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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our mighty fortress, as our hearts recoil at the horrors of war, we place our trust in You. We trust You because You have invited us to cast our cares on You, to call upon You in our day of trouble, and to comprehend that You are our refuge, hope, and strength.

Lord, we trust You to do more than we can desire, ask, or imagine. As our lawmakers trust You to make a way where there is no way, give them courage, wisdom, and perseverance.

We pray for all who are the victims of this tragic conflict between Israel and Hamas.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

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, October 18, 2023.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH 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

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION RELATING TO "SMALL BUSINESS LENDING UNDER THE EQUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITY ACT (REGULATION B)"

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S.J. Res. 32, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B)".

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess from 3:30 p.m. until 5 p.m. to allow for the all-Senator's briefing.

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

ISRAEL

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Mr. President, the slaughter of over 1,300 people in Israel on October 7 reminds every Jewish person in the world of darker, more sinister times. It lay bare, sadly, that the ancient poison of hatred against Jews still persists.

We must be clear that Hamas does not speak for the Palestinian people. Hamas is a terrorist organization dedicated to Israel's eradication. Hamas must be defeated. And the violence of Hamas terrorists has tragically put innocent Palestinians in harm's way.

I was deeply saddened and shocked by the awful news of the explosion at the Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza. The loss of innocent life is a sickening tragedy. My prayers are with the victims, the families, the children, and all innocent people who were injured or killed.

Now, while we await the results of a full review to be completed, as the President indicated and as of this morning—people should look at this—the released signal intelligence confirms, it appears that terrorist fighters within Gaza were responsible for the explosion and deaths, not the Israeli IDF. It is clear that terrorists in Gaza have no regard for civilian human life.

As I have said, and as the Biden administration has made clear, civilian life must be protected. And we must help civilians impacted by the war—Palestinian civilians—who have nothing to do with Hamas. As the Senate considers a supplemental package to help Israel fight Hamas, we will include robust humanitarian aid to help civilians and make sure that the aid goes to those who need it urgently and does not fall into the wrong hands, such as Hamas's.

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



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S5055

When I joined my Senate colleagues in meeting with the Israeli Government, we promised to do whatever we could to help Israel defend herself.

In the coming days, President Biden will send Congress a supplemental request that will provide Israel the resources they need to defend themselves and eliminate the threat of Hamas.

The Senate will move this package as soon as we can, without delay, with strong bipartisan support. Democrats want to act, and I know a lot of Republicans want to act, and I was very encouraged to hear my friend the Republican leader, Leader MCCONNELL, express his support too.

At this moment of crisis in Israel and of the chaos in the House of Representatives, the Senate must step into the breach and stand firmly together to get emergency military and humanitarian aid to Israel.

In this difficult moment, the Senate must act as a steady, bipartisan force. We must show that the work of the first branch of government is continuing.

We will not wait for the House—we cannot—because the need for this package is too urgent to sit and wait for them to get themselves out of their own morass. I hope the Senate passing a strong bipartisan package will implore the House to follow suit in whichever way they see fit.

Passing this supplemental and providing Israel the tools they need will show Israel and the world that the United States stands with our ally, now and always.

And I expect very soon—as early as today, maybe tomorrow morning—the Senate will act to pass a resolution from Senator CARDIN, Ranking Member RISCH, Leader MCCONNELL, and myself, affirming that the Senate stands firmly with Israel and firmly against Hamas. Our resolution has overwhelming—nearly unanimous—bipartisan support in the Senate. It is cosponsored by 99 Senators, Senator PAUL being the outstanding one who hasn't.

Passing a supplemental and passing this resolution will affirm an unchanging truth: So long as there is a United States of America and so long as there is a United States Senate, the people of Israel will not—will not—be alone.

Mr. President, now on the all-Senators classified briefing, later this afternoon, we will have an all-Senators classified briefing on Israel and Gaza. We will be briefed by the top people in the administration: Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Tony Blinken, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Gen. C.Q. Brown, and Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines.

I encourage all my colleagues on both sides to attend today's briefing from our top leaders so we can stay fully updated on the latest information on the ground regarding Israel's security and their efforts to defeat the evil, terrorist, horrible organization named "Hamas."

NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, on nominations, now, with all the conflagration in the Middle East, it is really important that we have Ambassadors in critical places. It is always important, but a lot of them have been blocked. But now, with the conflagration in the Middle East, it is more important than ever that they be there. When we were in Israel, the lack of an ambassador was apparent. Now, there is a great Charge d'Affaires person; she did a great job. But we still need an ambassador.

So, Mr. President, for that reason, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working quickly this week on getting critical nominees through the Senate. Last night, we confirmed Ana Escrogrima to serve as Ambassador to Oman, and earlier this week, we confirmed Karen Sasahara as Ambassador to Kuwait.

We have more nominees whom we need to pass to fill ambassadorships in the Middle East. More important than ever, we must do more. It is important that the Senate show bipartisan unity right now to get these critical diplomats confirmed. And I hope we keep doing so, like we did with these two Ambassadors, in the days ahead.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SPEAKER ELECTION

Mr. President, now, on what is going on across the way in the House, thanks to MAGA Republicans, the U.S. House of Representatives has now been without a Speaker for 2 weeks, a paralysis in governing unprecedented—unprecedented—in modern times.

Hard-right extremists in the House have ground the people's House to a halt at the worst possible moment: at a time when our ally Israel faces its darkest hour and the U.S. Government would shut down in less than a month if we don't act.

Today, the House will gavel in to try and break the impasse, though it seems like the chaos of the hard right has exposed the deep, perhaps irreparable, divisions within the House GOP.

No matter who becomes Speaker, one lesson remains true: Whether it is funding the government, avoiding default, or helping American families, bipartisanship will be the only way things get done in a divided government.

Bipartisanship is the only way. When there is a Democratic President, a Democratic Senate, and a Republican House, a small band of rightwing, MAGA Republicans in the House cannot say: It is my way, not your way.

You are a minority, MAGA Republicans. You are a minority in the Republican Party. You are a minority with the people of America. You are a minority in this government. Certainly, your voices will be raised, and you will want some say, but it can't be your way or no way.

Bipartisanship will be required to help Israel. It will be required to avoid a government shutdown. It will be required to finish the appropriations

process. Bipartisanship will be required for just about everything—everything—that happens in the Congress.

So whoever the House elects as Speaker will not be able to ignore the realities of divided government, no matter what the hard right demands. As former Speakers Boehner, Ryan, and MCCARTHY have learned, you cannot let the hard right run the caucus or you won't last as Speaker. And, even worse, it will lead to more chaos at a time when the American people need unity and help and stability.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. President, on the AI Insight Forum, next Tuesday, the Senate will hold our second in a series of bipartisan—let me underscore "bipartisan"—AI Insight Forums, focusing on our North Star for AI innovation.

Our inaugural AI forum last month was one of the most historic and informative discussions ever held in the Congress. The debate was illuminating, and the discussions were candid, unvarnished, and direct.

Next week, we will turn to AI innovation, both transformational innovation—the kind of innovation that creates new vistas, unlocks new cures, improves education, protects our food supply and our national security—but also to sustainable innovation, which is the kind of guardrails that are needed to prevent the negatives in AI, necessary to prevent against AI's risks and minimize the chance that this technology becomes unmanageable or worse. We are going to focus on both of these types of innovation, both of which are needed.

Congress has taken leaps forward in the past few months, learning more about the benefits and risks of AI from the world's leading experts, getting some of the companies that do AI to sit down with some of the critics, so we can begin to fashion the kinds of guardrails that are necessary. Our committees continue to lead the way, having hosted more than 15 hearings on AI this year, and the bipartisan AI gang is working to supplement the committees' critical work with our AI Insight Forums. But there is still so much more to learn and do on AI, which is rapidly changing as we speak. So these forums are designed to ensure the Senate is asking the right questions, having the right debates, and getting to the heart of this complex issue.

I urge everyone to attend next week's bipartisan forum, and I thank my colleagues Senator ROUNDS, Senator HEINRICH, and Senator YOUNG for helping organize this discussion.

To repeat, our AI forum will be—I am trying to get the date here—I don't have it. We will get everybody the date right away. I believe it is on the 24th of next week, at 3 p.m., in the Kennedy Caucus room.

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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

ISRAEL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the barbaric terrorist attacks of October 7 have elicited two sorts of reactions in the West. Most reasonable people have responded to the slaughter of innocent Israelis with utter horror, fervent prayer, and strong support for Israel's right to defend itself.

The overwhelming majority of Americans think the United States should publicly support our closest ally in the Middle East. They recognize this moment as a time for choosing, and they see the choice between a democracy's right to self-defense and a terrorist group's obsession with destroying it as an easy choice.

The United States must have Israel's back as it roots out the terrorists who threaten it. For as long as it takes, I am proud to stand with this overwhelming majority.

But, alas, in recent days, we have also seen just how the default position in some highly influential corners of our society—from national newsrooms to elite college campuses—how quickly they have been to blindly amplify terrorists' versions of events.

This was especially true of the reporting of a deadly explosion at a Gaza hospital yesterday. Hamas immediately blamed Israel for the blast, and major news organizations took their word for it, running headlines about an "Israeli strike." In the hours since this tragedy, credible evidence has emerged suggesting that the same terrorists who used innocent civilians as human shields were themselves responsible. Well, the media can revise its headlines, but the shameful anti-Semitic fringe of our society has already heard what it wanted to hear.

Unsurprisingly, the woke incubators of the Ivy League have been at the epicenter of this anti-Israel outrage. One coalition of 30 student groups at Harvard declared that they "hold the Israeli regime entirely responsible" for Hamas's terrorism—that Israel is responsible for Hamas's terrorism.

Now, student radicals taking extremist stands is par for the course. The more important question is how university administrators—the supposed grownups on campus—would respond. The answer is not good. As former Harvard President Larry Summers rightly noted, his institution's initial silence ceded the field to campus extremists in defining Harvard's response.

And when Harvard's leaders did respond, they failed the most basic test: distinguishing the victim from the ag-

gressor. The university's response professed heartbreak at "the war in Israel and Gaza now under way," as if there were even a shred of moral equivalence between terrorism and self-defense.

The presidents of Columbia and Dartmouth expressed regret at "the ensuing violence" and "the escalating violence," respectively. Not to be outdone, Notre Dame didn't even assign perfunctory blame to the terrorists.

Instead, they bemoaned "the outbreak of war in the Holy Land" and calling "for an end to the cycle of violence."

I am reminded of a retort the late, great Bill Buckley deployed in a debate when his opponent tried to have both sides of the Cold War. He said:

That is like saying that the man who pushes a little old lady into the path of a bus is morally equivalent to the man who pushes her out of its path, because they both push little old ladies around.

If you want to know where this leads, take the American Bar Association, the organization that accredits our Nation's law schools. At first, the ABA's president called "on both sides to show restraint" and urged Israel and Hamas to "settle their disputes in a peaceful and legal fashion." But yesterday, the ABA denounced Israel's self-defense efforts as "collective punishment, forced displacement, [and] ethnic cleansing."

Terrorism and self-defense are not morally equivalent. They are not morally equivalent. And you would think the leaders of America's higher education would understand that.

Some leaders in higher education have argued in recent days that schools should not wade into political disputes. Stanford's president said that doing so means picking winners and losers on campus. Northwestern's president observed of his students and faculty that "for me to speak for them displaces their own freedom to speak." That may actually be a wise policy, but it is certainly not one elite academia has been known to practice in the past. It doesn't take long to find the impassioned stances universities took following the murder of George Floyd or the ending of DACA. So why the new policy?

Let's be clear. Some university leaders have displayed admirable conviction. Our former colleague Ben Sasse at the University of Florida describes support for the terrorists who murdered Israeli children as "sickening" and "dehumanizing." Emory's president said the attacks "must be condemned in the strongest possible terms." Princeton's president called it "among the most atrocious of terrorist acts" and, importantly, placed the blame for the coming war entirely where it belongs—on Hamas's shoulders.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all of these statements—the good, the bad, and the ugly—be printed in the RECORD.

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

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

DEAR JEWISH GATOR ALUMS: Many of you have reached out about the vigil at UF last night. I was overwhelmed to see a thousand Gators standing with Israel. You can find my remarks here.

The chaos at the event was an unfortunate end to a beautiful gathering, but I wanted to let you know that there was no attack on campus and the injuries that have been reported seem to be relatively minor. From what we can gather, a student passed out and, when a fellow student called for 911, other students—understandably on edge—fled.

While we all wish the night had ended differently, we are tremendously proud of the students who came to stand with Israel. I hope Rabbi Jonah and Rabbi Berl reschedule the vigil, and I hope the community reconvenes.

Like you, I am tremendously grateful for our students. The University of Florida is home to the largest number of Jewish students at any university in this country. We are honored by and committed to that legacy. Our Jewish students and alumni around the world have been devastated by Hamas' terrorism.

I will not tiptoe around this simple fact: What Hamas did is evil and there is no defense for terrorism. This shouldn't be hard. Sadly, too many people in elite academia have been so weakened by their moral confusion that, when they see videos of raped women, hear of a beheaded baby, or learn of a grandmother murdered in her home, the first reaction of some is to "provide context" and try to blame the raped women, beheaded baby, or the murdered grandmother. In other grotesque cases, they express simple support for the terrorists.

This thinking isn't just wrong, it's sickening. It's dehumanizing. It is beneath people called to educate our next generation of Americans. I am thankful to say I haven't seen examples of that here at UF, either from our faculty or our student body.

As for us, our educational mission here begins with the recognition and explicit acknowledgment of human dignity—the same human dignity that Hamas' terrorists openly scorn. Every single human life matters. We are committed to that truth. We will tell that truth.

In the coming days, it is possible that anti-Israel protests will come to UF's campus. I have told our police chief and administration that this university always has two foundational commitments: We will protect our students and we will protect speech. This is always true: Our Constitution protects the rights of people to make abject idiots of themselves.

But I also want to be clear about this: We will protect our Jewish students from violence. If anti-Israel protests come, we will absolutely be ready to act if anyone dares to escalate beyond peaceful protest. Speech is protected—violence and vandalism are not.

I'm grateful to have heard from so many of you. Like I said at the vigil last night: When evil raises its head, as it has in recent days, it is up to men and women of conscience and courage to draw strength from truth and commit ourselves to the work of building something better—to the work of pursuing justice and pursuing peace. That is what we aim to do through education, compassion, and truth here at the University of Florida.

Sincerely,

BEN.

EMORY UNIVERSITY

DEAR EMORY COMMUNITY: As students return to campus this morning after fall break, I know many at Emory are in profound pain,

absorbing the shock and grief from the Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel over the weekend. So am I. The reality of Jews being senselessly murdered and taken as hostages will not soon leave my mind, and must be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

We are fortunate that Emory students and faculty in the region are safe at this time. I have heard from many members of our community about how the attacks have affected them and their families and friends. The suffering they are experiencing is tremendous. I know they are not alone.

In June, I traveled to Israel with a delegation of Emory colleagues. We visited with Emory students studying and interning, alumni who live and work in the region, and scholars at universities in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. It was my first trip back to Israel in 40 years and as a Jew, it offered me an opportunity to visit a homeland that is meaningful to my family across generations. To see the nation where I walked peacefully a few months ago now under attack is hard to comprehend. Acknowledging that a war has begun and more lives, both Israeli and Palestinian, will be lost to this conflict fills me with grief.

Each member of our community is experiencing this tragedy in their own way. As we move forward, we must show empathy for one another. My wish is for Emory to come together peacefully, and I see that we are already doing that with student-led vigils and memorials. I also urge you to treat your peers and colleagues with dignity as difficult conversations take place. As a research university, we are fortunate to have scholars who have deep expertise on the Middle East, Israel, and relevant disciplines. Our faculty experts will be invaluable at this time.

The students, faculty, physicians, staff, and alumni who call Emory home come from all over the world and represent many backgrounds and life experiences. Emory's motto, the wise heart seeks knowledge, is based on an understanding that we treat each other with respect even, and especially, in moments of disagreement. That is my plea to you in the coming days—seek knowledge but do so in a way that acknowledges our shared humanity. That's what unity looks like at Emory.

Treat each other well and keep your minds and hearts open. Pray for peace.

Sincerely,

GREGORY L. FENVES,
President.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Even in a world wearied and torn by violence and hatred, Hamas's murder and kidnapping of hundreds of Israelis over the past weekend is among the most atrocious of terrorist acts. This cruel and inhumane attack has provoked a bloody war that has already claimed the lives of thousands of Palestinians and Israelis and will tragically take many more as it continues.

Princeton is a community that embraces many Israelis and Palestinians among its cherished members, as students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Even more have friends or relatives directly experiencing this awful violence. The nightmare underway in Israel and in the Palestinian territories is being deeply felt on this campus. That pain will inevitably continue in the months ahead. My heart goes out to everyone personally affected.

The University has reached out to students and other community members from Israel and the Palestinian territories. Resources and support services are available from the Davis International Center, Counseling and Psychological Services, and the Office of Religious Life.

Our experts at the School of Public and International Affairs have produced a thoughtful compilation of initial analysis and there will be many more such scholarly contributions and public panel discussions about these events in the coming days.

Of course, our work as researchers and teachers must also make space for the recognition of suffering, and for time to grieve and heal. I hope that Princetonians from all backgrounds will treat each other with grace and compassion during this difficult time.

CHRISTOPHER L. EISGRUBER.

NOTRE DAME

Given the current situation in Israel, we have relocated our students who were studying in Jerusalem to other Notre Dame International locations. We will continue to support our relocated students and ensure that their transitions are as smooth as possible. We have temporarily suspended our study abroad program at Tantur and will continue to assess the situation as it develops.

Saddened by the outbreak of war in the Holy Land, I join with many in abhorring the killing of non-combatants and I echo the Holy Father's call to pray for all victims of the current conflict, for an end to the cycle of violence, and for a lasting peace with justice. I welcome all of our Notre Dame family to join us for this evening's interfaith prayer service for peace and protection of the innocent.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE HARVARD COMMUNITY: We write to you today heartbroken by the death and destruction unleashed by the attack by Hamas that targeted citizens in Israel this weekend, and by the war in Israel and Gaza now under way.

The violence hits all too close to home for many at Harvard. Some members of our community have lost family members and friends; some have been unable to reach loved ones. And, even for people at Harvard who have not been affected directly by the fighting, there are feelings of fear, sadness, anger, and more that create a heavy burden. We have heard from many students, faculty, and staff about the emotional toll that these events are taking.

Across Harvard, we will continue providing as much support to our students and colleagues as possible. Our Schools either have shared or will soon share messages regarding available resources.

We have also heard an interest from many in understanding more clearly what has been happening in Israel and Gaza. Even as we attend immediately to the needs of our community members, we can take steps as an academic community to deepen our knowledge of the unfolding events and their broader implications for the region and the world. We expect there will be many such opportunities in the coming days and weeks.

We have no illusion that Harvard alone can readily bridge the widely different views of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but we are hopeful that, as a community devoted to learning, we can take steps that will draw on our common humanity and shared values in order to modulate rather than amplify the deep-seated divisions and animosities so distressingly evident in the wider world. Especially at such a time, we want to emphasize our commitment to fostering an environment of dialogue and empathy, appealing to one another's thoughtfulness and goodwill in a time of unimaginable loss and sorrow.

As many colleagues, classmates, and friends deal with pain and deep concern about the events in Israel and Gaza, we must all remember that we are one Harvard community, drawn together by a shared passion

for learning, discovery, and the pursuit of truth in all its complexity, and held together by a commitment to mutual respect and support. At this moment of challenge, let us embody the care and compassion the world needs now.

Sincerely,

CLAUDINE GAY,
President, Harvard University.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

DEAR FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE COLUMBIA COMMUNITY: I was devastated by the horrific attack on Israel this weekend and the ensuing violence that is affecting so many people. Unfortunately, at this moment, little is certain except that the fighting and human suffering are not likely to end soon.

I know many members of our community are being impacted in profound ways and I want to assure each of you that Columbia will provide any measure of care or comfort that we can. This is your community, and you are not alone.

Since Saturday, our first priority has been to make sure everyone connected to Columbia is safe and to provide logistical support and other types of resources for students, staff, and faculty who are directly affected by the conflict. We are in close touch with students, staff, alumni, and faculty throughout the region. I have included a list of university resources below.

I am gratified by and grateful for the skill, agility, and care that I have witnessed by professionals across Columbia. Colleagues in our community have shown great sensitivity and leadership, including staff at the Kraft Center for Jewish Student Life, our leaders in the Earl Hall Center for Religious Life, and the various student support teams across our schools.

Many of you have reacted to these terrifying events by pulling closer your friends, classmates, and relatives whose sense of security was shattered. These acts of kindness and empathy represent the best of Columbia and exemplify what we as a community can contribute to this moment. I encourage you to continue gathering, supporting each other, and listening to one another in the days ahead.

As a global university, we are devoted to examining and debating difficult issues that affect our world. Our job is to educate, enlighten, and engage. We must reject forces that seek to pull us apart and model behavior that shows respect for all. I welcome events like the SIPA webinar scheduled for tomorrow, examining the evolving situation in Israel and Gaza. I strongly encourage Columbia faculty to find ways of bringing clarity and context to this painful moment, just as you contribute your expertise and scholarship to other great challenges of our time.

I am committed to ensuring that these values are reflected in our teaching, our research, and our community support.

Sincerely,

MINOUCHE SHAFIK,
President, Columbia University.

DARTMOUTH

DEAR DARTMOUTH COMMUNITY: Like many of you, I watched with growing horror the Hamas attack on Israel this weekend, the escalating violence, and the devastating loss of life, especially among civilians. Adding to my deep sorrow over the overwhelming human tragedy playing out in Israel and Gaza are the ways in which the war affects Dartmouth's global community and many of our colleagues, peers, and friends. Dartmouth alums live in the region, scholars work there, and students, staff, and faculty have deep roots in the areas now in danger. I want to extend my concern to each of you at this time.

We have been working over the weekend and into this week to make sure our community members with ties to the region—both in the U.S. and abroad—are as safe and supported as possible.

In every conflict, one of the most important roles a university can play is to help us understand it, and to make a space for dialogue and community. As Dean Elizabeth F. Smith and Senior Vice President Shontay Delalue indicated in their message below, shared yesterday with the campus community, Dartmouth faculty and staff experts have organized a series of discussions that can help bring us together and shed light on the situation. These discussions will be held today and Thursday at 5 p.m. and livestreamed for those who cannot attend.

I encourage you to join these forums, which you can view here, and others that we will plan over time. As we navigate these difficult times, please care for one another and take advantage of the support Dartmouth has to offer, as an institution and a community.

Sincerely,

SIAN LEAH BEILLOCK,
President.

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STANFORD

DEAR STANFORD COMMUNITY: Our news and social media feeds have been filled over the last few days with horrifying new details about the Hamas attack in Israel last weekend, which involved intolerable atrocities including murder of civilians and kidnapping. The likelihood of a lengthy and violent continued conflict in the region has become clearer. Our focus as university leaders is on supporting the members of our Stanford community in this difficult moment. We hear the deeply felt concerns, fears, and grief that have been expressed by students, faculty, and staff. We want to address several issues that have arisen on our campus in the past few days.

We have heard many expressions of concern regarding student safety. We have heard from Jewish students, faculty, and staff concerned about rising antisemitism. We have heard from Palestinian students who have received threatening emails and phone calls. We want to make clear that Stanford stands unequivocally against hatred on the basis of religion, race, ethnicity, national origin, and other categories. The expression of political views, in appropriate times and places, is important. Thoughtful, reasoned discussion of current issues is central to the life of the university. Our commitment to academic freedom means that latitude for expression of controversial and even offensive views is necessary to avoid chilling freedom of thought and ideas. But harassment and abuse have no place here. We are committed to working with affected communities to provide support and resources, and also to ensuring the physical safety of those on campus.

We have received a report of a class in which a non-faculty instructor is reported to have addressed the Middle East conflict in a manner that called out individual students in class based on their backgrounds and identities. Without prejudging the matter, this report is a cause for serious concern. Academic freedom does not permit the identity-based targeting of students. The instructor in this course is not currently teaching while the university works to ascertain the facts of the situation.

We have received complaints about banners, signs, and chalking on campus that express views that many find offensive. Again, it is important to remember that controversial and even offensive speech is allowed except when it crosses the line into certain il-

legal categories such as threats or harassment for which the threshold is quite high. Unlawful threats and harassment will not be tolerated. Stanford also has content- and viewpoint-neutral time, place, and manner rules that limit locations for banners and signs. Thus, many of the banners and signs have been removed, because they were in places where they are not allowed. Moreover, it is worth remembering that while a climate of free expression requires breathing room, our aspiration as a community is for respectful and substantive discourse.

Here and across the nation this week, there also has been discussion of the role of university leaders in commenting on global events. This provides an opportunity for the two of us, who are new in our current roles at Stanford, to share some further thoughts on this topic, and on the place and purpose of universities.

Stanford University is a community of scholars. We believe it is important that the university, as an institution, generally refrain from taking institutional positions on complex political or global matters that extend beyond our immediate purview, which is the operations of the university itself. Maintaining university neutrality allows for our individual scholars to explore them freely. In recent years, many universities have gotten into the habit of issuing frequent statements about news events. This creates a number of difficulties. The decision to take a position about one event or issue yields implications for silence with regard to other issues; given that different subsets of a campus community may be more or less affected by particular issues, this inconsistency is felt acutely. It can enmesh universities in politics and create a sense of institutional orthodoxy that chills academic freedom. In addition, crafting each message is challenging, from gathering facts and context on complex issues at the speed of online media and the news cycle while also walking a line between platitudes and overly political positions.

As a moral matter, we condemn all terrorism and mass atrocities. This includes the deliberate attack on civilians this weekend by Hamas. One of the advances in international law in the 20th century following the horrors of the Holocaust was the development of international humanitarian law prohibiting war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. Such crimes are never justified. Sadly, they occur regularly throughout the world; the International Criminal Court website lists seventeen different country situations for which it has launched investigations, all of which involve mass atrocities. And that court's docket does not even reflect the full range of situations. We point this out not to in any way diminish the shocking severity of the events in Israel and Gaza this week, but to highlight the pervasive problem that humankind faces in conquering hate.

The events in Israel and Gaza this week have affected and engaged large numbers of students on our campus in ways that many other events have not. This is why we feel compelled to both address the impact of these events on our campus and to explain why our general policy of not issuing statements about news events not directly connected to campus has limited the breadth of our comments thus far, and why you should not expect frequent commentary from us in the future.

The fighting in the Middle East is likely to continue in the coming weeks, with casualties on both sides, and the overall situation has a deep and complex history. Stanford has community members who are themselves from the region or who have friends and family there. We recognize the deeply felt im-

pacts across our community. We encourage you to approach one another with a spirit of compassion and respect for our shared humanity.

Sincerely,

RICHARD SALLER,
President.
JENNY MARTINEZ,
Provost.

—
NORTHWESTERN

DEAR COLLEAGUES: Some of you have asked either me or the provost about whether the University would be issuing a statement on the current conflict in Israel and Gaza. I also know many of you are receiving similar requests from your own leadership, staff and communities. I am not planning to put out a statement officially stating a University position. I thought I would write to give you a bit of insight into why.

Let me start by saying that I am deeply repulsed, sickened and disappointed by what Hamas has done. Kidnapping, beheading, murdering people—children and adults, civilians and people in the armed forces—is horrific and inhuman, pure and simple. This sort of behavior is entirely unacceptable regardless of one's political convictions or grievances. Period. No moral equivalencies needed.

That is the view of Mike Schill, citizen, Jew and human being. I didn't give up those parts of me when I assumed the presidency of Northwestern.

However, I understand that when I put out an official statement on a political matter, an atrocity, a catastrophe, people read it not as the views of Mike Schill, but as President Michael Schill speaking for the University. As such, the decision to exercise speech takes on different meaning. We are a University which celebrates free expression, diversity of people and diversity of viewpoints. This is essential to our role in society. The University does not speak for our faculty, students and staff on these matters—they have their own voices, and I would venture to say, there are no doubt differences among our students and faculty on what Hamas did and how Israel is responding. For me to speak for them displaces their own freedom to speak.

Some of you who have followed recent discussions about free expression may see strong influence of the Chicago Principles, and you would not be mistaken. Regardless of what the University has done in the past, I do not foresee that I will be issuing statements on political, geopolitical or social issues that do not directly impact the core mission of our University, the education and futures of our students, or higher education. This reticence to speak out publicly as President Michael Schill will sometimes please and often infuriate members of our community. But I believe it is the right approach.

Just to be clear, as individuals in a democracy, we do not give up our rights to have and express our personal political and social viewpoints. We just need to make clear we are speaking for ourselves and not for all our students, faculty, staff and trustees. So, on Monday night when I stood with our students at a Vigil for Israel in Deering Meadow, I did that as Mike Schill. And I will continue to personally support, when my conscience demands it, issues that I care deeply about, always making the distinction in roles as clear as possible.

I will end by expressing my concern, my prayers and my hopes for a peaceful resolution of the current violence. We all have an obligation at a moment like this to care for one another . . . and most particularly our students and members of our community who have loved ones whose lives have been

taken, who are held hostage or who are engaged in combat. If you wish to relay my views to your respective communities, I ask that you stress that our community has resources available to help. Please contact Vice President for Student Affairs Susan Davis if you would like to inquire more about resources for students. Lorraine Goffe and Sumit Dhar can address resources for our staff and faculty.

Mr. McCONNELL. I can only hope that the leaders of America's universities recognize what time it is in America. This is a time for moral clarity, not a time for anti-Semitic hate dressed in faculty-lounge jargon. Leaders cannot afford to be silent. Terrorism is evil. Anti-Semitism is despicable. And Israel has a right to exist. It shouldn't take a Ph.D. to understand that, but it also shouldn't be so hard for a Ph.D. to acknowledge it.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, today, the Senate will vote on a Republican resolution to chip away at yet another example of the Biden administration's runaway regulatory state using the Congressional Review Act. The junior Senator from Louisiana, Senator KENNEDY, has put forward a measure that would block a proposed rule at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that would require financial institutions to collect and report personal information on small business loan applications, including data on race and sex. Apparently, as if the radical progressivism on campuses wasn't enough, Washington Democrats want to tie small business loans to diversity quotas.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of the American dream, and I am grateful to my colleague from Louisiana for giving the Senate an opportunity to stick up for them. I would urge each of our colleagues to join me in supporting his resolution later today.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Israel and the world are still reeling from the surprise attack by Hamas on October 7 that left somewhere around 1,400 Israelis and at least 31 Americans dead. In scale and scope, the attack carried echoes of our 9/11. And as on 9/11, life changed in an instant.

I came down to the floor yesterday to talk about these attacks and the United States' commitment to standing with the Israeli people against terrorism. And today, I would like to talk about another important point these attacks raise: the importance of our national defense and military readiness.

It has been said that "Only the dead have seen the end of war." We live in a fallen world. And as long as we live in a fallen world, there will be evil men bent on aggression. And if we wish to continue living in peace and freedom, we must be always ready to defend against such men. Military preparedness is an essential and constant need. There is never a time where we can guarantee our peace and safety, and so there is never a time when we can afford to be ill-prepared to defend our peace and safety.

As citizens of the United States—an immense country with a reputation for military strength—it can be easy to become complacent and to assume that we will always be able to deter or defeat attacks, but that is a dangerous assumption. As strong as we are, we are not invulnerable, and we are not the only great power out there. And if we don't make the necessary investments in our military to back up our reputation of strength, we may find our ability to deter hostile countries quickly waning.

And the fact of the matter is, our military preparedness is not where it should be. Thanks to budgetary impasses and increased operational demands, by 2018, our readiness had eroded to the point that the bipartisan National Defense Strategy Commission released a report warning that we might struggle to win a war against a major power like Russia or China.

And while we have made progress since then, we are still a long way from where we need to be. We have military services that are struggling to meet recruiting targets. There is a persistent pilot shortage, and in a number of cases, we have too few mission-capable aircraft. And we are not doing an adequate job of maintaining the kind of supply we need of munitions.

That is not an acceptable situation for us to be in, and it could have very serious consequences. To give you just one example, recent U.S. war games envisioning a United States-China conflict following an attack on Taiwan have had grim results, showing enormous military and economic costs on both sides. One story on these war games noted: And while the ultimate outcome in these exercises is not always clear—the U.S. does better in some than others—the cost is clear. In every exercise, the U.S. uses up all its long-range air-to-surface missiles in a few days, with a substantial portion of its planes destroyed on the ground.

Let me just repeat that last line:

In every exercise, the U.S. uses up all its long-range air-to-surface missiles in a few days, with a substantial portion of its planes destroyed on the ground.

That is not a promising scenario, and it highlights our serious readiness shortages, shortages that other countries may not share. China, which is investing heavily in its military, is outpacing our military in modern capabilities like hypersonic missiles and has amassed a larger navy. And while

Russia is currently expending its military resources in its war of aggression against Ukraine, it too does not hesitate when it comes to military investment.

We have serious work to do on the readiness front. And as I said, we have made progress since 2018. But we still have a long way to go to ensure that our military is fully prepared to meet and deter 21st century threats, and this is a priority we need to address now, not when we are waking up one morning reeling from an attack on our country or on Americans abroad, but right now.

Investing in our military after we are threatened or attacked is too late. We can't scale up defense capabilities in an instant or suddenly produce an adequate supply of munitions out of thin air. We need to get and keep—and keep—our military where it needs to be on the readiness front so that we can deter threats and meet them, if needed, with overwhelming force.

And boosting our strength is important for our friends and allies as well. We can't and shouldn't send troops into every conflict, and we can't solve all the world's problems. But sooner or later, world events do affect us, and we can't retreat from the world stage and allow malign powers to fill the resulting vacuum, nor can we afford to concentrate on one threat or area of the world to the exclusion of others. Putin's war in Ukraine and Hamas's attack on Israel should be ample reminders that threats can come from both great powers and non-state actors alike.

So we need to get to work, and that should start with passing a final version of this year's National Defense Authorization Act and making progress on our annual appropriations bills, including the defense appropriations bill. And we should also take up a supplemental to provide the necessary support to our allies and to ensure that we provide any additional funding needed for our own military.

October 7 was the latest reminder that we live in a fallen and dangerous world. Let us ensure that we always are prepared to preserve the peace and to defend our Nation.

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.

SMALL BUSINESS LENDING

Mr. BROWN. We know our middle class relies on strong, small businesses. Small business ownership is the second largest source of personal wealth in this country, only behind owning a home. Small businesses make up more than 40 percent of our economy—no better example than that of the Presiding Officer from Colorado and the

work that he did as he had the phenomenal success he did starting small businesses.

We know, to build strong businesses, entrepreneurs need credit. A loan lets you turn an idea into a business or invest in your company to hire more workers. That is why small business credit is so essential to our economy and to our middle class.

Today, small business lending takes place in the dark. We don't have good data about how lenders are serving the small businesses in their communities. We don't have good data about whom lenders might be leaving behind. Without transparency, it is all too easy for entrepreneurs in Ohio and around the country to lose out.

The data we do have suggests too many small business owners aren't getting a fair shot at a loan for their businesses. Take rural small businesses. We know that rural communities have seen bank branch close after bank branch close for years, drying up access to credit for lots of small businesses in rural Ohio. We need the data to understand how to reach these business owners and how to grow smalltown economies.

Or take small businesses owned by women or by people of color. The data we do have suggests they are more likely to be denied loans and they are more likely to be charged higher interest rates. You don't need reports and studies to know that most Ohioans don't get a fair shake from big banks and the financial system. You do need accurate information to fight back. That is why, in 2010, Congress required the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to get that information; and this spring, the CFPB issued a rule to finally implement the law and to bring transparency to the small business lending market.

We are talking about basic data on the borrowers' demographics, loan pricing, application approvals, and other critical information—just like we do with mortgages. It is not that complicated and not that difficult and not that expensive. With this data, we will be able to see gaps in the small business lending market, allowing programs to expand access to credit for small businesses, especially like small businesses in rural areas. More data means more accountability, ensuring that lenders reach minority communities and helping to root out discrimination.

We have seen this model work before. After we began publishing data some years ago about home mortgages, more Americans of all races and backgrounds were able to achieve the dream of homeownership.

This still protects people's privacy. Borrowers are not required to submit information if they don't want to. Of course, big banks and their lobbyists are putting up a fight. They always do. Any time there is a rule that might change their behavior, they come up with the same song and dance: It is too

expensive. We have to hire new people. Actually, it helps them serve the community better.

I am not going to help Wall Street avoid accountability. There has been too much of that. When I took over chairmanship of this committee, it was called the Senate Banking Committee, and it was a committee all about Wall Street. We changed this. The colloquial name of this committee is the Senate Housing and Banking Committee. Our charge is to build more homes, to make them more affordable, to help with transit systems in places like Atlanta and Denver and Cleveland, and to look out, especially, to help small banks and communities. That is why we are going to hold Wall Street accountable.

I want to see more rural small businesses get loans and grow and be successful. We are not going to let the banking lobby stand in the way, as it all too often has.

I hope my colleagues will stand up for small businesses, will stand up for entrepreneurs, and will vote no on this resolution.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask for permission to speak for up to 20 minutes before the vote.

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—we call it the CFPB—has struck again. It has made another bad decision—this by an Agency that has become famous for bad decisions. Here is what is going on.

You will remember the Dodd-Frank Act, of course, which this Congress passed after the financial meltdown in 2007, 2008, and 2009. There was a section in the Dodd-Frank Act called section 1071—fairly innocuous. Congress directed certain information to be collected about small business loans. We were curious about small business lending in America, so we directed, in this section 1071, certain covered financial institutions—I call them small banks because most business loans to small business people come from small banks. We directed small banks to start collecting information about their loans to small business people because we wanted to know and see if we could do something to make their services more efficient.

We, the Congress, asked that 13 pieces of information be collected. It is the sort of stuff that you would imagine, very routine stuff, like “What was the date of the loan, the small business loan? How much was the loan?” that sort of thing.

Well, the CFPB has taken our work and totally perverted it. The CFPB has

promulgated a rule that totally perverts our intention in section 1071 of the Dodd-Frank Act.

First, we intended for only small businesses to be covered in providing this information. Now, if you look at the definition of a “small business,” most people use the definition that has been put out by the National Federation of Independent Business. That is the NFIB. It says that a small business is a business that has 10 or fewer people and sales of about half a million dollars a year—not according to the CFPB. They want to cast the net as far and as wide as they can. Their definition of a “small business” will almost double that—more than double that. They say a small business is a company with \$5 million in revenue or less from the previous fiscal year, not \$500,000 but \$5 million. So this is going to throw the net of government much, much wider than Congress ever intended.

But, secondly, the most egregious thing the CFPB has done is they took our 13 pieces of information that we asked for, by Congress, and they expanded it to 81. All of a sudden, they want a book.

Here are some examples of what the CFPB is going to require small banks to ask of small business women and small business men when they come to the bank and ask for a loan. The bank has to ask the small business person how long it has been in business. That is fair. The bank has to ask the small business woman or small business man about its annual revenue. That is fair. But then it gets a little intrusive. It gets a lot intrusive.

The bank has to ask the small business woman or small business man what their race is. The bank has to ask the small business person about their ethnic background. The small bank has to ask the small business person if he is a male. The bank has to ask the small business person if she is a female. It should be obvious to many, but those questions have to be asked. The bank has to ask the small business person if that person is a lesbian. The bank has to ask the small business person if that person is gay. The bank has to ask that small business person if that small business person is bisexual. The small bank has to ask its customer, that small business person, if that small business person is transgender. The bank, according to the CFPB, has to ask that small business person who is applying for a loan, who just came in for a loan for the business, if that person is queer. The small bank has to ask that small business person if the small business person is intersex.

Not only does the bank have to ask those questions, those private questions, of the person from the small business applying for the loan, the person applying for the loan on behalf of the small business has to bring in every one of its owners who owns 25 percent or more, and the bank has got to start over with those people. Are you a male? Are you a female? What is

your race? Tell me about your ethnic background. Are you a lesbian? Are you gay? Are you bisexual? Are you transgender or are you queer or are you intersex?

Give me a break.

Then all of this information that is collected, this private information, has to be sent to the CFPB, and they are going to put it on their website. Are you gay? Are you lesbian? What race are you? They are going to put it on their website.

Now, the CFPB says: Well, it is going to be institutional-level data, just top-line data fields. Bull. You will be able to take this data, particularly if you are a small bank in a rural area, and be able to—the snoops will be able to go on that public website and identify small business people in their community—how much money they are borrowing, how they answered the question about whether they were gay, how they answered the question about whether they were intersex. This is incredibly private information.

And why? Why would the CFPB need this information? Well, the truth is, they don't, but I will tell you why. The CFPB is setting these small business people—but also these small banks—up for lawsuits. That is exactly what they are doing.

What happens if a small business person goes into the bank and the small banker says: Listen, I hate to have to ask you this, but the CFPB says I have to ask you. Are you gay?

As if that is anybody's business.

The small business person says: That is none of your business, and I am not going to answer that question. I am here for a loan, not to talk about my private life. What I do in the privacy of my bedroom with a consenting adult is my opinion, Mr. Banker.

The small banker says: You are right. I am sorry. I had to ask. They made me.

If the small business person won't answer the question, the small banker can get in trouble with the CFPB.

What has the world come to?

And the CFPB doesn't care about the cost. Do you know what this is going to cost to implement every year? Four hundred million dollars. Why? And that doesn't even include the cost of actually setting up this program. That will be hundreds of millions of dollars more.

It is not like the CFPB is exactly a wizard when it comes to data security. I mean, yes, it is going to be on their public website, but in terms of the granular information, the CFPB says: Oh, don't worry; we will protect it.

Right. Like they protected it a few months ago? The personally identifiable information of 256,000 consumers, which is being held by the CFPB, was breached. And do you know what the CFPB did? They didn't tell anybody for 2 months. They acted like a rock, only dumber. We are not talking about wizards here, wizards of financial data privacy and security.

You know, I hear it all the time, and the Presiding Officer probably hears it back in his State, perhaps. But people tell me all the time: Kennedy, what is wrong with Washington, DC? Why is common sense illegal there?

This rule. This rule. What has the world come to?

So my Congressional Review Act request is to have the Senate tell the CFPB that it is none of their business—none of their business—what a private American does with another private adult American in the privacy of their bedroom. We are free, so long as it doesn't break any laws, to express our sexuality however we want to, and it is none of the CFPB's business.

With that, I ask my Senate colleagues to overturn this rule.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we start the vote now, 1 minute early.

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

VOTE ON S.J. RES. 32

Under the previous order, the clerk will read the title of the joint resolution for the third time.

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

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 260 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Barrasso	Grassley	Ricketts
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Britt	Hoeven	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Collins	King	Sinema
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Tester
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Manchin	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Vance
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Mullin	Young
Graham	Murkowski	

NAYS—44

Baldwin	Cantwell	Cortez Masto
Bennet	Cardin	Duckworth
Blumenthal	Carper	Fetterman
Booker	Casey	Gillibrand
Brown	Coons	Hassan

Heinrich	Murray	Smith
Hirono	Ossoff	Stabenow
Kaine	Padilla	Van Hollen
Kelly	Peters	Warner
Klobuchar	Reed	Warnock
Lujan	Rosen	Warren
Markey	Sanders	Welch
Menendez	Schatz	Whitehouse
Merkley	Schumer	Wyden
Murphy	Shaheen	

NOT VOTING—3

Butler	Durbin	Paul
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The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) was passed, as follows:

S.J. RES. 32

Resolved the Senate and use of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B)" (88 Fed. Reg. 35150 (May 31, 2023)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

(Mr. HICKENLOOPER assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Oklahoma.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate 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.

ISRAEL

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, earlier this year, I was with a bipartisan delegation. I traveled around the Abraham Accords countries. We were in Morocco, we were in Bahrain, we were in the UAE, and we were in Israel, talking about future advancement for peace. There was great optimism and engagement. There was economic activity, tourist activity. There was a lot of interaction with development on healthcare, on cyber protections, and cooperation together for energy and water.

Literally, there were families meeting each other, some of them for the first time in generations, to be able to have a conversation about a future in the Middle East based around peace. It was based off of an agreement that started on September 15, 2020, with the signing of the Abraham Accords, and it has continued to advance.

In fact, just as recently as a month ago, there was outspoken public support from Saudi Arabia and from Israel about advancing a normalization agreement between Saudi Arabia and Israel—what people thought would be unheard of just a few years ago.

There was an advance of conversation about how we could increase peace. And then, on the 7th of October, 1 day after the 50th anniversary of the start of the Yom Kippur War, a group of terrorists from Gaza penetrated the wall separating Gaza and Israel, and

they slaughtered 1,400 Israelis, brutally, many in their bed—children, elderly, disabled—it didn't matter. Whether they were college students at a concert, whether they were people traveling down a highway, or whether it was children, literally, on their playgrounds, they murdered them where they stood. And then they took hostages and retreated back into Gaza, for some reason assuming that Israel and the world would just not notice their barbarism.

Well, the world certainly noticed, and, as Americans, we obviously all lived in the shock and horror of the event with the Israelis and the rest of the world. Thirty-one Americans died in that attack, and 13 are missing, presumed to be hostages inside Gaza. Many of those individuals were killed simply because they were Jewish—period.

The pain of that has struck all of us over the course of the past several weeks now, and we have watched Israel rightly respond to the acts of terrorism, as we have as a nation, as well, when we were attacked on 9/11. We mobilized our forces. We identified al-Qaida, and we identified those who were harboring al-Qaida in Afghanistan and the Taliban and determined that type of attack would not happen again. And we, as a nation, determined we were not only going to stop the capabilities of al-Qaida to be able to attack us, but we were going to preemptively respond if we were attacked again. Our first goal, though, was to be able to prevent that kind of attack from coming at us again.

Israel is entirely right when they have been attacked by a terrorist organization to be able to say: That organization cannot do that to our Nation again and to our people again.

The United States has responded by sending two carrier strike groups to the Mediterranean, to literally park off the coast of Israel, to give a clear signal to Lebanon, to Iran: Do not engage in this.

We understand fully, as most of the world does, that Hamas is funded by Iran. And while many in the Muslim world, in the Arab countries continue to be able to speak out on behalf of Palestinians, they also understand that 70 percent of the funding for Hamas comes from Iran.

The weapons systems that Hamas has right now were fully funded by Iran, and the weapons systems in Lebanon, by Hezbollah, where they have been attacking Israel from the north, were fully funded and created and, many times, shipped directly from Iran.

Iran is the destabilizing force in this entire region, and we, as Americans, have made very, very clear that we understand that Iran is the one who funded this, who supplied the weapons systems, who supplied the training and the munitions. Iran is the one who continues to destabilize that region.

As Americans, we clearly speak out for the protection of all civilians in

every nation around the world and in every conflict in the world, but we were also very clear that Israel did not initiate this battle in the last 2 weeks. Hamas did, and they pulled their hostages back into Gaza, as they continue to be able to hide them among the civilian population. It is a painful peace for us to be able to see internationally. For us in Oklahoma, we are like many others that are in this Chamber as well. It personally affects many families in Oklahoma. Israel is a nation so small that there is no one that has not experienced the pain of a friend or relative, someone whom they work with, they know people who have been directly attacked. But in my State of Oklahoma, we are in the same condition. Many people that I interact with talk frequently about family, friends that live in Israel or that travel back and forth.

Quite frankly, last weekend, I worshipped with a Jewish congregation on Shabbat and heard the dialogue from many people about their travels back and forth and family and friends and what they personally experienced as a family based on this terrorist attack. Quite frankly, my State of Oklahoma has a very close bond with Israel, as the United States has a very close bond, close enough that we had many Oklahomans that were currently in Israel during that time of the attacks, and our office actively worked to be able to get many of those out, since many flights have been canceled out of Tel Aviv.

So we have actively worked to be able to get many of those individuals back home to Oklahoma, and they have quite a story to tell, as you would assume.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, the pain of this, though, is also something that we should pay attention to. We, as a nation, not only remember 9/11 and our response, but we also remember 9/11 was instituted by 20 people that were illegally present in the United States. We should not fail to remember that fact as well.

Recent statistics coming across our southern border identified in the last 2 years—just the last 2 years—we have had 70,000 individuals that have been identified as what they call special interest aliens. These are individuals that came between the ports of entry, that were running through to try to evade being captured. They are identified as special interest aliens because they have this designation: They potentially possess a national security risk to the United States or its interests. So they are identified as a special interest alien.

As I mentioned, we have had more than 70,000 of those that have crossed between our ports of entry just in the last 2 years. These are individuals from Syria, from Iran, from Iraq, from Pakistan, from west Africa, from locations

where terrorism is known to exist, and we don't have any criminal history of those individuals.

If you are thinking, I am glad we picked them up between ports of entry, well, let me finish the story for you. Most of those 70,000 special interest aliens were identified between the ports of entry and then were released into the country under Biden's policy on how he handles immigration currently. Those 70,000 individuals that were identified as potentially possessing a national security risk to the United States or its interests are in the United States right now.

Just in the past week, four individuals from Iran were picked up, multiple Syrians were picked up between our ports of entry and then released, awaiting a hearing in the future. And in current status right now, that hearing will be 8 to 10 years in the future. They are unmonitored. They are wandering around within our borders awaiting a hearing 8 to 10 years from now in the future, after being identified as a special interest alien.

We grieve for Israel, but for some reason, there are some in this body and in the White House that will not pay attention to our own national security issues and the obvious exposure that literally everyone in the country can see.

I can raise this issue with 100 people on the street outside this building, and all 100 would say, Oh, yeah, that is a risk. But for some reason, we can't get serious in this body to be able to take on the same thing, just to identify what are we going to do with individuals that are considered special interest aliens. Are we really going to just process them at the border and release them into the country? Or are we going to enforce our own sovereignty as just about every other nation does in the world? What are we planning to do on this?

I would just say, for the basic function of our national security, we should enforce our borders, and we should not just release special interest aliens out into the country, as has been done for now the last 2 years by the numbers of 70,000-plus.

So I would hope this body would get serious about dealing with issues like asylum, parole, and all the different features that have been used to release these individuals into the country, that we could fix that before we have the next 9/11 in our country.

ISRAEL

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, one last comment just based on news that is continuing to flow out.

All of us are absolutely heartbroken—absolutely heartbroken—at a hospital that had a major explosion from a rocket in Gaza. The initial reports came out just immediately: This must have been the Israelis that attacked a hospital. And many countries around the world immediately made

statements that the Israelis bombed a hospital.

Meetings were canceled with President Biden while he was in the region because the Israelis had bombed a hospital—until the facts and information actually came out. Now, less than 24 hours later, we have overhead that can identify the movement of different rockets that we are able to see. We have information that is now out in the public, and the President has confirmed that was not an Israeli strike on that hospital; that was a rocket that was launched from inside Gaza that went errant and then landed in Gaza directly on the hospital, killing almost 500 people.

It was literally a terrorist attack on Israel that, instead of hitting innocent civilians in Israel, it hit innocent civilians in Gaza.

It is still just as tragic for all of those families, but I would call on all the nations that immediately condemned Israel for attacking a hospital to immediately turn that to condemn Hamas for attacking civilians and for launching rockets to kill civilians in Israel that actually killed Palestinian civilians in Gaza, that for every nation that falsely accused Israel of this horrible attack, that they would see the evidence and they would instead turn and try to speak to Hamas to stop their terrorist attacks.

That is something every nation can do, to stand up for the life and the value of people and of civilians. I would call on them to be able to do that even today.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

ISRAEL

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I join with my overwhelming bipartisan majority of Senators and House colleagues in delivering a message of unwavering support for our friends in Israel. And I want to congratulate my friend, the senior Senator from Oklahoma, for his very fine speech just now and to associate myself with every single remark that he made, and I congratulate him on making it so eloquently.

We have all seen the devastation from Hamas's brutal attacks. We need to send this clear signal from both sides of the aisle and both ends of this building: Israel has the right to self-defense, just as we in America deserve a right to self-defense, and Israel is entitled to our full support. The weeks ahead will require decisive action from Congress and decisive action from the White House. We must ensure our allies are armed to the teeth as they enter what amounts to a Hamas fortress across the border in Gaza.

They must also receive the tools they need to keep Hezbollah in the north and the Palestinian-Islamic jihad at bay. And we must stand united against Hamas's patron, the Islamic Republic

of Iran. Israel needs more Tamir interceptor missiles for the Iron Dome system. They need them immediately. We have several hundred in inventory, and the administration should use its draw-down authority immediately to send these missiles without delay. We need to pass a supplemental appropriations bill to accelerate Tamir production in Israel, even as the United States builds our own Tamir manufacturing capability here in the United States by 2025.

Congress should also support the delivery and production of more precision-guided munitions and ammunition for Israeli ground forces, as well as expansive intelligence sharing. And there are many questions about intelligence failures and shortcomings leading up to this terrorist attack.

This episode, again, highlights that our national defense is far behind where it should be. Some of us have been raising this point for a long time. I have been making this point long before I was able to become ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

The administration needs to send Congress a funding request that fully resources the U.S. military for a rapidly worsening threat environment in Israel and the Middle East and Ukraine and Europe and in the Western Pacific.

For over seven-and-a-half decades, Israel has made every effort simply to be a peaceful democracy in a dangerous area of the world. Hamas wants to end the nation of Israel. That is part of their charter. It is in writing. That is their goal.

And, you know, our fellow American citizens are also victims of the Hamas violence. We have lost more than 20 fellow Americans to these terrorists, and, of course, we know that some are being held captive. Millions of Americans are praying today that they come home.

The people of Israel know that there can be no return to the pre-war status quo. The pre-war status quo, the pre-October 7 status quo is over. Israel must now destroy Hamas, no matter how long it takes.

As it pursues this goal, no nation should give Hamas terrorists safe haven. Iran should not give Hamas terrorists safe haven. Tehran's support for this war makes one thing clear: We successfully deter bad actors only through unmistakable signals of American strength. We need to return to the maximum pressure policies of the previous Trump administration, and we can match that financial pressure with a heightened defense posture in the region.

We must also examine why Iran and its proxies believe they can get away with this heinous massacre. We know, for example, that the Biden administration's Iran policy—and this pains me to say, Madam President—the Iran policy was led by individuals who were actually part of an Iranian Government information operation. One of those individuals has been relieved. Another of those individuals, Dr. Ariane

Tabatabai, inexplicably remains in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Thirty Senators have joined me in a letter asking for answers on this. We need answers now on why this is still allowed to happen and what steps the administration will take to remediate it.

We should support the continued Arab-Israeli peace efforts, which President Trump initiated through the Abraham Accords. While I disagree with many of the Biden administration's Middle East policies, I strongly support the recent Saudi-Israeli peace initiative. Hamas clearly hopes their terrorist attacks will grind this process to a halt.

I am grateful that many of our Arab partners, in the face of extreme pressure and hardship, still see the true nature of Hamas today. They understand that Hamas is an Iranian-backed terrorist organization who wants to wipe Israel off the face of the map. Many of our Arab partners have fought and defeated similar organizations like Hamas within their own borders.

So I urge the Biden administration today to emphasize the shared Arab-Israeli interest in Hamas's defeat so that Arab-Israeli peace efforts can continue to progress.

Finally, let me say this. I can state with confidence that the people of my State are with Israel. My office has received a remarkable outpouring of support for Israel from the people across Mississippi. We express that support in word and deed.

The three flagship Navy corvettes of the Israeli battle fleet were built by the skilled craftsmen of our Mississippi shipyards. Think about that. Mississippi-made hulls, carrying the flag of the Star of David, are being used to protect the Israeli people from further attack. It is just one example of our common cause.

With the people of Mississippi and with the overwhelming majority of Senators on both sides of the aisle, I call upon all of us to stand united in support of an Israeli victory.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

ISRAEL

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, let my message to Israel be clear: America stands with you and your right to defend yourself from this unspeakable evil perpetrated by Hamas.

From my earliest memories, my mom, my Sunday school teachers told me that we support Israel. And as you go through your faith journey, as you go through your education, you learn why your mom and your Sunday school teachers said: We support Israel. I looked no further than my own bedroom wall to see Moses's Ten Commandments there that my mom had put for my brother and myself to look at every day when we awoke in the morning.

We learned later that Moses was indeed the greatest lawgiver; that this

Nation was founded on Judeo-Christian values. It is what defines the United States of America in so many ways. And to our faith partners in Israel, we are grateful for that heritage and culture that they passed on to us.

But what I have learned as a Member of Congress, I need to pass on to every person in America—how important Israel is as an ally. In so many ways, they are the eyes and ears for America in a very, very troubled land. No doubt, their efforts have prevented the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans by thwarting terrorist attacks from our enemies. We are so blessed to share military technology that is saving American lives as well. Indeed, Israel has been one of our greatest, most staunch allies.

Today, we need to face the truth. We need to tell the truth. Hamas is a terrorist organization, and it only knows one language: death and destruction. Hamas's sole purpose is to radicalize its people, serve as a breeding ground for terrorism, and entirely eradicate Israel and other freedom-loving people like Americans.

The actions of Hamas over this last week serve as an illustration of their principles. Look, Hamas has no interest in dialogue, only in destruction. Hamas does not want peace, they want punishment. Hamas wants war, not co-existence. Hamas is a terrorist army with a track record of unspeakable brutality and a commitment to wiping out not just Israel but America as well. This terrorist organization knows only one language: death and destruction.

But the head of the snake is Iran. That is part of the truth that needs to be told. Iran is the head of the snake and Hamas is just a puppet fulfilling the prophecy of its leader. Hamas fighters and other terrorist groups are inspired, encouraged, and empowered by Iran to continue committing more brutal, more savage, and more devastating terrorist attacks around the globe.

Look, I think there is no doubt in my mind that Iran planned, they funded, they armed, and they authorized the brutal murders of babies, burning women alive in the streets, and killing 30 Americans. This blood—the blood of American citizens—is on the hands of Iran and Hamas. As we go forward over these next weeks, these next months, we need to realize that all the blood being shed belongs on the hands of Iran.

I would ask the White House to strongly condemn Iran's actions and disavow their terrorist regime. We need to stop empowering Iran. We need to stop encouraging them to develop nuclear weapons and making it possible to do that. We need to turn off their spigots. Right now, Iran is selling \$1 billion of oil every week to pay for wars like this.

Under this administration, Iran's reserves have gone from \$6 billion to \$60 billion. We have to stop turning our heads to the sanctions. We need to dou-

ble down on our sanctions. We need to stop the funding from Iran, this head of the snake.

Lastly, we need to make sure that all the other puppets of Iran know that if they engage further in war with Israel, as my dad would say, there will be hell to pay. This seems complicated to many people, but I think that is why it is so important that the United States outline exactly what our priorities are as we undertake these next several weeks.

No. 1, first and foremost, should be a focus on getting American citizens back home safely and to free American hostages. Every day that we wait, every day that goes by, American hostages are being terrorized. They are being tortured by Hamas. It goes without saying that we need to cut the head off the snake, which is Iran.

As I really ponder what is ahead of us here in the near future, I think about what one of my boyhood heroes said, Dwight David Eisenhower, 34th President of the United States. This is what President Eisenhower said:

I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, and its stupidity.

I, too, hate war. This is not going to be pretty for the next several weeks and, I am afraid, months even.

We need to be clear about what Israel is up against. Their opponents, they are worse than animals. They are using women and babies as human shields and harboring hundreds of hostages.

I support Israel, and I understand and encourage their need to fight fire with fire when it comes to decimating this threat. The existence of Hamas is a clear and present danger to the United States, to Israel, and the entire free world. There is no safe Israel; there is no safe world; there is no safe America as long as Hamas lives in the Gaza Strip.

Again, I just pledge my support to the people of Israel.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

ISRAEL

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I join my colleague from Kansas and many others who are going to be on the floor today in full and total support of one of our most steadfast allies, the State of Israel. I also stand here today to strongly condemn—condemn in the strongest terms—the terrorist attacks perpetrated on Israel by Hamas.

Since the initial attack on October 7, we have lost 31 American citizens. Other Americans remain unaccounted for and are being held hostage. More than 1,400 Israelis have been killed, and countless families have been left without a home and without their loved ones.

This is an unacceptable tragedy and recalls far too familiar memories of terrorist attacks in our own Nation's history. We remember vividly the dev-

astating and hostile attacks that ISIS deployed and can clearly see the parallels between their terroristic actions and the wrath that Hamas is now perpetrating. Now is the time to unabashedly and unapologetically support Israel, and I do.

It is also time to support Israel's right to defend themselves and their people. The United States and Israel has a long, long history of demonstrating mutual respect and allegiance to one another.

It dates back to 1948, when President Truman became the first world leader to recognize the Jewish State. Since then, Israel has displayed unmatched loyalty and provided critical support to our country in the Middle East. Israel has stood beside us in some of our darkest hours, and now, as friends do, we will do the same for them.

It is imperative that Congress take action now and provide the support that Israel needs in the face of these terrorist attacks, both to properly defend themselves but also to provide the humanitarian resources needed for those whose lives have been decimated by a group that shows no mercy toward civilians, many of whom are women and children.

Our country must do all that it can within our power to rescue American hostages and return them to safety. This has to be met with increased urgency because time is of the essence. I am afraid the longer we wait, the sadder the stories, especially for those hostages who are in severe need of medical attention.

We must also make certain that the \$6 billion in frozen assets that the Biden administration planned to send to Iran in September remains frozen.

It is incomprehensible to me that the Biden administration made the announcement that they were going to unfreeze \$6 billion to Iran and that they would do that on September 11 of this year. Additionally, it is imperative that the Biden administration finally strengthens and enforces U.S. sanctions on the Iranian regime, which is raking in billions of dollars—the Iranian regime is raking in billions of dollars—in illicit oil sales.

It is past time to get tough on Iranian oil and to stop the regime from skirting our U.S. sanctions. Iran is selling 1.4 billion barrels of oil per day this year and using these proceeds to fund what we just saw over the last several weeks—these murderous actions of terrorist groups throughout the region—and they fund their own military at the same time.

It should surprise no one that Iran, the world leader in state-sponsored terrorism, was heavily involved in this attack and that they continue to support the unjustifiable actions of Hamas.

The leaders of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have put forth a resolution, of which I am an original cosponsor and support strongly, as do many of us. This resolution declares that Congress will stand with Israel. It

reaffirms Israel's right to self-defense. It condemns Hamas and Iran and calls on the Biden administration to further impose sanctions on Iran.

With the support of 99 Senators, once passed, this will send an almost unanimous message to the world that acts of terrorism and violence will not be tolerated or go unpunished.

I have been encouraged by President Biden's response following the attacks on Israel. However, President Biden's time in office has been defined by a level of, in my view, passiveness and ambiguity that has emboldened our adversaries, and it has lacked the strength that is required of a superpower. That being said, this is not the time to fight amongst ourselves.

One of our strongest allies is under attack, and a nation as strong as ours must display a united front as well as call these attacks on Israel exactly what they are, an act of terrorism.

There is no doubt that the continued assault on Israel creates a seismic shift in our foreign policy. Just a few weeks ago, on this very floor, I warned about the uneasy closeness that was cultivating between our adversaries. Nations that shun our values and reject democracy are finding refuge with each other and stand in direct opposition to our ideals and our way of life. The connection between these countries—Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea—cannot be ignored and only further underscores the importance of strengthening our own military capabilities. We need to be providing military aid for Israel that will serve to not only reinforce our allies but also invest directly back in our own defense. We will serve to reenergize our defense industrial base by restoring the arsenal of democracy that defines our leadership as the United States of America.

Moving forward, we must act decisively and lead in the way that America has done before in times of emergency and adversity. This is the United States of America, the greatest country on Earth. We have the capacity and the obligation to defend our allies as they face unjustified aggression from adversaries.

These attacks on Israel are brutal beyond comprehension and have led to the slaying, as I said before, of innocent families, women, and children. It is incumbent upon us to show steadfast support for Israel and to reiterate how military aid from the United States is in the best interests of both of our nations.

The world is watching and expecting the United States to lead. I encourage my colleagues to recognize the magnitude of this moment, which many of us have been expressing here on the floor today, and join together in our unwavering support of Israel.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

ISRAEL

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, I just returned from a mission to the Middle

East, where I had the unique opportunity to lead a bipartisan delegation to the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, and Israel. We had planned this visit long before the heinous attacks by Iran-backed Hamas, with the goal of strengthening the Abraham Accords and our relationships in the region.

In the UAE, I led a discussion with their Crown Prince and President about increasing cooperation between our two countries to further security, peace, and prosperity. I left feeling more determined than ever to intensify our efforts to advance growth across the Middle East and beyond.

In Saudi Arabia, I met with Mohammed bin Salman, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom. During this visit, we discussed the prospect of an Israeli-Saudi peace deal to further the dream of a thriving and integrated Middle East.

The delegation left that very meeting optimistic that the Crown Prince was dedicated and committed to this dream—a dream, for many of us, like myself, who served in the region after 9/11, a dream that was rocked the next morning when we heard the news that Israel was at war once again.

At this moment, there was no question what my bipartisan delegation needed to do. It was our job to ensure our ally Israel understood clearly that America is and will always stand shoulder to shoulder with her.

Our delegation was briefed at the highest levels as we completed our visit in Saudi at the Prince Sultan Air Base, where we witnessed integrated air and missile defense systems in action, something my bipartisan DEFEND Act helped to ensure.

We continued into Bahrain the next morning to meet with the Crown Prince and Prime Minister. Once again, a meeting that was intended to be another step on the path to regional security took a very different turn. The Crown Prince provided his insight into the current situation in Israel and his assessment of the causes and potential scale of the conflict. He also spoke of a peaceful future and highlighted the longstanding relations between Bahrain and America, noting the history of bilateral ties and his commitment to achieving mutual aspirations.

Our final stops in Bahrain included the U.S. Naval Support Activity and Task Force 59, which integrates unmanned systems and artificial intelligence to help ensure maritime security and to deter Iran's illegal activities in the Gulf.

The situation in Israel continued to degrade, and I made the decision that we were ultimately going to accomplish what we set out to achieve. Despite all attempts to stop us, I led our bipartisan delegation to Jordan in preparation for a cross-border drive into Israel.

Upon our previously unscheduled arrival, we met with His Majesty King Abdallah II of Jordan, where he painted a dire picture of regional escalation

and the need for stability in the West Bank. He was open and honest about his concern that Iran would capitalize on the chaos by using their other proxies to further escalate the conflict. He discussed the tensions within Jordan and the need for the United States to once again lead and establish peace through strength.

The King's clear-eyed insight into the savage nature of Iran-backed Hamas was chilling, and his concern for escalation was felt by every member of our delegation.

It was clear that what we were about to walk into was chaotic and uncertain and not for the faint of heart. But, in unity, our bipartisan delegation pressed on, and on October 10, we set foot in Israel.

We first met with Eli Cohen, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and received an update on the war. Here, we heard, for the first time, the true nature of the atrocities that the Hamas savages were conducting—rape, beheadings, dragging bloody bodies into the streets—and among those dead were American citizens. The Israeli Foreign Minister made it very clear that the threat Hamas poses to civilization is no less than what the United States faced with ISIS in Iraq, where I served, and in Syria, and I couldn't agree more. These terrorists are monsters, and they deserve nothing short of destruction.

We then spoke with the family of Chaim Peri, an 80-year-old peace activist and father of five who was kidnapped from his home during the invasion. We heard firsthand accounts of the inhumanity of the attack: the destruction of their home, the violence his family endured, and, ultimately, that one of his sons was murdered in defending the family.

Shaken but not deterred, the delegation carried on to Tel Aviv, where we met with Opposition Leader Lapid, the Minister of Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer, and, ultimately, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. We heard increasingly graphic accounts of torture and mutilation of civilians. We ultimately witnessed a nation that was and is truly in an existential fight for survival against a psychopathic terrorist organization whose stated goal is destruction of the State of Israel and killing as many Jewish people as possible.

Let me tell you, there was no daylight between the political factions in Israel on what needs to be done. The complete and total destruction of Hamas is the greatest near-term priority for Israel. Reestablishing deterrence against all others who seek the destruction of Israel is critical.

I am here to say that, in these goals, the United States must not waver in our commitment to our greatest ally in the Middle East. Now is not the time for weak-kneed leadership and ongoing appeasement of the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism that risks the lives of Americans and our allies at

home and abroad and allows Hamas to wreak havoc in Israel.

Now is the time for strong American leadership, one that understands the threat a war waged by Iran-backed proxies is to our own national security here in the homeland. With Americans still being held hostage by Hamas and the death toll of our fellow citizens continuing to rise, this moment demands clarity from our elected officials. Not only today but in the coming days and months, as Israel fights to secure their most basic human right—the right to life—the United States must stand resolute in our support.

May God bless the families who have lost a loved one, and may God bless Israel as she defends herself from Hamas's brutal attacks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

ISRAEL

Mr. BUDD. Madam President, I rise today to express my total and complete support for the State of Israel.

On October 7, Hamas terrorists launched an unprovoked and despicable series of terrorist attacks inside of Israel. The level of barbarism that we witnessed was nothing short of evil incarnate with the mass slaughter of innocent civilians and unspeakable violence against women, children, and the elderly. It was the deadliest massacre of the Jewish people since the Holocaust. These crimes against humanity were also visited upon our American citizens as well. At last count, 30 Americans were murdered by Hamas, and others are currently being held hostage.

We pray for comfort for the families of those who were killed, and we continue to pray and work for the safe return of those who are unjustly being held by the terrorists.

Compounding these atrocities are the reactions in some parts of the world and even here in our own land, like the sickening anti-Semitic protests in city streets and on university campuses. These vile demonstrations celebrated, they justified, and they endorsed this violence. Simply put, there can be no place in our country for anti-Semitic bigotry.

But we have also seen some politicians—some who work in this very Capitol—express a cynical moral ambiguity, blithely declaring that both sides are at fault, explaining away the motives of the terrorists while preaching restraint from the nation that was attacked.

So, to those who need a reminder, there is a stark difference between the two sides here.

Israel is the Middle East's only democracy. They have been a force for stability in a region historically beset by chaos. They have been one of America's strongest friends in good times and in bad. When faced with attacks, they go out of their way to avoid civil-

ian casualties, sometimes at the cost of their own Israeli lives. Israel is an unmistakable force for good.

Then you have the terrorists of Hamas. Their founding charter calls for the destruction of the State of Israel. Their largest benefactor, Iran, lends its materiel and financial support to this cause of their destruction each and every day. They intentionally target civilians—they fire rockets into crowded markets—and they preach the sort of hate that triggered the Holocaust.

Make no mistake, the only word to describe all of this is "evil." And, unlike the Holocaust, we have seen this evil in realtime. We have seen it with our own eyes.

Evil is surrounding a music festival full of innocent young people and systematically hunting them down and slaughtering them on the side of the road. That is evil. Evil is kidnapping elderly women out of their homes and threatening on the internet to murder them. And evil is beheading and burning babies in front of their mothers and fathers.

The line between morality and depravity, right now, is as bright as it has ever been. As a country, we must not avoid the reality that this is good versus evil, because if we try to turn away from evil, if we try to deny that it is evil, or to beg for context to explain away the evil, then we do a disservice to our credibility, and we stain the soul of a nation.

We must stand shoulder to shoulder with the State of Israel. We must provide them with everything that they need to secure the safety of their nation and eliminate the threat of terrorism.

So I call on the Biden administration to project unequivocal strength to the forces of evil in our world. In this struggle between good and evil, America must lead the forces of good. And we must not fail.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from North Dakota.

ISRAEL

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, the images that have been emerging from Israel in the aftermath of the Hamas terrorist assault are shocking in the extreme. Our hearts are with the Israeli people in the wake of these atrocities, and all of us here in America need to stand strongly, firmly, and united for our friend and ally, Israel.

Here in Congress, there is strong bipartisan support to stand with Israel against Hamas. But what does that mean? What does that mean to stand with Israel? Of course, it means providing military aid. And, of course, it means providing diplomatic support.

I am pleased to cosponsor a bipartisan legislation from the Foreign Relations Committee under the leadership of Chairman CARDIN and Ranking Member RISCH that expresses the Sen-

ate's support for Israel against terrorism.

But today, standing with Israel also means standing against the largest state sponsor of terror in the world, and that is Iran.

For too long, the United States has negotiated with Iran and made concessions. Such policies have not brought peace.

Many of my colleagues and I have warned for years that giving money to Iran, letting Iran sell oil, and giving Iran access to weapons would destabilize the entire region. And, sure enough, over the last decade, we have watched Iran extract concessions in one negotiation after another while creating chaos in Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, and beyond. And now we see the hand of Iran behind Hamas and this horrific assault on Israel.

So we must do all we can to support Israel, to help Israel—help Israel defend itself and ensure that it doesn't suffer another attack like this at the hands of Hamas. But also, to stand with Israel, we must undercut Iran's ability to work through its proxies like Hamas and Hezbollah that pose such a danger to the Israeli people and others as well. Concessions and waivers to the Iranian regime provide the resources for Iran to develop an infrastructure of terror across the Middle East, and the cash flow to Iran must be cut off.

To start with, we must refreeze the \$6 billion that the regime gained access to following negotiations over the release of U.S. citizens from Iran.

I am part of the legislative efforts to do just that, including bills from Senator COTTON, Senator MCCONNELL, as well as legislation authored by Senator MARSHALL and Senator TIM SCOTT.

Ultimately, we must return to a policy of maximum pressure—severe sanctions, maximum pressure that holds Iran accountable for its actions, its actions as the largest state sponsor of terror in the world.

This means a return to the sanctions without waivers. This means leading a global effort to isolate Iran, choke off its sources of financing, and deny the regime the resources required to dominate the region. And this also means making every effort to recognize the rights and the freedoms of the people of Iran, including the right of the Iranian people to choose their own future. We must take these steps.

At the same time, we must always do all we can to ensure that we provide strong, unwavering support to our closest friend and ally in the region, Israel.

Now, we need to move quickly to provide military support for Israel in its fight against Hamas. Also, as I said, our policy on Iran needs to change. We need to exert maximum pressure. That means severe sanctions without waiver.

Maximum and unrelenting pressure on Iran helps Israel, helps the United States, and provides the best chance for minimizing bloodshed both now and in the future.

We stand with Israel.
I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

ISRAEL

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I come here to join my colleagues to talk about the events of the past 10 or so days in Israel and the horrible attacks.

I want to talk a little bit about two visits that I have made there over the past year or so, the most recent one back in February. But I want to start with holding our Members accountable here on Capitol Hill.

This was posted on social media, and it reads like false statements that we have seen from Hamas and other groups that want to foment hate and death in the region. It reads like this: Israel just bombed the Baptist Hospital building, killing 500 Palestinians—doctors, children, patients—just like that.

That was within an hour or two of the bombing. Before we knew anything, before any of us could have possibly had a secured briefing, before we had gotten an assessment from the President of the United States or any of our intelligence sources here, before we could go down to the SCIF and actually understand the details, that statement was made.

You would think that would come from a member of Hamas, but it came from a Member of our Congress. If that Member of Congress wants to take responsibility for the protest that we now see in Beirut—good on you, in Jordan, in Amman, and in Egypt. This sort of leadership or failure of leadership has no place on Capitol Hill.

Now I want to talk about why I think Hamas is evil and why Iran is a part of this and why this is not surprising that the very details of this attack took place.

Earlier this year, in February, I was in—well, let me back up. A couple of years ago, I was in Israel, and we went down to the Gaza Strip. We saw a tunnel head. We actually walked into a tunnel that was discovered by the Israelis. We went to a Patriot battery or an armed dome battery that every day is prepared to shoot down missiles because that always happens. Before this attack, it happened almost on a daily basis. I have literally been in Israel when I am having lunch, in northern Israel—this was near the Golan Heights—and I am asking somebody to pass a plate of food, and a bomb goes off. And the people living in this kibbutz did not even miss a beat. Every day they have to live with this stuff.

So now, down in Gaza, we see the tunnel system that is in Gaza. If you go north to the Lebanese border, you will see an entire network of tunnels that the Israelis identified just in time. It had been a project, it was estimated to be, 10 years in the making, funded by Iran. Hezbollah is in Lebanon. Hamas

is down in the Gaza Strip. They had developed these tunnel networks, and they were prepared to do the same thing in northern Israel that we saw in southern Israel over the past week and a half. They even want to design this to strike fear and terror in the Israeli people. They want them to think—they want their children to think that they are going to pop out of the ground and kidnap them and kill their parents. This is a part of the terror that they want the Israeli people to live with every single day.

The Iranians were absolutely responsible for funding Hamas to build that tunnel network in northern Israel, and they do the same thing with Hamas in southern Israel.

Ladies and gentlemen, first off, this has to end. Let us work with facts. If Israel doesn't abide by the rules of war, then we should hold them accountable. But what we are finding out now from additional intelligence sources is that it does appear as though this was not an Israeli strike; that it was probably a failed missile launch from Hamas.

Well, let the facts lead where they may, but here is what I do know: This congressional Member and others, before they can actually stand up to the Palestinian people—who I believe the majority of whom are good people who want to live free and live in democracy—they have to recognize that Hamas is evil, every single one of them. From their leadership down to their rank and files to the ones who flew the ultralights in to the people who came out of the tunnels and murdered over 1,200 people, they have to be held accountable. Their funder has to be held accountable. Their strategists in Iran have to be held accountable.

We in the United States have to stand by Israel and by freedom-loving Palestinians and freedom-loving members of the Middle East, but we cannot let this go. We cannot let this evil go unchecked.

We have to stand by Israel, and we have to make sure that we do everything we can to educate the American people on the facts and disabuse them of any notion that this congressional Member or anyone else has any place in communicating that misinformation to the American people and across the world. And the violence that can come from making people believe that, they have to own.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

ISRAEL

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President:

Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts . . . Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror . . . These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our Nation into chaos and retreat.

These were the words of former President George W. Bush speaking to the Nation on the evening of Sep-

tember 11, 2001. But they could have been repeated word for word by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the wake of the heinous terrorist attacks by Hamas that left more than 1,400 dead in Israel on October 7.

As Americans, we know the horror of living through the mass murder of our fellow citizens in a shocking terrorist attack; to be overcome with these intertwined feelings of insecurity and fear, fury, and grief; to be filled with the deep righteous desire for justice and retribution a need to reconcile the moral universe by making the perpetrators of these crimes pay a heavy price. And we know that, even as the impulse to avenge may subside, there remains a need to deter, to show your enemies that aggression against us will be met with overwhelming force.

Nine days after September 11, President Bush presented an ultimatum to Afghanistan's Taliban government:

[H]and over the terrorists, or . . . share in their fate.

The United States moved swiftly to mobilize the support of the international community and the overwhelming capabilities of the U.S. military to destroy al-Qaida and wrest control of Afghanistan from their Taliban hosts. It was a just mission. Neither America's security nor the moral order of the world could have been preserved if the Taliban remained in power, having made possible al-Qaida's training and planning to execute the September 11 attack. Americans rallied around the invasion of Afghanistan—so did the world.

In thinking back on those early days in the fall of 2001, America was looking for partners, not second-guessers or critics. We would not have taken kindly to lectures about how we should go about meting out justice or keeping our Nation safe. Either you were with us or you were against us. With 3,000 Americans dead, that was our mindset, and it was an entirely understandable one.

Israel must seek justice for the 1,400 of its citizens murdered by Hamas on October 7. Israel must bring to justice those who planned and executed the attacks, and it must seek to destroy Hamas as an armed group or, at the very least, destroy its capability to carry out terrorist violence against Israelis. Israel must defend itself, just like we had to do in 2001. This is the state's obligation to its people.

And I, for one, will be there to support Israel, just like our friends were there for us 20 years ago. And I, for one, am glad to see this body, the U.S. Senate, coming together—Republicans and Democrats, who fight over a lot of things—in our joint show of support for Israel's defense.

But here is what I also believe. I believe that part of the way that we support Israel is providing them with funding and with arms in order to destroy Hamas's military capabilities, but I also believe that we should be sharing the lessons that we learned

from our response to September 11 and the successive two decades of wars waged in the name of counterterrorism.

If we are going to be honest with our friends in Israel, then we need to admit that we often failed to see beyond our fury and that we made mistakes by not understanding what came next after the invasion of Afghanistan and the decapitation of our enemy. We had a day-one strategy, but we did not have a day-two strategy, and we paid a horrible price.

After al-Qaida fled and the Taliban government collapsed, we spent 20 years trying to “win” without a clear idea of what “winning” was, how it would be accomplished, or how that was actually linked to making America safer.

Now, let me be clear. The challenge Israel faces from Hamas is different in really important ways from the al-Qaida threat to the United States, and the lessons of America’s global counterterrorism campaign do not neatly map onto Israel’s current crisis. For one, the physical proximity of the threat is meaningful. Hamas does not operate from a safe distance. It exists right next door, in Gaza.

America had no experience in or with Afghanistan before the invasion—not so for Israel and Gaza. They know each other. They have an intimate history, and that history impacts the effectiveness of the fight to come.

Another key distinction is the disposition of the enemy. Hamas is not hiding in caves in the Tora Bora. They are both a military and a political entity. They live in a tightly packed corridor that is home to more than 2 million people. Many of them have nothing to do with Hamas.

So there is no perfect comparison between Afghanistan and Gaza, but there are enough similarities that we should be confident in sharing with our friends in Israel the lessons that we learned, the mistakes we made—mistakes that Israel could avoid.

The first of those mistakes was lacking a realistic conception of success. In Afghanistan, we set about the total and complete elimination of “ungoverned space” and “terrorist safe havens”; but after 20 years of fighting, of raids, of targeted strikes, we finally came to terms with a really harsh reality: Our tactics were often producing more terrorists and insurgents than they were eliminating. We were far too cavalier about civilian casualties and the humanitarian cost of our pursuit of the Taliban, and it ended up simply making the Taliban stronger.

Today, Israeli leaders talk about totally eliminating every last Hamas fighter. It is an understandable objective, given the terror that Hamas rained down on Israel. But is it realistic? Can the Israeli military destroy an entire movement—not just a terrorist organization or an armed group but a political entity that administers territory? Is there a risk of our fate in

Afghanistan—creating more terrorists than we eliminated—repeating in Gaza?

Another mistake we made in Afghanistan was believing that every proposal we put down on paper could, through the sheer force of American will, become a reality on the ground. We drew up a viable plan to replace the Taliban’s kleptocratic theocracy with corruption-free parliamentary democracy. But Afghanistan was not a fit for that plan, and our plan, which looked good on a PowerPoint, was destined to fail.

What was an achievable outcome that we eventually, 20 years later, settled on was eliminating al-Qaida’s ability to attack the United States and creating the political conditions on the ground in Afghanistan so that al-Qaida would never again be granted safe harbor. But, of course, that outcome didn’t need to take 20 years. It was likely available to the United States much earlier in the conflict.

If Israel does mount a ground invasion, the question is, of course: What comes next?

Hamas administers Gaza. So if Hamas is eliminated, who takes their place? Does Israel reoccupy Gaza in the long run and run Gaza directly? That would seem like a recipe for perpetual conflict. Or does Israel imagine that the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority could step up and administer Gaza? I won’t go into a full analysis, but there are very few Middle East watchers who bet that that is a long-term, viable arrangement.

Some Israeli leaders suggest that the question of the future status of Gaza is a matter to be addressed after Israel has “won the war.” But what we learned in Afghanistan is that the very concept of “winning” is meaningless if it is not built around the conditions of a sustainable peace.

And what is the realistic possibility of building a post-Hamas governing structure in Gaza, particularly when the only immediate alternative would seem to be a renewed and indefinite occupation?

If there isn’t a satisfactory answer to these questions, then the military planning is incomplete.

But, make no mistake, America is going to support Israel in its time of need, with funding, with weapons, with whatever they need.

But I raise these questions only because there are important lessons that can be drawn—not perfect parallels but important lessons that can be drawn—from both our successes and our failures.

We had to invade Afghanistan. We had to take out the Taliban. It was the only way to square the moral universe. Israel must strike at Hamas. Israel must destroy their military capabilities. It is the only way to restore the balance of the moral universe. But supporting Israel also means helping them learn from our successes and our failures and to not reflexively repeat the

same mistakes we made 20 years ago. Friends support friends, but friends also level with friends.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

ISRAEL

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, throughout their history, the children of Israel have known persecution and sorrow. They have lived in exile and enslavement. They have faced bigotry and violence. Entire nations and civilizations have sought to extinguish them and vanished, but the Jewish people remain, and, against all odds, millions of their descendants gathered together in the Holy Land and founded a nation.

Today, Israel is a vibrant democracy in the Middle East and a strong ally of the United States of America. Many people of faith would say the existence and perseverance of the State of Israel is itself evidence of divine providence.

Yet, even today—even today—Israel faces existential threats. On October 7, Hamas terrorists carried out the worst attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust: the slaughter of 1,400 people; the decapitation of babies; the execution of grandmothers; and the taking of nearly 200 hostages, including children, women, seniors, and American citizens. Thirty Americans were among the murdered—30 Americans. Many of our fellow citizens have friends and family in Israel.

Regardless of our faith, we are all, I know, heartbroken for the loss and sickened—sickened—by the cruelty. And, on behalf of the Hoosiers I represent, I want to express my deepest condolences to the people of Israel as they mourn and pray and bury the dead.

As it has since its founding, against alliances of far larger nations and armies, this country, which is four times smaller than Indiana, will defend itself, and America will be here for Israel and support its right to confront this violence, this barbarism. We will do this because our values are the same: dedication to liberty and order, to tolerance, and to human dignity.

Make no mistake, the days ahead will be difficult. As Members of this body know too well, Israel is still under threat, and the risk of additional fronts opening up is real.

Over the past several days, I have been heartened by the strong bipartisan support in the U.S. Senate for the people of Israel. During this time of peril, this body cannot succumb to isolationism. We cannot abandon Israel any more than we can abandon our friends in Ukraine or Taiwan. On urgent matters of national security, we are stronger when we stand together, and in the difficult days ahead, we will work to support the people of Israel. I know we will continue that spirit.

Relatedly, I call on the Biden administration to consult and closely work with this Congress to quickly fulfill—

quickly fulfill—any urgent Israeli requests for assistance and do all we can to fully support Israel.

Now, colleagues, the Constitution of the United States lays out our responsibilities. Congress—Congress—has an important constitutional role in determining how the United States will respond to any additional acts of aggression.

As we support and stand with our allies, we also must be crystal clear about what has happened. The attacks on the people of Israel orchestrated by Hamas were barbaric, depraved—they were evil. Long supported by the Iranian regime, Hamas's stated mission is to destroy the Jewish people.

That is right—at the core of Hamas burns an age-old sickness: anti-Semitism. It was the twisted inspiration for their massacre. This broken thinking, this horrific ideology liberates not a single life; instead, tragically, it will cost only more, including those of innocent Palestinian civilians.

For the past 15 years, many peace-keeping Palestinians in Gaza have had their lives upended and exploited by the Hamas terrorist group. We acknowledge their suffering. We hope for change.

Those in our media, on our college campuses, or even those serving in government who ascribe the actions of Hamas to anything else other than hatred; those who are so quick to decry injustices elsewhere but place murder and rape in some sort of perspective; those who provide context for savagery; those who sigh that both sides are equally guilty—to all of you, I say you are providing cover for monsters.

The world view of Hamas must be added to the rollcall of evil ideologies that failed to destroy the Jewish people. And that is why we must stand with Israel. That is why. But that alone is not enough. You see, the murder of thousands of Jews brought reminders of the Holocaust and echoes of Russian pogroms and so many centuries of trials and tragedies. So we must also stand vigilant against and always oppose anti-Semitism wherever it appears, whatever movement it is attached to, whatever banner it marches underneath.

In these difficult days, we echo the old prayer sung across synagogues to the Jewish people:

May God have mercy on them and remove them from distress to relief, from darkness to light, from subjugation to redemption, now, speedily, and soon.

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

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

EDUCATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, we have an issue in Louisiana—I wouldn't call it a problem—that I would like to talk about. Perhaps some of our sister States can learn from our struggles in my State. And the issue is education. I can't think of a more important subject. That is the future of my State. I think it is true in many other States.

I believe that Louisiana's future can be better than its present or its past, but the key to determining whether that is going to be the case or not is education—and I am talking specifically about elementary and secondary education—because that is what counts. In my State, it is not the price of oil; it is not what the unemployment rate is; it is not who the United States Senator is; it is not who the Governor is; it is education, pre-K through 12.

It is frustrating, I know. You know, Americans can do extraordinary things. We can unravel the human genome. We can take a diseased human heart and replace it with a brandnew one and make that thing beat. We can send a person to the Moon. But we in America struggle and we in Louisiana struggle to teach our children how to read and write and do basic math when we have 18 years to do it. I am not blaming anyone. We all share the frustration. And it is not just Louisiana; it is all across America. I understand that.

But decades ago in Louisiana, we made a decision. In fact, it was during my first job in government. I was working as legal counsel to a brandnew, reform Governor in Louisiana. He decided, and the people of Louisiana agreed with him—we all agreed on two things: No. 1, every child can learn. Now, it takes some a little bit longer. Kids mature at different times. But every child can learn. The second thing we agreed on was this: That which is measured gets done. That which is measured gets done.

We decided to implement, 30 years ago, standards for our elementary and secondary schools. One of those standards was and I think still is—that is the subject of my remarks today; I hope it still is—a graduation exam. We call it our Graduation Exit Examination 21, G-E-E. So if I say "G-E-E" or "GEE," I am talking about our graduation exam.

We said we are going to get serious about kids. We can't have our children graduate if they can't read their diploma, and so we are going to test them. The test is not terribly rigorous. It is four subjects. It is English, it is math, it is science, and it is social studies. We grade those exams—and you don't have to pass all four. You have to pass English and math and then either social studies or science. So, really, three out of four.

There are five different grades: advanced, mastery, basic, approaching basic, and unsatisfactory. Let me tell you what that really means: A, B, C, D, and F.

You only have to make a D on your graduation examination. You only have to make a D to pass—not an A, not a B, not a C, a D. So you take four exams. You have to make a D on English, a D on math, and at least a D on either social studies or science. If you don't pass, we will give you another chance, but you have to pass to get a diploma.

Now our Board of Elementary and Secondary Education—we call it BESE—which governs elementary and secondary education in Louisiana, has decided to take us back to the Dark Ages. By a one-vote margin, supported, quite frankly, by my Governor, who is lameduck—he will be leaving soon—he makes three appointments to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Everybody in America is entitled to their opinion, but I think my Governor and his team are wrong on this. They are going to send us back to the Dark Ages.

Here is the new rule: You have to pass the Graduate Exit Examination in the way I just described—unless you fail. Then you have to go to your teacher, and he or she can give you an extra-points project. Come on. Come on. Who are we kidding here?

Now, why do some want to do this? It is not the kids who want to do this; it is the adults, because not only do we grade our kids, we grade our schools, and if schools have kids who don't pass the GEE, the Graduate Exit Examination, it counts against the grade of the school. So this is all coming from the adults. They are putting themselves first, and they are not putting the kids first.

This is a massive step backward. This is an announcement to the rest of America that Louisiana has given up, that our kids are not smart enough, they are not good enough, even when we give them second or third chances, to be able to get a D on the Graduate Exit Examination, and as a result, we have to give them a special extra-points project so they can get a diploma that is not really a diploma.

The people behind this ought to hide their head in a bag. Our kids are better than that. Every one of my kids in Louisiana can learn. Sometimes they need a little bit longer. But it is not going to do them any good to give them a diploma that they can't read. It is not going to do them any good to give them a diploma that the rest of America and, frankly, the world is going to look at and go: That is not really a high school diploma because we know you failed the exam. You just got an extra-points project so the adults wouldn't look bad.

I am embarrassed by this.

This isn't the only problem we have in elementary and secondary education. I will give you one other statistic. Seventy percent of our high schools are graded A or B. Forty percent of the schools below that are graded A or B. Seventy percent of my high schools in Louisiana are not A or B

schools, OK? I wish they were—not when 40 percent of the lower grades are only A or B. Once again, the adults who don't want to be embarrassed are inflating those grades, too, and now they have started on the Graduate Exit Examination. But this is a bridge too far.

All is not lost. BESE, which, as I said, passed this rule change by one vote—and by the way, our superintendent of education was against it.

This rule change is going in front of the Louisiana Legislature for an oversight hearing and the Senate Education Committee and the House Education Committee. I hope that either the Senate or House and hopefully both will say no—no—because this change represents what George Bush, President Bush, called “the soft bigotry of low expectations”—“the soft bigotry of low expectations.” It has no place in this country, and it has no place in my State.

I am embarrassed that the people who are part of the education establishment in Louisiana are telling the rest of the world: Our kids are not good enough. They can't learn. So we are going to give them a diploma that is not really a diploma.

Thank you for the time today, Madam President. I wanted my colleagues to know what is going on in Louisiana. We are going to turn this rule back, and we are going to put our kids first in Louisiana, not the adults.

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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ISRAEL

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, I rise today as a Senator, as a former president of a synagogue, as the only Jewish mother in the U.S. Senate, as a steadfast supporter of Israel, and as a person who stands firmly against hate and terrorism around the world.

Since October 7, when Hamas launched a horrific and unprovoked terrorist attack on the Israeli people, our hearts—well, our hearts have been shattered. And over the past week and a half, we have learned that 1,300 innocent Israeli civilians and soldiers have been murdered. Thousands more have been injured. And countless families are grieving for loved ones who have been kidnapped, who at this very moment are being held hostage by Hamas—young children, women, seniors, some of whom even were Holocaust survivors.

This past weekend, I met with these families in Israel as part of a bipartisan Senate delegation, meeting with parents whose children—their children, their babies—that is how they called

them: My babies. They have my babies, a mother said.

They were ripped away from them by terrorists. Hearing those stories, seeing the fear and the pain in their eyes, feeling their heartbreak is something that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

And there is one story in particular that I am never going to forget. A woman, whose family member was taken from her by Hamas, spoke to us, and in speaking about her pain, she said:

We no longer live in the same world as you.

We no longer live in the same world as you. For her and her family, she said, every moment is an eternity. Just think about that, think about what they feel every single day that they are separated from their loved ones, not knowing how they are doing, not knowing if they are being tortured, if they are in pain, if they are even still alive.

And with each passing day—each passing day—these families, they anxiously await for their loved ones, hopefully, to be returned to them. And these stories, these stories demonstrate why I am going to do everything in my power to make sure that these families are made whole again.

We know that Hamas is currently holding nearly 200 innocent people, including Americans, many of them in dire need of medical attention. So we cannot stay silent. We must speak out until every hostage is released—every single one of them.

And that is why last night, I introduced a bipartisan resolution condemning Hamas for its brutal, brutal, premeditated attacks on Israel and demanding that Hamas immediately release the hostages so they can be reunited with their loved ones.

After what I saw, after what I experienced on the ground, I know we need to take decisive, bipartisan, and immediate action to help Israel. Let us take action to free the hostages, pass supplemental funding, aid to our ally in its greatest time of need, and provide Israel with all the support it needs to defend itself from acts of terrorism.

And at the same time, we need to make sure that Palestinian civilians receive humanitarian aid and that it does not ever, ever, end up in the hands of Hamas terrorists. Israelis and Palestinians alike have been victims of Hamas's terror. We have seen how Hamas uses Palestinian civilians as human shields to—which has led to the death of countless—countless—innocent residents in Gaza.

And so we will continue to support Israel's efforts to eliminate Hamas once and for all and limit civilian casualties. And as we do this, let's use the full force of the Senate, both sides of the aisle, to send a clear and decisive message to Hamas.

Let us all tell those cowards who kidnapped children, who kidnapped seniors, that the United States will not stand by and let these crimes occur. We will not rest until the hostages are free, until justice is delivered.

So I urge all of my colleagues to support my resolution and send a clear—and united message to the world.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1390

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, last Saturday, October 7, we saw evil personified. We saw the deadliest attack on the Jewish state since the Yom Kippur War, over 1,400 dead Israelis. And, for context, think of that. If that were America, it would be over 40,000 dead Americans. On top of that, we have seen 30 Americans lose their lives because of the evil brought upon Israel. We saw Hamas—an evil, terrorist organization—launch an unprecedented, unprovoked, undeniably devastating attack on the Jewish state.

I can't think of anything more evil than the images that we saw coming out of Israel where grandmothers were taken captive, where babies were burned alive, and where babies were beheaded. For what reason? For what reason did we see the atrocities and the evil brought upon a people? Simply because they were Jews.

Hamas, their goal is to eliminate the Jewish state, but that is not where they stop. They want to annihilate every single Jewish person on the planet, with more than 6 million living here at home in America. But they go one step further. They despise Western democracy. They want the elimination, the annihilation, of our entire way of life.

Fighting that war with the single-minded focus is exactly what we should expect from the Jewish people, from the State of Israel, from the Prime Minister, Prime Minister Netanyahu. He needs to have a single-minded focus.

But that is not the case because we have seen, in the last 24 hours or so, the emergence of a different kind of war that they now must fight. It is the war of misinformation. The disinformation, the misinformation war could be just as deadly, if not more deadly, than the actual attack we saw last Saturday, October 7.

One might ask the question: Why would I say that? Well, I would say that because immediately what we have seen since the devastation in Israel was Prime Minister Netanyahu sending the signal that they were coming into Gaza, giving people, the Palestinians, a chance to find themselves out of harm's way.

But the misinformation campaign takes a different turn, a different spin,

a different direction. What it said was that the hospital strike was, in fact, carried out by Israel. That misinformation was carried in the New York Times, the AP, and other news outlets in America. That misinformation campaign caused a summit in Jordan to be canceled. It caused President Biden's meetings to be canceled. It caused protests at embassies around the globe. Our Embassies, around the world, felt the devastation of misinformation, of lies, signaling to the world that now Israel must fight a different kind of war at the exact same time that they have a proportional response, which is and should be wiping Hamas off the face of the map.

We saw, as a result of that misinformation war, Hezbollah mobilizing. We have seen very clearly an attempt to weaken Israel and their standing in the world. Devastation after devastation and then, on top of that, we see the emergence of another deadly encounter.

Rather than waiting for the facts, these outlets carried the Hamas narrative, carrying the narrative of an evil, lying terrorist organization.

On top of that and equally as devastating is to see the divide within the House of Representatives, where the vast majority of Republicans and Democrats stand firm with our ally Israel. But there are Members in the Squad who have decided to continue spreading the propaganda of Hamas. Congresswoman TLAIK has yet to delete the tweet that says "Israel just bombed the Baptist Hospital killing 500 Palestinians (doctors, children, patients) just like that."

Delete the tweet. We cannot have Members of the U.S. Congress sending out and being an extension of the Hamas propaganda machine. It is despicable behavior from elected representatives of the greatest Nation on God's green Earth.

Those Members did not start their anti-Semitic comments on October 8. This started months and even years prior. There is a cancer that is metastasizing on the radical extreme left that has to be dealt with in America. I have said several times over the past several days that Psalm 122:6 is so important, that we should "pray for the peace of Jerusalem," and those who do "will prosper."

There is no doubt in my heart, there is no doubt in my mind that we find ourselves living in dangerous times in this world. Conflicts in Eastern Europe, now conflicts in the Middle East, and real threats in the Indo-Pacific. We need American mettle. We need American leadership. And we need it to be strong, defiant, clear, and undeniably the strongest force for good on the planet.

It is one of the reasons why I made strong comments about the terrible decision—the unbelievable decision—to release \$6 billion for hostages.

I said this during the Obama administration—that paying \$400 million for

hostages would make more Americans less safe abroad and raise the price on every head. Now with \$6 billion being paid to Iran, with Iran being the chief funder of Hamas—after the attacks, Hamas thanked Iran for the help. We do not need an administration to be complicit with such challenging evil attacks on the Jewish State.

That is one of the reasons why I seek consent to pass my legislation, the Solidify Iran Sanctions Act. In 1996, we put in place sanctions on Iran. We did so in the sector of their energy sector, because we understood that causing pain—causing pain—would be an important and necessary component of keeping Iran in its place, to slow down, if not stop, the spread of terrorism.

I am thankful. I am thankful that in 1996 we did act, but that action is set to sunset. It is set to expire. We must keep those sanctions in place, without any question.

I look at the support. I look at the support for my legislation. This legislation predates the attacks on the nation of Israel. This bill has the support from both sides of the aisle. It is a commonsense step to make permanent the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, and support comes from both sides of the aisle, including the only Jewish member in the Senate, Senator ROSEN. These are one of the many steps we must take to restrain this regime from developing weapons that threaten the safety and security around the world.

I believe that if we want to respond to this brutality, if we want to respond to this evil, one of the ways that we can respond is by making permanent the sanctions on Iran.

I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 1390 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The senior Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I appreciate the passion with which the Senator from South Carolina has delivered his remarks today. I am also grateful for his willingness to adopt a minor modification in the savings clause, clarifying that nothing in this legislation may be construed as independently authorizing the use of military force against Iran or any country. It is something we should do independently.

So I am grateful for the Senator from South Carolina's willingness to work with me on that and that he has agreed to do it.

The junior Senator from Kentucky, Senator PAUL, has suffered a death in his family and is away today attending the funeral of that immediate family member. At his request, I am here to object on his behalf.

On behalf of Senator PAUL, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, I am deeply disappointed that common sense seems to be harder to find in Washington, DC. It is just not common enough.

I certainly hope that we have an opportunity to see SISA—my bill—make permanent the sanctions against Iran. It is critically important that we show progress sidelining the largest state supporter of terrorism in the world.

I yield the floor.

RECESS UNTIL 5 P.M. TODAY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 5 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:40 p.m., recessed, and reassembled at 5 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO).

MORNING BUSINESS—Continued

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 489

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I stand again in support of our great ally Israel.

The terror and devastation unleashed on Israel by Iran-backed Hamas terrorists has rightly horrified the world. What I am about to describe is difficult to say and uncomfortable to hear, but it has to be said on the Senate floor. We cannot make this stuff up. The world must know the atrocities that have occurred in Israel.

On the morning of Saturday, October 7, 2023, as families rose to start a new day, make breakfast, or slowly wake up in their beds, terror approached. Innocent families were murdered in their homes. Babies were killed. Innocent, little babies were murdered, and some were ruthlessly beheaded. Children were burned alive. Teenage girls were raped and then burned alive. An elderly, wheelchair-bound woman, who was later identified as a Holocaust survivor, was brutally dragged through the streets of Gaza. Children who witnessed the murders of their parents were kidnapped and are now being held hostage by Hamas. More than 250 young people were savagely murdered while attending a music festival in southern Israel—many shot in the back as they tried to run away.

At least 31 Americans—31 Americans—have been killed. More than 1,400 innocent people were killed in Israel, and we have no idea how many are being held hostage by Iran-backed Hamas terrorists in Gaza. The atrocities are too numerous to fully recount, but the images seen will never leave our memories.

I was sent a photo of Kfar Aza. I visited this kibbutz during a trip to Israel

with AIPAC in 2019. At the time, it was full of happy families and children, but it is now silenced by brutality and death.

This week, I talked to the individual who gave me the tour of the village, or the kibbutz. It was a beautiful place, with nice people—happy. I was told she is only alive because she was not there. She told me the family who lived next door to her on the right was murdered, that the family on her left was murdered, and that the family down the street was murdered. I was told that the Hamas terrorists set fires to force people out of their homes and safe rooms, and they savagely murdered innocent Israelis—many shot at close range. She told me that she was talking to her sister, who was in a safe room, and the Hamas terrorists were trying to break in. Fortunately, they weren't able to.

Children were shot in front of their parents, and some have been kidnapped to Gaza. Iran-backed Hamas terrorists slaughtered the innocent babies in their beds. I met so many happy people there just a few short years ago. Now I fear a lot of them are going to be dead.

We saw FOX News correspondent Trey Yingst report:

Bodies litter the town of Be'eri. You can see here it's complete and total destruction. All of the houses are destroyed. It looks like many were blown up with RPGs or other explosives. People were shot and killed in their beds, executed at point blank range. This is the most horrific thing I have ever seen.

Thomas Hand is the father of Emily, an 8-year-old girl who was killed by Hamas in Be'eri. Thomas had to wait 2 days before he found out that Emily was killed.

I am the father of two daughters and am the grandfather of seven grandchildren. Watching this father speak about the murder of his daughter is heart-wrenching.

He said to CNN:

They just said we found Emily, and she's dead. And I went "Yes!" And I smiled.

This is what he said.

He said:

I smiled because that is the best news of the possibilities that I knew. . . . She was either dead or in Gaza.

He said:

And, if you know anything about what they do to people in Gaza, that is worse than death.

Do you know why they murdered Emily and more than 1,400 other Israelis and 31 Americans that these Iran-backed Hamas killers slaughtered? Simply because they were Jewish. They killed them because they hate Jews and want to kill every Jew.

It is unimaginable what these families have suffered. We cannot look away. Let's remember these were Israeli and American families. The atrocities are too numerous to fully recount, but these stories and the images we have all seen will never leave our memories.

Not since the Holocaust has the world witnessed such a brutal attack

on the Jewish people. Sadly, the Jewish people have endured thousands of years of hate and persecution, but this will not be the end of Israel or the Jewish people.

Israel is surrounded by terrorist groups that want it wiped off the face of the Earth. I have seen this firsthand during my five visits to Israel, which has given me a clear perspective on Israel's proximity to its enemies Hamas, Hezbollah, ISIS, and Iran.

I want to be clear: Hamas and Hezbollah are not religious groups. They are not on a noble political quest for liberty or civil justice. They are terrorist thugs, and they are killers. They are killers who seek to eradicate the Jewish people from this Earth, and they are funded and supported by the evil Iranian regime.

In August 2021, the Senate voted 99 to 0 for my amendment to a budget bill to ensure that U.S. tax dollars do not benefit terrorist organizations such as Hamas. The vote was 99 to 0. Everyone in this body agrees American taxpayers should never fund Hamas terrorists. Unfortunately, the final text of the bill did not include my language, necessitating further action today.

Here is why we need the Stop Taxpayer Funding of Hamas Act. In 2021, Biden's State Department said:

We're going to be working in partnership with the United Nations and the Palestinian Authority to kind of channel aid there in a manner that does its best to go to the people of Gaza.

The official went on to say:

As we've seen in life—as we all know in life—there are no guarantees, but we're going to do everything that we can to ensure that this assistance reaches the people who need it the most.

We all know that Hamas controls Gaza. Every dollar that goes to Gaza comes under the control of Hamas, who decides what it is going to do with it.

So what I heard from the Biden State Department in 2021 is that the administration can't guarantee that American taxpayer dollars aren't going to fund terrorists in Hamas. The Biden administration thinks the risk of resources going to Hamas terrorists is OK because, in life, "there are no guarantees."

I reject that, and I will not leave anything to chance when it comes to preventing U.S. taxpayer money from being sent to the brutal terrorists who have slaughtered so many Israelis and Americans.

And we know for a fact that Hamas uses humanitarian aid to support its terrorist attacks. Look at this one. This is a humanitarian package. It is a humanitarian UNICEF bag that was found among the trucks used to carry Iran-backed Hamas terrorists into Israeli towns where they brutally murdered innocent families and burned homes to the ground. I guess there was no guarantee.

I have talked to a lot of rabbis in Florida. We have a lot of synagogues there. They told me that they have

seen lots of pictures on Israeli TV of humanitarian rice bags and that, when people opened them, there were bullets in them.

The administration must do better and fully control where American taxpayer money is going. We can. We can make sure American taxpayers aren't funding terrorists. That is why I am again asking that we pass the Stop Taxpayer Funding of Hamas Act. I am proud to have the support of Senators CINDY HYDE-SMITH, MIKE BRAUN, KEVIN CRAMER, and TED BUDD on this bill.

What this bill says—it is common sense—is that no funds will be authorized for the territory of Gaza until the President certifies to Congress that these funds can be spent without benefiting terrorist organizations.

The Stop Taxpayer Funding of Hamas Act also ensures that U.S. funds are not authorized for expenditure in the territory of Gaza through any United Nations entity or office unless the President can certify that it is not encouraging or teaching anti-Israel and anti-Semitic ideas and propaganda. It is pretty basic.

Finally, this bill mandates that the President certify that there are no hostages—and we know there are hostages in Gaza—being held in Gaza by any terrorist organization.

Just this morning, President Biden announced \$100 million of U.S. aid for Gaza and the West Bank. While Iran-backed Hamas terrorists continue attacks against Israel and hold American hostages in Gaza, I cannot think of a more critical time to pass this bill.

Let me just finish with something that somebody reminded me of today.

I know a family in Florida who lost their sister-in-law and her husband, and I think there were two 6-years-olds and a 3-year-old. So here is the way it works. They lost their loved ones, but their government is going to tax them to give money to the Palestinian Authority that gives money to the terrorists who died while killing their family. You can't make this stuff up.

So, I mean, this is a simple bill.

Let me now turn it over to my colleague from Indiana, Senator BRAUN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, I was on that trip with Senator SCOTT back in, I believe, August of 2019.

What struck me about that visit, as we went to almost every perimeter in Israel, is how they had to be on guard constantly—constantly—to keep from having something flying into one of their towns or villages.

When we did visit the one that Rick referred to, what struck me is they had like a big locker by one of the homes that showed all of the unique ways—and I think it was the village nearest to the Gaza Strip—of how many attempts that were made over time. Thank goodness, most of them had fallen short, but it gave me the impression that there was never a moment of real security.

Then we saw how, within those villages, you had to be on guard almost 100 percent of the time and scurry into a safe room that would disrupt the normal pace of your life. Imagine if you had to live under those conditions. And here, it has been a long time since anything of this magnitude has come along—probably nearly 50 years—but it shows that it never ends there.

When something like this does happen and when we have had legislation that looks like it was intended to prevent this and it went through—I think, according to the Senator, unanimously—this should be a slam dunk in that we would want to make sure that nothing can leak free out of any other type of aid that would help something like this either persist or happen again.

If the report in the Wall Street Journal is accurate, Iran was closely involved in the planning and execution of the horrible terrorist act on Israel. If that is the case, then it appears the \$6 billion in cash, unfrozen for Iran, freed up resources to aid the attack. We should suspend those funds immediately and permanently. We must also take extra steps to make sure the United States is not inadvertently funding terrorist activities. This bill—a simple one—the Stop Taxpayer Funding of Hamas Act, would do just that.

Under this bill, the President will have to certify that no U.S. funds are able to go to Hamas or members of Hamas. It would also make sure that funds are not benefiting organizations controlled or influenced by Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, or any other terrorist organization. It simply puts in specificity what we all should be for.

With President Biden's announcement today that he intends to send \$100 million in aid to Gaza, we need this legislation to become law immediately. The American people need to feel confident that their tax dollars are not going to fund the mayhem we saw in Israel at the hands of Hamas terrorists.

I yield the floor to the Senator from North Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Madam President, on October 7, Hamas terrorists launched an unprovoked and barbaric series of terrorist attacks inside Israel. Over 1,400 children, women, and men were brutally murdered. Thirty-one Americans were killed, and dozens remain missing or held hostage.

In the wake of such a despicable series of attacks, we must ensure that our taxpayer dollars are not being sent to aid these terrorist killers.

Two years ago, one of our own State Department officials in the Biden administration acknowledged the possibility that aid to the Palestinians could find its way into Hamas's hands. That is unacceptable.

That is why Senator RICK SCOTT's Stop Taxpayer Funding of Hamas Act is so critical right now. It simply states that no U.S. taxpayer dollars would be authorized to Gaza until the

President certifies to us, to Congress, that there are measures in place to prevent any taxpayer dollars from benefiting terrorist organizations.

At the end of the day, we should be standing shoulder to shoulder with the State of Israel to give them everything that they need to destroy Hamas.

I urge the Senate to pass this without delay.

I thank my colleague from Florida for his leadership on this issue, and I yield to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I thank my colleagues Senator BRAUN and Senator BUDD for joining me here on the Senate floor to pass this important legislation.

You know, the individual who gave me the tour of the kibbutz—she was telling me that they were just half a mile from Gaza, and before Hamas took over the Gaza area, she used to be able to walk all the way to the beach, and it was safe.

I think most people in America—no one is against Gazans, but to take any chance that our money goes to Hamas before or after this doesn't make any sense.

I think every single Member of this body can agree that the United States shouldn't allow a single dollar of taxpayer money to get into the hands of terrorists—funding that is being used to kill innocent Israelis and Americans and hold our citizens and others hostage.

I look forward to my colleagues joining me today.

I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 489 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the Scott of Florida substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mr. SANDERS. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I listened carefully to what Senator SCOTT and others have said about the barbarous acts committed by Hamas against innocent men, women, and children—the mowing down by machine guns of young people who were doing nothing more than attending a dance; the murder of babies. This is a horrific—horrific—act, precipitating a worldwide crisis, and the United States of America—all of us—condemn this act.

In my view, the State of Israel has the absolute right to defend itself against Hamas and terrorism in general—no debate on that. But what I ask my colleagues to also consider is that

while we fully appreciate the horrific attack by Hamas against innocent people of Israel, I ask you also to understand that right now there are hundreds and hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children in Gaza who have lost their homes. They have been thrown out of their homes. They have no food. They have no water. They have no fuel. And I remind my colleagues that half of those people are children. Half of the people in Gaza are children. So, yes, we are united in doing everything we can to destroy Hamas and their terrorism, but I implore you, do not take Hamas's inhumanity and brutality and terrorism against children who are 3 or 5 years old.

I ask you to think for a moment. Think about it. I have a State that I represent, the State of Vermont—630,000 people. A million people—most of them are poor. They had nothing to begin with. Before this whole business, Gaza was one of the most desperately poor places in the world. Youth unemployment was 75 percent, many of their people dependent on the U.N. for basic survival.

So what I am asking people to take a look at is to understand what our country is about, and what our country must not be involved in is making the horrific and miserable situation in Gaza even worse.

Many of the families—and, again, these are people thrown out of their homes. They don't know where they are going. They don't know who will accept them. They don't know if they are ever going back to their homes. And they were poor to begin with. Do we really want to deny those people aid from the U.N. and other agencies to feed the children, to provide water for them? Is that really what we are about?

Of course, it goes without saying that we have to do everything we can to make sure that not one nickel goes to the murderous Hamas organization, but at the same time, we have to stand with the innocent women and children in Palestine who are suffering today and are facing an almost unprecedented modern humanitarian disaster.

So today, in the midst of this crisis, U.S. and U.N. assistance in Gaza is aimed squarely at addressing the basic needs of the Palestinian people, including humanitarian aid and water and health programs. The United States and the United Nations go to great lengths to ensure that aid gets to the people needed and is not diverted, through trusted partners like Catholic Relief Services. The Israeli Government itself recognizes the importance of this U.N. humanitarian aid and has long supported it.

Today, in the midst of this horrific crisis, the United States and the international community are working to secure humanitarian access—and from media reports I have seen recently, we may be making some progress on that—so that the U.N. can get food and

water and fuel and medicine to the million or more people in Gaza who need essential supplies. That should be our focus. There are people now facing hunger, they are facing incredible desperation, and we cannot—cannot—turn our backs on them.

If you think this is going to be good for Israel, if you think that the suffering of the Palestinian people long term is good for Israel, I think you are sorely mistaken.

The world is looking at us, and the world understands that what Hamas did was terrible, but they don't want to see our great country turn its back on innocent women and children. That, in my view, is not what this country is about.

This is a tough issue. There have been four wars there in the last 15 years. It ain't going to be solved tomorrow. But while we do our best to support Israel and destroy Hamas, please, let us not turn our backs on the suffering people in Gaza.

This is not what we should be doing, not what Congress should be doing, and therefore I object.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. So I hoped my colleague would change his position if he just read what I said. The bill doesn't say that money can't go to Gaza; it says that no funds will be authorized for the territory of Gaza until the President certifies to Congress that these funds can be spent without benefiting terrorist organizations. I don't know how anybody can disagree with that. It says that no funds are authorized for expenditure in the territory of Gaza through any United Nations entity or office unless the President can certify that it is not encouraging or teaching anti-Israel and anti-Semitic ideas and propaganda.

So this doesn't say money can't go to Gaza and help Gazans. This bill says the President has to ensure that this isn't happening and rice bags are not being filled with bullets and we are not having the PLO give money to terrorists who killed American citizens or their families. That is all this says, is that the money cannot go for the benefit of Hamas. So if you disagree with what this says, then you are saying money can go to Hamas. I don't know how else you can disagree with it. This is so basic.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. The thing is that hundreds of thousands of women and children are living in desperation today. And nobody in the world can guarantee that a bottle of water may not go to somebody connected to Hamas. If you are insistent upon that, what you are really saying is, no money for Gaza.

So, with that, I object.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Senators, I am going to ask that you direct your comments and questions to the Chair.

The Senator from Vermont, you were recognized. Thank you.

The Senator from Florida, you are now recognized.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, let us just remember, what we are talking about is, this is not against sending money to Gaza. It is saying we have—if we are going to send money, it cannot go for the benefit of individuals who murdered babies, raped teenage girls, and shot people in their sleep. I mean, I don't know how anybody can ever support giving money to Gaza when you know it is going to go to Hamas if you are not careful. And that is exactly what this administration said.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I know that we are all watching what is happening with Israel and then also looking at how that affects our national security. And in doing this, one of the things we have paid attention to is what is happening at our southern border.

As you look at the numbers there, it really is quite frightening to see how people from all across the globe are coming to our southern border. Indeed, last year, we had individuals from 176 different countries that came to our southern border. Among this number, there were hundreds of gang members, there were thousands of convicted criminals, and there were individuals of interest—names of interest—that our Border Patrol watched, and, indeed, there were people on the Terrorist Watchlist.

Last year, in 2023—that is, our fiscal 2023—there were 151 apprehensions of individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist. Now, this number is really quite a dramatic increase. In 2022, there were 98 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist who were apprehended at the southern border. In 2021, there were 15. And in 2019, there were zero—not a one.

Now, as you look at these numbers and as you look at what is happening here, it is natural to think: What has caused this uptick in terrorists that are coming to our border? If you are going to be honest about these numbers, what you would have to do is say: OK, what has changed from 2019 to 2021 and 2022 and 2023? And in a sane world—which maybe this is not a sane world right now—it would lead you to look at this administration's border policies: the ease with which people can come to the border, raise their hands, and claim asylum; the way the cartels have expanded around the globe as global businesses, indeed, moving human trafficking from having been a \$500 million-a-year business in 2019 to today, this year, \$150 billion—"billion" with a B. Those are the numbers that we are dealing with.

And for terrorists who want to get in this country—and I would say it is not

a stretch to think they are coming here to do us harm—maybe they are saying: It is the easiest way. You can claim asylum. You can grab a child and say you are bringing your child to America for a better life.

But the numbers are not my numbers. They are not Republican numbers. They are not Senate numbers. These are the numbers that come from the Department of Homeland Security. This is what they have logged.

Now, the other thing that we have to look at is that in fiscal year 2022, DHS reported that 2.4 million individuals tried to force their way across the southern border. And, indeed, we have to say that. And, in that, we also have an additional 600,000 "got-aways." Those are the ones who can be seen on surveillance but they can't get to.

Those are pretty hefty numbers, and those are the 2022 numbers. In 2023, the numbers are even above that. It is impossible to control an influx of this magnitude, which means it is also impossible for us to control the collective threat that this poses to our country. Because, in those "got-aways," how many are terrorists? How many are gang members? How many are drug traffickers? How many are sex traffickers? How many of those "got-aways" are coming to inflict harm on our cities, our towns, our communities, and our citizens?

Now, what has concerned me and what concerns so many Tennesseans—and I hear it regularly—last night, I did a cell phone townhall, which I enjoy doing and hearing firsthand from Tennesseans, spending an hour taking questions, answering their questions. And what really bothers so many of them is our President and his administration's unwillingness to acknowledge the very existence of the threats that that open border brings to us. It jeopardizes our safety and our security and, I would say, even the security of our allies.

We have got a lot of adversaries in this world. We all know that. When you look at Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, we know we have got adversaries. You look at what is happening with Hamas in Israel, in those horrific attacks there. And we can say our adversaries may be sadistic, but they are not stupid. They know the border is open.

They know that we are practicing—this administration is practicing—a foreign policy of appeasement. And maybe that is the reason that even this month what you saw was 2,000 Chinese, 100 Russians, 35 Pakistanis, and 30 Iranians coming to our southern border; coming in the country illegally; coming, saying they are claiming asylum.

Does this make us safer? No, it doesn't, when you do not know who is coming into this country and their intent.

Now, Hamas has noted the confusion in our foreign policy and the lack of clarity. They saw it when President Biden withdrew troops from the

CENTCOM area. They saw it. So what we did when we withdrew those troops was, effectively, to leave Israel surrounded by their worst enemies.

They have also noted Biden's record of appeasing hostile regimes. When Biden chose not to enforce—and this is important to note—this administration, this National Security Director, this President chose not to enforce oil sanctions against Iran. They did this knowing this would end up benefiting Hamas, Hezbollah, and the terrorist groups that are the proxies for Iran.

The President also knew that \$6 billion in a ransom payment would free up even more money for terrorist groups, more money for Hamas, more money for Hezbollah. That is the hallmark of this administration: looking the other way, appeasing Iran, and doing it at cost to the American people. Since 2021, President Biden has funneled \$730 million to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees.

Now, this agency, which has been around for decades, what they have become is a ferociously anti-Semitic organization that has a long history of employing people that—guess what—they are associated with Hamas. And Hamas has a history of stealing money from this agency and using the agency's facilities to store weapons.

Now, does that sound like humanitarian aid? Does that sound like money going to the purpose for which it was given? Of course not. And that is why, in 2018, President Trump halted the funding to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees.

Well, President Biden comes in and guess what he does. He turned that spigot back on, running wide open, even though he knew it was pretty much as good as writing a check to Hamas, a terrorist organization. And, by the way, we declared and recognized Hamas as a terrorist organization. We as a country did this in 1997.

So, you know, there are things we can do. And I have introduced legislation to halt funding to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees until Iran is expelled from the U.N. and until we investigate their crimes—what they are doing with this money, how it leads to death and destruction—because they are giving it to these terrorist organizations.

Iran gives Hamas about \$100 million a year—\$100 million. They also provide them with the weapons and armor and ammo and with supplies and training. We also know that Hamas has grabbed aid this week for State kits, medical supplies, food. It is not going to the people, the Palestinians; it is going to Hamas for their efforts.

Now, in the first 2 weeks of fiscal year 2024, Border Patrol captured 30 Iranians, as I said a few minutes ago. Now, they were trying to come across the southern border; two of them, Terrorist Watchlist. Now, this is this month. This is in the last couple of weeks. And we have gotten reports of

at least two more Iranians on that Terrorist Watchlist that have tried to come in.

So since last Monday alone—Monday a week ago—we have had 19 Iranians and 17 Syrians that tried to sneak into this country over the southern border.

So I would just ask my colleagues, my Democratic colleagues: Why do you think the terrorists—why do you think these people feel so emboldened? Whether it is the Iranians, the Pakistanis, the Russians, the Chinese, why are they flooding to our border to gain illegal entry into our country to evade our immigration laws, to fly under the cloak of darkness and get in here on U.S. soil? Why are they emboldened? Does this not worry you? Does this not cause you to say it is an imperative that we secure this border?

You know, right now, as we have looked at what is happening around the globe and, specifically, as we look at what has happened in Israel, you have got 1,400 Israelis who are dead; you have got 31 Americans who are dead; you have got individuals from dozens of other countries around the globe who are dead, who are injured, who have been taken hostage and have faced a horrific circumstance. We cannot let this pattern of neglect continue in our country. We cannot continue to make our Nation and our citizens vulnerable. We cannot let attacks happen on our soil. It is time that we close that southern border.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. RES. 413

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I want to read here, briefly, from the law of the United States of America. This is the existing law; I am not trying to pass a law today. And it says: section 212(a)(3)(B), subsection—I am not going to read the whole number. The law of the United States Immigration and Nationality Act mandates that you are ineligible to enter into the United States if you endorse or espouse terrorist activity or persuade others to endorse or espouse terrorist activity or support a terrorist organization.

What that basically means is, if you are a supporter of a terrorist group or you encourage others to support the actions of a terrorist group—a designated terrorist group—the statute defines what that is, you are not supposed to get a visa.

And so it is reasonable to conclude that if you are already in the country—understand what I am talking about, I am not talking about American citizens; I am talking about someone who is a foreign national and that person is in the United States on a visa and that person is out there defending or encouraging others to defend and take the side of a terrorist organization, like, for example, Hamas or maybe Hezbollah or somebody else—if they

are not supposed to have a visa to come into the country, once they are already here, if they do that, they should lose that visa. That is applying existing law.

And so what I am going to come here on the floor and try to do today is pass something that I, frankly, thought was common sense, doesn't go any further than this, that basically urges—it is not even a new law. It is in the resolution. It basically says the Senate is asking the Biden administration, if they come across anyone who is here—a foreign national on a visa who supports Hamas—that that person's visa should be canceled, and they should be removed from the country through the proceedings involving removal.

That is what this resolution does. It, obviously, does things like condemns anti-Semitism and condemns the horrible attack from Hamas. But all it basically says is if you are a foreign national in the United States, you are here on a visa as a visitor and you support Hamas or you encourage others to support Hamas, you should lose your visa and you should be gone. That is what I hope to be able to do here today.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consideration of S. Res. 413, which is at the desk; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I want to make it very clear that there are 100 Members of the U.S. Senate who absolutely condemn the brutal attack by Hamas on innocent Israeli citizens; that absolutely condemn the kidnapping of Israeli citizens and some Americans; who absolutely condemn the vicious "kill Jews" philosophy of Hamas. And all of us have an opportunity—which I think all of us are going to take—to stand by Israel when it comes to going after Hamas.

I hope all of us are also going to do everything we can to encourage that every precaution that can be taken to protect innocent Palestinians be taken because they, too, have been kidnapped by Hamas, who cynically use them as human shields.

But I read the resolution of my colleague from Florida. This is not about enforcing the existing law. This is about compromising a constitutional right that Americans have enjoyed since the inception of our country. It is the First Amendment.

And it may be something that people in this body may object to, but when a person is in the United States, they enjoy the protections of our magnificent founding document to be free from unlawful searches and seizures and, certainly, to be able to say things that we may find repugnant. There have been many things that have been said that are repugnant.

But at a time of maximum stress—and we are in that right now—is when there is the maximum stress to compromise the right we have enjoyed of free speech protected by the First Amendment since the founding of our country.

And we have had some recent experience with this. After 9/11 and the trauma that our Nation experienced with the loss of over 3,000 wonderful people—in the Twin Towers, at the Pentagon, in Pennsylvania—there was a call to go after groups, to compromise rights. In hindsight, in those times when we did do the wrong thing, because we harmed innocent people in our anger—our justified anger, by the way—we don't want to do that again.

So this resolution—however my colleague wants to characterize it—is about what happens in this country. This may be something my colleague disagrees with, but when a person is in this country, they enjoy the benefits of our Constitution and the right of free speech. I stand for free speech.

My preference is that we focus on doing the things that this U.S. Senate can do to help Israel go after Hamas, to help all of the innocent Palestinians who seek to live in peace have that opportunity to do so.

I object.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Objection is heard. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. If I may respond for a moment. I understand my colleague has to go. I know it is late and other things are going on. He is welcome to stay, obviously.

There were a couple of mentions about how I characterized the resolution. I will just read from the resolution:

Resolved, That the Senate [1] calls on the President of the United States to enforce existing law to revoke visas and initiate deportation proceedings for any foreign national who has endorsed or espoused the terrorist activities of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad—

People whose rocket yesterday hit a hospital in Gaza and killed innocent people—Hezbollah, or other Foreign Terrorist Organizations—

Which is a term that is defined by the State Department who issues a list of who those are—

That participated in terrorist attacks against Israel and United States citizens before, on, or after October 7, 2023.

Yes, we have a First Amendment right in this country to free speech, but everyone acknowledges there are limits to it. For example, you do not have a First Amendment right to call on people to overthrow the government of the United States. You don't have a First Amendment right to do that. You don't have a First Amendment right to incite people to violence. And there is no First Amendment right to a visa. I am not talking about U.S. citizens.

And, by the way, to be abundantly clear, this is very specifically written

to talk about people who have endorsed or espoused the terrorist activities of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad. This is not about people who support a two-state solution. This is not about people who are of Palestinian descent. It has nothing to do with any of them. People have every right to espouse those views. And I may disagree with them, but they have a right to do that.

What no one has a right to do, especially a visitor—not an American—a visitor to the United States granted a visa for which there is no constitutional right—that we are going to allow visitors into the country the law says they are not even allowed to be in, but now they are here. They got in because, obviously, nobody goes into their interview and says: I am a Hamas supporter, by the way, in case you are wondering. So they let them in the country. Or maybe they became a Hamas supporter while they are here. But they are here as visitors on a visa, espousing, defending, and supporting a terrorist organization that just committed a horrible slaughter, but they have been doing it for a long time—not at this scale and scope like we saw in one day.

This is not about the First Amendment. This is about people that are actively calling for the support of a terrorist organization that, if they could, they would slaughter Americans. If they have the capability to conduct an attack like that in the United States, they would. There is no constitutional right to that. And there is no constitutional right to a visa to remain in this country.

That is what I am talking about. That is what all this is about. It goes on, obviously, to condemn the attack and all the other things, which I think would not be controversial. But that is specifically what this is about.

The law is very clear. You are not allowed—it just makes all the sense in the world. Why would any country in the world say: We are going to give out visas to people who support terrorism? They wouldn't, and our law doesn't.

But now that they are here, somehow, they are immune to the application of the law? Now that visa is somehow a protected document? A visa is just like if we have to get a visa to go to another country. It is a country saying: We will allow you in as a visitor for a temporary period of time.

But there are all kinds of things that can get your visa canceled. There are all kinds of things that can get your visa canceled, like if you are here to do a certain kind of job and you are not doing that job, you are in default of the visa.

There are all kinds of things that, depending on the visa you are on, can get your visa canceled. Shouldn't one of them be espousing support for terrorism? Shouldn't that be one of the criteria we use? We can go back and forth. We can talk about all these other concepts. I promise you that all across America—I don't have to take a

poll. If you went up to the average person and asked them: Let me ask you a question. If someone is a visitor to this country, say they are here on a tourist visa or student visa or here on a visa as a visiting professor. They are here on a visa. And that person is out there supporting and encouraging others to support a terrorist organization that hates America, hates our values, but more importantly, that carries out violence; that espouses violence as their primary tool for activism—if you went and told somebody: Should we kick people out of this country—not Americans—who are foreign nationals who are here on temporary visas and are out there supporting terrorism inside our country? I guarantee you, the overwhelming majority of Americans would say, absolutely—absolutely, we should. I have had Democratic colleagues come up to me and say that today.

All this resolution does is—it doesn't even force the administration to do it. It just calls on them to do it. So I honestly don't understand the objection. I don't understand the rationale behind the objection. I hope we can maybe vote on it one day. Maybe we can get a vote on this, and that way everybody could be on the record.

We shouldn't have foreign nationals in our country that support Hamas or Hezbollah or any of these other groups.

I specifically tailored the language of this resolution to stick to the law and nothing more. I do not believe anybody should be out there committing acts of violence against people because of their ethnic heritage, because of their religion.

I tell this to people all the time. Do people realize, for example, that in the Israeli Army right now, there are Israeli Arabs who will be called to go into Gaza and fight in the war? There are Israeli Arabs who will fight for Israel because they are against terrorism. Do they realize in the Armed Forces of the United States, there are men and women who are Muslims, followers of Islam who have fought for the freedom of this country? This is not a Nation where your value as a person or status of American is determined by your religion or ethnic background. I reject that categorically.

We are heartbroken, for example, by a story that some deranged person knocks on a door and murders a little boy the other day screaming something about Muslim. That is a crime. I am glad he was arrested. He should go to jail. Anyone who does that should go to jail. That is the kind of violence that terrorists do.

No one is defending or talking about anything like that. What I am saying is common sense. You are a visitor. You are not even an American. You are a foreign national. You are here because we gave you a visa to be here temporarily, and now you are out there defending and supporting Hamas, a terrorist organization. You need to go. That is what this resolution asks the administration to do.

I hope we can get a vote on the Senate so at least everyone will know where everybody stands.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am rising today for the 25th time to address the multifaceted dark money scheme to capture and control our Supreme Court. We will look today at how the creepy billionaires who captured the Supreme Court get their message through to the Justices they helped plant there.

That, of course, is the last leg of the capture operation. First, you have the so-called Federalist Society list, purportedly created by the Federalist Society for former President Donald Trump to pick Supreme Court Justices from. Bad enough if that were true—a secretive, anonymously funded, private group picking Supreme Court Justices while accepting big, secret contributions. What could possibly go wrong? But it is actually worse. The Federalist Society can show no official process to cook up the list—no agenda item, no vote, no nothing. It was done in some back room secretly by the Federalist Society's Leonard Leo, the operative of the creepy billionaires who fund this endeavor.

The Federalist Society did let Trump use the "Federalist Society" name for cover on the list, as if it was their list, but it wasn't.

After that step, the fake list, came the billionaire-funded campaign to get the Senate to confirm the Federalist Society Justices. This part of the operation ran through another dark money front group, the Judicial Crisis Network, conveniently located just down the hall—in the same building, on the same floor—from the Federalist Society. "Judicial Crisis Network" is the fictitious name for yet another dark money front group. And, of course, millions in dark money were poured into Senate Republican political coffers from the same billionaires, and—no surprise—Republican Senators voted to confirm even deeply troubled Justices, and now there they sit on the Court.

So let's say you are a billionaire who funded all of this. You have your hand-picked Justices on the Supreme Court. How are they supposed to remember what you want? Well, easy—you tell them.

Queue the front groups that file briefs at the Supreme Court as amici curiae—Latin for "friends of the court." They file them in coordinated flotillas, usually of about a dozen. But where it is a really big deal to the dark money billionaires, they have sent in more than 50 of these briefs.

In the case where it was over 50, it was at the certiorari stage, early in the proceedings, to make sure the chosen Justices got the message. That case was Americans for Prosperity Founda-

tion v. Bonta. It was about disclosing donors behind dark money front groups. After the deluge of over 50 front group amici, the Federalist Society Justices let nonprofits—known as 501(c)(3)s—hide their donors even from sovereign States where they operate and which have a responsibility to police them for fraudulent abuse of the tax system.

This decision added more secrecy to the latest and greatest secret political influence technique, which is to pair a dark money 501(c)(3) with a dark money 501(c)(4) entity. This is—no surprise—precisely the secretive influence technique that the creepy billionaires deployed to get those chosen Justices on the Court.

Well, we have all witnessed the sordid saga of theatrically grotesque gifts and free travel that rightwing billionaires have bestowed on certain Supreme Court Justices. That is connected here. The billionaires who fund the Justices' gifts and entertainment also fund front groups that come in to tell the Justices what to do.

So the backdrop of the capture apparatus is that billionaires choose the Justices, fund the campaigns for their confirmations, and then send in flotillas of billionaire-funded front groups to give instructions. With that backdrop, let's look at recent and coming cases and how those front groups are doing.

Last term, the Federalist Society Justices handed several major wins to the front groups and their backers. One of these wins came in a case called Sackett v. EPA. It was the latest assault on the EPA's power to clean up our environment and hold polluters accountable.

Many of the big-spending, rightwing billionaires owe their fortunes to the polluting fossil fuel industry, so it is no surprise that their front groups are out to weaken the EPA.

The EPA has responsibility under the Clean Water Act to make sure that our country's water remains safe and clean. Naturally, the polluters and their front groups hate this, so in Sackett, they asked the Court to narrow as much as possible which waters the EPA could protect under the Clean Water Act.

The front groups had their fingerprints all over this case. To start, the attorneys who brought the case came from the Pacific Legal Foundation. Because it is a dark money group, it is impossible to know exactly who funds the Pacific Legal Foundation, but in the past, it has received money from the likes of ExxonMobil, the Koch Brothers' political apparatus, and other groups who fund climate denial.

A great many of these cases that bring in the flotillas of billionaire-funded amici are not brought up through regular litigation; they are brought by these front groups, teed up by front groups who bring in plaintiffs of convenience to bring a particular question up before the captured Court.

At the Supreme Court, at least 10 other far-right, front group amici all urged the Court to undermine the Clean Water Act. These amici included groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, one of the biggest mouthpieces for the fossil fuel industry, and the Americans for Prosperity Foundation, which we just spoke about, part of the Koch Industries' fossil fuel political operation.

I went over some of the briefs this morning in the Environment and Public Works Committee when we took a look at the Sackett case, and I will just do a brief summary right now.

The Pacific Legal Foundation has received money from Exxon, various Koch political foundations, DonorsTrust, the Bradley Foundation, and the Sarah Scaife Foundation.

Also in the case was the Americans for Prosperity Foundation, which has been funded by the Koch political operation, DonorsTrust, the Bradley Foundation, and the Sarah Scaife Foundation.

The Cato Institute was in the case with funding by the Koch political operation, Donors Capital, DonorsTrust, and the Bradley Foundation.

Something called the Claremont Center for Constitutional Jurisprudence chimed in with funding from Donors Capital, DonorsTrust, the Bradley Foundation, and the Sarah Scaife Foundation.

Liberty Justice Center came in with funding from DonorsTrust and the Bradley Foundation.

NFIB Small Business Legal Center came in with funding from Donors Capital, DonorsTrust, and the Bradley Foundation.

Atlantic Legal Foundation came in with funding from the Bradley Foundation and the Sarah Scaife Foundation.

Mountain States Legal Foundation came in with funding from the Koch political operation, DonorsTrust, Donors Capital, the Bradley Foundation, and the Sarah Scaife Foundation.

Southeastern Legal Foundation came in with funding from DonorsTrust, Bradley Foundation, and Sarah Scaife Foundation.

The Washington Legal Foundation came in with funding from the Koch political operation, Donors Capital, DonorsTrust, the Bradley Foundation, and the Sarah Scaife Foundation.

So the litigant and nine amici were all funded by the Kochs, by DonorsTrust and Donors Capital, and by the Bradley Foundation and the Scaife Foundation. They could just as easily have filed briefs in the name of the Koch political operation, DonorsTrust and Donors Capital, and the Bradley Foundation and the Sarah Scaife Foundation or even filed one brief filed by all of those entities, but instead they created this fake machinery of front groups, creating the illusion of multiplicity and the illusion of independence, when, in fact, these things are played like piano keys on a piano.

By the way, if they had actually tried to file a brief in the name of DonorsTrust and Donors Capital, it would have been a little bit weird because those are not entities that have any real role in the world other than to scrub the identities off of dark money donations to rightwing groups. So if you don't want your name on an expenditure, you give it to Donors Capital, and they then pass it on to the group. The group reports that they got it from Donors Capital, and you get to walk away hands-free, without any attribution or accountability.

So not only are these multiple players; they tend to switch around in this scheme. So let me add that Americans for Prosperity Foundation was the petitioner in the case with the 50-plus dark money amici that came in. There, the scheme was to get the chosen Justices to protect dark money for 501(c)(3)s, and needless to say, it worked.

But back to Sackett. Five of the six Republican-appointed Justices got the message sent by these front groups and adopted the narrowest interpretation of the Clean Water Act that they could get away with. Millions of acres of wetlands are no longer protected by the EPA—another win for polluter interests; another loss for the American people; another successful direction by a rightwing, dark money, front group flotilla.

Sackett wasn't the only case where the creepy billionaires scored big at the Court last term. Another win came in the student loans case, where the Federalist Society Justices threw out President Biden's plan to cancel student loan debt for millions of struggling borrowers.

Showing up in that case was another double-digit flotilla of far-right and industry-funded front group amici, with customary repeat players like the Kochs' Americans for Prosperity Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Buckeye Institute.

In this scheme, even the front groups have front groups. So Leonard Leo's Judicial Crisis Network is actually the fictitious name of another front group called the Concord Fund, and the Judicial Crisis Network, which is the same group that Leo used to help confirm the handpicked Justices, in turn propped up a new front group led by Mike Pence, funding it with more than \$1 million. So the front group's front group's front group filed a brief in the student loans case.

You cannot make this stuff up.

Well, naturally, the Federalist Society Justices delivered what these groups were asking for on behalf of their billionaire benefactors, but the real victory for the front group amici in this case was how the Justices struck down the plan.

The Federalist Society Justices relied on something called the major questions doctrine—a doctrine they first deployed 2 years ago at the behest of fossil fuel groups in a case called

West Virginia v. EPA. The basic idea is that if a judge thinks an Agency regulation is too big or too important, the judge gets to strike it down. It is the perfect tool for billionaires to use billionaire-picked Justices rather than Agency subject-matter expertise to stop regulations they don't like.

A whole separate scheme speech could be devoted to the hothouse “doctrine factories” in which notions like the so-called major questions doctrine are seeded, fertilized, watered, and grown.

In West Virginia v. EPA and in the student loans case, the Federalist Society Justices took the doctrine from dark money-funded hothouses like the Federalist Society itself and replanted it into American law. It is now law. The front groups, of course, with that opening, then began challenging even more regulations left and right using this supposed doctrine. And, no surprise, the Agency they targeted the most is the EPA.

That brings me to the pending wave of front group action at the Supreme Court. One case that has received a lot of attention is Moore v. United States. That case centers on a narrow legal issue related to the Republicans' 2017 tax cuts for the rich. But the billionaires' front groups want far more. They want the chosen Justices to shield the billionaire elite from paying taxes by preemptively declaring unconstitutional taxes that would more directly target the billionaires' massive fortunes.

Well, given what a boon that would be for the creepy billionaires, as you can imagine, the amicus flotilla is out in full force. At least 14 far-right billionaire front groups have surfaced in Moore. And like in Sackett, a front group is litigating the case: the Competitive Enterprise Institute, it is called, which has a long history of rightwing, billionaire funding.

One side note about this case, remember when I said there was overlap between the rightwing billionaires who fund these groups and the rightwing billionaires who lavished Justices Thomas and Alito with luxury gifts? This case is exhibit A, with multiple rightwing front groups funded by billionaires Paul Singer, Harlan Crow, and the Kochs, who are billionaires at the center of the ethics mess of secret freebies for certain Justices at the Court.

It actually gets worse. In Moore, the lawyer litigating on behalf of the billionaires' cause is the same lawyer who conducted the so-called interview with Justice Alito in the Wall Street Journal editorial page about my Supreme Court ethics bill and our Senate investigations on Judiciary and Finance into the undisclosed gifts to certain Justices. That interview propped up for the lawyer's client Leonard Leo the argument that we could not investigate gifts Leo orchestrated to Justice Alito.

You need a diagram. You cannot make this stuff up.

Litigant in Moore, lawyer to Leo, interviewer of Alito—that is a whole lot of hats for that one lawyer's head. The more you look at this operation, the more you see it as a big shell game with multiple front groups that can be moved around and multiple operatives switching around to deliver results for this billionaire elite. It is a scheme.

Another case the billionaires are targeting this term is Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo with, yep, another attack on the basic foundations of Agency regulation. It is not enough that their home-brewed major questions doctrine has just been made law by their chosen Justices. They want more. And, of course, a flotilla of front group amici has been marshaled to urge on the Federalist Society Justices.

I filed a brief in that case with several colleagues documenting these amici's industry connections. Many have received hundreds of thousands—even millions—of dollars from far-right and polluter interests that would benefit from weaker regulations. As usual, they are repeat performers who show up in case after case to feed the Court arguments propagated in rightwing hothouses.

That is the Court capture process: Billionaire-funded groups cook up legal theories to help the billionaires; billionaire-funded litigation propped up by billionaire-funded flotillas of front groups tees up the Justices to adopt the hothouse theory. And then, after the Justices adopt the hothouse theory, the front groups bring more cases to attack more regulations. Rinse and repeat, until you have tied up or knocked down every regulation in your polluting way.

As with a lot of the mess at the Supreme Court right now, the Justices could do a lot to clean this up by themselves. They could require real disclosure of who is behind these flotillas of phony front groups. They could turn away cases that look like faux litigation brought by political front groups behind plaintiffs of convenience. They could adopt ethics procedures that allowed basic factfinding into the swampy mess of billionaires, front groups, free secret gifts, and the ubiquitous fixer Leonard Leo. And, of course, they could stop granting the front groups' wishes time after time after time.

A new term of Court presents a new opportunity for the Court to recommit itself to deciding law and not just doing the bidding of creepy billionaires and their phony front groups. We too often fixate on the awful decisions that have come out of this Federalist Society majority. When we do, we overlook the nasty little web of front groups lurking behind those awful decisions.

But the front group web is an important part of the story, an essential element of the Court capture apparatus, and a key element of the scheme. The web should not be allowed to hide in plain view simply because we don't

bother to keep track and connect the dots.

To be continued.

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

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

ISRAEL

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise today as Israel is at war. They are at war in response to a genocidal assault by the Iran terrorist group Hamas, an assault against Israel and against America and against the citizens of dozens of other countries.

The numbers are staggering: over 1,400 Israelis killed, thousands more wounded and tortured, over 199 kidnapped—alongside them, 30 Americans killed and about a dozen kidnapped, by far one of the deadliest attacks against Americans in history. And so our Israeli allies are rightly going to war to eradicate Hamas.

We often hear that Israel and the United States share the same interests and the same enemies, that when Israel fights for its own security, they are also fighting for ours. Rarely in history has that been so explicitly, horribly true.

And let us be clear about what they are fighting against. What we saw on October 7, in the early hours of Saturday, October 7, was pure evil unleashed, genocidal, exterminationist violence, Nazi tactics in pursuit of Nazi aims. Entire Israeli families were murdered in door-to-door horrors. Israeli babies were brutally slaughtered, burned, and decapitated. Women and young girls were systematically raped.

In some homes, children were shot right in front of their parents. In other homes, parents were shot right in front of their children, and then the children were kidnapped—husbands and wives murdered in front of each other, holocaust survivors massacred. In one home, Israelis found the burned remains of an adult and a child who died hugging each other in terror as they were murdered. They were burned to death, clutching each other in their home. And throughout these atrocities, Hamas terrorists gleefully filmed themselves in ecstatic joy. There are harrowing videos of Israeli babies and toddlers in the hands of Hamas terrorists after they were kidnapped.

Why were these crimes committed? Because the victims were Jews in Israel, because Hamas and the Iranian regime—which arms, funds, and controls Hamas—because both are committed to the eradication of Jews. It was the biggest mass murder of the Jewish people in a single day since the Holocaust.

At the Supernova music festival—which was billed as a celebration of friends, love, and infinite freedom—young Israelis were dancing when Hamas assassins paraglided in, raining terror from the skies. They shot at defenseless Israelis, murdering 260 of them. They systematically raped survivors. They shot those who were too brutalized to be moved, and they kidnapped others.

At kibbutz Be'eri, 120 people were murdered. Hamas terrorists infiltrated the kibbutz from several directions, and they went home by home murdering people.

One of the victims was Tom Hand's 8-year-old daughter Emily, who was at a sleepover with her friends. Tom is a single father. His wife, Emily's mom, had passed away earlier from cancer. On that Saturday morning when Hamas invaded the kibbutz, Tom, thankfully, was able to get out alive. Emily was murdered.

In another kibbutz, 16-year-old Rotem Matias was with his parents Deborah and Shlomi when Hamas terrorists came into their home. The terrorists shot Shlomi in the arm, blowing his arm off. Deborah, heroically, shielded Rotem with her body to save him. Both of Rotem's parents were murdered.

At kibbutz Nir Oz, Yarden and Shiri Bibas, along with their 3-year-old son and their 9-month-old son, were all hiding in their home when Hamas terrorists entered. They took Shiri and her sons, and they kidnapped them. No one has heard from Yarden. Shiri and her sons are now hostages in Gaza as well as Shiri's parents.

These were all by design. We know from documents discovered on terrorists' bodies that their goals were to "kill as many as possible" and "capture hostages." We know they sought out specifically children, and they went specifically to children's rooms.

In the face of this evil, Israel must and Israel will defend herself.

America's policy should be absolutely unequivocal: to ensure that Israel has the military and the diplomatic support to utterly eradicate Hamas, for as long as it takes.

I want to repeat that last part: for as long as it takes.

I give you my word that I will do everything in my power and ability and use every resource at my disposal to ensure that that is indeed America's policy.

So what do we do immediately? We know what Israel needs in the short term. Our Israeli allies need air defenses, and they need weapons. We must make sure together that they get them.

If we can get those things from prepositioned weapons we keep on their soil, the war reserve stock, that is where they will get them from. If it needs to be shipped to them, we will ship it to them. And if the President needs more authorization or more money, Congress must find a way to give it to him.

Over the last week, we have heard objections from various parts of Capitol Hill about arming Israel. There have instead been calls for withholding support and pressuring Israel into an immediate ceasefire. These people draw a moral equivalency between our Israeli allies and these Hamas terrorists.

This is a battle between good and evil. Anyone who draws a moral equivalency between Hamas and Israel is shamefully lying.

This is an existential fight for Israel. As Golda Meir once said, "If the Arabs put down their weapons today, there would be no more violence. If the Jews put down their weapons, there would be no more Israel."

That is as true today as it was when she said it.

Hamas uses human shields as standard practice. Israel does everything it can to minimize civilian casualties. They are polar opposites.

The Israeli Government asks innocent civilians to get out of harm's way. They go so far as to send texts to Palestinians warning them to evacuate. They do things like if they are going to bomb a building where they know Hamas rockets are stored or they have terrorists hiding, they will send a text to every person in that building and even drop a dud bomb on top of the building that lands with a thud that doesn't explode—designed to warn the civilians to evacuate the building because the next bomb to take out the weapons or take out the terrorists is going to explode. And then, no doubt, they will level the building because they are trying to get rid of murderers. No other military on Earth goes to such extraordinary lengths to avoid civilian casualties. And there is no moral equivalency here—zero—between Israeli soldiers protecting civilians and Hamas monsters targeting babies. Much more needs to be done and can be done to counter the use of human shields by Hamas and other Iran-controlled terrorist organizations.

In 2014, I was proud to author a resolution in the Senate, cosponsored by Democrat Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND from New York, condemning the use of human shields by Hamas as a war crime. That bipartisan resolution passed the Senate 100 to nothing.

Later, in 2019, I wrote and passed language that imposes sanctions on Hamas, on Hezbollah, on any other terrorist group that uses human shields. Now, that was a much tougher fight because sanctions always are, but by working in a bipartisan and bicameral fashion, we passed that law as well. Since 2019, there are new groups that are using human shields that need to be added, especially the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the law itself needs to be extended and strengthened. I intend to work in a bipartisan way to do exactly that in this Congress.

Unequivocal support from the United States is critical. We are already seeing pressure from across the world and from far too many places here in Washington for our Israeli allies to stand

down. It is, unfortunately, well known—predictable—that as soon as Israel begins to defend itself from terrorists, from the very beginning, a clock starts ticking until pressure on them to stand down becomes immense. It is a surreal, disquieting, and shameful spectacle. This time, the calls for Israel to stand down began while Hamas terrorists were still on Israeli territory as the attack was ongoing.

And I am saddened to say, they came, among other places, from within the Biden administration itself.

As the Hamas invasion was becoming horrifically public, as the first reports of atrocities were being published, here is what the Biden State Department tweeted out:

We unequivocally condemn the attack of Hamas terrorists and the loss of life that has incurred. We urge all sides to refrain from violence and retaliatory attacks. Terror and violence solve nothing.

Now, to be clear, that was a message to the Israelis from the U.S. Department of State: Refrain from violence and retaliatory attacks. Terror and violence solve nothing, so do nothing against the terrorists who were then murdering over 1,000 Israelis. That was from the U.S. Office of Palestinian Affairs of the U.S. State Department.

They sent this tweet out at 3 a.m., DC time, literally as these murders, as these rapes, as these brutal assaults were happening. I caught it within about an hour, and it was obvious what they were trying to do. So I made it clear what I intended to do, and I publicly responded to that tweet by saying:

This is disgraceful, and every . . . person involved in drafting and approving this tweet should be immediately expelled from the U.S. government.

So their first instinct was to tell Israel: Your country is being invaded, terrorists are murdering your civilians, your citizens are being kidnapped, infants and children are being murdered, and the position of the U.S. State Department is, Israel, please do nothing. Do not engage in retaliatory strikes. Just sit there and allow the terrorists to murder your citizens.

Within the hour, the State Department deleted their tweet. Later that day, they apologized. They said the tweet was unauthorized, and it didn't reflect their policy—except they weren't done.

A few hours later, the Twitter account of the Secretary of State Antony Blinken posted a note saying the Secretary of State was encouraging an immediate ceasefire. Understand the word "ceasefire" is not directed at the terrorists; it is directed at Israel. They are saying: Israel, do not defend yourself. Do not kill the Hamas terrorists.

I, likewise, denounced that tweet, and for the second time in 24 hours the Department of State had to delete yet another tweet. That is in the first day that this attack proceeded.

This is not a time for partisan disagreements. We should be standing to-

gether with Israel. And I will be the first to admit that much of what President Biden has said himself since then has been welcome. His first major speech on this crisis was very strong in parts.

The problem is that this administration—this White House, this Department of State—is filled with passionate opponents of Israel, and every time President Biden has spoken in support of Israel, he has been undercut by staffers before and after.

The President just traveled to Israel yesterday in what was an unprecedented trip. I am glad the President went to Israel. That was a strong statement for him to be physically there on the ground during this war. But on the way there, literally on the plane, a White House spokesperson said the purpose of the trip was to have the President ask the Israelis "tough questions." Even on the night before his speech last week, Biden's Deputy National Security Advisor had gone on MSNBC and warned the Israelis that "[i]t is our advice that this war be conducted based on the principles of international law."

(Ms. HASSAN assumed the Chair.)

Madam President, what does that mean?

Has Israel ever not fought its wars based on the principles of international law? Why is that something they are publicly lecturing Israel on? And even if it did come up in discussions with Israel, why lecture them publicly?

I remember well September 11, the horror of the greatest attack on the United States in American history. And I don't recall any American ally publicly lecturing America: Follow international law. I don't recall any foreign heads of state traveling here to ask us the tough questions: Are you going to dare retaliate against the terrorists? Instead, our friends said: We stand with you. Period.

After President Biden's speech at the White House, the White House officials stated:

We support Israel taking necessary and proportionate action.

Understand that word "proportionate." You are going to hear it again. You are going to hear again from the enemies of Israel who are already preparing to attack and undermine each and every step Israel takes to eradicate the Hamas terrorists. They are going to say: It is not proportionate.

What is a proportionate response to the beheading of babies? What is a proportionate response to the systematic murder of entire families? For that matter, what is a proportionate response to a genocidal campaign?

The Biden administration's ideological, partisan reaction day after day to all of this is tragic. They see these terrorist attacks, and their immediate reaction is: I hope Israel doesn't respond by killing the terrorists too much.

Why? Well, because I think at least some in the Biden administration feel

a need to appeal to the radical leftwing base, which includes BLM, which includes the Democratic Socialists of America, which includes the anti-Semitic Squad in the House, as well as the woke university students at Harvard and other so-called elite universities.

At Harvard, 35 student groups, in the aftermath of Hamas's attack, blamed Israel. These organizations and these elite universities, sadly, have become venomous pits of anti-Semitism and hatred for Israel. The 35 student groups at Harvard put out a joint statement by the Harvard Palestinian Solidarity Group, and I want the American people to know what they said.

They said:

We the undersigned student organizations hold the Israeli regime entirely responsible for all the unfolding violence.

That is the opening sentence of their statement. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas terrorists are raping women and young girls in the street. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas is mutilating babies and kidnapping them and holding them hostage. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas is using toddlers as human shields. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas is targeting and murdering civilians, indiscriminately going house by house by house. That sentiment is sick and twisted and wrong.

Now, I also worry that, in addition to the knee-jerk, partisan, ideological reaction, the Biden administration also has a very real interest in dampening Israel's response, because every day that the war goes on, people will ask: Where does Hamas get the resources to keep fighting?

The answer is obvious. This massacre—this horrific assault on Israel—was funded by Iran. Hamas and Hezbollah are both Iranian proxies. They work for Iran; they work under the direction of Iran; and they are funded by Iran. Without Iran, there would be no Hamas.

When it was first reported that these attacks had been planned or signed off on by the Iranian Government, the usual Iran echo chamber went to work defending the regime. They said there was no evidence. The administration and an awful lot of congressional Democrats said they weren't sure either. But do you know what no one denies? Do you know what makes these denials so strange? No one denies that Hamas is armed and funded and directed by Iran.

The game these people are playing is, they say: Well, we can't be sure. We don't have video evidence. We don't have an audio recording of the Ayatollah looking at a map and telling Hamas where to breach the border fence. So we can't be sure. We have to look into it more.

What utter nonsense.

Why are they so defensive? Well, because, since President Biden took office, this White House has been responsible for nearly \$100 billion flowing to

Iran, and much of that money has gone directly to Hamas and directly to Hezbollah.

You know, now everyone acknowledges the \$6 billion in ransom money that Joe Biden paid to get five Americans out of Iranian custody. I am glad that now Democrats have joined what I and many others said was a tragic mistake that put a bounty on Americans. It set a price: \$1.2 billion is what the Biden administration will pay you if you kidnap Americans. At the time, I said more Americans will be kidnapped, and Iran will kidnap more Americans. I am very sorry to say that prediction came true in just a matter of weeks.

My Democratic colleagues would not stand with us to cut off that \$6 billion when it was paid initially. Now we have Democrats willing to do so. That is a step in the right direction. But understand the \$6 billion is only the tip of the iceberg. It is only a tiny portion of the money that this administration, the Biden administration, has flooded Iran with.

A few weeks before the \$6 billion deal, Biden made available \$10 billion related to electricity that Iraq bought from Iran, and both of those—the \$16 billion—pales in comparison to the tens of billions of dollars—as much as \$80 billion—that Iran has made from illicit oil sales under Biden. Understand, when Joe Biden came into office, the Iranian regime was on its knees. The economy was in shambles. Why? Because the Ayatollah gets its principal revenue from selling oil.

When Donald Trump was President, I spent much of the Presidency urging President Trump to vigorously enforce the oil sanctions, to cripple their oil sales. Iran had been selling a million barrels a day of oil. President Trump agreed with me and vigorously enforced the sanctions. Those oil sales were crushed, and the Iranian economy collapsed. That is what President Biden inherited—an Iran in shambles economically.

And what did the Biden administration do immediately? It ceased enforcing oil sanctions. It said, in effect: Sell all of the oil you can. And do you know what? The Ayatollah heard him, because, right now, Iran is selling 2 million barrels a day of oil—the same level they were selling before the sanctions ever passed, more than double what they had been selling before the vigorous enforcement of the oil sanctions under President Trump.

Why is it that so many Democratic politicians hate oil and gas production in the United States and are willing to kill jobs here at home, but when it comes to theocratic, homicidal, genocidal maniacs, they are perfectly happy with letting them reap \$80 billion by selling 2 million barrels a day of oil primarily to communist China? That is madness.

So let me say, I am glad the President gives speeches saying: We are standing with Israel. That is great, but

actions speak louder than words. If the President wants to stand with Israel, stand up tomorrow and say: We are vigorously enforcing oil sanctions, and we are going to end these oil sales.

To the Democrats in this body who are giving speeches saying we stand with Israel, great. Then join me in saying: We are going to take away the billions of dollars that are flooding into Iran; that are funding Hamas; that are funding the death squads; that are funding the rockets; that are funding the murders of Israelis.

But it wasn't just money to Iran that went to Hamas. The Biden administration also poured money into Hamas areas directly. As soon as they came into office, the Biden administration began flooding money into the Gaza Strip. At the time, I led a coalition of 19 Senators in urging the Biden administration: Do not send money to Gaza. Why? Because Hamas controls Gaza, and if you send hundreds of millions of dollars to Gaza, Hamas will use it to commit acts of terrorism against Israelis and Americans.

At the same time that 19 of us urged the administration "don't fund Gaza because it will fund Hamas terrorism," 145 House Democrats sent a letter to the Biden administration, saying: Do fund Gaza even though it will fund Hamas terrorism.

And what did the Biden administration do with these dueling letters from Congress? We now know because the internal government documents of the Biden administration are now public; and the Biden Treasury Department determined there was a "high risk" that Hamas would potentially derive benefit from the money they were sending.

Now, ordinarily, that would end the matter because, in their existing U.S. anti-terrorism sanctions, the laws say, if you know there is a high risk it is going to terrorism, you can't send money to do it. Did the Biden administration take that step? No. Instead, they exempted themselves from American laws against funding terrorism. They wanted, as a political matter, to send the cash so much that they were willing to look the other way to, in their own words, the "high risk" that that money would go to Hamas to carry out acts of terrorism.

Here is the full quote from the Biden administration document:

Due to its overall strength and level of control over Gaza, we assess there is a high risk that Hamas could potentially derive indirect, unintentional benefit from U.S. assistance to Gaza.

These atrocities in Israel were the direct result of political decisions made by the White House to dismantle pressure and to pour money into Iran and into territories controlled by Iranian terrorists. When you send billions of dollars to people who hate us and want to murder us, we should not be surprised when they use those billions of dollars to murder us.

Not to support Israel in this time of need—not to support them fully for as

long as it takes—would be a grave moral failure. This fight is civilization against barbarism. It is good versus evil. The differences between the two sides are as stark as light and darkness. The light and goodness, I believe, will prevail if we stand with Israel.

I want to say something also.

In the last 2 weeks, I have spoken with many of my friends, in particular, many of my Jewish friends. It has been astonishing the number of my Jewish friends in Texas and all across America who have family members or who have close friends in Israel. It has been truly breathtaking the number of American Jews I know well who either lost a loved one in these terrorist attacks or who have relatives or close friends who have been called up to the IDF, who are facing the most significant war in Israel in the last 50 years.

I have spent much of the last 2 weeks reaching out to those friends and just telling them: Heidi and I are praying for you. We are lifting you up. We are lifting your family up. We are lifting the people of Israel up, encouraging them. This has been a frightening time for every Israeli and for a great many Americans.

I hope that, in the face of evil, we see the same solidarity we saw in the wake of September 11. Just as the world rallied to our side when radical Islamic terrorists committed a grotesque act of terror against the United States, now is the time for the world to rally to Israel's side, and now is the time for this body to come together.

There have been policy differences in the past, with some Members of this body and leaders of this administration believing that it is a good idea to send tens or even hundreds of billions of dollars to Iran. That policy has been proven catastrophically wrong.

So I hope that we come together and that we stand as one, united, to tell the people of Israel: America stands with Israel for as long as it takes.

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

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions submitted earlier today: S. Res. 414, S. Res. 415, and S. Res. 416.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, in two criminal cases pending in Federal district court in the District of Columbia and arising out of the events of

January 6, 2021, the prosecution has requested testimony from a Senate witness.

In these cases, brought against Ryan Samsel and John Earle Sullivan, respectively, trials are expected to commence in late October, and the prosecution has requested testimony from Daniel Schwager, formerly counsel to the Secretary of the Senate, concerning his knowledge and observations of the process and constitutional and legal bases for Congress's counting of the electoral college votes. Senate Secretary Berry would like to cooperate with these requests by providing relevant testimony in these trials from Mr. Schwager.

In keeping with the rules and practices of the Senate, these resolutions would authorize the production of relevant testimony from Mr. Schwager, with representation by the Senate legal counsel.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions (S. Res. 414, S. Res. 415, and S. Res. 416) were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MORNING BUSINESS

S. 3041

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, on October 17, 2023, in a speech offered by Mr. COTTON on the Senate floor, Mr. COTTON erroneously indicated that I was not a cosponsor to S. 3041, a bill to reinstate certain sanctions imposed with respect to Iran. Prior to Mr. COTTON's speech on October 17, 2023, I requested to be added as a cosponsor to S. 3041 and was added on that same day. Please let the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD reflect this.

REMEMBERING JOYCE LEVITON

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, next week, on October 24, family and friends will gather to celebrate the life of Joyce Leviton, a beloved member of my staff who passed away after a courageous battle with cancer. I imagine it will be a rather large gathering because Joyce touched so many people. And while we grieve her death, the event will indeed be a celebration of her life, a life she lived brimming with contagious happiness and enthusiasm and kindness.

Joyce was born and raised in Baltimore and graduated from Forest Park High School and Towson University, earning her bachelor's degree in history in 1966. In 1970, she went to work for the Baltimore City Department of

Planning as a community planner for the Third District, a position she held until 1988, when she became chief of community planning. She excelled at her job because she loved it but, more importantly, because she loved people and she loved Baltimore. Joyce had a knack for bringing people together and giving them a voice in their communities and in the city. Everyone was Joyce's neighbor. As I said at the time of her death, "Joyce is Baltimore and she loved our community and wanted it to be the best it could possibly be, and always went the extra mile. When she spoke about Baltimore, it was from the heart. She was a person who made a difference."

I was fortunate to have Joyce work on my Senate campaign in 2006 and then join my staff as a trusted senior adviser and community liaison after the election. Joyce would organize groups of people from Baltimore and across the State and bring them to the Capitol for tours and luncheons and lectures. She met and worked with Maryland's arts and humanities and cultural organizations. She was my ambassador. Everyone I met—from all corners of Maryland, it seemed—already knew Joyce and was so fond of her.

The Baltimore Sun obituary referred to Joyce as a "political junkie." That is an understatement. Joyce started working on campaigns at an early age, and she never stopped. She was deeply involved from the national to the State to the local level. As the Sun noted, Joyce was one of the founders of the Second District New Democratic Club in the early 1970s "one of the first political groups that joined Black and white residents from across the city and resulted in integrated and progressive tickets for city and state elections."

Joyce was never content to rest on her laurels—or even rest at all. She was a member of the steering committee for the Baltimore City Fair and National Advisory Council of Neighborhood Reinvestment; a board member and vice president of the Citizens Planning and Housing Association; a founder of Women Employed in Baltimore and Live Baltimore, an organization that encouraged people to move to Baltimore; a member of the National Organization for Women; executive secretary of Young Democrats of Baltimore; and an active member of Beth Am Synagogue. She formed or joined book clubs, and she loved to attend cultural events. Joyce was the epitome of a civic activist and absolutely committed to social justice, what we members of the Jewish faith call "Tzedakah"—making the world a fair and more just place—and "Tikkun Olam"—repairing the world. We are closer to that ideal because of Joyce.

Another one of Joyce's lifelong passions was the Baltimore Orioles. She moved to Otterbein in 1981. When Oriole Park at Camden Yards opened in 1992, she could walk to the stadium to

attend games, which she did—often. She was no casual fan. The regular season wasn't enough for Joyce; she enjoyed going to Sarasota to watch the team during spring training.

Joyce loved people, but she especially loved her family: her sisters Susan and Audrey and their husbands Jeffrey Lauren and Peter Martin. She doted on her nephews and nieces and their spouses, Jake (Stephanie Martin), Liz (Shai Lauros), and Josh (Taieri McKenzie) and their children: Max, Lucy, and Emma Martin; Reuben and Micah Lauros; and Lola Lauren. Extended family includes her cousin Neil Tucker, who was more like a brother to her, his wife Laura, and their children Michael, Molly, and Will. She loved to spend weekends and vacations with her family in Rehoboth Beach, Maine, and Vermont.

Everyone who knew Joyce will miss her, but we are all so grateful for the opportunity we had to share her friendship and love. And we are all so grateful for the indelible mark she made on Baltimore and across Maryland.

The Baltimore Sun had a lovely obituary, and I would ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

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

[From the Baltimore Sun, Jul. 27, 2023]

JOYCE E. LEVITON, FORMER BALTIMORE COMMUNITY PLANNING CHIEF, ACTIVIST AND CIVIC BOOSTER, DIES

(By Frederick N. Rasmussen)

Joyce E. Leviton, a political activist and civic booster who was chief of community planning for the Baltimore Department of Planning and later became a member of Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin's staff, died of cancer July 19 at Gilchrist Center in Towson. The longtime Otterbein resident was 78.

"Joyce is Baltimore and she loved our community and wanted it to be the best it could possibly be, and always went the extra mile," Sen. Cardin said. "When she spoke about Baltimore, it was from the heart. She was a person who made a difference. She touched so many lives in a genuine and special way."

Former City Council President Mary Pat Clarke said: "She meant the world to me and was the center of life itself and in all of its dimensions. The loss of Joyce is the loss of the center of life that no one can replace. Everywhere and everyone, she loved all comers."

"Joyce was ebullient, colorful, kind, a great listener and dedicated to public service," said Phoebe Stein, director of the Federation of State Humanities Councils and former executive director of Maryland Humanities, who was a longtime friend.

"She was very vibrant and curious about the world and took joy in her work and connecting with people. She lived life to the fullest, her family was her joy, and she was interested in everything that was going on in Maryland and particularly Baltimore."

Joyce Ellen Leviton, daughter of Max Leviton, a bacteriologist and manager at the Joseph E. Seagram and Sons Inc. distillery in Relay, and Goldie Bernstein Leviton, an administrative assistant for the state Department of Human Resources, was born in Baltimore and raised in Pimlico neighborhood.

She was a graduate of Forest Park High School and attended the University of Maryland, College Park before earning a bachelor's degree in history in 1966 from what is now Towson University.

"From an early age, Joyce didn't want to be politically like our parents. She was a progressive Democrat and wanted to fight for people," said a sister, Susan Leviton of Otterbein.

A political junkie from an early age, Ms. Leviton worked on Rep. Carlton R. Sickles' unsuccessful 1966 Maryland gubernatorial run, in which he narrowly lost the Democratic nomination to George P. Mahoney—a contest that had racial overtones.

Ms. Leviton was one of the founders in the 1970s of the Second District New Democratic Club, which was one of the first political groups that joined Black and white residents from across the city and resulted in integrated and progressive tickets for city and state elections.

"The success of that campaign led to future campaigns such as the Clarke/Dalton team, Mary Pat Clarke, Clarence H. 'Du' Burns, Nathan Irby, Maggie McIntosh, Anne Perkins and many others," according to a biographical profile submitted by Ms. Leviton's family.

She was a member of the national staff for George McGovern and John Kerry. In 2006, she was a volunteer coordinator and advance coordinator for Sen. Cardin's campaign. She attended five Democratic conventions.

If politics helped define who Ms. Leviton was, it was also her abiding love for Baltimore that shaped her long career with the city planning department.

Ms. Leviton joined the department as a 3rd District community planner in 1970, when it was headed by the legendary and visionary Larry Reich. She held this role until being appointed chief of community planning in 1988.

"She loved communities and liked getting neighbors involved and having a voice in the city. That's the theme of Joyce," her sister said. "She loved the city and was quite the ambassador for Baltimore. When new people came to town, she got them to move to the city and stay in the city."

"Joyce and I met at the planning department in 1971 when we were both assigned to review hundreds of zoning changes for the Planning commission under the recently adopted zoning code," Alfred W. Barry III, who retired as assistant planning director in 1995, wrote in an email.

"This work took her throughout the city and her interest in neighborhoods blossomed. From there she became the 3rd District community planner and subsequently chief of community planning, where she hired and mentored two community planners, Thomas J. Stosur and Chris Ryer, who later became planning directors," wrote Mr. Barry, the founder and president of AB Associates.

Said Mr. Stosur, who headed the department from 2009 until retiring in 2018: "First of all, Joyce was an incredible Baltimore booster and was so enthusiastic and brought that to her work with the planning department and was overjoyed to be a part of it."

"She said it was her 'favorite job ever,' and she was very good at developing relationships with neighborhoods and politicians. She was the combination of enthusiasm and honesty, and that's what was so impressive about Joyce. As a founding member of the New Democratic Club, her love and skill at community-based politics fed naturally into her successful role planning to ensure that city neighborhoods had a voice."

After working on Sen. Cardin's 2006 campaign, Ms. Leviton joined his Capitol Hill staff in 2007 as a senior adviser.

"When Joyce died, I heard from dozens and dozens of people from all walks of life who

had been touched by her," he said. "When she was given the diagnosis of cancer about a year ago, she still kept going and remained fully engaged. She was just a lovely person."

"Joyce's position on Sen. Cardin's staff could never summarize all that she did for the people of Maryland," said Phoebe Stein, director of the Federation of State Humanities Councils and former executive director of Maryland Humanities, who is a longtime friend.

"She had an amazing ability, a gift really, to bridge the D.C. and Baltimore, and many communities in between. Of course, she was at every Cardin event, but more amazingly, she was at every cultural event in Maryland that mattered to her and the senator."

"And when she arrived, she was informed, focused, smiling and authentically supportive. She knew the ins and outs of every cultural organization in Maryland. You will not find a smarter, kinder, more capable, more knowledgeable advocate for Maryland's cultural sector anywhere."

Said Mr. Barry: "Her role as an advance person for political campaigns came naturally. She could enter a room filled with strangers and leave with five invitations for dinner."

With the coronavirus pandemic coming in 2020, Ms. Leviton began working from Sen. Cardin's office and had not retired at her death.

Ms. Leviton cut a wide swath across numerous boards and commissions in the city, including serving as a member of the steering committee for the Baltimore City Fair and National Advisory Council of Neighborhood Reinvestment, and as a board member and vice president of Citizens Planning and Housing Association.

She was a founder of Women Employed in Baltimore and Live Baltimore, an organization that encouraged people to settle and stay in the city. She was also a member of the National Organization for Women, executive secretary of Young Democrats of Baltimore, and a member of Beth Am Synagogue, where she on the social action committee.

Being a resident of Otterbein since 1981 allowed Ms. Leviton to indulge her lifelong passion for the Orioles and walk to games at Camden Yards.

She was an integral part of the South Baltimore-Federal Hill social scene, where she had established a book club and enjoyed dining in restaurants and cafes.

An inveterate traveler, she enjoyed visiting Europe, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, Maine and Vermont.

Plans for an autumn celebration of life gathering are incomplete.

In addition to her sister, Ms. Leviton is survived by another sister, Audrey Leviton of Homeland, and several nieces and nephews.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ROGER AND BOBBI LOVEN

• Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, October is the month the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute—CCAI—recognizes individuals across the Nation who make a difference in the lives of young people in need of foster care and forever homes. My wife Kris and I are adoptive parents ourselves and share a commitment to adoption and foster care and applaud the work of the CCAI.

This year, I nominated Roger and Bobbi Loven of Bismarck as among

those honored this year as CCAI Angels in Adoption. I consider it a privilege to annually recognize the work of individuals and families in North Dakota who devote years toward loving children in the foster care system. Roger and Bobbi Loven began foster care when he was doing his anesthesiology residency in Omaha, NE, in the early 1980s. They took babies for up to 3 weeks before they were permanently placed with an adoptive family.

When they moved to Bismarck in 1984, they had already cared for 17 babies. In 1991, while raising three sons of their own, they became licensed foster care providers in North Dakota. Because Roger is a medical doctor, they were often contacted about babies coming out of NICU, including those born with drug addictions and recovering from withdrawal. They also took babies with physical injuries, including a 3-month-old with a skull fracture and broken bones in every extremity. Another 2-month-old had been sexually assaulted by the father. They adopted one foster daughter when she was 4 years old, and following high school graduation this year, she is attending college. In the 40 years since taking their first, they estimate they have cared for at least 85 children.

The Lovens enjoy contact with many families whose children they have fostered. And they mentor countless other adults new to foster care. A common concern is about getting so attached to the children it is hard to let them go. "There are many hard days with foster children, but the rewards are there too," says Roger. "Being able to see them thrive and learn to attach to others is worth it." They also are active in a group at their church where caregivers listen to and support each other in whatever challenges they are facing. "It's so important to remain positive," Bobbi says.

Roger retired in 2019 after 35 years as an anesthesiologist at Bismarck's St. Alexius Hospital. Although they talk about pulling back in the number of children they will take in the future, they continue to counsel others providing foster care and are in constant contact with NICU nurses who are well acquainted with this couple and their loving hearts.

I join all North Dakotans and the entire Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute in congratulating and honoring Roger and Bobbi Loven. We thank you for your years of dedication and the work you continue to do fostering children in your home and inspiring others to also become involved. You are exceptionally deserving of recognition as Angels in Adoption. •

TRIBUTE TO STANLEY S. FINE

• Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, on October 26, the University of Baltimore Merrick School of Business Real Estate and Economic Development Advisory Board are hosting their annual "Lessons from Legends" celebration. This

year's honoree is my dearest friend, Stanley S. Fine, a partner at Rosenberg Martin Greenberg, LLP. Stanley is indeed a legend. As the announcement of the celebration notes, "The city's skyline and neighborhoods highlight Stanley's vast impact on Baltimore; from office buildings to shopping centers and local businesses, from industrial buildings and office parks to neighborhood restaurants and pickleball courts." As his lifelong friend and law partner Ben Rosenberg has said, "Wherever you look at bright spots in Baltimore, chances are you'll see something that Stanley has helped bring about." Stanley and Ben went through grade school, college—Johns Hopkins University—law school—the University of Maryland School of Law—and service in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve together.

My wife Myrna and I have known Stanley since we were all in junior high school together. For us, it is a family affair: Stanley's wife Bailey ran my reelection campaign to the Maryland House of Delegates in 1982 and then served as my campaign aide during my first congressional race in 1986; as my district director for 20 years; and, finally, as my State director during my first term in the Senate before she retired at the end of 2012. This couple has devoted their lives to strengthening our community and helping those in need. Stanley and Bailey will be celebrating their 52nd wedding anniversary on November 28. They have two lovely adult children Michael and Laura and four grandchildren. Michael and his wife Whitney have two daughters Riley and Blakely; Laura and her husband Ben Liebman have two sons Eli and Brooks.

If I were to recite all of Stanley's accomplishments and awards, I would surely run out of breath. But I will mention a few: recipient of the Baltimore District Council of the Urban Land Institute's—ULI—2016 Lifetime Achievement Award; cofounder of the Baltimore Development Workgroup; director of the Maryland State Lottery Agency and chairman of the Maryland State Lottery Commission; former member of the Baltimore City Planning Commission; and president of a community association. *Best Lawyers in America* magazine has repeatedly recognized Stanley as "Land Use & Zoning Lawyer of the Year." *Baltimore Magazine* has repeatedly recognized Stanley as one of "Maryland's Super Lawyers."

Stanley's brilliance as a lawyer merely followed his brilliance as an athlete. While he was a freshman at Johns Hopkins University, he played in the first game of Baltimore's box lacrosse league, televised live in 1962, and scored a game-high four goals for his club team, which won the game. He had a wicked left-handed shot. At the university, he was the backbone of a tenacious midfield for the Blue Jays varsity lacrosse team and joined the Phi Sigma Delta fraternity. His athletic skills

continue to this day, for you can normally find Stanley in the mornings on a pickleball court. He still has a wicked left-handed shot.

If you didn't know all of this about Stanley, you wouldn't learn it from him. He is inherently self-effacing. He never seeks plaudits or accolades or publicity. He is content to continue finding creative solutions to some of Baltimore's toughest land use challenges by patiently building consensus among all stakeholders: city, county, and State government officials, developers and other business interests, community planners, architects, engineering firms, historic preservationists, and the like.

In 1943, as members of the British House of Commons debated how to rebuild their chamber after Nazi incendiary bombs destroyed it, Prime Minister Winston Churchill stated, "We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us." Baltimoreans are so fortunate that Stanley Fine has dedicated his extraordinary life to shaping the city's buildings. I ask my Senate colleagues to join Myrna and me, Stanley's family, and his colleagues, friends, and admirers too numerous to count in celebrating one of Baltimore's true legends.●

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT WENDY THI

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I recognize CMSgt Wendy Thi as she retires from a distinguished 28-year career in defense of the Nation in both the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force.

Chief Master Sergeant Thi began her career in the Navy as an electrician's mate, graduating from one of the first classes at the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command in Orlando, FL, that included women. After a 6-year tour with the Navy that included a deployment in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, she transitioned to the Air Force Reserves in 2001.

Chief Master Sergeant Thi spent 6 years in public affairs and 9 years as a first sergeant, helping thousands of airmen and their families. Critically, she served as the Reserve liaison to the Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, where she was instrumental developing and executing the first-ever enlisted professional military education curriculum at the Royal Saudi Air Force that supported women, peace, and security.

In her final position in the Air Force, Chief Master Sergeant Thi served as the senior enlisted adviser to the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. In that position, she advised on a wide array of issues ranging from recruiting challenges, readiness support, and food insecurity.

Chief Master Sergeant Thi's work over the decades has had an immeasurable impact on our servicemembers and the civilian employees of the Navy and Air Force. Her dedication to the

mission and tireless efforts have contributed to the safety of all Americans.

I extend my best wishes to Chief Master Sergeant Thi in her retirement in Florida.●

PRIVILEGED NOMINATIONS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator RON WYDEN, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Demetrios L. Kouzoukas, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund for a term of four years.

On request by Senator RON WYDEN, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Demetrios L. Kouzoukas, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for a term of four years.

On request by Senator RON WYDEN, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Demetrios L. Kouzoukas, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for a term of four years.

On request by Senator RON WYDEN, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Patricia Hart Neuman, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund for a term of four years.

On request by Senator RON WYDEN, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Patricia Hart Neuman, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for a term of four years.

On request by Senator RON WYDEN, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Patricia Hart Neuman, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for a term of four years.

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-2409. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury,

transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Inspector General, Department of Treasury received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 2, 2023; to the Committees on Finance; and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2410. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Administration, Cost, and Impact of the Quality Improvement Organization Program for Medicare Beneficiaries for Fiscal Year 2021"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2411. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Evaluation of the Accountable Care Organization Beneficiary Incentive Program Established in the Medicare Shared Savings Program Under Section 50341(c)(2) of the Balanced Budget Act of 2018"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2412. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Department of Labor's 2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2413. A communication from the Branch Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) User Fee Update" (RIN1545-BQ78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2414. A communication from the Branch Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Wash Sale Relief for Money Market Funds" (Rev. Proc. 2023-35) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 6, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2415. A communication from the Branch Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Notice: Treatment of Amounts Paid to Section 170(c) Organizations under Employer Leave-Based Donation" (Notice 2023-69) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 6, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2416. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Program; Medicare Secondary Payer and Certain Civil Money Penalties" (RIN0938-AT86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2417. A communication from the Assistant Chief Counsel, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Administrative Protective Order, Service, and Other Procedures in Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Proceedings" (RIN0625-AB15) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 12, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2418. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of intent to provide as-

sistance to Ukraine, including for self-defense and border security operations; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2419. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Federal Vacancies Reform Act - Changes that occurred from April 19, 2023, through September 19, 2023, and additional report on departure of Ambassadors"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2420. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13694 with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2421. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods; Technical Amendment" (RIN0910-AI44) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 2, 2023; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2422. A communication from the Policy Analyst of Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Advisory Committee; Board of Tea Experts; Termination and Technical Amendment to the Citation for the Federal Advisory Committee Act" (Docket No. FDA-2023-N-3497) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 2, 2023; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2423. A communication from the Executive Director, United States Access Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2022 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2424. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, five (5) legislative proposals aimed at enhancing benefits and aligning resources to provide further value for Federal employees and retirees while improving efficiency and effectiveness of program operations; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2425. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Education's Semi-annual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2426. A communication from the Chief Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Superior Court's Family Court 2022 Annual Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2427. A communication from the Director, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2023-06, Technical Amendments" (FAC 2023-06) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 10, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2428. A communication from the Director, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2023-06, Introduction" (FAC 2023-06) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 10, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2429. A communication from the Director of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; FAR Case 2021-012, 8(a) Program" (RIN9000-AO29) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 10, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2430. A communication from the Director of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; FAR Case 2021-012, 8(a) Program" (RIN9000-AO29) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 10, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2431. A communication from the Director of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; FAR Case 2020-011, Implementation of Federal Acquisition Supply Chain Security Act (FASCSA) Orders" (RIN9000-AO13) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 10, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2432. A communication from the Senior Policy and Regulations Coordinator, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Revisions of the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs Using Urine (UrMG)" (RIN0930-AA36) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 2, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2433. A communication from the Senior Policy and Regulations Coordinator, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Revisions of the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs Using Oral Fluid (OFMG)" (RIN0930-AA37) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 2, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2434. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-160, "Law Enforcement Vehicular Pursuit Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2435. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-229, "Prioritizing Public Safety Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2436. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report

on D.C. Act 25-222, "Medical Cannabis Clarification and Non-Resident Patient Access Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2437. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-223, "Office of Unified Communications Transparency and Accuracy Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2438. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-224, "School Student Vaccination Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2439. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-225, "DC Water Critical Infrastructure Freedom of Information Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2440. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-226, "Walter Reed Development Assistance Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2441. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-227, "Vulnerable Youth Guardianship Protection Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2442. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-228, "Short-Term Disability Insurance Benefit Protection Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2443. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-241, "Public Health Emergency Credit Alert Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2444. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-242, "Advisory Neighborhood Commissions Remote Operations Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2445. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-243, "Department of For-Hire Vehicles Delivery Vehicle Traffic Enforcement Expansion Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2446. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-244, "Family Re-Housing Stabilization Program Protection Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2447. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-245, "Sexual Harassment Investigation Review Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2448. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-246, "Middle School Career Exploration Pilot Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2449. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-252, "Foreclosure Moratorium and Homeowner Assistance Fund Coordination Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2450. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-253, "Migrant Services and Supports Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2451. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-247, "Banning Associations from Banning Youth Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2452. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-248, "Fairness in Renting Clarification Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2453. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-249, "Electric Bicycle Incentive Program Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2454. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-250, "Opening of Streets and Designation of Opened Streets in Square S-5868, S.O. 22-01486, Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2455. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-251, "Commission on the Arts and Humanities Acting Executive Director Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Joel Matthew Szabat, of Maryland, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

*Anthony Rosario Coscia, of New Jersey, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

*Christopher Koos, of Illinois, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

*Rebecca Kelly Slaughter, of Maryland, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the term of seven years from September 26, 2022.

*Douglas Dziak, of Virginia, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for the remainder of the term expiring October 26, 2024.

*Andrew N. Ferguson, of Virginia, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the unexpired term of seven years from September 26, 2016.

*Andrew N. Ferguson, of Virginia, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the term of seven years from September 26, 2023.

*Melissa Holyoak, of Utah, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the unexpired term of seven years from September 26, 2018.

*Michael G. Whitaker, of Vermont, to be Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration for the term of five years.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation I report favorably the following nomination list which was printed in the RECORD on the date indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that this nomination lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Matthew A. Gans and ending with Ian W. Marks, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 6, 2023.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. ROMNEY):

S. 3066. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to increase the knowledge and skills of principals and school leaders regarding early childhood education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 3067. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to conduct an evaluation and submit to Congress a report on ways to reduce the complexity of the cost effectiveness requirements for hazard mitigation assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. BUDD, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. KELLY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. REED, Mr. KING, and Mr. WELCH):

S. 3068. A bill to require each enterprise to include on the Uniform Residential Loan Application a disclaimer to increase awareness of the direct and guaranteed home loan programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 3069. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage for custom fabricated breast prostheses following a mastectomy; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 3070. A bill to amend the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act to reauthorize the youth prevention and recovery initiative; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 3071. A bill to amend section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to incentivize States, Indian Tribes, and Territories to close disaster recovery projects by authorizing the use of excess funds for management costs for other disaster recovery projects; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 3072. A bill to modify the program of grants to support high-quality charter schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FETTERMAN (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. WELCH):

S. 3073. A bill to modify the public transportation emergency relief program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. BUDD, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 3074. A bill to prohibit schools that receive certain support from the Federal Communications Commission from allowing access to social media platforms on subsidized services, devices, or networks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 3075. A bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to strengthen adult education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 3076. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include individuals receiving Social Security disability benefits under the work opportunity credit, increase the work opportunity credit for vocational rehabilitation referrals, qualified SSI recipients, and qualified SSDI recipients, expand the disabled access credit, and enhance the deduction for expenditures to remove architectural and transportation barriers to the handicapped and elderly; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. ROUNDS, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 3077. A bill to require the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to annually review and update the facilities and property of the United States Government determined to be national security sensitive for purposes of review of real estate transactions under section 721 of the Defense Production Act of 1950, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mrs. BRITT, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 3078. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to prohibit institutions of

higher education that authorize Anti-Semitic events on campus from participating in the student loan and grant programs under title IV of such Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO:

S. 3079. A bill to establish a policy regarding appraisal and valuation services for real property for a transaction over which the Secretary of the Interior has jurisdiction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 3080. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize state of good repair grants to be used for public transportation resilience improvement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DAINES:

S. 3081. A bill to authorize additional assistance to Israel using assets confiscated from Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. SMITH, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WELCH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. Res. 412. A resolution supporting the nearly 150,000 United Auto Workers currently negotiating collective bargaining agreements with the “Big Three” automakers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. VANCE, Mr. BUDD, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. Res. 413. A resolution condemning foreign nationals in the United States who have endorsed and espoused the actions of foreign terrorist organizations (FTO) in Gaza who, on October 7, 2023, launched attacks against the State of Israel, and killed innocent Israeli and United States citizens; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. Res. 414. A resolution designating October 8, 2023, as “National Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Day”; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 415. A resolution to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Samsel; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 416. A resolution to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Sullivan; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 26

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 26, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the amendments made to reporting of third party network transactions by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

S. 233

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 233, a bill to authorize the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture to support African American history education programs, and for other purposes.

S. 767

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 767, a bill to enhance mental health and psychosocial support within United States development and humanitarian assistance programs.

S. 944

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 944, a bill to promote low-carbon, high-octane fuels, to protect public health, and to improve vehicle efficiency and performance, and for other purposes.

S. 1034

At the request of Ms. LUMMIS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1034, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish a competitive grant program for projects for commercial motor vehicle parking, and for other purposes.

S. 1300

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1300, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the late Prime Minister Golda Meir and the 75th anniversary of the United States-Israel relationship.

S. 1603

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1603, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase vaccination rates of pregnant and postpartum individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1714

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

S. 1867

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1867, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out an initiative to develop, expand, and improve rural childcare, and for other purposes.

S. 1906

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1906, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish a time-limited provisional approval pathway, subject to specific obligations, for certain drugs and biological products, and for other purposes.

S. 2026

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2026, a bill to provide support for programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs relating to the coordination of maternity health care, and for other purposes.

S. 2210

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) and the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2210, a bill to provide for congressional review of actions to terminate or waive sanctions imposed with respect to Iran.

S. 2460

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2460, a bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to clarify the availability and appropriateness of training for local food service personnel, and for other purposes.

S. 2647

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2647, a bill to improve research and data collection on stillbirths, and for other purposes.

S. 2771

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2771, a bill to allow additional individuals to enroll in standalone dental plans offered through Federal Exchanges.

S. 2781

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2781, a bill to promote remediation of abandoned hardrock mines, and for other purposes.

S. 2856

At the request of Mr. VANCE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2856, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require additional disclosures relating to gifts and contracts from foreign sources.

S. 2860

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2860, a bill to create protec-

tions for financial institutions that provide financial services to State-sanctioned marijuana businesses and service providers for such businesses, and for other purposes.

S. 2888

At the request of Mr. KING, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2888, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize representatives of veterans service organizations to participate in presentations to promote certain benefits available to veterans during pre-separation counseling under the Transition Assistance Program of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes.

S. 2899

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2899, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to include Middle Easterners and North Africans in the statutory definition of a "racial and ethnic minority group", and for other purposes.

S. 2984

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2984, a bill to establish uniform accessibility standards for websites and applications of employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, joint labor-management committees, public entities, public accommodations, testing entities, and commercial providers, and for other purposes.

S. 3018

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3018, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the National Labor Relations Act to clarify the standard for determining whether an individual is an employee, and for other purposes.

S. 3028

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3028, a bill to continue in effect certain Executive orders imposing sanctions with respect to Iran, to prevent the waiver of certain sanctions imposed by the United States with respect to Iran until the Government of Iran ceases to attempt to assassinate United States officials, other United States citizens, and Iranian nationals residing in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 3039

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3039, a bill to protect access to kratom.

S. 3041

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr.

RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3041, a bill to reinstate certain sanctions imposed with respect to Iran.

S. 3049

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3049, a bill to freeze \$6,000,000,000 of Iranian funds held in Qatar, and for other purposes.

S. 3057

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3057, a bill to prohibit allocations of Special Drawing Rights at the International Monetary Fund for perpetrators of genocide and state sponsors of terrorism without congressional authorization.

S. 3063

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3063, a bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a grant program to address forestry workforce development needs, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 42

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 42, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Food and Nutrition Service relating to "Application of Bostock v. Clayton County to Program Discrimination Complaint Processing-Policy Update".

S. CON. RES. 21

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 21, a concurrent resolution recognizing the significance of equal pay and the disparity in wages paid to Latina women in comparison to men.

AMENDMENT NO. 1181

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 1349

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1349 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. REED (for himself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 3075. A bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to strengthen adult education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Madam President, we have a longstanding adult literacy crisis that affects the quality of life for individuals and families and holds our economy back. It is time for a major expansion of adult education. Today, I am proud to introduce bipartisan legislation—the Adult Education Workforce Opportunity and Reskilling for Knowledge and Success Act, or the Adult Education WORKS Act—with my colleague Senator YOUNG.

Adult education provides numeracy, literacy, digital literacy, English language skills, work readiness, soft skills, high school equivalency, and numerous wraparound services to millions of adult learners nationwide. These essential skills can make the difference between earning a family-sustaining wage and struggling to make ends meet. A study commissioned by the Barbara Bush Foundation estimated that getting all U.S. adults to the equivalent of a sixth-grade reading level would generate an additional \$2.2 trillion in annual income for the country. Without the opportunities provided through adult education programs, many adults will be left on the sidelines.

Estimates from the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, PIACC, indicate that 43 million adults are low-skilled in literacy and 63 million are low-skilled in numeracy. Building a sustainable economy that truly works for everyone is going to require helping these individuals acquire the basic skills they need to succeed. Unfortunately, we are reaching only a fraction of these individuals today. PIACC data show that 23 to 30 percent of working-age adults with low literacy or numeracy skills wanted to participate in adult education but were unable to do so. The Department of Education calculates that this means there are up to 16 million adults seeking education opportunities from programs that currently serve fewer than 1 million individuals.

In my home State of Rhode Island, there are over 61,000 adults who could benefit from English language instruction and over 64,000 working-age adults without a high school credential. Yet, under current funding levels, the adult education program serves just over 4,500 individuals.

The Adult Education WORKS Act provides a roadmap for addressing this crisis. It calls for increased resources, doubling funding for adult education by 2029. At the same time, it makes significant improvements to the adult education system. It calls for a new emphasis on digital and information literacy, which are essential for success in the workplace and in navigating everyday life. It enhances the role of adult education providers, with a spe-

cial focus on public libraries and community-based organizations throughout the workforce development system, ensuring coordination and efficient use of resources. It invests in the professionalization of the adult education field, strengthening State certification policies, encouraging full-time staffing models, and expanding professional development opportunities and career pathways for adult educators. It provides support for college and career navigators in public libraries and community-based organizations to support adult learners where they live. Finally, it invests in innovation and accountability through pilot projects that test new approaches for measuring program performance and learner outcomes.

In developing this legislation, Senator YOUNG and I worked closely with key stakeholders, working on the frontlines in the adult education community. I am pleased to count the American Library Association, the Center for Law and Social Policy, the Coalition on Adult Basic Education, the National Coalition for Literacy, National Skills Coalition, ProLiteracy, and TESOL among the supporters of this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and work with us to ensure it is part of any legislation to reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 412—SUPPORTING THE NEARLY 150,000 UNITED AUTO WORKERS CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS WITH THE “BIG THREE” AUTOMAKERS

Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. SMITH, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WELCH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. WARNOCK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 412

Whereas the United Auto Workers (referred to in this preamble as “UAW”) are on strike for better wages, benefits, and working conditions at the Big Three automakers (General Motors, Stellantis, and Ford);

Whereas the Big Three automakers have made \$21,000,000,000 in profits over the first 6 months of 2023, an increase of 80 percent from the same time period last year;

Whereas the Big Three automakers have made \$250,000,000,000 in profits over the past decade in North America;

Whereas the Big Three automakers are providing their Chief Executive Officers with exorbitant compensation packages, while autoworkers continue to fall further and further behind;

Whereas the average wage for an autoworker has decreased by 30 percent over the past 20 years, after adjusting for inflation;

Whereas the Big Three spent \$9,000,000,000 last year on stock buybacks and dividends, while the average starting wage at these companies is just \$17 an hour;

Whereas many UAW members today cannot afford to buy the cars they make and struggle to afford the basic necessities of life, including groceries, housing, child care, and prescription drugs;

Whereas UAW members are fighting against corporate greed and to finally receive a fair share of the record-breaking profits that their labor has produced, including for cost-of-living adjustments, an end to the 2-tier wage system, and the restoration of pension benefits; and

Whereas, since the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 151 et seq.) in 1935, it is the clear policy of the United States to encourage collective bargaining and protect the fundamental right of workers to seek better working conditions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) stands with the United Auto Workers in their fight against corporate greed;

(2) supports every worker's fundamental right to organize and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits, and working conditions; and

(3) calls on the Big Three automakers—General Motors, Stellantis, and Ford—to negotiate in good faith and offer their workers a fair contract.

SENATE RESOLUTION 413—CONDEMNING FOREIGN NATIONALS IN THE UNITED STATES WHO HAVE ENDORSED AND ESPOUSED THE ACTIONS OF FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS (FTO) IN GAZA WHO, ON OCTOBER 7, 2023, LAUNCHED ATTACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF ISRAEL, AND KILLED INNOCENT ISRAELI AND UNITED STATES CITIZENS

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. VANCE, Mr. BUDD, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 413

Whereas entry into the United States for foreign nationals to study, work, and travel is a privilege and intended to benefit the national interest of the United States;

Whereas section 212(a)(3)(B)(i)(VII) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(3)(B)(i)(VII)) mandates that certain aliens be ineligible for entry into the United States, including anyone who “endorses or espouses terrorist activity or persuades others to endorse or espouse terrorist activity or support a terrorist organization”;

Whereas, on October 7, 2023, members of the Iran-backed Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other designated FTOs from the Gaza Strip invaded the State of Israel in force by land, air, and sea;

Whereas Iran-backed FTO Hezbollah has taken responsibility for firing mortar shells and anti-tank missiles towards Israeli positions along the Lebanese border;

Whereas leaders of Hamas have openly thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its consistent provision of funding, weapons, and support in the weeks before the attack;

Whereas the terrorist invaders unleashed slaughter and cruelty against the residents of southern Israel, reminiscent of the worst pogroms of history;

Whereas the terrorists operated death squads tasked with exterminating Jews, as well as hostage-taking squads tasked with abducting Jews for ransom, propaganda, and torture, if not simply sadistic pleasure;

Whereas the terrorists murdered at least 1,300 innocent victims, including children;

Whereas the terrorists murdered at least 30 United States citizens;

Whereas the terrorists continue to hold hostage dozens of Israeli and United States citizens;

Whereas the October 7, 2023, terrorist attacks represent the deadliest and most savage assault on the Jewish people since the Holocaust;

Whereas students at our most elite colleges and universities, including foreign nationals, have celebrated this pogrom and blamed the Jews for their own slaughter at the hands of a savage enemy;

Whereas Hamas called for a “Day of Rage” on October 13, 2023, and some individuals in the United States have responded to this call and incited others to endorse and espouse Hamas’ actions against Israeli and American civilians;

Whereas there have been violent, anti-Semitic, pro-Hamas riots in the streets of South Florida, Washington, D.C., New York City, Pittsburgh, Portland, Los Angeles, and other cities;

Whereas individuals, including foreign nationals, participating in these riots have made calls for intifada, decolonization, jihad, and other similar calls to eliminate the State of Israel; and

Whereas organizers and participants of these riots could include foreign nationals who are in the United States on visas: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) calls on the President of the United States to enforce existing law to revoke visas and initiate deportation proceedings for any foreign national who has endorsed or espoused the terrorist activities of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, or other PTOs that have participated in terrorist attacks against Israel and United States citizens before, on, or after October 7, 2023;

(2) affirms that there is no equivalence between the terrorism of Hamas and its backers, on the one hand, and the military action taken by Israel in self-defense, on the other;

(3) rejects anti-Semitism in all its forms and guises, from full-throated Jew hatred to the subtle anti-Semitism that holds the State of Israel to a different standard than any other nation; and

(4) commits to honoring the memory of the deceased and never forgetting the unwarranted and unjustified assault on Israel and the Jewish people on October 7, 2023.

SENATE RESOLUTION 414—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 8, 2023, AS “NATIONAL HYDROGEN AND FUEL CELL DAY”

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 414

Whereas hydrogen, which has an atomic mass of 1.008, is the most abundant element in the universe;

Whereas the United States is a world leader in the development and deployment of fuel cell and hydrogen technologies;

Whereas hydrogen fuel cells played an instrumental role in the United States space program, helping the United States achieve the mission of landing a man on the Moon;

Whereas private industry, Federal and State governments, national laboratories, and institutions of higher education continue to improve fuel cell and hydrogen technologies to address the most pressing energy, environmental, and economic issues of the United States;

Whereas fuel cells utilizing hydrogen and hydrogen-rich fuels to generate electricity are clean, efficient, safe, and resilient technologies being used for—

(1) stationary and backup power generation; and

(2) zero-emission transportation for light-duty vehicles, industrial vehicles, delivery vans, buses, trucks, trains, military vehicles, marine applications, and aerial vehicles;

Whereas stationary fuel cells are being placed in service for continuous and backup power to provide businesses and other energy consumers with reliable power in the event of grid outages;

Whereas stationary fuel cells can help reduce water use, as compared to traditional power generation technologies;

Whereas fuel cell electric vehicles that utilize hydrogen can mimic the experience of internal combustion vehicles, including comparable range and refueling times;

Whereas hydrogen fuel cell industrial vehicles are deployed at logistical hubs and warehouses across the United States and exported to facilities in Europe and Asia;

Whereas hydrogen is a nontoxic gas that can be derived from a variety of domestically available traditional and renewable resources, including solar, wind, biogas, and the abundant supply of natural gas in the United States;

Whereas hydrogen and fuel cells can store energy to help enhance the grid and maximize opportunities to deploy renewable energy;

Whereas the United States produces and uses approximately 10,000,000 metric tons of hydrogen per year;

Whereas engineers and safety code and standard professionals have developed consensus-based protocols for safe delivery, handling, and use of hydrogen; and

Whereas the ingenuity of the people of the United States is essential to paving the way for the future use of hydrogen technologies: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates October 8, 2023, as “National Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Day”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 415—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. SAMSEL

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 415

Whereas, in the case of *United States v. Samsel*, Cr. No. 21-537, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former officers and employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for evidence relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, is authorized to provide relevant testimony in the case of *United States v. Samsel*, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Mr. Schwager, and any current or former officer or employee of the Secretary’s office, in connection with the production of evidence authorized in section one of this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 416—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. SULLIVAN

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 416

Whereas, in the case of *United States v. Sullivan*, Cr. No. 21-078, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former officers and employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for evidence relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, is authorized to provide relevant testimony in the case of *United States v. Sullivan*, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Mr. Schwager, and any current or former officer or employee of the Secretary’s office, in connection with the production of evidence authorized in section one of this resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1352. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. CRAPO) 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 1353. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI)) 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 1352. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. CRAPO) 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 121, lines 23 and 24, strike “\$10,000,000 shall be allocated to irrigation modernization projects and activities located in Western states” and insert “\$20,000,000 shall be allocated to multi-benefit irrigation modernization projects and activities”.

SA 1353. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI)) 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 VII of division B, insert the following:

SEC. ____ (a) In addition to the annual amount of user fees authorized to be assessed and collected under section 919(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 387s(c)) and made available for purposes of

carrying out the Food and Drug Administration's tobacco regulation activities under chapter IX of such Act (21 U.S.C. 387 et seq.), notwithstanding section 919(c)(2)(B) of such Act (21 U.S.C. 387s(c)(2)(B)), of the amounts made available to the Food and Drug Administration under this Act, not less than \$8,000,000 shall be used by the Commissioner of Food and Drugs for such tobacco regulation activities, including to enhance regulatory reviews of, and enforcement actions with respect to, electronic nicotine delivery systems.

(b) Of the unobligated balances previously made available from prior Appropriations Acts under the heading “Farm Service Agency—Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund Program Account”, \$8,000,000 are hereby rescinded.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I have eight requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEES ON ARMED SERVICES AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committees on Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs are authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 10 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 2 p.m., to conduct a subcommittee hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on

Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 18, 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 Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2023

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 19; 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 later in the day, and that the Senate 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.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:08 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, October 19, 2023, at 10 a.m.