraph (2), the Secretary may temporarily suspend the grant.

“(B) PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN.—If the Secretary suspends a grant under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall provide to the grantee a performance improvement plan with the specific requirements needed to lift the suspension within a defined time period.

“(C) REPORT.—If a grantee fails to meet the spending thresholds established under paragraph (2), the grantee shall submit to the Secretary, the appropriate committees of Congress, and each member of Congress who represents a district or State of the grantee a written report identifying technical capacity, funding, or other Federal or State impediments affecting the ability of the grantee to meet the spending thresholds.

“(4) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION AND REPORTING.—

“(A) REQUIREMENT TO REPORT.—A grantee under this section shall provide to the Secretary such information as the Secretary may determine necessary for adequate oversight of the grant program under this section.

“(B) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Subject to subparagraph (D), the Secretary shall make information submitted under subparagraph (A) available to the public and to the Inspector

General for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, disaggregated by activity, income, geography, and all classes of individuals protected under section 109 and the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.).

“(C) SUMMARY STATUS REPORTS.—To increase transparency and accountability of the grant program under this section the Secretary shall, on not less frequently than an annual basis, post on a public facing dashboard summary status reports for all active grants under this section that includes—

“(i) the status of funds by activity;

“(ii) the percentages of funds allocated and expended to benefit low- and moderate-income communities;

“(iii) performance targets, spending thresholds, and accomplishments; and

“(iv) other information the Secretary determines to be relevant for transparency.

“(D) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary—

“(i) shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that personally identifiable information regarding applicants for assistance provided from funds made available under this section is not made publicly available; and

“(ii) may make full and unredacted information available to academic institutions for the purpose of researching into the equitable distribution of recovery funds and adherence to civil rights protections.

“(f) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Activities assisted under this section—

“(A) may include activities permitted under section 105 or other activities permitted by the Secretary by waiver or alternative requirement pursuant to subsection (i); and

“(B) shall be related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of housing and infrastructure, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from the major disaster for which the grant was awarded.

“(2) PROHIBITION.—Grant funds under this section may not be used for costs reimbursable by, or for which funds have been made available by, the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

“(3) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PLANNING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish in regulation the maximum grant amounts a grantee may use for administrative costs, technical assistance and planning activities, taking into consideration size of grant, complexity of recovery, and other factors as determined by the Secretary, but not to exceed 10 percent for administration and 20 percent in total.

“(B) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts available for administrative costs for a grant under this section shall be available for eligible administrative costs of the grantee for any grant made under this section, without regard to a particular disaster.

“(4) PROGRAM INCOME.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any grantee under this section may retain program income that is realized from grants made by the Secretary under this section if the grantee agrees that the grantee will utilize the program income in accordance with the requirements for grants under this section, except that the Secretary may—

“(A) by regulation, exclude from consideration as program income any amounts determined to be so small that compliance with this paragraph creates an unreasonable administrative burden on the grantee; or

“(B) permit the grantee to transfer remaining program income to the other grants of the grantee under this title upon closeout of the grant.

“(5) PROHIBITION ON USE OF ASSISTANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT RELOCATION ACTIVITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Grants under this section may not be used to assist directly in the relocation of any industrial or commercial plant, facility, or operation, from one area to another area, if the relocation is likely to result in a significant loss of employment in the labor market area from which the relocation occurs.

“(B) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibition under subparagraph (A) shall not apply to a business that was operating in the disaster-declared labor market area before the incident date of the applicable disaster and has since moved, in whole or in part, from the affected area to another State or to a labor market area within the same State to continue business.

“(6) REQUIREMENTS.—Grants under this section are subject to the requirements of this section, the other provisions of this title that apply to assistance under this section, and other applicable laws, unless modified by waivers or alternative requirements in accordance with subsection (i).

“(g) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—

“(1) ADOPTION.—A recipient of funds provided under this section that uses the funds to supplement Federal assistance provided under section 203, 402, 403, 406, 407, 408(c)(4), 428, or 502 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133, 5170a, 5170b, 5170c, 5172, 5173, 5174(c)(4), 5189f, 5192) may adopt, without review or public comment, any environmental review, approval, or permit performed by a Federal agency, and that adoption shall satisfy the responsibilities of the recipient with respect to the environmental review, approval, or permit under section 104(g)(1).

“(2) APPROVAL OF RELEASE OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding section 104(g)(2), the Secretary or a State may, upon receipt of a request for release of funds and certification, immediately approve the release of funds for an activity or project to be assisted under this section if the recipient has adopted an environmental review, approval, or permit under paragraph (1) or the activity or project is categorically excluded from review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

“(3) UNITS OF GENERAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The provisions of section 104(g)(4) shall apply to assistance under this section that a State distributes to a unit of general local government.

“(h) FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop requirements and procedures to demonstrate that a grantee under this section—

“(A) has adequate financial controls and procurement processes;

“(B) has adequate procedures to detect and prevent fraud, waste, abuse and duplication of benefit; and

“(C) maintains a comprehensive and publicly accessible website.

“(2) CERTIFICATION.—Before making a grant under this section, the Secretary shall certify that the grantee has in place proficient processes and procedures to comply with the requirements developed under paragraph (1), as determined by the Secretary.

“(3) COMPLIANCE BEFORE ALLOCATION.—The Secretary may permit a State, unit of general local government, or Indian tribe to demonstrate compliance with the requirements for adequate financial controls developed under paragraph (1) before a disaster occurs and before receiving an allocation for a grant under this section.

“(4) DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available under this section shall be used in accordance with section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155), as amended by section 1210 of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 (division D of Public Law 115-254), and such rules as may be prescribed under such section 312.

“(B) PENALTIES.—In any case in which the use of grant funds under this section results in a prohibited duplication of benefits, the grantee shall—

“(i) apply an amount equal to the identified duplication to any allowable costs of the award consistent with actual, immediate cash requirement;

“(ii) remit any excess amounts to the Secretary to be credited to the obligated, undisbursed balance of the grant consistent with requirements on Federal payments applicable to such grantee; and

“(iii) if excess amounts under clause (ii) are identified after the period of performance or after the closeout of the award, remit such amounts to the Secretary to be credited to the Fund.

“(C) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—Any grantee provided funds under this subsection or from prior Appropriations Acts under the heading ‘Community Development Fund’ for purposes related to major disasters that fails to comply with section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5155) or fails to satisfy penalties to resolve a duplication of benefits shall be subject to remedies for noncompliance under section 111, unless the Secretary publishes a determination in the Federal Register that it is not in the best interest of the Federal Government to pursue remedial actions.

“(i) WAIVERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In administering grants under this section, the Secretary may waive, or specify alternative requirements for, any provision of any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers in connection with the obligation by the Secretary or the use by the grantee of those funds (except for requirements related to fair housing, non-discrimination, labor standards, the environment, and the requirements of this section that do not expressly authorize modifications by waiver or alternative requirement), if the Secretary makes a public finding that good cause exists for the waiver or alternative requirement and the waiver or alternative requirement would not be inconsistent with the findings in section 502 of the Reforming Disaster Recovery Act.

“(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—A waiver or alternative requirement described in paragraph (1) shall not take effect before the date that is 5 days after the date of publication of the waiver or alternative requirement on the website of the Department of Housing and Urban Development or the effective date for any regulation published in the Federal Register.

“(3) PUBLIC NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall notify the public of all waivers or alternative requirements described in paragraph (1) in accordance with the requirements of section 7(q)(3) of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Act (42 U.S.C. 3535(q)(3)).

“(j) UNUSED AMOUNTS.—

“(1) DEADLINE TO USE AMOUNTS.—A grantee under this section shall use an amount equal to the grant within 6 years beginning on the date on which the Secretary obligates the amounts to the grantee, as such period may be extended under paragraph (4).

“(2) RECAPTURE.—The Secretary shall recapture and credit to the Fund any amount that is unused by a grantee under this section upon the earlier of—

“(A) the date on which the grantee notifies the Secretary that the grantee has completed all activities identified in the disaster grantee’s plan under subsection (c); or

“(B) the expiration of the 6-year period described in paragraph (1), as such period may be extended under paragraph (4).

“(3) RETENTION OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Secretary may allow a grantee under this section to retain—

“(A) amounts needed to close out grants; and

“(B) up to 10 percent of the remaining funds to support maintenance of the minimal capacity to launch a new program in the event of a future disaster and to support pre-disaster long-term recovery and mitigation planning.

“(4) EXTENSION OF PERIOD FOR USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary may extend the 6-year period described in paragraph (1) by not more than 4 years, or not more than 6 years for mitigation activities, if—

“(A) the grantee submits to the Secretary—

“(i) written documentation of the exigent circumstances impacting the ability of the grantee to expend funds that could not be anticipated; or

“(ii) a justification that such request is necessary due to the nature and complexity of the program and projects; and

“(B) the Secretary submits a written justification for the extension to the Committees on Appropriations of Senate and the House of Representatives that specifies the period of that extension.”.

REGULATIONS

SEC. 507. (a) PROPOSED RULES.—Following consultation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Small Business Administration, and other Federal agencies, not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue proposed rules to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act and shall provide a 90-day period for submission of public comments on those proposed rules.

(b) FINAL RULES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue final regulations to carry out section 123 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as added by section 506.

COORDINATION OF DISASTER RECOVERY ASSISTANCE, BENEFITS, AND DATA WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

SEC. 508. (a) COORDINATION OF DISASTER RECOVERY ASSISTANCE.—In order to ensure a comprehensive approach to Federal disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of housing and infrastructure, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a catastrophic major disaster, the Secretary shall coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to the greatest extent practicable, in the implementation of assistance authorized under section 123 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as added by section 506.

(b) DATA SHARING AGREEMENTS.—To support the coordination of data to prevent duplication of benefits with other Federal disaster recovery programs while also expediting recovery and reducing burden on disaster survivors, the Department shall establish data sharing agreements that safeguard privacy with relevant Federal agencies to ensure disaster benefits effectively and efficiently reach intended beneficiaries, while using effective means of preventing harm to people and property.

(c) DATA TRANSFER FROM FEMA AND SBA TO HUD.—As permitted and deemed necessary for efficient program execution, and

consistent with a computer matching agreement entered into under subsection (f)(1), the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall provide data on disaster applicants to the Department, including, when necessary, personally identifiable information, disaster recovery needs, and resources determined eligible for, and amounts expended, to the Secretary for all major disasters declared by the President pursuant to section 401 of Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) for the purpose of providing additional assistance to disaster survivors and prevent duplication of benefits.

(d) DATA TRANSFERS FROM HUD TO HUD GRANTEES.—The Secretary is authorized to provide to grantees under section 123 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as added by section 506, offices of the Department, technical assistance providers, and lenders information that in the determination of the Secretary is reasonably available and appropriate to inform the provision of assistance after a major disaster, including information provided to the Secretary by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, or other Federal agencies.

(e) DATA TRANSFERS FROM HUD GRANTEES TO HUD, FEMA, AND SBA.—

(1) REPORTING.—Grantees under section 123 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as added by section 506, shall report information requested by the Secretary on households, businesses, and other entities assisted and the type of assistance provided.

(2) SHARING INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall share information collected under paragraph (1) with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Small Business Administration, and other Federal agencies to support the planning and delivery of disaster recovery and mitigation assistance and other related purposes.

(f) PRIVACY PROTECTION.—The Secretary may make and receive data transfers authorized under this section, including the use and retention of that data for computer matching programs, to inform the provision of assistance, assess disaster recovery needs, and prevent the duplication of benefits and other waste, fraud, and abuse, provided that—

(1) the Secretary enters into an information sharing agreement or a computer matching agreement, when required by section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”) with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, or other Federal agencies covering the transfer of data;

(2) the Secretary publishes intent to disclose data in the Federal Register;

(3) notwithstanding paragraphs (1) and (2), section 552a of title 5, United States Code, or any other law, the Secretary is authorized to share data with an entity identified in subsection (d), and the entity is authorized to use the data as described in this section, if the Secretary enters a data sharing agreement with the entity before sharing or receiving any information under transfers authorized by this section, which data sharing agreement shall—

(A) in the determination of the Secretary, include measures adequate to safeguard the privacy and personally identifiable information of individuals; and

(B) include provisions that describe how the personally identifiable information of an individual will be adequately safeguarded and protected, which requires consultation

with the Secretary and the head of each Federal agency the data of which is being shared subject to the agreement.

SA 1223. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, strike “: *Provided further*, That funds may be transferred from one specified activity to another with the prior approval of the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress”.

SA 1224. Ms. ERNST (for herself and Mr. MARSHALL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act, including under any grant, contract, subgrant, subcontract, or other memorandum of understanding, may be made available for any purpose to EcoHealth Alliance, Inc., or the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

SA 1225. Mr. HAWLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. CAP ON CREDIT CARD INTEREST RATES.

Section 107 of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1606) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f)(1) The annual percentage rate applicable to an extension of credit obtained by use of a credit card may not exceed 18 percentage points, inclusive of all finance charges.

“(2) Any fees that are not considered finance charges under section 106(a) may not be used to evade the limitations of this paragraph, and the total sum of such fees may not exceed the total amount of finance charges assessed.

“(3) Any creditor who violates this subsection shall be subject to the provisions of section 130.”.

SA 1226. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1092 proposed by Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. COLLINS)

to the bill H.R. 4366, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

DIVISION D—REDUCTIONS AND RESCISSION

SEC. 4001.

Each amount made available under division B is reduced, on a pro rata basis, by the amount necessary so that the amount made available under division B is \$17,838,000,000.

SEC. 4002.

Each amount made available under division C is reduced, on a pro rata basis, by the amount necessary so that the amount made available under division C is \$65,208,000,000.

SEC. 4003.

Of the unobligated balances available in Public Law 117-169, \$25,035,000,000 available under section 10301(1)(A)(ii) as of the date of the enactment of this Act are permanently rescinded.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I submit the following notice in writing: In accordance with Rule V of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby give notice in writing that it is my intention to move to suspend Rule XVI for the consideration of amendment No. 1092 to the bill H.R. 4366.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

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

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, September 14, 2023, 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 Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of

the Senate on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct an executive business meeting.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the privileges of the floor be granted to the following member of my staff, Max Slaiman, today.

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

SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2023, AS NATIONAL CONCUSSION AWARENESS DAY

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 345, which is at the desk.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 345) supporting the designation of September 15, 2023, as “National Concussion Awareness Day”.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 345) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, September 18; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate resume consideration of Calendar No. 198, H.R. 4366; further, that at 5 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Oliver nomination and that the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023, AT 3 P.M. fore the Senate, I ask that it stand ad- Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:28 p.m.,
journed under the previous order. The adjourned until Monday, September 18,
Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objec- 2023, at 3 p.m.
there is no further business to come be- tion, it is so ordered.