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## Senate

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

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Merciful God, the fountain of wisdom, as we witnessed what is euphemistically called collateral damage, we wrestled with what our eyes have seen, ears have heard, and hearts have felt.

Lord, some of us asked the question, When does the end justify the means? We reflected on Gandhi's words that "the end is inherent in the means."

Lord, across time, You have shown us how peace following a war can be jeopardized because of the long-term consequences of how the war was fought. Give our lawmakers the faith, wisdom, and courage for the living of these turbulent days.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024—Resumed

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

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

Pending:

Schumer (for Murray-Collins) amendment No. 1092, in the nature of a substitute.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). The majority leader is recognized.

#### MILITARY APPOINTMENTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, so last night, I filed cloture on President Biden's nominees to serve as Chief of Naval Operations and Chief of Staff to the Air Force, the remaining vacancies on the Joint Chiefs of Staff which we said we would fill. We will move on these critical military appointments soon here on the floor.

I also filed on the nomination of Lieutenant General Mahoney to be second in command of the U.S. Marine Corps. His appointment has become urgent because this weekend the Commandant of the Marines, Gen. Eric Smith, was unexpectedly hospitalized after a serious medical emergency. Now, normally, Lieutenant General Mahoney would have been able to immediately step in to temporarily serve as Commandant. But, unfortunately, because of the blanket holds of just one Senator, Senator TUBERVILLE, that cannot happen. The situation at the Marine Corps is precisely the kind of avoidable emergency that Senator

TUBERVILLE has provoked through his reckless holds. Lieutenant General Mahoney is one of more than 300 nominees Senator TUBERVILLE is currently blocking. So while the Senate will proceed quickly to vote on Lieutenant General Mahoney's nomination, these holds cannot and must not continue.

Yesterday, my colleague Senator REED, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, introduced a resolution that will allow the Senate to quickly confirm the nominations that are currently being blocked by the Senator from Alabama. The resolution will be referred to the Rules Committee; and when the time comes, I will bring it to the floor of the Senate for consideration.

We must—we absolutely must—ensure that our military is fully staffed and fully equipped to defend the American people, and it begins by confirming these vital nominations that are currently on hold. Every day that Senator TUBERVILLE continues his blanket holds, our military preparedness is degraded. Our military families—most of whom have served decades in the Armed Forces—suffer. Our military appointments risk being further ensnared in partisan politics. These nominees must be confirmed, and both parties should work together to make sure we fulfill our obligation to America's servicemembers.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, now on the minibuss, for the information of Senators, today we will pass the first of three bipartisan appropriations bills: Agriculture, MILCON-VA, and T-HUD.

When these bills pass, they will be the only—I underscore—the only bipartisan appropriations bills that have passed either Chamber. These bills will make a huge difference for America's farmers, for our infrastructure, for housing on our military bases, and for veterans. Bipartisanship isn't easy. On the contrary, it is very difficult. But here in the Senate, we are making sure

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



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that the appropriations process is succeeding. I want to thank the good work of Chair MURRAY, Vice Chair COLLINS, and all the appropriators. Passing these appropriations bills today is not just terrific news for the country, but an affirmation of what I have said since the start of the year: The only way to get things done in a divided government is bipartisanship.

The House is going through a futile exercise in passing partisan appropriations bills that have no input or support from Democrats. They are going nowhere. The House ought to learn its lesson. The Speaker ought to understand that the 30 hard-right people should not be dictating what the entire House or the entire country does. Those bills are filled with poison pills. They break the agreement and cut below the agreement that we made when we wanted to avoid the debt from being not fulfilled, and they are nowhere.

On the other hand, the Senate has bipartisan bills. And that is the real difference here. Sooner or later, the House and the new Speaker will learn the lesson: If you don't do it bipartisan, it ain't getting done. The Senate has been a strong model for how bipartisanship can work, even amidst the deep disagreement, and I thank my colleagues on both sides for their work on these bills.

#### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. President, now, we continue on our AI Insight Forums. Today, as leaders gather in London for the first AI summit, the Senate will hold our third and fourth bipartisan AI Insight Forums. This morning will be focused on the intersection of AI in the workforce. We will hear from a balanced group of leaders in labor, tech, civil rights, and business about both the opportunities and risks that AI presents to the American worker and to our economy.

People are worried. Many people worry, Will I still have my job as AI kicks in? We want to make sure that we have guardrails that protect workers, not make the mistake that was done with globalization, where so many were thrown out of work through no fault of their own.

And then this afternoon, we will discuss AI's use in high-impact areas like finance, healthcare, law enforcement. We will focus especially on the potential bias in AI technologies in these high-impact areas and how Congress can create guardrails to protect our civil rights in the age of AI.

The Senate is continuing to be all hands on deck when it comes to trying to pass AI legislation. Yesterday our bipartisan AI gang—Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, YOUNG, and I—had a great meeting with President Biden at the White House on AI. So we are making good progress, but we still have more to learn about AI as we work to develop bipartisan legislation. And the world is paying attention. There is a forum in London today where the Vice President will attend. And, inevitably,

they will be looking. The whole world will be looking to the Senate to see whether and what kind of legislation we can pass. We will work hard to get the best possible bipartisan legislation done.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, about the supplemental, on Monday, Speaker JOHNSON and House Republicans released a totally unserious and woefully inadequate package that omitted aid to Ukraine, omitted humanitarian assistance to Gaza, had no funding for the Indo-Pacific, and made funding for Israel conditional on hard-right, never-going-to-pass proposals. What a joke.

Yesterday afternoon, President Biden issued a veto threat on the GOP proposal, and it is no wonder why: It needlessly politicizes aid to Israel. It balloons the Federal deficit. Here the House is talking about we need to pay for, to reduce the deficit, and they put in a provision that actually increases the deficit. Why? Because they don't want their superrich, megawealthy friends to be audited by the IRS like every other citizen is.

As we know, when Trump was President, he almost exempted them from auditing. Someone making \$40,000 a year had a greater chance of being audited than someone making \$4 million a year.

It is amazing that the main focus as the world is in crisis—in the Middle East, in Ukraine, in the Indo-Pacific—our House Republicans are spending more time trying to further reduce taxes of those who don't pay much tax at all. So I am so glad that President Biden issued a strong veto message. I would urge every House Republican, every House Democrat, every Senate Member to read the President's veto message. It is strong and well thought out. He talks about it politicizing aid to Israel, it ballooning the Federal deficit, and it failing to address the national security threats America faces around the globe—particularly our need to help Ukraine, provide humanitarian aid to Gaza, and help in the Indo-Pacific.

So the House GOP proposal is not going anywhere. It is dead before it even is voted on. The Speaker should start over—this time without terrible, partisan poison pills; this time sitting down with Democrats and working this issue through.

Israel has suffered the worst terrorist attack in its history. It needs help. But House Republicans are asking a price for helping them by cutting off funding that holds rich tax cheats accountable. That ain't happening, House. It ain't happening.

Now, Speaker JOHNSON says that this supposed pay is needed because of his concern about the national debt; but as I mentioned, every independent estimate shows this partisan bill raises the deficit by billions of dollars. So, what hypocrisy. It is not responsible. It is reckless. It is utterly baffling—baffling—that at a moment that demands

maximum bipartisanship, when the country is in crisis and our friends in Israel and Ukraine are in crisis, that the House GOP is, instead, trying to pick an egregiously partisan fight over wealthy tax cheats.

Years back, both parties would have come together for the good of the country and the good of security in the world when crises like these happen. But the House GOP—continuing the kind of recklessness, the kind of inability to get their act together—continues to do these kinds of things.

Their proposal is simply not a serious one. And, worse, it still wastes precious time at a moment when we need to help Israel, Ukraine, and send humanitarian aid to Gaza ASAP.

All friends of Israel should loudly and clearly say that any move to make the United States-Israel relationship a partisan one, as the House is doing, is a move that hurts Israel. That is what they do, unfortunately: harming our partnership with Israel by politicizing their aid package. I urge Speaker JOHNSON: Quickly change course, Speaker JOHNSON, because this stunningly unserious proposal is not going to be the answer. It is not going anywhere. As I said: It is dead almost before it is born.

#### OIL INDUSTRY MERGERS

Mr. President, the FTC letter that we sent this morning—and I think people should pay attention to this because this is a very serious issue. Last month, America's two largest oil companies, ExxonMobil and Chevron, announced two of the largest oil acquisitions of the 21st century—in fact, some of the largest mergers in the history—in the whole history—of the United States. And where are these mergers occurring? In the heavily concentrated oil industry where the consumer has almost no say whatsoever.

These deals have all the hallmarks of harmful, anticompetitive effect. And if they are allowed to happen, Americans could see the consequences through higher prices at the pump. People are complaining, justifiably, that gas prices are too high, and these mergers inevitably will make the price even higher.

So today, I am leading a group of 22 Senators calling on the Federal Trade Commission to use the full powers of the FTC to investigate these mergers. In our letter, we say that if any antitrust laws may be violated, the FTC should step in and oppose the mergers.

We broke up Standard Oil's illegal monopoly in 1911. We are quickly getting back to that place. The FTC should also investigate whether it is time to break up today's anticompetitive oil conglomerates. When America's largest oil companies can just buy some of their largest competitors—here we have Exxon, the biggest oil company in America, buying the largest oil driller in the Permian Basin, which is the biggest U.S. oil field—it is outrageous. When the largest companies can control the lion's share of the supply chain, when they are able to act

with little accountability, the result is a raw deal for American consumers, American workers, and the American economy.

And this isn't speculation. We have seen this happen before. In the 1990s, there were over 2,600 mergers across the petroleum industry. The number of major oil companies was cut in half.

I will never forget the day. This was a Democratic President. President Clinton, unfortunately, allowed the merger between Exxon and Mobil—two of the biggest oil companies. I opposed it at the time. The result of these mergers and lax accountability was market manipulation, an unstable supply, and, ultimately, price hikes for Americans.

Well, why repeat that mistake? We cannot allow it.

With ExxonMobil's merger with Pioneer and Chevron's merger with Hess, we are seeing history repeat itself. More consolidation and less competition may be good for the shareholders and the big oil company execs, but it ain't good for America, and it certainly ain't good for the consumer, who will inevitably pay more for gas, oil, and so many other things.

There is something deeply wrong about seeing the largest oil and gas companies in the world manipulate their way to higher profits as Americans are struggling at the pump. Last year alone, the world's five largest oil companies saw record profits—\$219 billion—more than double the profits of 2021.

And where did the profits go? Did they translate to lower prices for Americans? Did the companies invest in worker productivity or in finding new, clean energy sources? No. The soaring profits fueled soaring stock buybacks. Americans, meanwhile, saw higher prices every time they filled up the tank.

And one other point about these mergers: At one point, the big oil companies said: Hmm, we understand that the world is moving in a direction of clean energy. We are going to move that way, too.

These mergers show they are not. They are not. They are simply investing in the old carbon resources that we know, in the long run, will do such damage to our world and our world economy. Yet they are just moving headlong in that direction—short-term gain, long-term loss.

Mergers will accelerate these disturbing trends of high gas prices and less competition. So we are calling on the FTC to look into the announcements made by ExxonMobil and Chevron and step in if necessary.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have spoken frequently about the clear links between the biggest national security challenges facing our country and about what we need to do to address them, but let's not lose sight of a few overarching points.

America's adversaries don't ease up when we lose our resolve. In fact, they press their advantage. How many of our colleagues would disagree that withdrawing from Afghanistan caused America's friends and foes to question the credibility of our commitments?

How many would disagree that failing to respond decisively to hundreds of terrorist attacks against U.S. forces in Syria and Iraq has weakened our deterrence against Iran?

How many Senators would disagree that the Biden administration shouldn't have withheld lethal assistance to Ukraine in the summer of 2021 or that they should have shipped lethal weapons more quickly as Russia's preparations became glaringly obvious that fall and winter?

How many would disagree that the President's caution and hesitation to provide critical weapons—like HIMARS, Patriots, tanks, and ATACMs—has prolonged the conflict in Ukraine?

Over and over again, history has taught us that the costs of disengaging from the world are far higher than the costs of engaging. And just as the threats we face aren't isolated, neither are the benefits of investing in American leadership.

So here is the plain truth: The overwhelming majority of the resources approved by the Senate as security assistance for Ukraine has, in fact, gone directly—directly—to American manufacturers, supporting American jobs, expanding the American industrial base, and producing new weapons for America's military, with almost \$70 billion in investments spread across at least 38 different States. The production of artillery rounds alone has distributed multiple billions into facilities from Arkansas to Virginia and Texas to Ohio—all to improve our ability to equip the United States and our allies for the growing challenges we face.

These investments are not just replacing what is being used to destroy Russia's military strength; they are expanding production capacity to meet the soaring demand from allies. NATO countries have invested \$90 billion in capabilities produced here in America since last February, and they are helping equip U.S. forces for our own long-term competition with China.

Take the Patriot interceptor. This air defense system is arguably the most in-demand weapon in the United States' arsenal. It has saved thousands of American and allied lives. It is de-

ployed across Europe, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific. It is produced in Tucson, AZ, with components coming from all over our country; and the supplemental resources we are working on could expand production capacity by nearly 20 percent.

Or take the 155-millimeter round. It is relevant in nearly every conflict imaginable. More than 75 percent of our investments marked for this munition has gone toward capacity expansion. Today, U.S. manufacturers are able to produce double what they could before our response to the Russian aggression last year. With the further investment of so-called Ukraine spending, American production would reach 1 million rounds per year.

The notion that this money is distracting from America's other security priorities is nonsense. Anyone making this claim doesn't understand how critical production lines work. The truth is the investments we have made in expanding production capacity to respond to Putin's escalation are helping American manufacturers produce more of the weapons Israel and Taiwan need.

I have spoken at length about America's clear national security interest in helping Ukraine demolish Russian military strength and in a secure and peaceful Europe. I have spelled out the glaring and immediate threats we face from Iran-backed terror and of the importance of supporting our closest ally in the Middle East. I have emphasized the gravity of strategic competition with China and the urgency of the threat facing our friends out in the Indo-Pacific.

But, as foolish as it is to deny the clear link between America's adversaries and the threats we face, it is every bit as dangerous to pretend that, as a global superpower, our Nation cannot or should not face each of them down. We have the means to lead the free world and ensure our own security. In the face of coordinated aggression from our adversaries, we have the clearest possible objective: We win. They lose.

BORDER SECURITY

Now, Mr. President, on a related matter, as I mentioned last week, illegal crossings at our southern border are setting alltime records. In just 3 years, under the Biden administration, the CBP has recorded 6 million border encounters—6 million. And yet, in the face of these astonishing statistics, the Secretary of Homeland Security continues to say: "Our approach to managing the border . . . is working."

The White House Press Secretary has reiterated this insanity, saying:

It's not like someone walks over [the border]. . . . That's not how it works.

Well, of course, we know that is exactly—exactly—how it works. The Border Patrol has been tracking 1,000 known "got-aways" per day—1,000 "got-aways" per day.

The facts on the ground send a clear message: The Biden administration's handling of the border crisis is a complete and utter failure.

Yesterday, Senator CRUZ and Senator BARRASSO both shared an encounter they witnessed on the border, over the weekend, of a 10-year-old girl and a man claiming to be her father. They described the terror on the girl's face as the man attempted to use the Biden administration's family unit loophole to cut the line at the border. As Senator CRUZ put it, "the cartels are renting children to grown men."

The crisis that has unfolded on President Biden's watch is inhumane and dangerous. Fiscal year 2022 was the deadliest year on record at the southern border, and fiscal year 2023 set an alltime record for terror watchlist encounters. We are watching a humanitarian crisis that has become a glaring national security vulnerability.

The solution is pretty clear. The solution isn't billions of dollars to make it easier and faster to process illegal immigrants or "money for a welcome wagon," as Senator BARRASSO put it yesterday. The solution is a clear and commonsense policy that forces the Biden administration to enforce the law and treat the border with the legal consequences that it demands.

So I am grateful to my Republican colleagues who are working hard on a policy proposal to deliver actual border security and drawing on ideas put forward by Senator LANKFORD, Senator CRUZ, Senator GRASSLEY, and others.

Washington Democrats have proved that their border security approach is simply not working. President Biden's border supplemental request is just more of the same. It is time to wake up and embrace policy changes that will keep Americans safe.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we recently learned that fiscal year 2023 set a new record for the number of illegal immigrants apprehended at the southern border—the third recordbreaking year of illegal immigration under the Biden administration.

First, fiscal year 2021 set an alltime record. Then, fiscal year 2022 broke that record. And, now, fiscal 2023 has broken that record. In other words, we have had 3 straight years of the Biden border crisis getting worse and worse and worse.

Since the President took office, more than 6.2 million individuals have been caught attempting to illegally cross our southern border—6.2 million. If every one of those individuals lived in one city, it would be the second largest in the country.

I don't need to tell anyone that the kind of unchecked illegal immigration we are experiencing represents a serious security threat.

The Department of Homeland Security recently noted in its 2024 threat assessment:

Terrorists and criminal actors may exploit the elevated flow [of migration] and increasingly complex security environment to enter the United States.

And by all indications, bad actors are, in fact, taking advantage of the chaos at the border to try and enter the United States. During fiscal year 2023 alone, 169 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist were caught attempting to illegally cross our southern border—169 on the Terrorist Watchlist. Those are the ones they apprehended. That is more than in the previous 6 years combined.

The head of the Border Patrol recently said that his Agency is arresting an average of more than 47 people per day who have "serious criminal histories"—more than 47 people per day with serious criminal histories. Those are just the individuals who are being caught.

Since January 2021, when President Biden took office, there have been more than 1.7 million known "got-aways." Those are individuals the Border Patrol saw but was unable to apprehend. We can only imagine the number of unknown "got-aways" who have sneaked into the country.

How many of those individuals have "serious criminal histories" or hail from hostile countries? We just don't know, but we can be pretty confident that among those "got-aways" are dangerous individuals who should not be entering our country.

This is a serious issue, and we need a serious course correction from this administration.

Vice President HARRIS, who is in charge of overseeing border policies for this administration, recently told "60 Minutes" that "we need a safe, orderly, and humane border policy." This has been the purported goal of the Biden administration for almost 3 years now, but the administration has been failing on all three counts.

The current crisis we are experiencing is a predictable result of the Biden administration's decisions. Before the President took office, his team was warned of the possibility of a migrant surge. Yet the moment the President took office, he set about dismantling the immigration policies of his predecessor and weakening our border's security, and the result has been, as I said, 3 successive years of record-breaking illegal immigration.

While the Biden administration has finally started to, at least halfheartedly, acknowledge our Nation's border crisis and put in place policies attempting to encourage legal migration and penalize illegal border crossings, the changes are insufficient—far too little, far too late—or, as one columnist recently put it in the Washington Post, "The Biden administration's various efforts have amounted to Band-Aids on a massive, open wound."

The President's recent supplemental funding request has not left me hopeful that the administration is suddenly going to become more effective. Potentially billions of dollars in reimbursement for blue States struggling to house illegal immigrants won't do a single thing to solve the crisis we are facing at the border.

While the President's proposal does include some funding that would actually go toward security, funding alone is simply not enough. We need meaningful policy changes that will, for starters, end the rampant abuse of our asylum system and sweeping parole designations.

Senators GRAHAM, LANKFORD, and COTTON, among several others, are working hard to craft a set of changes to our asylum and parole policies that would stem the flow at our southern border. These changes would address obvious flaws in President Biden's immigration policies and make tangible progress toward getting our border crisis under control.

Recent events have underscored the importance of national security, and a porous southern border is a huge—huge—vulnerability when it comes to our national security. We need to use every tool we can to secure the border and keep terrorists and criminals out of the United States.

Senate Republicans are committed to putting policies in place at the border that keep Americans safe, and I hope that, in the days and weeks to come, Senate Democrats will join us to make securing our border a priority.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ISRAEL

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, the situation in Gaza today is a disaster. Congress must take action. The administration must take action. The world must take action.

Today, 3 weeks after Hamas's barbaric attack against civilians in Israel, which began this war, many hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children in Gaza are on the brink. Over the past 3 weeks, it is estimated that some 8,000 people in Gaza have been killed in bombings, including more than 3,000 children, and far more have been wounded.

More than a million people in Gaza have been displaced from their homes, and some 670,000 are sheltering in U.N. installations, where they are down to 1 liter of water per person per day. They lack sufficient food, water, medical supplies, or fuel. The hospitals and medical facilities there are in nightmarish conditions, with hundreds of

babies in incubators and patients on life support at risk of death should the generators that sustain them run out of fuel. Corridors are lined with injured and displaced people, and overwhelmed doctors must turn patients away or operate without anesthesia or antibiotics.

The humanitarian crisis is dire and getting worse by the minute. There must be a humanitarian pause now so that sufficient supplies—food, water, medicine, fuel—can reach the people of Gaza. If not, thousands more will die needlessly. We cannot allow that to happen. A stop to the bombing is critical to save innocent lives and secure the safe return of hostages.

Let us never forget the lives of all children—all people—are sacred, whether they are Palestinian children, Israeli children, or American children, and we must do everything we can to protect them. But if we are going to make any real progress in addressing this never-ending conflict between Israel and Hamas—there have been five wars in the last 15 years—we need to understand somewhat as to how we got to where we are today. If peace is to come to that troubled region and if the Palestinian people are ever going to be able to enjoy lives of security and dignity, there must be a vision of where we go in the future.

So, let us be clear, the living conditions in Gaza before October 7 were horrific and inhumane, and that is before Hamas ignited the latest war. Before this conflict, in Gaza, nearly 80 percent of people there lived in poverty, and two-thirds were reliant on humanitarian assistance. Almost half the population and over 70 percent of young people were unemployed in Gaza. What kind of life could they look forward to? Electricity there was intermittent, with 11- to 12-hour blackouts every day. Water and sanitation systems were inadequate, and there were constant shortages of all basic necessities.

Gaza was mostly cut off from the world, with Israel and Egypt severely limiting the number of people and types of goods that could go in or out. In fact, many observers described Gaza as “an open-air prison”—and all of that is before October 7.

If we are serious about bringing freedom and dignity to the Palestinian people, that is a situation that can never be allowed to be returned to. The Palestinian people are entitled to much more than that.

In Gaza, Hamas, an authoritarian terrorist organization, ruled by force, stockpiling arms and war materiel, taxing the desperately poor population, and stealing resources to build tunnels and rockets. Make no mistake about it, Hamas is a terrorist organization bent on the destruction of Israel, and long before this horrific attack, they had killed countless innocent people, including Americans. They advance a fundamentalist ideology which treats women as inferior, second-class citi-

zens and which threatens to kill people who are gay.

Hamas is an authoritarian nightmare, repressing dissent and stealing from Gazans not just many materials of life but the dream of a better future. And that was the situation before October 7.

And what was going on in Israel before Hamas's terrorist attack? What was going on there? That country had the most rightwing government in its history, a Cabinet that included outright racist Ministers who consistently dehumanized the Palestinian population. Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, was under indictment for a litany of corruption charges, and many believe that Israel's intelligence—or lack of intelligence—on October 7 had everything to do with his government's preoccupation with his political problems.

Before the war, this rightwing Israeli Government had systematically undermined the prospects of peace. Netanyahu and his extreme partners in the Cabinet had worked to marginalize Palestinian voices committed to peace, pursued settlement policies designed to foreclose the possibility of a two-state solution, stymied economic development in Palestinian areas, and passed laws that entrenched systemic inequality between Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel.

This last year saw record Israeli settlement growth in the West Bank, where more than 700,000 Israelis now live in areas the United Nations and United States agree are occupied territories. Despite that, the Israeli Government authorized thousands of new homes for settlers and opened up new areas to construction, while bulldozing thousands of Palestinian homes and schools and further restricting Palestinian movement.

Legal experts agree, these policies constituted nothing less than illegal annexation. All of these policies and more greatly increased tension in the West Bank. Before October 7, 179 Palestinians had been killed in 2023—179 Palestinians in the West Bank—which made it the deadliest year in two decades. Since October 7, 121 more Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank, including some by settlers.

These tensions were part of why so much of the IDF, the Israel Defense Forces, was deployed in the West Bank rather than the border with Gaza.

And then came October 7 and Hamas's atrocities that began this latest and horrific war. The Hamas attack was unspeakable. Over 1,300 innocent men, women, and children in Israel were killed; over 200 Israelis and Americans taken hostage, including young children and grandparents. Young people were gunned down in cold blood at a music festival, babies and older people brutally murdered in their homes.

And let's remember that Hamas did not primarily target the military—no. They intentionally targeted civilians. Their goal was to kill civilians. Their

attack was designed to provoke a response, and in that they succeeded.

Many Israelis are now understandably furious, and they want to strike back forcefully. I think we can all understand that. But rage and revenge do not make useful policy. And here in the United States, after the attack on 9/11 in this country, we acted with rage and revenge, and I think many people now understand that that was a horrific mistake.

Killing innocent Palestinian women and children in Gaza will not bring back to life the innocent Israeli women and children who have been killed by Hamas. Like any other country, Israel has the right to defend itself and destroy Hamas terrorism, but it does not have the right to kill thousands of innocent men, women, and children in Gaza.

Israel does not have the right to endanger the lives of millions of Palestinians—half of whom are children—by shutting off water, food, fuel, and electricity. That type of action against a helpless and impoverished population is morally unacceptable and in violation of international law.

Israel does not have the right to bomb an entire neighborhood to target one Hamas leader or installation, but that is what the Israeli Government is doing. One need only look at the satellite imagery and photography of Gaza to see that this is not a carefully calibrated campaign. These are not surgical strikes.

Yesterday, Israel struck the densely populated Jabalia refugee camp and killed a Hamas commander, but they also killed some 50 other people and injured hundreds more, although the exact toll is not yet known. That was actually the fourth airstrike on that community. An October 9 airstrike killed 60, an October 19 airstrike killed 18, and an October 22 airstrike killed 30, according to outside researchers.

UNRWA reported yesterday that their head of security—that is the United Nations Relief Agency—their head of security was killed, along with his wife and eight children. In total, 67 United Nations Relief Agency workers have been killed, and 44 United Nations facilities have been damaged since October 7.

The current Israeli strategy must end. Israel must begin the process of restoring water and electrical services to areas where they are still operable. The international community must also rush generators and solar capacity to Gazan medical facilities to address acute needs and reduce Israeli fears of diversion to Hamas.

Israel will not stop going after Hamas, but it must do it in a very, very different way, and additional pauses will be needed.

Let me conclude by saying that Israel must also begin the process of laying out a political strategy. It cannot bomb its way to a solution. Such a strategy must include as minimum first steps a clear promise that Palestinians displaced in the fighting will

have the absolute right to safely return to their homes; a commitment to broader peace talks to advance a two-state solution in the wake of this war; an abandonment of Israeli efforts to carve up and annex the West Bank; and a commitment to work with the Palestinian Authority to build genuine governing capacity.

The United States must make it clear that these are the conditions of our solidarity. Just as we want justice for the Israelis murdered by Hamas, we also want justice for the Palestinian people, and that is not going to happen with Hamas. Palestinians need a state of their own, contiguous, with the freedom of movement and access that can sustain a vibrant economy.

This will be a long and difficult road. It will take concerted U.S. and international support and a doubling down of our political commitment to a two-state solution. But the first step right now must be to stop the bombing and bring in as much humanitarian aid as possible.

I think Secretary Blinken said it well when he said:

Providing immediate aid and protection for Palestinian civilians in the conflict is a necessary foundation for finding partners in Gaza who have a different vision for the future than Hamas—and who are willing to help make it real.

This is a dreadful situation. It is part of a very, very long-term conflict between Israel and its neighbors. But the immediate crisis is to save lives, to stop the bombing, to bring forth a humanitarian pause, and then to go forward to bring peace and stability to the region.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

S.J. RES 42

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise today about a resolution to make it harder for students—all students—to have access to school meals. I am referring to S.J. Res. 42. We deal with a lot of complex issues here every day. This is not a complex issue.

First, the Federal policy: the USDA memo clarifying that State agencies and programs participating in Federal school meal programs are required to abide by our Nation's anti-discrimination laws. This means that they cannot deny access to kids on the basis of their gender identity or sexual orientation. In other words, schools may not deny lunch to LGBTQ+ kids.

Now, this isn't some strange, new interpretation of the law that USDA came up with and announced out of the blue; this is the USDA implementing anti-discrimination laws that apply across government, in line with the Supreme Court's reading. This is what the Republicans attempted to overturn with S.J. Res. 42.

Of course, S.J. Res. 42 was never really just about school lunches. The goal was to send a message to LGBTQ+ kids that they are not welcome, to send a message that it is OK to discriminate

against these kids because of who they are. I want to be very clear. That is wrong. We proudly stand with LGBTQ+ kids.

Your rights matter. You are welcome at school.

The USDA guidance will help kids. It will also reduce discrimination and bring Agency guidance in line with Supreme Court precedent.

The USDA policy will also ensure that hungry kids get the food they need to grow and to do well in school. According to census data, LGBTQ+ individuals are almost twice as likely to live in a household that experiences food insecurity, and trans individuals are almost three times more likely not to have enough food to eat, as compared to cisgender individuals.

The last thing our kids need is adults behaving like classroom bullies and trying to justify taking away their lunches. I am glad the Senate rejected this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 1241

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1241 and ask that it be reported by number, as I intend to withdraw the amendment shortly due to majority party mischief.

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

The clerk will report by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. CRAMER], for himself and Mr. MANCHIN, proposes an amendment numbered 1241 to amendment No. 1092.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to finalize, implement, administer, or enforce the proposed rule of the Federal Highway Administration relating to greenhouse gas emissions performance measures)

In title I of division C, insert after section 127 the following:

SEC. 128. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to finalize, implement, administer, or enforce the proposed rulemaking entitled "National Performance Management Measures; Assessing Performance of the National Highway System, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Measure" (87 Fed. Reg. 42401 (July 15, 2022)) or a successor regulation.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, the Senate has been preaching regular order for some time, and I have been cheering them on. I have been a strong advocate for regular order because we need a process that engages all of the Members of this body. But one has to ask why my bipartisan, germane amendment is deemed a "poison pill" and now needs 60 votes to pass. Well, I know the answer. It is simple. Because it was going to pass. That is why. That is why suddenly it is a "poison pill." Senate Democrats would rather provide the Biden administration cover by taking a show vote designed to fail than follow real regular order. The will of the Senate should prevail here, but they are not going to let it.

This appropriation limitation amendment would prevent the U.S. Depart-

ment of Transportation from finalizing their illegal rule requiring States to measure CO<sub>2</sub> tailpipe emissions and then set declining targets for individual States on their roadways.

Congress has not provided any authority for the Department of Transportation to dictate CO<sub>2</sub> performance requirements. They can't do what they don't have the authority to do. And even if we had, it is not a workable solution. It may be hard for bureaucrats in Washington, DC, to imagine this, but you cannot tell States like North Dakota and Montana that to reduce tailpipe emissions is easy. Just build a subway. Build a subway or dedicate bus lanes on your gravel roads. That is why a majority of the States in this country have submitted comments expressing their concern and opposing—out-right opposing—this rule.

When the Environment and Public Works Committee negotiated the last highway bill, we expressly left this authority out. We made the decision to not give this authority to the Department of Transportation.

I would note that that bill moved out of committee unanimously and then became the cornerstone of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Ironically, the Biden administration created the "poison pill" that this amendment is meant to address.

I am not interested in show votes, so I am going to withdraw the amendment.

The administration should scrap this rule, but if they finalize it, I will be back. I will be back with a CRA resolution, and then Senate Democrats can't force a 60-vote majority on that one, and I will lead an amicus brief pointing to the major questions doctrine, which the Department of Transportation clearly violates with their rule.

With that, I yield.

AMENDMENT NO. 1241 WITHDRAWN

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 1241) was withdrawn.

Mr. CRAMER. 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. PAUL. 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. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be up to 4 minutes of debate equally divided on Senate amendments Nos. 1217 and 1347.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 1217

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1217 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report by number.



The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 1217 to amendment No. 1092.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks by the Comptroller General of the United States)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_\_. AUDIT REFORM AND TRANSPARENCY FOR THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 714 of title 31, United States Code, or any other provision of law, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete an audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks under subsection (b) of that section not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the audit required pursuant to subsection (a) is completed, the Comptroller General of the United States—

(A) shall submit to Congress a report on the audit; and

(B) shall make the report described in subparagraph (A) available to the Speaker of the House, the majority and minority leaders of the House of Representatives, the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, the Chair and Ranking Member of the committee and each subcommittee of jurisdiction in the House of Representatives and the Senate, and any other Member of Congress who requests the report.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include a detailed description of the findings and conclusion of the Comptroller General of the United States with respect to the audit that is the subject of the report, together with such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Comptroller General of the United States may determine to be appropriate.

(c) REPEAL OF CERTAIN LIMITATIONS.—Subsection (b) of section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the second sentence.

(d) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)(3), by striking “or (f)” each place the term appears;

(B) in subsection (e), by striking “the third undesignated paragraph of section 13” and inserting “section 13(3)”; and

(C) by striking subsection (f).

(2) FEDERAL RESERVE ACT.—Subsection (s) (relating to “Federal Reserve Transparency and Release of Information”) of section 11 of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 248) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking “has the same meaning as in section 714(f)(1)(A) of title 31, United States Code” and inserting “means a program or facility, including any special purpose vehicle or other entity established by or on behalf of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or a Federal reserve bank, authorized by the Board of Governors under section 13(3), that is not subject to audit under section 714(e) of title 31, United States Code”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking “or in section 714(f)(3)(C) of title 31, United States Code, the information described in paragraph (1) and information concerning the transactions described in section 714(f) of such title,” and inserting “the information described in paragraph (1)”; and

(C) in paragraph (7), by striking “and section 13(3)(C), section 714(f)(3)(C) of title 31, United States Code, and” and inserting “, section 13(3)(C), and”.

Mr. PAUL. The Federal Reserve effectively controls the economy but without scrutiny. No other institution has so much unchecked power.

The Fed demonstrated its unlimited authority during the pandemic. The Fed printed money, purchased government-backed securities, and doled out massive amounts of money to favorite industries. The result added almost \$5 trillion to the Fed's balance sheet, the largest in our history.

When Dodd-Frank ordered a limited, one-time audit of Fed actions, the Government Accountability Office uncovered that during the financial crisis, the Fed doled out over \$16 trillion to domestic and foreign banks. This kind of inflationary bailout should not be kept secret from the public.

While the Fed's easy money policies make the rich richer, the side effect is high inflation. As Milton Friedman famously explained, “Inflation is taxation without legislation.”

Congress cannot control the Fed's actions, but Fed actions can cost Americans dearly. Just ask any parent who has to feed his or her family during historically high inflation rates.

My amendment would require a full audit of the Fed within 1 year. It is time for the Federal Reserve to operate in a manner that is transparent and accountable to the taxpayers. I ask for a “yes” vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in opposition to the Paul amendment.

Members of both parties have always agreed an independent—underscore independent—central bank is critical to a functioning economy. Congress put in place restrictions to shield the Fed's monetary policy from political influence. This longstanding restriction ensures that the Fed isn't subject to the whims of Congress, to the partisanship, to the nihilism—if I could use another word—of, too often, people in this body.

Whether it is threatening a default or a government shutdown, all too common because of dysfunction and chaos in the House of Representatives—whether it is threatening a default or government shutdown, we have already seen how partisanship so negatively impacts people's pocketbooks in the broader economy. We don't need it here too.

This amendment would make the Fed less effective. It would open it up to all kinds of nefarious political pressure. Congress already requires that the Fed undergo regular review of their operations, of their programs, of their balance sheet, of their financial statements. These are some of the ways Congress holds the Fed accountable while avoiding dangerous political interference.

This amendment is irrelevant to what we are voting on today. It is yet another impediment to keeping our government open. It shouldn't be partisan. It shouldn't be political. Those antics should stay out of this debate.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on the Paul amendment.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1217

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

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

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 280 Leg.]

**YEAS—46**

Baldwin	Ernst	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Rubio
Braun	Hagerty	Sanders
Britt	Hawley	Schmitt
Budd	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Sinema
Cassidy	Johnson	Sullivan
Collins	Kennedy	Thune
Cornyn	Lankford	Tuberville
Cotton	Lummis	Vance
Cramer	Marshall	Wicker
Crapo	McConnell	Young
Cruz	Moran	
Daines	Mullin	

**NAYS—51**

Bennet	Hickenlooper	Ricketts
Blumenthal	Hirono	Romney
Booker	Kaine	Rosen
Brown	Kelly	Rounds
Butler	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Lujan	Shaheen
Carper	Manchin	Smith
Casey	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warnock
Fetterman	Ossoff	Warren
Gillibrand	Padilla	Welch
Hassan	Peters	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Reed	Wyden

**NOT VOTING—3**

Lee	Scott (SC)	Tillis
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 46, the nays are 51.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1217) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

**ORDER OF PROCEDURE**

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, for the information of the Senate, starting at 2:30 p.m. today, the following amendments are expected to be called up and made pending: Cruz No. 1249 and Lee No. 1121. Upon disposition of the amendments, the Senate will vote on

adoption of the substitute amendment No. 1092, as amended, and on passage of H.R. 4366, as amended; further, that upon disposition of H.R. 4366, the Senate will vote on passage of H.R. 662, as amended, and that all previous provisions of the order from October 24 remain in effect.

So for the information of all Senators, there will be four rollcall votes beginning at 2:30 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 1347 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1092

(Purpose: To reduce the amounts appropriated in divisions B and C and to rescind amounts appropriated to the Internal Revenue Service.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1347 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 1347 to amendment No. 1092.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be up to 4 minutes of debate, equally divided.

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, the national debt just recently surpassed \$33 trillion. That is \$280,000 per household. Unless we change course, the debt only increases.

CBO predicts trillion-dollar deficits as far as the eye can see. We borrow over \$176,000,000 every hour, \$3,000,000 is borrowed every minute, and \$50,000 every second. It is out of control.

Net interest payments are anticipated to double, from \$475 billion to a trillion dollars by fiscal year 2028. Interest will be the largest item of expenditure for the Federal Government.

Americans could pay dearly for Congress's inability to say no to the welfare and warfare state. It could mean confiscatory tax rates, high inflation, and a weak economy. But it doesn't have to be this way.

My amendment begins the path toward fiscal health by saving the taxpayers \$30 billion. My amendment also cuts \$25 billion that the Biden administration wants to use to sic the IRS on taxpayers to squeeze them for even more money. That is a reduction of \$55 billion for what the government is on track to spend.

I urge a "yes" vote on my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we have a bipartisan package before us. This amendment that is being offered would slash funding supported unanimously in our committee in the Ag and T-HUD bills—kicking women and kids off of WIC or gutting funding for our farmers and agricultural research, making our food supplies less safe; lay-

ing off air traffic controllers, leading to flight delays and cancellations; booting people from their homes as housing assistance would be cut off; eliminating resources for communities to invest in important local infrastructure needs and a lot more. This would be catastrophic.

The bills we are considering today have been carefully drafted. They are written to the spending levels that were set by the debt ceiling agreement that the House Republicans and the President agreed on. Congress passed it in July, so I urge my colleagues to vote no.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1347

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 23, nays 74, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 281 Leg.]

YEAS—23

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Johnson	Schmitt
Budd	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lummis	Sullivan
Cotton	Mullin	Tuberville
Crapo	Paul	Vance
Cruz	Ricketts	

NAYS—74

Baldwin	Graham	Padilla
Bennet	Hagerty	Peters
Blumenthal	Hassan	Reed
Booker	Heinrich	Romney
Boozman	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Britt	Hirono	Rounds
Brown	Hoeven	Sanders
Butler	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Capito	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Lankford	Stabenow
Cassidy	Lujan	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Thune
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Marshall	Warner
Cramer	McConnell	Warnock
Daines	Menendez	Warren
Duckworth	Merkley	Welch
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Fetterman	Murphy	Wyden
Fischer	Murray	Young
Gillibrand	Ossoff	

NOT VOTING—3

Lee Scott (SC) Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). On this vote, the yeas are 23, the nays are 74.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1347) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise today to address this Chamber at an increasingly important moment in our Nation's history, to discuss the national security issues that we are currently facing and the ways in which the U.S. Senate can address them.

On the floor, over the past several weeks, I have repeatedly called for American leadership in support of our allies abroad and in support of the many challenges that we face here at home. Again, today, I renew that call for American leadership and continue to stress the urgency created by the trials at hand: from the vicious, horrific attacks on our allies in Israel by Hamas to Putin's aggression we see in Europe; from North Korea's brazen nuclear posturing to Iranian militias attacking our men and women overseas in uniform; and, of course, the increasing tensions that we see in the Indo-Pacific, where China continues to threaten stability and to pursue the largest military buildup since World War II.

We are currently living in times and are tasked in making decisions that will greatly shape the world in which we and the young people here today will be living in. Our Nation is being tested. Our resolve is being tested. And a country as powerful as ours needs to show strength, clarity, and control that only the United States of America can generate.

This is something I have addressed repeatedly with my constituents across West Virginia and something that I am confident they understand and agree with. The Mountain State is incredibly patriotic. We are very proud Americans. Pride in our country and a steadfast belief in the ideals and values that we stand for are invaluable, both now and in our future. I agree with my fellow patriotic West Virginians that this is the greatest country on Earth and that the title requires us to make critical investments in both our own national security and in the security of our allies, before it is too late.

It is imperative that Americans across this country recognize this and that we come together as our adversaries attempt to turn us against one another.

I am appreciative of the Biden administration for proposing a supplemental appropriations package that addresses key areas of concern that I have talked to, but those key areas of concern that we see across our country and the world. That being said, the administration's supplemental request needs to be recognized for what it is—a request. The Senate must and will have a say in how this is formulated. The Biden administration has not shown the strength it needs to during these challenging times.

We need to unabashedly stand with Israel. We need to responsibly support



Ukraine as they further deteriorate Putin's military. They are getting back land that they lost. They are regaining it. We need to strengthen our allies and our own defense capabilities in the Indo-Pacific. And we may need to make strong changes to policies that have allowed our southern border to remain in chaos for years now. Any response from the Senate must reflect these four categories because they are directly tied to what is in the best interest of our country and our national security.

Yesterday, I participated in a Senate Appropriations hearing to examine President Biden's request. This was an important step. It allowed us to grow consensus as we move toward a supplemental that will be crafted by the Senate. I firmly believe that this was one of our most important Appropriations Committee hearings, and I congratulate the chair and the vice chair. This hearing highlighted how investments into the defense of Israel and Ukraine go a long way to strengthening our own defense capabilities and how the lack of deterrence and enforcement at our southern border is creating elevated threats to our national security.

This further underscores the importance of responsible relief efforts that need to be included in a response from the Senate. It is critical that a Senate-crafted supplemental address all four areas that I have mentioned and that we provide the tools needed for our allies to win and to strengthen our own defense capabilities, at the same time, in the process.

Israel is currently under attack by Hamas and Hezbollah and terrorists who are supported by America's most evil adversaries. American lives have been lost, and far too many innocent families have been left without a home and without their loved ones.

Ukraine is facing an unjust and unprovoked ground war, the likes of which we have not seen in generations—nor did we think we would see in this generation. Putin's aggression creates dangers all around the globe. The Ukrainian military is decimating Russia's military strength without putting one American troop in harm's way.

Additionally, funding toward Ukraine goes straight into replenishing our own stockpiles with new and more advanced weapons. These are weapons that are made in the U.S.A., for the U.S.A., some of which are made in my home State of West Virginia.

Our Indo-Pacific allies remain on heightened alert. I saw this directly when I visited the region last summer. It is irresponsible to neglect the tie between the attacks on Israel, the war in Ukraine, and the security of Taiwan and the increasing aggression from China—and on our southern border, which remains in chaos.

President Biden's policies have led to record after record of illegal crossings, with an alarming amount of encounters with individuals on our own country's Terrorist Watch List. I saw where

Secretary Mayorkas testified yesterday that 600,000 "got-aways"—we don't even count them in the over 2 million who were apprehended. This is 600,000 people who are believed to have entered our country without any interdiction at all. We don't know who these people are.

We do not just need funding for a border wall; we need substantial changes in policy, as I said earlier, that will strengthen our security and protect our homeland, which has been left under siege for far too long.

It is important that Congress and the American public recognize the importance of support across those four categories. The investments will support our own defense industrial base. It will increase the security of the United States. We will support our allies in their time of need, and, most importantly, we will keep U.S. servicemembers from fighting in these battles. Each of these categories is in the direct and best interest of the United States and the security of our homeland and the security of our allies.

There is no doubt that now is the time to act. If we fail to meet our obligations in any of the four areas, we weaken the overall impact of all of them. I am confident in the ability of this Chamber to craft a supplemental that meets the growing and urgent national security needs of our country and our world.

The time for American leadership is now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

ISRAEL

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, we have heard story after story this past month about Hamas's brutal ground attacks on Israel. Hamas militants murdered Israelis and Americans alike as they stormed places, from border towns to music festivals. Hamas didn't just attack from the ground; they continue to rain rockets on Israel. These rockets have destroyed people's homes, ruptured their livelihoods, and taken their lives.

Throughout this conflict, Israel's Iron Dome defense system has played a crucial role. The Iron Dome acts as a shield, detecting rockets and firing missiles to intercept them before they hit the ground.

The United States has stood by Israel—our closest ally in the Middle East—since the country's inception. We have always pledged our support in times of crisis. So it is critical that my colleagues and I on the Senate Appropriations Committee work together to ensure that Israel receives the defensive and offensive capabilities that it has requested from the United States. That includes replenishing the Iron Dome system so that Israel is able to protect its people from rocket attacks by terrorist groups. It includes replenishing Israel's David's Sling system and investing in the development of the Iron Beam system. These defensive systems set Israel up for an effective

response to the havoc that Hamas and Hezbollah continue to wreak.

We must provide Israel with the time and resources its government needs to eliminate those threats. But as we consider the aid we will provide to Israel, we also need to consider the question, how do we better position the United States to support our allies as well as bolster our own defense systems amid the escalating global threats?

A few days after the heinous attacks on Israel, a bipartisan, bicameral congressional commission released its report on the strategic posture of the United States. This report, based on the consensus of respected national security experts from across the political spectrum, concluded that the United States will be woefully underprepared for the threats we are facing.

Our two peer nuclear adversaries, Russia and China, have dramatically expanded their nuclear forces over the decades. They continue to develop novel nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Meanwhile, the United States is barely keeping up with modernizing our nuclear forces.

The report emphasized the need to grow our nuclear and conventional forces and, above all else, to expand our production capability, including our workforce, supply chain, and infrastructure.

As Senators, we regularly receive briefings and intelligence reports that clearly outline the threats we face from actors like Russia and China. I have often said that if the American people had access to more of this information themselves, they would better understand the nature and the severity of the threats we face. Investment in national security would move to the top of their priority list.

These events—the release of a disquieting defense report and the assault against our ally Israel—should serve as a wake-up call for the United States of America. We must expand our production capacity to meet the needs of our country. If we don't expand our production capacity, we also won't be able to support our allies and our partners or supply them with the lethal aid they desperately need.

Building out our capacity so we can meet future threats—that is going to take time, and it is going to take resources. But we can start now, and we can start by making targeted investments in munitions production.

The administration's supplemental request includes \$25 billion just to replenish our own weapons stockpiles and expand the critical munition production capacity—initiatives that, frankly, should have already begun. Including this funding in the supplemental will be a step in the right direction.

The supplemental request must bring together our goals of strengthening our own military readiness, supporting our troops in Europe and the Middle East, and providing our allies and our partners with lethal aid. I look forward to

working with my colleagues to ensure that the supplemental includes these priorities.

We have been asleep to changes in the global threat environment for too long, and now is the time to wake up. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, yesterday, the Senate Appropriations Committee heard from the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State about the administration's request for supplemental appropriations. We heard about a wide range of threats to the national security and the national interests of the American people.

Now, I believe that we need to support Israel, our staunch ally. We see the Israelis fighting for their very existence. They need our help, and they need it now. I believe this includes not only military assistance but also standing against Iran. Various attacks have been launched at U.S. forces across the Middle East since October 7, and they have been launched at the behest of Iran—we know that—and we must make it clear to Iran that there are consequences for attacking U.S. forces.

In addition to support for Israel, I also recognize that we need to support Ukraine. We know from history that tyrants like Putin do not stop. They must be stopped. And as we support Ukraine, we need a strategy for victory to end this war, not to have a continued stalemate. Ukraine does not want the war to drag on, and neither do we. So I will continue to press the Defense Department, as I did yesterday with the Secretary of Defense, to ensure that we are on a path to win, that Ukraine is on a path to win and end the conflict, not to have an ongoing war.

So we need to support Israel, and we need to support Ukraine. But, at the same time, enhancing our national security means we also need to secure the homeland, and that means securing our southern border.

Border security is national security—I will repeat that: Border security is national security. But this administration, the Biden administration, does not have a plan in place to secure the border. They are doing just the opposite. We have an open border—an open border at a time when we are concerned about attacks from terrorists.

Last month, we had a record 270,000 illegal encounters at the southern border. Last year, we had 2.5 million illegal encounters—also a record. That includes 169 individuals who are on the Terrorist Watchlist. I am sure our adversaries are very much aware of this vulnerability.

The supplemental calls for funding to support “border security.” This administration's definition of “border security” is processing migrants who illegally come across the southern border and then providing them with housing, transportation, and other services once

they enter the United States. That will only encourage more illegal immigration when we should be making every effort to get the border under control.

The keys to securing the border and stopping the illegal crossings at our southern border are simple, and we know what they are. The solutions are there, but the administration won't apply them. And we know—we are not guessing at this—because the last administration put these in place, and they worked. They are reinstating the Migrant Protection Protocols, meaning the “Remain in Mexico” policy, and enforcing the safe third country agreements. They work. We know they work. We have seen them work. The Biden administration has those tools, but they won't use them. They won't enforce the law. As a result, we have an open border, with 270,000 illegal encounters last month, 2.5 million last year, and 169 people encountered who are on the Terrorist Watchlist.

How many came across who are on the Terrorist Watchlist whom we don't know about—the “got-aways”—at a time when we are worried about the possibility of there being a terrorist attack in our country? What is going on?

We need to also recontinue the construction of the border wall so that the CBP can truly control this border. It is way past time to get this done. These are the things that, I think, must be included as we consider this funding. We need to secure our border as well. If we are talking national security, we have to recognize that border security is a vital part of national security, and that must be part of what we include as we consider this funding. Again, I emphasize that border security is national security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, we just heard from the Senator of North Dakota talking about the imperative of ensuring that our borders are secure, particularly at the southern border.

We had an opportunity yesterday in the Senate Appropriations Committee to hear from Secretary Austin and Secretary Blinken about the administration's supplemental funding request. If there were one common thread there that was underscored over and over, it was the dire need—the immediate need—of support for our allies, our allies who are locked, really, in two existential wars that threaten both their sovereignties and their people. So the support for Israel and the support for Ukraine, in my view, is one that I shared with the two Secretaries: that they are inextricably linked and our support for both must be inextricably linked.

We have all watched with horror as Hamas has unleashed this terrorist attack on civilians, killing more than 1,400 Israelites and taking at least 240 Israelites hostage; then in Ukraine, with Russia's brutal invasion of

Ukraine homeland killing over 70,000 Ukrainians in just a hellbent mission to reclaim their old Soviet territory.

It is times like this when I think we look to the role that the United States should be playing. We are not—no, we are not—the police force for the world. We are not there to fight the wars for others. But when the world is watching democracy face direct assaults from terrorists and from authoritarian regimes, this is the time that the United States must be leading from the front. We have a responsibility to our allies, and we have a responsibility to the world at large, whether that is providing humanitarian aid, promoting stability, or lending support through the most powerful military in the world.

This is the United States. These are responsibilities that, I think, are significant, and, again, others from around the world look to us for that leadership.

Now, there are some who would suggest that we have supported Ukraine enough; that we should move and direct our attention only to our own borders; that the situation in Israel is such that we should focus exclusively there. As we heard yesterday in the Appropriations hearing, we do not have the luxury of dealing with one crisis at a time. That would certainly make things easier, but we do not have that.

So to those who would suggest that we must abandon our allies in their most desperate hour, I would remind them that this defense spending comes right back to the United States through our own defense industrial base, providing an opportunity to refresh outdated war-readiness items, making the United States stronger in return as well as providing jobs to Americans. So this is not just about providing aid to others outside our borders. This is also helping to strengthen us.

There was a comment that I had read: The United States can lead through the power of example; but in order to be most effective, we need the example of our power.

It is that industrial base that we know we have work to do there.

Then, to those who say we need to be looking at home—again, as the Senator from North Dakota mentioned—we do. We must pay attention to those who are coming across our border illegally, those who would threaten us from within. We cannot ever, ever lose sight of that obligation and the responsibility; but I think it is important to recognize that this supplemental request does include support for our Department of Homeland Security to strengthen our border. It also provides over \$1 billion toward combating fentanyl—just the devastating drug that has taken the lives of far, far, far too many Americans. So that also must be part of this.

What we are talking about with this supplemental is, effectively, four legs of a chair. Think about what makes

that chair that you are sitting in stable. You have got four pillars here. One essential imperative: We must be there to support our friends in Israel. We must be there. An imperative is to continue our support for Ukraine. We must address our southern border—an absolute imperative. Then that fourth underpinning that provides for that greater stability is the threat from the Indo-Pacific.

So I think we know that, within the contours of this package that the President has sent to us, there is room to move things around; there is room to subtract or add. But I think it is these four fundamental pillars here that are so inextricably linked that we cannot lose sight of what it means and what our role here in the United States is.

The violence that we see may be across the globe, but the eyes of the world are squarely on us. Our enemies are probing. They are waiting for our response. They want to see what the United States is capable of. Can they only do one thing at a time? Can they only do one thing? And, if they can only do one thing, who are they going to choose? Are they going to be there for their allies in words only or, when things get hot over here, are they going to walk away over there? We have seen how that failure in Afghanistan has reverberated around the world and what it has meant to our friends and allies.

I would suggest that this supplemental package is measured, and it is necessary as a strategic response. I will tell you, our opponents are praying that we fail to take this up—as, again, that balance. So we will and we should discuss and debate the contours within, but I would hope that we would stand together and unite on a package that is good, that is solid, and that is stable for our country and for our friends and allies.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, let me say that I associate myself with the remarks that were just made by the previous two speakers—the senior Senator from the State of North Dakota and the distinguished Senator from Alaska.

I rise today to follow on with the importance of national defense and, in that regard, to speak specifically about the historic Australia, United Kingdom, United States agreement known as AUKUS.

This pact, AUKUS, builds upon a bond forged during the First World War between the United States and Australia and made unshakable in the second. That bond remains strong today as we face the greatest challenge of our lifetime—the Chinese Communist Party.

The Senator from Alaska just spoke about the importance of building our defenses in the Indo-Pacific, and that is exactly what the AUKUS agreement is designed to address.

Our military leadership has made the stakes clear. The Secretary of the Air Force, Frank Kendall, recently said:

The intelligence couldn't be clearer. . . . China is preparing for a war and specifically for a war with the United States.

Now is the time for free nations across the Pacific to prepare for this sobering possibility. The AUKUS deal will help prevent that war from happening. Indeed, the AUKUS agreement is vital, but there is more work to do beyond that. We have yet to take the actions necessary to ensure that our industrial base can support both the United States and Australia.

The basic fact is this: Our defense industrial base is not where it needs to be. Workforce shortages, a shrinking base of contractors, and insufficient resources have damaged our military readiness. Year after year, we have deferred maintenance on our surface ships, even as these ships are spending more days deployed and the fleet continues to shrink. Our capabilities are stalling as we hurtle toward a window of maximum danger with the Chinese Communist Party.

The story for our submarines is no better. We are not prepared to fulfill our Navy's submarine construction and maintenance needs, let alone fulfill the prospective commitments in the critical AUKUS agreement.

Our Navy's requirement is to have 66 attack submarines at 80 percent readiness. We currently have 49 attack submarines at 67 percent readiness. Let me say that again. We need 66 attack submarines. We have only 49. They need to be at 80 percent readiness. They are only at 67 percent.

We should be building two attack submarines per year, but we are really building 1.2 attack submarines per year. The demands of the AUKUS agreement would push this requirement higher to above 2.3 attack submarines per year. We should do that, but we can't meet that challenge right now. To meet this challenge, our defense industry will need to handle more demand than ever before.

To handle this demand, our defense industry will need to reverse its current trajectory. Since the so-called peace dividend of the 1990s, we have closed two nuclear submarine repair yards and one construction yard. COVID-19 took a sledgehammer to an already declining workforce, and our government is expecting that same inexperienced workforce to meet deadlines not just on our *Virginia*-class submarines but also the critically important, nuclear-armed *Columbia*-class.

Our submarine fleet, just like our surface fleet, is still living off the Reagan-era defense buildup. Many vessels are in a deteriorating state and will soon need to be retired, but replacements are not waiting in the wings. The remaining ships will face longer deployments and fewer opportunities for maintenance. This is not a blueprint for American command of the seas, nor does it put us in a posi-

tion to provide our Australian friends the submarines which they need.

These cascading problems create what some have called a debt spiral of submarine construction and readiness. This spiral keeps us from hitting our shipbuilding targets. Moreover, today's threats mean the current targets are actually too small. China's navy is now the world's largest navy. Russia is increasing its nuclear submarine activity in the Atlantic. Keeping up with these challenges means raising our shipbuilding goals in the first place, then expanding our industrial capacity to meet them.

According to our Acting Chief of Naval Operations, *Virginia*-class construction needs to nearly double. This is the man whom we have put in charge and confirmed to let us know about the readiness of our Navy.

I am grateful for past congressional and executive branch efforts to fund this work; otherwise, we would construct fewer than one *Virginia*-class submarine each year. But even those funding increases have not matched our need. At the current rate, we will be at least nine submarines short by 2030.

Our defense policy cannot continue to hinge upon a hope and a prayer. To make good on AUKUS and stand by our friends in Australia, the administration and Congress need to make the investments necessary to improve submarine construction.

Our first step is clear. We must enact into law the nearly \$3.4 billion in submarine funding, including in the defense supplemental Congress is considering. We need every bit of this funding increased and more.

These funds will be spread throughout our industrial base in the United States—inside the United States, employing American workers. It will modernize our shipyards, accelerate maintenance on our existing submarine fleet, and put capital investments in place for future submarine components to be built in our country. They will put Americans to work, showing that economic development and national security go hand in hand.

This additional funding is a welcome first step, but we must do more to show our allies and the U.S. industry and our adversaries that we can meet the obligations of the AUKUS agreement without putting our own submarine fleet in jeopardy. We should sustain investments in our shipbuilders, public shipyards, and the nearly 16,000 suppliers across the Nation, many of them—most of them—small businesses around the Nation. This industry network supports American undersea supremacy and prevents conflicts on the seas, but it needs more long-term investment to stay afloat.

We already have some sense of what this investment should look like. I want to emphasize this. The Biden administration commissioned the "Submarine Industrial Base 2025" study to examine the best way to execute

AUKUS. From what I understand, the study will document what we already know: We need significant additional funding to fulfill Australia's needs alongside those of our fleet. But here is the problem: We commissioned the study. Inexplicably, the Biden administration has yet to let Congress actually see the specifics of the study—not Members of the Democratic leadership, not Members of the Republican leadership. Until the elected Members of the U.S. Senate and the House see this study, Congress cannot make its strongest argument for submarine investment.

I led a letter, signed by a bipartisan group of defense leaders, asking the administration to send us the study without delay. This was a bipartisan letter. Friends from both sides of the aisle joined me on that. We are an equal part of the government. We have authorized this study, and, for heaven's sake, the elected Senators and Representatives of the people need to see this.

If the President desires the same success for the AUKUS deal that many of us in Congress desire—and I believe he does, given the funding request included in the supplemental—then the administration ought to release the study promptly. They ought to release the study to us today.

This study is just one element of strengthening AUKUS. Of course, the most crucial element is increasing overall American sea power. For years, I have cast a vision for restoring American maritime supremacy, following President Reagan's own defense buildup. Again, this is not something that sprung from the brow of Senator WICKER. These are requirements given to us by the top military Navy and Marine leadership, in particular, across the Nation. AUKUS ought to be part of that buildup.

This vision will require historic investment to ensure we have the necessary shipbuilding capacity. It is not an easy task, but history suggests it would underwrite and protect American security for decades.

It will also include strengthening the U.S.-Australian alliance throughout the 21st century. This alliance is symbolized by Australian Prime Minister Albanese's travel to Washington last week. I was honored to meet with him and his team several times during that visit.

The bond between our two nations is deep and abiding. It stood the test of World War II, and it will continue to stand as we confront the challenge of Xi Jinping's communist Chinese fleet.

I can think of no action more emblematic of our bond than the AUKUS agreement, which, again, I fully support. I know the Australians do. They told me last week. They show this also by committing \$3 billion to our industrial base. The best way to honor our special relationship would be to back AUKUS with funds of our own. Australia's economy is a tenth the size of ours, and the United States should

commit a proportional investment. The current plan doesn't get us there.

We have never pursued a defense technology partnership at this scale and level of sophistication, but we have moments in our history to draw upon that inform our path forward. Since its invention in the American midcentury, our nuclear Navy has been second to none because we have never accepted anything less.

Our adversaries knew this. When Admiral Rickover, the founding father of our nuclear Navy, traveled to discuss nuclear submarines with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and his aides, Admiral Rickover boasted:

Although the United States is a democracy, it can act fast. . . . Can't Russia act as fast as the United States?

The answer was that Russia could not act as fast as we could. The strength of our free enterprise system, the clarity of our mission set by our Federal leaders, and our collective appreciation of the Soviet threat gave us a focus, a singular focus, and it allowed the American system to unleash our arsenal of democracy, and we prevented war with the Soviet Union by maintaining our naval supremacy. We need to unleash that arsenal again.

In the words of Admiral Rickover, "We shall let nothing deter us from building a nuclear Navy in the shortest possible time."

Once more, we cannot let anything deter our skilled shipbuilders from cutting the steel and constructing the fleet that will safeguard America for a generation to come.

We have submarines to build. Let's get to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise to discuss the Senate's urgent need to confirm nominations of Rebecca Lutzko to be U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio and April Perry to serve as U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Illinois.

On five previous occasions, I have come to the floor of the Senate to request unanimous consent to move these nominees forward. Each time, the junior Senator from Ohio has objected. He campaigned for the Senate, claiming he would be tough on crime, but now that he is here, he proudly brags that he wants to "grind the Department of Justice to a halt."

These communities desperately need these nominees in place. There are 85 U.S. attorneys across the United States. Under President Donald Trump, we approved all 85 without a record rollcall—voice vote. It was the understanding that we would voice—we would debate the issue of an attorney general. When it came to the U.S. attorneys in individual cities and States, it was too important for us to slow these down with additional procedural requirements on the floor. And so we

do background checks on these U.S. attorney nominees on a bipartisan basis. And once they clear, we add them to the calendar. That is when the junior Senator from Ohio stepped in and decided he would try to stop the process.

How important is the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio that he is holding up? The entire Nation has been impacted by the opioid epidemic, but Ohio has been especially hard-hit.

In recent years, fentanyl has been involved in 80 percent of unintentional drug overdose deaths within the State of Ohio. Last year, Federal law enforcement officials and local partners in Ohio seized over 87,000 fentanyl-laced tablets in a span of less than 4 months. And over the course of 1 year, from April 2022 to April 2023, more than 5,000 Ohioans lost their lives to drug overdoses—5,000. Let that sink in.

On average, every day, 14 Ohio families lose a loved one to drugs. How important is it to have a U.S. attorney in Ohio—and in Illinois—working on this drug crisis that claims so many lives every single day? Can we really make an excuse that we have some political petulance at work on the floor of the Senate that stops us from putting a prosecutor in place to stop this drug trafficking?

The U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio plays a significant role in holding drug traffickers accountable. Last month, the office secured a 320-month sentence for a Toledo-based man who was a local drug distributor for the Sinaloa Cartel and had helped traffic fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine into the State of Ohio. In addition, Federal prosecutors found this defendant engaged in sex trafficking and secured a 140-month sentence after he was convicted.

Notably, the U.S. Attorney's Office coordinated this with both the Toledo Metro Drug Task Force and the Toledo Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Task Force. That is what an efficient U.S. Attorney's Office does to keep the people of Ohio and Illinois safe.

Why in the world would any Senator stand up and object to a U.S. attorney prosecutor who is working to stop this drug trafficking across his State?

Well, the Senator from Ohio explained it. He is upset, Madam President. He is upset that the U.S. Department of Justice, through a special counsel, would actually consider indicting the former President of the United States. And because he is upset—and he calls it weaponization—he is going to make sure that, in his own State, there is not a Federal prosecutor doing the job that should be done to stop the sale of narcotics and, in my State of Illinois, the same thing.

This is unprecedented. It has not happened in the history of the Senate. You can be upset, petulant, worried, hate it that a friend of yours in politics has been indicted, but to hold that against the people of Ohio and the families who are dying on such a regular

basis from these narcotics—that is shortsighted. That does not really reach the level that we, as Senators, should aspire to.

So, Madam President, I make the following request: I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, with the Republican leader's consultation, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 314 and 315; that there be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form, on each nomination; that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. VANCE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, the Senator from Illinois has made two comments that I would like to respond to.

First of all, I think it takes a special amount of gall to be from Joe Biden's political party and to complain about the fentanyl crisis that is ravaging not just Ohio but the entire country, because it is Joe Biden's border policies that have invited this fentanyl into our country at record levels. I heard a briefing from the Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Protection today that confirmed that very fact.

Second of all, the Senator said something I actually agree with: that this whole policy that I have implemented on Department of Justice nominees is unprecedented. He mentions that we have in the past in this body, before I got here, approved a number of Department of Justice nominees through unanimous consent.

What the Senator from Illinois doesn't mention is that, in that time, when these nominations sailed through unanimous consent, the Department of Justice was not trying to throw the political rival of the President of the United States in prison.

I object to this because we are living in a banana republic where the President is using his Department of Justice to go after his chief political rival, the person he will appear on the ballot with in about a year.

If the Department of Justice will use these nominations for law instead of politics, I am happy to end this whole policy. But so long as the Department of Justice uses its nominations and uses its personnel to go after its political opponents—from the President of the United States on down—I will object. And, because of that, Madam President, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, so, on average, every day, 14 Ohio families lose a loved one to drugs.

The explanation: We want to send a message to the Department of Justice. We want to keep the U.S. attorney off the job who would try to attack this narcotics epidemic.

It just doesn't make sense. How can you explain to the people of Ohio and Illinois that you are trying to get some way to make it even on political grounds at their expense? For goodness' sake, for the sake of families in your own home State, give these U.S. attorneys a chance to fight to make life safer for these families.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

AMENDMENT NO. 1249 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1092

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 1249 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. CRUZ], for himself and Mr. CORNYN, proposes an amendment numbered 1249 to amendment No. 1092.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure that United States diplomats and officials of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission are able to advance efforts seeking compliance by the United Mexican States with the 1944 Treaty on Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ . ADVANCING EFFORTS SEEKING COMPLIANCE BY MEXICO WITH TREATY ON UTILIZATION OF WATERS OF THE COLORADO AND TIJUANA RIVERS AND OF THE RIO GRANDE.**

The Secretary of State shall use the voice, vote, diplomatic capital, and resources of the United States to ensure that United States diplomats and officials of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission are able to advance efforts seeking compliance by the United Mexican States with the Treaty on Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, signed at Washington February 3, 1944, and to establish understandings to provide predictable and reliable future deliveries of water by the United Mexican States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be up to 2 minutes of debate, equally divided.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, this is an amendment that should be a simple and bipartisan, commonsense amendment.

Under a treaty in 1944, Mexico is obliged to provide 350,000 acre-feet of water per year to the Rio Grande Valley. Farmers in the Rio Grande Valley are facing drought right now, and Mexico has been slow in meeting its treaty commitments. This amendment simply instructs the water negotiators to press Mexico to meet its treaty agreements and provide the water that is owed.

I would note that the language of this amendment was worked out in a

bipartisan manner and was cleared by both Democrats and Republicans on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This language was also worked out directly with the negotiators of the International Boundary and Water Commission. It is designed not to negatively impact any other State but to instruct States to urge Mexico to meet its treaty commitments so that farmers who need water can get the water they need.

I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to support the amendment.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. We yield back our time.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1249

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 282 Leg.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—45

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Bennet	Hassan	Rosen
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Sanders
Booker	Hickenlooper	Schatz
Brown	Hirono	Schumer
Butler	Kelly	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Lujan	Stabenow
Carper	Markey	Van Hollen
Casey	Menendez	Warner
Coons	Merkley	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Welch
Durbin	Padilla	Whitehouse
Fetterman	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Lee	Scott (SC)	Tillis
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 45.



Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1249) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 1121 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1092.

(Purpose: To require congressional review of certain agency rulemaking)

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I call up my amendment, No. 1121, and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL], for Mr. LEE, proposes an amendment numbered 1121 to amendment No. 1092.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of September 12, 2023, under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be up to 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

The junior Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, our Declaration of Independence asserts that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. While voters may elect Members of Congress, Americans are increasingly governed by bureaucrats they do not know, will never meet, and cannot hold accountable.

In 2022, the Biden administration imposed \$117.1 billion in regulatory costs on the American people. Unelected, unknown, and unaccountable bureaucrats should not unilaterally develop the most significant public policies that impose costly burdens on American families and businesses.

To restore republican accountability to our government, Senator LEE and I propose that we adopt as an amendment a bill that I have introduced for several years called the REINS Act. The REINS Act would require Congress to affirmatively approve every new major rule proposed by the executive branch before it is permitted to become effective.

By passing the REINS Act, the American people, through their elected officials, will reclaim the ability to prevent unnecessary government interference in everyday life.

I ask for a "yes" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, this amendment would prevent Federal Agencies from effectively serving the American people. It would weaken the government's ability to enact key health and safety standards. It would endanger a range of public protections for the environment, American workers, and people with disabilities. It would stifle innovation for emerging technologies, such as self-driving cars, artificial intelligence, and other tools that will help carry our country forward.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting no on this amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1121

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on agreeing to amendment No. 1121.

Mrs. FISCHER. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "nay" and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) would have voted "yea."

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 283 Leg.]

YEAS—46

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

NAYS—51

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Butler	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cardin	Lujan	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Lee Scott (SC) Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). On this vote, the yeas are 46, the nays are 51.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1121) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-affirmative vote threshold for the adoption of the substitute amendment, No. 1092, as amended, be withdrawn.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I know of no further debate on the substitute amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1092

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on

agreeing to the amendment, No. 1092, as amended.

The amendment (No. 1092) in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I am proud to say that today the Senate becomes the first Chamber in Congress to pass bipartisan, responsible appropriations bills: MILCON-VA, Agriculture, and Transportation-HUD. These bipartisan bills deliver big wins for America's farmers, for our infrastructure, for housing, and for our military bases and veterans and more. And passing these bills affirms what I have said all year long: The only way—the only way—to get things done in divided government is bipartisanship.

I hope the Senate's success today shows Speaker JOHNSON and House Republicans that bipartisanship is the way to go. The American people won't support futile exercise of passing partisan, extremist legislation that has no chance of becoming law, which is what the House is doing right now. Their appropriations bills, A, are loaded with poison pills that they know are not going to be accepted in this Chamber or by Democrats in their Chamber, and they make cuts in the budget that go against the agreement we made during the debt ceiling.

I told Speaker JOHNSON last week that if we can figure out how to work on appropriations together, we can get good things done for the country, which is what both sides, I am proud to say, in the Senate want to do. I urged Speaker JOHNSON not to repeat the mistakes of Speaker MCCARTHY's team, who pushed party-line funding bills that went way below the agreement from June, without input from Democrats. Only—only—bipartisan appropriation bills will be able to fully fund the government.

I want to recognize my colleague. Chair PATTY MURRAY has done excellent work in her first year as chair of the Appropriations Committee. She has been outstanding. I also wish to thank Vice Chair SUSAN COLLINS for her terrific work, as well as all the appropriators on both sides of the aisle.

Pursuing bipartisanship isn't always easy. Most of the time, it is difficult—more difficult now than ever. But if you stick with it, we can do it. And we have stuck with it, and we have done it. Thanks to both sides, we are reaching a good outcome for the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I want to thank everyone who has worked with me and the senior Senator from Maine to get our bipartisan spending package here.

Over the last few days, we have had a truly robust amendment process and considered 40 amendments, and this vote is now our chance to get Congress back on track so that we can fund our



government in a bipartisan way, avoid another massive, end-of-the-year omnibus, and address pressing issues like aid to our allies, disaster relief, childcare prices, and more.

By passing this bill today, we can send a crucial message to the American people and the world that, yes, Democrats and Republicans can work together; and, yes, the United States is still strong and still responsive to the challenges before us.

So I urge everyone who wants to avoid another year-end omnibus, everyone who has worked with us to put this package together, to vote with us to pass it. Let's get the job done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, the Senate is about to cast its vote—a key vote—on passage of the first package of fiscal year 2024 appropriations bills. They include the Military Construction-VA bill, the Agriculture and FDA legislation, and the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development appropriations.

I want to thank everyone involved for their cooperation for getting us to the point of passing this significant package.

First, let me thank Chair MURRAY for her strong, persistent, and dedicated leadership.

The support of Leaders MCCONNELL and THUNE and Leader SCHUMER were also absolutely essential.

I want to express my thanks to our hard-working staff, led by Betsy McDonnell and Evan Schatz.

We have a great Republican team on the Appropriations Committee. And I want to thank all of them for working with their Democratic counterparts to bring about truly bipartisan bills. Particularly, I want to thank on the Agriculture Subcommittee, the chairman, Senator HEINRICH, and the ranking member, Senator HOEVEN.

I want to thank my Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Committee, Senator MURRAY, for playing a double role there, as well as Senator BOOZMAN.

And on the Transportation-HUD Subcommittee—a subcommittee I chaired for many years and was ranking member on—I want to thank Senator SCHATZ and Senator HYDE-SMITH. They all worked incredibly hard.

After working for weeks with our colleagues, we considered 40 amendments to these three bills. All three of these bills passed the Appropriations Committee unanimously this past summer. And I appreciate the hard work of every single one of our members.

Giving Senators a voice in funding decisions through a robust committee and floor process was an early goal that Chair MURRAY and I established. It guided our process as the committee approved all 12 of the appropriations bills by the end of July for the first time in 5 years. It also has guided our process on the Senate floor. Well, it

was certainly not easy and certainly took far longer than either the chair or I would have liked. The amendment process allowed for Senators of both parties to fully debate these bills and be heard.

I look forward to working with Chair MURRAY and her colleagues to build on this progress by continuing to process our committee-approved appropriations bills on the Senate floor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this important legislative package that honors and serves our Nation's veterans, supports our farmers, ranchers, and rural communities, and improves transportation infrastructure and housing opportunities all across our great country.

I urge a yeas vote on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the third time.

The amendments were ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill, as amended, pass?

Mrs. MURRAY. 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) would have voted "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 82, nays 15, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 284 Leg.]

YEAS—82

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

NAYS—15

Barrasso	Ernst	Ricketts
Braun	Hawley	Risch
Budd	Johnson	Schmitt
Crapo	Lummis	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Paul	Tuberville

NOT VOTING—3

Lee	Scott (SC)	Tillis
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The bill (H.R. 4366), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. KAINE). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, what we have just done is really important, and I want to thank everyone who helped us get here: my vice chair, the senior Senator from Maine; our subcommittee leaders, the Senators from Arkansas, New Mexico, North Dakota, Hawaii, and Mississippi; and all of our colleagues—all of our colleagues—who worked hard to craft and strengthen these bills. I want to thank Senate leadership and, of course, all of our tireless staff who have met every challenge this process has thrown at us.

Today, months of hard work paid off. We just passed a strong bipartisan spending package—the only bipartisan spending bills in Congress, by the way—and we did it with an 82-to-15 vote.

So let us be crystal clear about what that means. Unlike the funding measures we have seen pushed through the House, these are serious and reasonable bipartisan bills that can actually be signed into law.

They are the product of months of hard work, careful negotiation, and thoughtful input from Members on both sides of the aisle.

They stick to the spending levels that House Republicans and President Biden signed and negotiated and that we all passed into law this past spring.

And despite the tough funding constraints, these bills move our country forward, not back, with important investments to keep our promise to our Nation's veterans, to get Americans where they need to go safely, to increase our housing supply, address the homelessness crisis, support our farmers, our ranchers, and keep American families healthy and safe and more.

What we have done here—finding common ground to produce reasonable, bipartisan bills—is not just a template; it is the only way to get our jobs done in a divided government. There is a clear lesson from the last few months here in Congress, and it is that we must work together, not retreat to extreme partisan corners.

So let us be clear to my colleagues. We have a lot more work to do. Our mission here isn't just to send a message or pass a bill through the Senate. We have to work to get these bills signed into law. And I don't just mean these investments but crucial funding in all of our bipartisan appropriations bills.

While we may need another CR before our work is done, we absolutely have to remember: Long-term CRs are no way to govern, and they certainly

are no way to lead. When we operate under long-term CRs, our Agencies are stuck in neutral. They cannot plan for the future. They have to delay initiatives and investments. They are far less equipped to meet the pressing challenges we face. Governing by CRs hurts families who need a government that works reliably, seriously stunts our economy and American innovation, and dangerously impedes our national security.

I think we all know that our competitors across the world are not putting their budgets on autopilot. They are doing everything they can to get ahead, and they are hoping that we fall behind into the chaos of partisan infighting. We cannot let that happen. We need to pass full-year funding with the investments we need to keep the United States strong and safe and competitive—especially in a moment that truly calls for American leadership.

There is no question we have got our work cut out for us, but today, we have shown a clear roadmap for how we can get our work done. So I am talking with my vice chair about the next set of bills we will work to move in the Senate and continuing work to move a comprehensive, bipartisan supplemental funding package.

We need to start conferencing our appropriations bills. That will require House Republicans to get serious about governing, to get back to the spending agreement that they negotiated and work with us to finalize these bipartisan bills. It is critical that happens.

We do not have time to waste. The clock is ticking. The American people are tired of watching Congress wait until the last second before kicking the can down the road. Our constituents do not want to see chaos. They do not want to see shutdowns or threats, and they don't want to see our country's future limited by CRs. They do want to see their elected officials roll up their sleeves, sit down at the table, and do the hard work of governing to help people and solve problems. That is what we have done today. So let's get it, and let's get our work done.

I yield the floor.

#### BLOCK GRANT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2023

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Committee on Appropriations is discharged from further consideration of H.R. 662, and the Senate will proceed to consideration of the bill, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 662) to amend the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023 to improve disaster relief funding for agricultural producers, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1357

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, substitute amendment No. 1357 is considered and agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1357) was agreed to.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Block Grant Assistance Act of 2023”.

#### SEC. 2. DISASTER RELIEF SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2023, AMENDMENT.

Title I of the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023 (division N of Public Law 117-328; 136 Stat. 5201), is amended, in the matter under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE—AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS—PROCESSING, RESEARCH AND MARKETING—OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY”, by inserting “: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Agriculture may provide assistance for losses described under this heading in this Act in the form of block grants to eligible States and territories” before the period at the end.

#### SEC. 3. EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.

Amounts repurposed under the amendment made by section 2 that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4001(a)(1) of S. Con. Res. 14 (117th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2022, and section 1(e) of H. Res. 1151 (117th Congress), as engrossed in the House of Representatives on June 8, 2022, are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 4 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the next rollcall vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, as we work to get the agriculture community back on their feet, I won't stop fighting to make sure the Federal Government keeps showing up.

Following natural disasters in prior years, USDA has administered block grants to many of our States. The Block Grant Assistance Act would explicitly give USDA the authority to provide block grants as an option to States and territories to assist agricultural producers with losses due to natural disasters occurring in calendar year 2022.

Importantly, it provides streamlined relief to growers by freeing up USDA resources at State FSA offices; allowing States to allocate funds directly to growers impacted most by covered disasters; and allowing farmers to perform necessary and time-sensitive tasks on their farms without the danger of forgoing disaster aid.

This bill does not mandate States to request disaster funding through State block grants; it only opens up this option.

I have talked to many of you about this bill in the last few days, and I understand that some of my Democrat colleagues have concerns about this legislation. I want to address those concerns directly and why we are even talking about this right now.

First, this bill doesn't take anything away from anyone's State. It creates an option for block grants that help our growers and ranchers who have been impacted by disasters. Again, this bill will not negatively impact any State. I want to make sure that is clear.

I have also heard some of my colleagues say that this isn't needed because just this week, after refusing to take action for 14 months, Biden's Ag Department finally opened up the ERP portal for growers and ranchers to apply for assistance just as this was to come to a vote. Our farmers have still not received a dime.

Here is the deal: I don't trust this process—I know my constituents sure don't—and I don't think the assistance being offered is anything close to what is needed for our farmers to actually recover.

This bill helps farmers all across the country, but let me speak for Florida. We have been waiting for more than a year—14 months to be exact—and nothing was done by the Biden administration until they knew that the Senate would be voting on my bill, and it is still just an application process. I don't think anyone can blame us for feeling uneasy about this process.

If we pass this bill today, we can give certainty to growers and ranchers in all of our States that they have a reliable partner in the Federal Government to make sure they can recover from natural disasters. That seems like something we can support.

Folks across the country who put food on our tables and create jobs in our States are hurting. I have been clear to the ag community in Florida: I won't stop fighting to make sure the Federal Government keeps showing up.

This is a good bill that helps hard-working people. It has already unanimously passed in the House, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it in the Senate today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, our Nation has experienced a series of recent natural disasters: the tragic Maui wildfires, flooding in Vermont and California, and the damage caused by Hurricane Idalia. Communities in my home State of New Mexico have been impacted by destructive floods and mudslides following last year's historic wildfire season.

We must get these Americans the help they need during these difficult times, and we must do it as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, this bill would do the opposite.

On Friday, the Biden administration announced that producers impacted by disasters last year are now eligible to apply for critical emergency assistance. H.R. 662 would delay that funding, essentially stopping the application process that the U.S. Department of Agriculture just got underway. In addition, the administration already has the authority under law to provide

funding to States through block grants. So this bill is both counter-productive and unnecessary.

For these reasons, I would urge my colleagues to vote no.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the third time.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

VOTE ON H.R. 662

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

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 285 Leg.]

#### YEAS—43

Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Hagerty	Romney
Braun	Hawley	Rounds
Britt	Hoeben	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Collins	Lankford	Thune
Cornyn	Lummis	Tuberville
Cotton	Marshall	Vance
Cramer	McConnell	Wicker
Crapo	Moran	Young
Cruz	Mullin	
Daines	Murkowski	

#### NAYS—53

Baldwin	Hassan	Ricketts
Bennet	Heinrich	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Butler	Kelly	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Ernst	Ossoff	Welch
Fetterman	Padilla	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Grassley	Reed	

#### NOT VOTING—4

Lee	Scott (SC)
Manchin	Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). On this vote, the yeas are 43, the nays 53.

The 60-vote threshold having not been achieved, the bill, as amended, fails passage.

The bill (H.R. 662), as amended, was rejected.

The Senator from New Mexico.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. 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.

The Senator from Alaska.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues for coming down here tonight. It is a very important issue that we are getting ready to talk about.

We are in a very dangerous world right now. Our country is being challenged on multiple fronts across the globe. We literally have American troops under attack in the Middle East.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, as a U.S. Marine Corps colonel, I know—we all know here in the Senate—that America needs to have our best players, our most combat-capable leaders on the field, and, right now, that is not happening. It needs to change.

I just want to begin by saying something very clear. You are going to hear this a lot. I am as pro-life as they come. I strongly disagree with what Secretary Austin and President Biden have done with their politicization of the military on a whole host of fronts, including the abortion policy, which I think is illegal and violates the Hyde amendment.

And I have been working with many colleagues, but especially Senator TUBERVILLE from Alabama, side by side, for months, trying to get this reversed, trying to get compromises. At the same time, we have been telling the majority leader: Do your job. Do your job. Bring up nominees so we can vote on them.

Now, we have had to force them to do it. Tomorrow, we are going to be voting on the CNO of the Navy, a member of the Joint Chiefs; the Chief of Staff of the Air Force; the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps—not because the majority leader brought them up, but because we forced them to. He needs to do his job.

But I also firmly believe that one of our most core basic principles—certainly, as Republicans—which I think in many ways distinguishes us from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, is our serious focus on national security, readiness, a strong military, and taking care of our troops and their families.

We all know there are current holds on our military. I want the American people to know right now, 376 promotions to one-, two-, three-, and four-star generals and admirals are being held. It is estimated that, by the end of this year, 89 percent of all general offi-

cer positions in the U.S. military will be affected by the current holds from Senator TUBERVILLE. Either the members have to be forced to retire, positions not filled, in acting capacity, or will be unable to retire—this is pretty much the entire officer corps. This is hugely disruptive to readiness.

A couple of examples: 288 one- and two-star generals are being held. These are the men and women who run the military right now. We are going to talk about other places. The First Marine Expeditionary Force, the Third Marine Expeditionary Force—these are the war fighting organizations of the Marine Corps—the Seventh Fleet, which is our fighting naval force in the Taiwan Strait; the Fifth Fleet, the fighting naval force in the Middle East. It goes on and on. NATO Deputy Chairman, a three-star job, empty; Deputy U.S. CENTCOM Commander, empty. The head of the Navy nuclear program, the head of missile defense—all non-confirmed.

We have a big challenge right now. Let me be a bit more blunt on the issue of morale. The military has a huge readiness and retention problem. These holds are not helping.

As I mentioned, I am a senior colonel in the Marines. Many of the one-star and two-star who are being held right now are in my peer group. I have known these men and women for 30 years. There is growing bitterness within the ranks of our military, driven by this fact, and I want people to understand this. The men and women in the military who served our country so well for decades—probably the most combat-experienced generation since World War II—have made huge sacrifices, multiple deployments, and now their careers are being punished over a policy dispute they had nothing to do with and no power to resolve.

That is what is happening right now, and the idea that some of these officers are supposedly woke or desk jockeys is ridiculous. These are some of the most combat-experienced generals and admirals we have ever had in our country.

Finally, these holds also pose strategic risks to our force. What does that mean? We are starting to see military officers saying: Admirals and generals, I am getting out. Or they have to get out if they are going to be timed out.

We had a scandal in the U.S. Navy several years ago called the “Fat Leonard” scandal. It literally wiped out a generation of Navy officers who had Pacific experience. We do not want to be responsible for a Senate-inflicted hollowing out of our most experienced military officers, especially given how dangerous the world is right now.

So I have mentioned this before. I have worked closely with Senator TUBERVILLE for months, always defending his holds, always looking for compromise. The one we are working on now: Lift the hold on the military officers who have nothing to do with this dispute and can't resolve it anyway, and put a hold on the Under Secretary

of Defense for Policy, who is in charge of this issue. Let's do that. That is a good compromise.

But we haven't made progress, and the world is a dangerous place. So tonight we are taking another approach. For months, Senator TUBERVILLE has said, if individual nominees are brought up for a vote one at a time, he will be fine with that. On September 6, he said: I am not holding up nominations for being approved. They can bring them to the floor one at a time.

Well, tonight, that is exactly what we are going to do—individual votes on individual nominees, just as Senator TUBERVILLE has requested. We have dozens. I hope the Senator from Alabama meant what he said on this issue, and he backs our troops, who are true warriors and, yes, heroes, who along with their families have dedicated their lives to this country, risked their lives for this country, and have nothing to do with this current policy dispute—nothing at all.

Last night on TV, Senator TUBERVILLE said he was "all for the military"—in particular, our military heroes.

You are going to hear a lot about military heroes tonight, and, hopefully, we are going to get a bunch of them confirmed, one by one, as we bring them up.

I yield the floor to my colleague from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, the world is on fire because of Joe Biden's failed leadership and ongoing weakness. Our enemies are on the march. Our servicemembers are under attack by Iran-backed proxies. And our country is under greater threat than it has been in years.

Innocent lives are on the line here at home and abroad. At home, the Biden DOD is waging a war on the unborn—a war that is immoral and unlawful.

I am a mother. I have carried a baby girl in my womb who is now a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army, and my baby girl is now carrying a baby of her own. And I am proudly, adamantly, and unabashedly pro-life. I always will be. That is why I have—I have—led the legislation to overturn this woke Dodd policy and will not rest in this fight for life, especially as we work through this year's Defense bill.

Abroad, our friend and ally Israel is under assault by ruthless Iran-backed Hamas. Jewish babies have been murdered, burned in ovens, and some even stripped from their mothers' wombs.

As a 23-year combat veteran and retired lieutenant colonel of our great U.S. Army, I firmly believe the Pentagon should be focused on protecting innocent life, not destroying it.

Joe Biden and Secretary Austin are weak and woke. The architects of this immoral policy should be held accountable. Anyone trying to insert their radical agenda into the military has no place in the Pentagon. No Senator

should support any person or dollar that threatens the lethality of our warfighters.

Catering to the far left does not win wars or keep Americans safe. Our servicemembers have been failed by their Commander in Chief, and we must do right by them and the security and protection of our own Nation.

For over 9 months now, CHUCK SCHUMER has used our military men and women as political pawns, refusing to allow the Senate to do its job of vetting and voting on military nominees. Only when Republicans forced the majority leader's hand did he finally relent and move on a few of those nominees.

Tonight, we are once again standing up for valiant individuals who have answered the call to selfless service. Unlike in the past, when promotions were quietly approved en bloc with no discussion, tonight we will be highlighting the distinguished careers of each and then putting their nomination before the Senate for confirmation individually by voice vote.

And with that, I will yield the floor. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you to my colleagues. Thank you for your leadership here.

Senator TUBERVILLE, I hope we can find a way to get this behind us, if possible. So my contribution to the debate is as follows: The bedrock of our democracy is that the military will be subordinate to civilian control. That has served our Nation well—that no matter who is in uniform, they answer to civilian authorities, and they are subordinate to the will of the civilian leadership elected and appointed. That has really helped our country be who we are today.

One of the things that I can't understand is, if you require our military to be subordinate to the people above them in the civilian world, why would you punish them for something they have nothing to do with?

All of these people—and if we need to call all 376, I will be glad to do it. I will get some rest this weekend and come back next week. I am going to start with two. All I am asking is to allow Major General Lenderman to get promoted. I will make that request in a minute.

Major General Lenderman is a two-star general. She got promoted to three-star because her peers—the military promotion system—saw in her leadership qualities. And after I read her bio, I now know why she got promoted.

But the job she is going into, she is going to be the Deputy Commander, Headquarters, Pacific Air Force, Hawaii. She would be responsible for Air Force activities over half the globe. The command supports 46,000 Airmen serving principally in Japan, Korea, Hawaii, Alaska and Guam. That has a lot to do with the Indo-Pacific theater.

She has 3,000 flight hours as a KC-135, KC-10, KC-46 pilot. In case you don't

know what that means, she flies the air refueling tankers that our fighters and our bombers come up to to stay in the fight. This is some of the hardest flying in the Air Force. You have to have your stuff together because refueling at night is not some easy thing. I have actually seen it done. I am an Air Force lawyer. They shouldn't let me near an airplane, but they did.

I can tell you this, this lady has proven herself time and time again: 3,000 hours—I am sure most of it is combat—doing some of the hardest things any pilot can do in the Air Force. And she has zero to do with what happened. I don't know what her beliefs are about the life issue. I am pro-life, too, but I don't want to start asking our military members litmus test questions.

She deserves to be promoted. You are not going to change policy that she didn't make by denying her the ability to be promoted. We need this lady as a three-star yesterday to deal with the threats coming from China and that part of the world.

She is a graduate of Duke University. She has had every major job I can think of in Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, which I have been to several times.

I am asking tonight that she be allowed to be promoted because she has had nothing to do with the policy we all object with. Holding her hostage doesn't help the pro-life cause. It hurts the military. The most pro-life people I know are the ones willing to die for us. She is willing to die for this country. She has proven herself time and time again. She needs to be promoted.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive calendar No. 189, Laura L. Lenderman, to lieutenant general and Deputy Commander, Pacific Air Forces; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Reserving the right to object, I want to start by thanking my colleagues for their service in the Armed Forces in the greatest country ever. There is no institution in this world I honor more than the U.S. military. I am thankful to every veteran in this country.

I also want to note that I respect my colleagues' strong pro-life voting record. The Republican Party has been the pro-life party for half a century. We ought to be proud that we stand for life. We stand for the most vulnerable of our society: the unborn. I know my colleagues here share that conviction. The disagreement we are having today is about tactics.

Let me explain why I am doing it, how we got here, and where we go from

here. Nine months ago, the Pentagon announced that they would start using our taxpayer dollars to facilitate abortion. Let me say that one more time. Nine months ago, the Pentagon announced—announced by memo—that they would start using our taxpayer dollars to facilitate abortion. The Pentagon is now paying for travel and extra time off for servicemembers and their dependents to get abortions.

Congress never voted for this. We also never appropriated the money for this. There is no law that allows them to do this. In fact, there is a law that says they can't do this. One more time: There is a law that says they can't do this, created in this room. It is 10 USC, Section 1093. It says the only time the Pentagon can spend taxpayer dollars on abortion is in cases of rape, incest, and threat to the health of the mom. So this is a policy that is illegal and immoral. This is about life, and it is also about the rule of law. It is about our Constitution. It is about whether we make laws at the Pentagon or whether we follow the Constitution.

This is also about the integrity of our military. The only thing in this world I honor more than our military is the Constitution. We all swore to uphold the Constitution. I also feel very strongly about the obligation to uphold it every day in this room. I cannot simply sit idly by while the Biden administration injects politics in our military—again—injects politics in our military from the White House and spends taxpayers' dollars on abortion.

The only power that a Senator in the minority has is to put a hold on a nomination—the only thing. I am not the first person to do this. Holds on nominations happen all the time. Holds on military nominations have happened many, many, many, many times before. Typically, they don't last as long because the administration will work with a Senator until the issue is resolved. But that has not happened this time. Zero negotiation.

Abortion is the most important thing to the Democrats that they have, and they won't negotiate. One more time: Abortion is the most important thing the Democrats have, and they will not negotiate.

This has been going on for 9 months. Every day this continues is a day that Democrats think abortion is more important than the nomination at our military. I support many of these nominees, and I agree that these are very, very important jobs. But we could have been voting on these nominees the entire 9 months.

The Senate has had more than 90 days off this year, not including weekends. Each nomination could take as little as 2 hours. In fact, tomorrow we will be voting on three of the most important nominees that we forced the leader of the Senate to bring to the floor. The nominees at the very top ought to be voted on anyway. These jobs are too important not to receive the advice and consent of the Senate.

I have to respectfully disagree with my colleagues about the effect of my hold on readiness. My hold is not affecting readiness. The Biden administration has been saying this for months, but nobody has an explanation. Nobody. The fact is, no jobs are going unfilled. Every job is being done. In fact, GEN Mark Milley said recently that our readiness is the best it has been in years. Time and again, generals and servicemembers have assured me that they are ready to go. I believe them.

I am going to keep my holds in place. If Senators want to vote on these nominees one by one, I am all in. I am happy to do that. But I will keep my hold in place until the Pentagon follows the law or the Democrats change the law. This is about our Constitution. This is about the rule of law. That is what we are about in here. It is about the integrity of our military. It is about keeping politics out of the military. I did not put it in the military. Joe Biden and Secretary Austin put politics in the military. And it is about the right to life. These are some of the most important things in the world to me. And so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. I will have another one.

Let me respond to my colleague respectfully. We have courts. If you think they have done something illegal, go to court. That is how you handle these things. The Pentagon has issued a legal opinion I disagree with, saying this doesn't violate the Hyde Amendment. I disagree with it.

Here is what is going to happen. You just denied this lady a promotion. You did that. All of us are ready to promote her because she deserves to be promoted. She had nothing to do with this policy. Let me say it again. Everybody in this body could find an issue with any administration they don't agree with. And what we are going to do is open up Pandora's box. Today is abortion policy.

If we take back the White House, we will go back to the Mexico City policy, limiting dollars to be given to overseas entities that are engaged in the abortion business. Some pro-choice people don't like that. What would happen if they put a hold on all of the officers because they don't agree with the Republican administration? There is a reason this has not been done this way for a couple hundred years.

No matter whether you believe it or not, Senator TUBERVILLE, this is doing great damage to our military. I don't say that lightly. I have been trying to work with you for 9 months. Folks, if this keeps going, people are going to leave.

Let me tell you how the system works. You have 18 months, I think, from the time you are promoted to pen on. If you don't make that gate, your time and grade up-or-out rule kicks in.

There are some people that are waiting to be promoted that if they don't get promoted soon, they will be out of the military.

Now, how does that help anybody if they are qualified? There is not one Senator in here that cannot find a reason to object to an administration policy in the military. None of us. We could all find something. I just hope we don't do this routinely, because if this is the norm, who the hell wants to serve in the military when your promotion can be canned based on something you had nothing to do with? She had nothing to do with this. If you think it is illegal, go to court. We have courts in this country.

I have one more: Rear Admiral Fred Kacher. Fred, sorry if I mispronounced your name. He has been promoted to three-star. OK? That is a pretty big deal. I made colonel and that is as far as I could go and that is probably a gift.

What job does he have? He is going to be the Commander of the 7th Fleet, Japan. Somebody is doing his job right now, but they are not a three-star. We have a military promotion system to reward people who are good at what they do so they can have more responsibility. This officer had zero to do with the Pentagon's decision, which I don't like and you don't like, but he can't get promoted because of one of us.

There is no end to this, folks. If this gets to be the norm, you are going to wreck the military promotion system. You are punishing people who, by law under the Constitution, require to be subservient to civilian control. They have to follow civilian control. And you are punishing them for something they didn't do. Punish the civilians who made the policy. That is the way to do it.

I am going to move that Rear Admiral Fred Kacher be immediately promoted to three-star, 7th Fleet, Japan, Commander. It is the largest forward-deployed fleet operating around China, Russia, and North Korea. Given the threats coming from that area, I think we need this guy, like, yesterday.

He is a 1990 U.S. Naval graduate. He commanded guided-missile destroyers. He has been—this is amazing; you need to read about this guy. We want this guy. Coach, we need this guy. We are in a fight. We need the best people on the field. He is off the field for something he had nothing to do with.

And if this gets to be normal—I will end where I started. If this gets to be normal, God help the military because every one of us could find some reason to object to policy. Let's just don't hold hostage the men and women who have to follow civilian control. Let's don't ruin the lives of all these people who have been serving our Nation for decades.

Their families can't enroll in school. Some of them are going to be knocked out of promotion because of time and grade problems. There are families

struggling out there because they can't move to the next assignment. This doesn't help anybody. It doesn't help any cause.

So I ask unanimous consent that this promotion be taken up under Executive Calendar No. 189; Rear Admiral Kacher, 7th Fleet Commander; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator will hold.

Mr. GRAHAM. Oh, sorry, sorry. This is why I didn't get promoted. Executive Calendar No. 85.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRAHAM. Frederick W. Kacher. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. GRAHAM. And we will be doing this 376 times.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I thank the President for the recognition.

Let me begin with the obvious because I think Senator GRAHAM did a great job of laying out what is at stake. He offered multiple arguments for why these amazing patriots who dedicated their professional lives to defending our safety, our security, our way of life should be promoted and should be promoted this evening.

But a different take is just to begin with the obvious: We are in the midst of the most complicated and, therefore, the most complex and perilous security environment that I have ever experienced in my adult lifetime, certainly.

Israel, our closest friend, our ally, is at war. Ukrainian freedom fighters remain at war against our adversary, Russia. We have a porous southern border. Last month alone, we had 18 individuals apprehended who are—just those who were apprehended—who are on the Terrorist Watchlist. There are all sorts of concerns about what might happen in the Indo-Pacific amidst this environment. We need a fully staffed, fully competent, fully engaged, and focused security establishment.

We need these individuals to be put in place to assume the jobs that they are prepared for. So the security environment is incredibly dangerous. That means Mr. TUBERVILLE's constituents in Alabama, my constituents in Indiana, and Americans all across the country, all across the world, their safety and security is in danger amidst this perilous time. So that is unique, but what is also unique is the number of holds.

My friend—and he is my friend. He is a genuine friend. I have got a lot of respect for this man, Senator

TUBERVILLE, to my right. But the number of holds is certainly extraordinary. I think he would concede that because he is also a smart colleague.

The length of the holds is extraordinary as well, but the tactics here, this is something that Senator SULLIVAN, who showed great leadership on this issue, Senator ERNST, myself, and many other colleagues have questioned. I am fervently, I am passionately, I am unapologetically pro-life in conviction and in deed. My reputation is untarnished, and it is unambiguous in that regard.

So I have every interest in seeing that we assume a smart tactic, a smart game plan, if you will. And to hold responsible, effectively, 300 nominated patriots who ought to be pinning on a star or another star right now—hold them professionally responsible for this and, by extension, to undermine the safety and security of the American people during this perilous time just doesn't make any sense to me.

Instead, it makes more sense for us to hold accountable someone whom the President has nominated to fill the policy position at the Pentagon who would actually oversee implementation and administration of this horrible policy. I said that publicly, and to the extent Mr. TUBERVILLE would remain open—to put it indelicately—to taking that hostage, I would be open to that tactic. But because that is not the case, we have a disagreement here, and it is going to have to be reconciled. I know Senator TUBERVILLE wants to be a good teammate, a good pro-life teammate and a good national security teammate. There is an opportunity here for him to agree to at least—to at least—allow the following patriot to be confirmed this evening.

Mr. President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 131, VADM Karl Thomas, U.S. Navy, to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Warfare.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination, Executive Calendar No. 131, Karl Thomas, to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Warfare, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Director of Naval Intelligence; that the Senate vote on the nomination of this esteemed individual, with whom I visited when I was in Japan earlier this year, without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider would be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, I rise out of great concern for our military,

for its readiness in a time of great peril but also out of concern for the men and women who are being held up and whose careers and prospects and families and plans are being interrupted by virtue of the decision by, in this case, two people—one is Secretary Austin and the other is Senator TUBERVILLE—to take intractable positions.

And it is simply a, in my opinion, an abuse of the powers we have as Senators to say if there is something we vehemently disagree with, that we are going to use that power to hold up the promotion of over 350 men and women in our military.

We each have things we might disagree with, with the military, and some would come with deep personal convictions about their morality. But if each Senator felt empowered to hold up all promotions in our military unless we got our way on one of those issues, why, our military would grind to a halt.

This power is extraordinary that we are given as individual Senators, but it is incumbent upon us to use it in a reasonable way and not to abuse it in such a way that we end up putting in harm's way the capabilities of our military and the well-being of our men and women in uniform.

Senator TUBERVILLE correctly pointed out—I believe he is absolutely right—that what Secretary Austin did was in contravention of the Hyde amendment, against the law. We have a process for pursuing things that are done by an administration that are against the law. It is the court process. I am happy to join with an amicus brief or even file a legal action to reverse the Pentagon's policy. That is the process we should follow in a circumstance like this, not one that is being exacted upon 350 men and women whom we need to have in service and whose lives are being so badly disrupted.

I would also offer this: Senator TUBERVILLE, if the Department of Defense, Secretary Austin were to say: OK. We will no longer pay for the travel of these individuals and their dependents but instead allow a private charity to do so, would that be acceptable to you and allow this to go away?

I am looking for—yes. So for instance, if Secretary Austin agrees, all right, we will eliminate this policy, but we will allow a private charity to provide for the travel for someone who wants to receive an abortion in a State where that procedure is legal, would that satisfy you and allow this impasse to be resolved?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Senator, that was the type of negotiation I have been looking for, for the last 9 months. Nobody—zero—has come to me with any alternatives to bypass to get this done.

Mr. ROMNEY. Would that be an acceptable alternative?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. It would; it would be a good starting point. We can sit down and work this out, but we can't do it without negotiations. That is



what I was saying earlier. There have been zero negotiations. There has been no give. It has all been take—three 1-minute calls with the Secretary. I haven't talked to him since June. There has been no more conversation. So how do you work out a problem without communication?

Mr. ROMNEY. Yes. Well, I have ways of doing that, which is I will pick up the phone and have that conversation. But we have to make sure that we do not continue to hold up 350-plus people from being able to get promoted. That is essential to our military.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we are going to start moving through some of these nominations. My colleague from Alabama has said publicly, hey, bring them up one at a time. And we are asking for a voice vote, so that is a vote. So we are doing what he said, not sure why he is objecting. Maybe he can explain that in a minute when I bring up another—a real hero by the way.

And, look, what Senator TUBERVILLE said about the policy and Austin and Biden on this abortion policy, I fully agree with him. We should be suing to stop it. I think it is illegal. And he is also right; everybody uses holds. I certainly use holds.

But the key is you put a hold on someone who typically has some kind of control over the issue that you are trying to fix, some kind of responsibility. One of the things I have been talking to the Senator from Alabama on is, all right, let's put a hold on the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. He is the guy. He is a civilian, and he is in charge of this policy dispute. Let's put a hold on him—that is the right guy—and squeeze him. But why are we putting holds on war heroes? I am going to get to one here in a minute.

Again, I just—I don't understand. And, look, we can go in and out of readiness, but my colleague from Alabama is 100 percent wrong, no kidding. The readiness is being impacted when you have—I will just give a couple of examples here. This is just from one theater: EUCOM, the Deputy Chairman of NATO, pretty important job. It is a three-star billet. It is empty.

The Deputy Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe—really important job—empty.

Like I said, I MEF—that is the big Marine Corps combined force that fights anywhere in the world; 25,000 marines, commanded by a three-star—it is a two-star. Now, for those who did serve in the military, we understand this is a problem. Same with III MEF. OK. This is just from EUCOM, European Command—72 officers are unable to assume their new positions. These 72 officers include 52 who cannot move because they have been nominated for a position that requires Senate confirmation, as well as 20 other officers who are projected to be assigned to a new position now held by one of the pre-

vious 52 officers. It is creating a giant blockage in the way in which the military operates.

To say there are no readiness issues—I am the ranking member of the Readiness Subcommittee on the Armed Services Committee. There are readiness issues. And that is the whole point. We have a really dangerous world, a really dangerous world right now, and to say, "Oh, don't worry; this isn't impacting readiness," with all due respect to my colleague, that is just wrong. It is not even a close call. It is wrong, and it matters to this country.

Let me give you another example: the head of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, the nuclear navy—one of the best run organizations on planet Earth, if you know anything about the military or just its organizations. It was started by Admiral Rickover. To not have the leadership in charge of the nuclear navy? That is a problem. To not have the leadership in charge of missile defense for America? That is a problem.

So, look, we can debate readiness, but my colleague on this, in my view, is respectfully quite misinformed.

I am going to bring up my first nominee. Now, this goes to the issue of some comments that have come out during this: Well, these one-star and two-star generals are kind of desk jockeys, right?

These comments have been made.

They are not warriors, right? The real warriors are the captains and the sergeants.

Look, I love the whole military, but the one- and two-star Generals—I know a lot of them. That is my peer group in the Marine Corps. I am a little bit behind them. I am not going to be promoted. I am getting out here probably soon. But I know these guys, and the idea that somehow these are desk jockeys? Do you know who these people were, the one- and two-stars we are holding up right now, 289 of them? These were the Captains and Lieutenants who were going fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11.

The current Commandant of the Marine Corps—by the way, every American should be praying for him; big health issues—he has a Purple Heart, distinguished combat.

These were the people who were kicking in doors in Fallujah, shooting terrorists in the face, and we have people saying they are desk jockeys and they are not warriors? That is just ridiculous. It is ridiculous, and it is insulting.

So I am going to talk about a warrior. I am getting ready to call up Col. Robert Weiler. He has been nominated to be a one-star Brigadier General, to be the 1st Marine Division Assistant Commander. That is the big division on the west coast of the U.S. Marine Corps infantry. I used to be part of the 1st Marine Division. I am proud of that. You need a Deputy Commander. They don't have one, OK?

Let's talk about Colonel Weiler—28-year career; commanded the 5th Ma-

rine Regiment—I was in that regiment, the most decorated regiment in the Marine Corps; 2d Battalion 4th Marines; 2d Battalion 24th Marines; deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan I think six times.

Think about what his family went through, OK? Think about what his family has sacrificed. And right now, people are being told: You are not going anywhere, Colonel, because we have a dispute on an issue you have nothing to do with that you can't resolve.

Let's hear a little bit more about this Colonel in the Marine Corps. He received a Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving as Commanding Officer, Weapons Company, 2d Battalion 4th Marines, 5th Marine Regiment, 6 through 10 April 2004, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; heavily engaged by enemy forces for an over 4-hour firefight while wounded by enemy fire, OK? Purple Heart. He continued to fearlessly lead marines as they destroyed this tenacious enemy. He is no woke guy. He is no desk jockey. Oh, what else did he do? He got a Purple Heart in that vicious combat.

He received a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with a combat distinguishing device for heroic action in another deployment—2d Battalion 4th Marines, 1st Marine Division, on 6 September in Ramadi, Iraq. He took decisive action by directing fires of his raid force, quickly gaining fire superiority and suppressing and killing the enemy. Although dazed by a major blast, he continued to lead and direct his team in combat, where they killed and captured all five insurgents on their target raid list. So we are going to block him tonight?

The Senator from Alabama last night on TV said he respects all military, especially the heroes.

Well, you got one coming. You got one coming, Senator.

So we are going to do what you asked, which is do a vote individually on this American hero.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Col. Robert S. Weiler to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Marine Corps under Executive Calendar No. 95; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Reserving the right to object, first of all, I would like to correct something my colleague just said. Not one time in my life have I ever said anything about anybody in our military was a desk jockey. I don't know where he got that from. I guess that is a military term. I would not do

that. I would not disrespect anybody in any job in the military that they have ever done. So I just want to set that story straight with people who will write a little bit about this disagreement tonight.

But with that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, I know this is a frustrating exercise, but we are going to flesh out some of these nominees tonight, truly incredible individuals who have served our Nation through thick and thin. These are folks who deserve to be promoted.

So I rise today to talk about Lt. Gen. Gregory M. Guillot on his promotion to the grade of General and his nomination to be the next Commander of U.S. Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command, also known as NORAD.

General Guillot is from Tucson, AZ, and he is a proud graduate of the United States Air Force Academy. I am sorry he could not get into West Point. He has successfully commanded a flying squadron operations group, two flying wings, a numbered Air Force, and has admirably served on numbered Air Force, major command, and combatant command staffs.

He is an expert in his field, as demonstrated by having been an Air Force Weapons School instructor and graduate of the National War College.

General Guillot is a decorated warfighter and a senior air battle manager by training who is currently the Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command. He has been instrumental integrating air, missile, and drone defense systems across the Middle East—experience that is applicable to the challenges facing NORTHCOM's air and missile defenses.

I believe that General Guillot's qualifications, his record, and his outstanding character make him the right nominee to serve in this important role.

So we can confirm this nomination by voice vote right here, now, and therefore I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 236, Lt. Gen. Gregory M. Guillot to be General; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, if I can just address this very briefly before we move to my colleague from Indiana, I have a discharge petition that was signed at our conference lunch the

other day for Lt. Gen. General M. Guillot. That discharge petition was signed by Senator TUBERVILLE, meaning that Senator TUBERVILLE believed that we should be voting on General Guillot. I was asking for a voice vote for General Guillot this evening.

I am not sure how we remedy this situation, but I can tell you we will keep working on these nominations, and we will get answers someday, and they will be confirmed someday if we have the intestinal fortitude to do what is right by our military men and women, who have absolutely nothing to do with the policy that was put in place by Secretary Lloyd Austin and President Joe Biden.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 238, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey A. Kruse, U.S. Air Force, to be Lieutenant General and Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

General Kruse currently serves as the Director's Advisor for Military Affairs at the Office of the DNI. This is a post he has held since 2020. One need not have me explain to them—especially if they are tuned in to matters of national security—the importance of our Defense Intelligence Agency at a time like this.

Previously, Mr. Kruse served as the Director for Defense Intelligence for Warfighter Support in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security.

Prior to his OSD and interagency roles, General Kruse served as the Director for Intelligence at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, deployed as Director of Intelligence for Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve, and served as Senior Special Advisor for the Commander of U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

He has commanded Air Force units at all levels across seemingly every geography, and he has deployed on multiple occasions to combat theaters around the globe.

Feeling good about this one. We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now.

Feeling really good, Senator TUBERVILLE.

It is for that reason that I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 238, Jeffrey A. Kruse to be Lieutenant General and Director, Defense Intelligence Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. YOUNG. I further request that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Well, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 188, Lt. Gen. Kevin B. Schneider, U.S. Air Force, to be General and the Commander of Pacific Air Forces.

General Schneider has been serving as the Director of Staff for the Air Force since 2021. He has commanded at all levels, including a combat wing in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. General Schneider is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flight hours, with 530 combat flight hours on multiple airframes. He has also earned numerous commendations, including the Bronze Star and the Air Medal.

We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 188, Kevin B. Schneider, to be General and the Commander of Pacific Air Forces; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, that being the case, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 107, Lt. Gen. James W. Bierman, Jr., USMC, to be Lieutenant General and the Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations for Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.

General Bierman has held numerous command postings, most recently serving as the Commander of the Third Marine Expeditionary Force and Marine Forces Japan. He has shown a true commitment to service in this posting, ensuring that marines remain prepared to face any future threats. General Bierman has also deployed multiple times, including to Afghanistan and Iraq, where he led marines in combat operations. His many commendations include the Bronze Star with Combat Distinguishing Device and the Legion of Merit.

We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 107, James W. Bierman, Jr., to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon

the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Having heard that objection, Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 132, Lt. Gen. Michael S. Cederholm, U.S. Marine Corps, to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force.

General Cederholm has been Deputy Commandant for Aviation since July 2022, a position he held with high distinction. He has held many operational assignments, including in U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command and as a TOPGUN Instructor Pilot. He has flown operational tours in all aircraft that the Marine Corps has to offer. General Cederholm has held numerous other assignments, including the deployments in furtherance of Operation Enduring Freedom, Joint Task Force Southern Watch, and Iraqi Freedom. He has also served in many Commanding Officer postings, including Commanding General of Task Force Baltic Watchtower and Commanding General of 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing.

We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 132, Michael S. Cederholm, to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I am going to make one further attempt.

I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 84, RADM George M. Wikoff, USN, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fifth Fleet.

Admiral Wikoff currently serves as Acting Commander for Naval Air Forces. He began his career serving as a naval aviator, moving up to command Strike Fighter Squadron 211, Strike Fighter Squadron 122, Carrier Air Wing 3, and Carrier Strike Group 5. Among many command assignments, General Wikoff has notably served as the Commander of Strike Fighter Squadron 211, Carrier Air Wing 3, and Strike Fighter Squadron 122. His shore assignments include a posting at the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center, as a TOPGUN Training Officer, as Bat-

tle Director at the Combined Air and Space Operations Center in Qatar, and many other critical postings.

We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 84, RADM George M. Wikoff, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fifth Fleet; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, just for people who are watching, as to that last nominee for Fifth Fleet Commander, you may have heard there are two carrier strike groups in the Middle East. He is the naval officer who would be in charge of all of them—right there. We could have put him in charge. It is pretty important to have a Fifth Fleet Commander ready to go.

He just objected to it. I am not sure why. Again, we are bringing these up one by one, which is what I thought my colleague from Alabama said he was good to go with.

Before I start going through my list, I just want to say, if anyone is watching—Senator ERNST and I were just talking about this—just listen to these bios. This is the best of America. This is the best of America. These men and women have been serving and sacrificing honorably for literally decades—all of them for almost 30 years at least. So when you think about it, think about the families behind these men and women. Think about their sacrifices. They are sacrificing a lot right now, and there is a lot of uncertainty. In my view, it is just a big mistake.

Again, I am with Senator TUBERVILLE on the policy of the Biden administration and Secretary Austin. We have got to fix that. But this tactic of making the military members who have nothing to do with it, of punishing them and their careers—which is what is happening, don't kid yourself—it is hurting their families. It is the wrong way to go about it, especially at this very dangerous time.

So, Madam President, I am going to call up the next promotion: VADM James W. Kilby to be U.S. Navy Admiral and Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Now, if you want to talk about a readiness issue, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations is the person who is going to be in charge, for America, of our very decrepit shipbuilding and industrial base. Everybody knows that that is a readiness problem, and I have been told by many military officers that Ad-

miral Kilby is the person—the leader—who can turn America's shipbuilding in the right direction. We have a giant readiness issue on shipbuilding. This person is the individual who can turn it around.

I have been told by many, and here is why: In over 30 years in the Navy, he commanded the USS *Russell*, which is a DDG-59, and the USS *Monterey*, a CG-61. Vice Admiral Kilby's additional sea tours were on the USS *Sampson*, a DDG-10; the USS *Philippine Sea*, a CG-58, two tours on the USS *San Jacinto*. Vice Admiral Kilby most recently served as the Deputy Commander of all U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

So he is a very important person. We could get moving right now to help our very weak industrial capacity and build ships, which everybody knows, as it relates to China, is probably one of the most important readiness issues we have to deal with. This person tonight—this leader tonight—could be confirmed to start that shipbuilding capacity for America tomorrow as the Vice CNO.

So with that, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 335, James W. Kilby, to be Admiral and Vice Chief of Naval Operations; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, the next nominee—again, we are doing them one at a time, one at a time. I thought that is what my colleague and friend from Alabama wanted. He still hasn't explained why "one at a time" is not what he wanted, but maybe he will do that.

This is regular order, by the way. For those who wonder, Well, it is not regular order, nobody knows what that means, but this is regular order because, in the Senate for 200 years, we have brought up and confirmed one- and two- and three-star Generals just like this: regular order voice votes.

So when my colleague said: I am good to go with bringing up individuals for a voice vote, for a vote, that is what we are doing. That is what we are doing. There is no explanation over there so far.

OK. Let me talk about MG Sean A. Gainey of the U.S. Army. We are trying to get him promoted to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General of U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command. Wow. That is a really important billet, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command. So we want a leader on those issues.

Here is a little bit about Major General Gainey: 33 years—33 years—of patriotic service. He has served as Deputy Commanding General for the U.S. Army Cadet Command, the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command, and on the Joint Staff as the Deputy Director for Force Protection, J8, overseeing the Joint Integrated Air and Missile Defense Organization. Major General Gainey has deployed in support of Operation Joint Task Force-East and Operation Enduring Freedom. Most recently, Major General Gainey served as the Director, Joint C-UAS Office, and Director of Fires in the G3/5/7 at Headquarters of the Army.

In essence, this general is an expert not just on missile command but on fires to protect our Nation—very qualified. I hope we can confirm him right now. Our country needs him.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 47, Sean A. Gainey, to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command—a really important billet and a really important command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let me move on to another Army officer and the same kind of billet that, again, really matters. This would be again on missile defense. This is Lt. Gen. Philip A. Garrant of the U.S. Space Force—I apologize. I mentioned he was in the Army. He is actually in the U.S. Space Force—to be Lieutenant General Commander, Space Systems Command, U.S. Space Force—again a really important billet.

Once again, if you look at this career, it is 29 years—29 years—of patriotic service to our country. Think about what his family has been through—multiple deployments.

Lieutenant General Garrant has served as the Commander of the 689 ARSS Air Armament Center, Eglin Air Force Base, and Vice Commander and Deputy Air Force Program Executive Officer for the Space and Missiles Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base.

By the way, these officers who are doing all of the space work—Space Force, Army, Navy—are brilliant. We don't have their resumes in terms of their schools, but I guarantee you these are physicists—brilliant, brilliant Army, Space Force, Air Force officers whom all Americans should be proud of.

Lieutenant General Garrant most recently served as Deputy Chief of Space Operations Strategy, Plans, Programs, and Requirements for the U.S. Space Force.

We can confirm him right now by an individual voice vote, Madam President. So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 293, Lt. Gen. Philip A. Garrant, U.S. Space Force, to be Lieutenant General and Commander, Space Systems Command, U.S. Space Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am going to bring up another important Lieutenant General. When we talk about mental health and we talk about taking care of our troops—we have got a big suicide problem in our military in Alaska—having the top Surgeon General in the military is also really important. These aren't just combat positions. These are other really important positions.

I want to talk about BG Mary V. Krueger, U.S. Army, to be Lieutenant General and the Surgeon General of the U.S. Army. Brigadier General Krueger has had a 32-year career in the Army. She has served as the Supervisory Assistant for Deputy Health Affairs, Assistant Secretary for the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, the Commander of U.S. Army Health Clinic, and the Division Surgeon for the 4th Infantry Division.

Again, boy, do we need that. In my State, with my troops, my military, the mental health issues are so important. Having the leader in the Army as Surgeon General will only enhance that issue. And we are to say that none of this impacts readiness?

The Brigadier General's deployments include to Tikrit, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn, from 2009 to 2012. Most recently, Brigadier General Krueger served as the Commanding General of the Regional Health Command—Atlantic.

I, therefore, ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 283, Mary V. Krueger, to be Lieutenant General and the Surgeon General of the U.S. Army; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let me move on to another service. This is RADM Daniel Cheever, U.S. Navy, to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific.

One thing that we always think about in the military, when you think 28, 29, 30 years and the combat experience, is that the experience that they bring is just remarkable. It is, by the way, the best military in the world. And this Rear Admiral, in his career, has this in spades.

With 34 years in the Navy so far, Rear Admiral Cheever commanded Carrier Strike Group 4, Strike Fighter Squadron 147—the VFA 147. So a carrier strike group—that is commanding a carrier strike group. That is several ships around an aircraft carrier. That is giant experience, and we are making this person, this great leader, sit on the bench when our country is in peril.

Rear Admiral Cheever has extensive EUCOM and CENTCOM experience as a Naval Amphibious Liaison Element for the Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet and 17th Air Force, and as a battle director at Combined Air and Space Operations Center, U.S. Central Command.

Most recently, Rear Admiral Cheever served as the Director of Plans, Policies, and Strategy at the North American Aerospace Defense Command and Director of Policy and Strategy at U.S. Northern Command—so, again, a great warrior right here, a carrier strike group commander. Only America produces these great warriors.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 181, Daniel L. Cheever, to be Vice Admiral and Commander of the Naval Air Forces; Commander, Naval Air Force U.S. Pacific Fleet, the fleet that will take on China—we have a war there; we need this officer—that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President immediately be notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, this one is special to me, since we are doing all the different services: Space Force, Navy, Army, Air Force. This is Maj. Gen. Roger Turner, U.S. Marine Corps, to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General, Third Marine Expeditionary Force and Commander of Marine Forces Japan.

The III MEF, as we call it in the Marine Corps—we only have three MEFs

in the entire Marine Corps: I MEF, II MEF, and III MEF. This is the MEF in Okinawa, forward deployed, waiting, ready to protect our interests in the Taiwan Strait, in Indo-PACOM. Right now, III MEF doesn't have a three-star general; neither does I MEF.

Again, that doesn't impact readiness? Of course, it does. Anyone who knows anything about the military knows that that impacts readiness. One of the most important fighting forces in the American military, III MEF, needs a Lieutenant General in charge.

Maj. Gen. Roger Turner has served in the Marine Corps since 1984. He most recently served as Commanding General of the First Marine Division. That is at Camp Pendleton—really important, big division, infantry division, great experience.

Previously, he served as a Commanding General of the Marine Air Ground Task Force Command and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center—incredible combat experience, ready to go if there is a Taiwan Strait crisis or another challenge in the Indo-PACOM theater. We really need this general.

For that reason, we can confirm him right now—right now—by voice vote, singular, what the Senator from Alabama has been asking for. We will see.

So, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 191, Roger B. Turner, Jr., to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General, Third Marine Expeditionary Force, and Commander of Marine Forces Japan; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we have got another incredible officer that we are bringing to the floor this evening for a voice vote, and I do hope my colleague from Alabama will explain to everyone out there who is watching why he has asked for individual votes, and, when given the opportunity, he is objecting to individual votes. I feel like we are in a holding pattern. But maybe he will care to explain that to us in a moment.

But, right now, I do want to focus on this really incredible officer. I have had the opportunity to work with this officer, and I will talk about the most recent time that I interacted with him.

I am bringing to the floor right now VADM Brad Cooper on his nomination to be the next Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command.

I just saw Admiral Cooper in Bahrain. The day I saw him in Bahrain was

October 7—October 7, the day that Hamas overran defenses that separated the Gaza Strip and Israel; the day that Hamas went into Israel and murdered babies, raped women, cut babies out of their mother's stomachs, killed innocent elderly men and women, abducted Americans and took them into the Gaza Strip. That is the last day that I saw Brad Cooper—October 7, the terrorist strikes against Israel.

Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command—what region is that? That is the region where Israel is located. They need fine men and women at U.S. Central Command. This is an area where we have seen great terrorist threats.

Our dear friends, the Israelis, are struggling under the weight of Iran-backed terrorist proxies. At U.S. Central Command, we need leadership.

I am bringing forward VADM Brad Cooper. I will remind the body, just as I did with General Guillot, that I passed around the Republican conference the other day a discharge petition, which means we would have a vote on VADM Brad Cooper. One of the signatures on that petition is of my colleague from Alabama. He agreed to vote on this nominee, and we are giving him the opportunity to vote on this nominee, who will be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command, where we have what could be World War III brewing. Our friends the Israelis need every last good man and woman that the United States has serving in these important positions.

A little bit about VADM Brad Cooper: He is the son of a career Army officer. He attended high school in Montgomery, AL. Vice Admiral Cooper joined the Navy and received his commission from the U.S. Naval Academy. He is a career surface warfare officer. He served on guided missile cruisers, guided missile destroyers, aircraft carriers, amphibious assault ships, and successfully commanded both the USS *Russell* and the USS *Gettysburg*.

If anyone knows Admiral Cooper, he is a very humble man. He is very proud of the extraordinary men and women with whom he served on sea duty during his 9 deployments and 13 real-world operations all around our globe.

He has served in a variety of positions throughout his career, and he has been nominated to serve in the U.S. Central Command as their Deputy Commander.

He has been instrumental in maintaining the stability and security of the Middle East regions' maritime environment through NAVCENT. His skills and experience gained in this position at NAVCENT make him absolutely the right choice to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command, and I am excited to see him confirmed.

So, Madam President, we can confirm that nomination by voice vote tonight—tonight. We will vote on this man: 9 deployments, 13 real-world operations. He is a warrior.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 196, Charles B. Cooper, II, to be Vice Admiral; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we see another one bite the dust. It is a good thing I still have that discharge petition, and we will see Vice Admiral Cooper on the floor once again, and I hope that my colleague will choose to support him.

So I served in the Iowa Army National Guard, and I am really proud of that service. So I deployed overseas with the Iowa Army National Guard as a young Company Commander. I was the first female to command my unit. It was the same unit that my father had served in when he was a young Sergeant in the Iowa Army National Guard. He was a mechanic. He is the salt of the Earth.

And I was so proud to grow up and serve alongside some really incredible Iowa Army National Guardsmen. They worked so hard. They worked so hard on that deployment, Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Now, I was gone from 2003 to 2004. My daughter, she was 3 years old when I deployed, and she was nearly 5 years old when I returned home. So my daughter—again, she is a Second Lieutenant serving Active-Duty U.S. Army. And she told me—it has probably been a year ago—she had read an interesting statistic about children who have mothers that served in uniform. And she told me that that statistic was that 80 percent of the children who have mothers that wore the uniform will go into the service.

She said: Mom, I didn't have a choice. So she did; she went into the U.S. Army. And I encouraged that, and I am so proud of her for her service. Again, she is a young officer. I know she is disappointed by what she sees today—in particular, this evening.

And what I want the folks to know—and in a roundabout way I am coming to this. But all of these holds are affecting our men and women in the military. They are affecting the families of these men and women. Like I said, 80 percent of the children whose mothers wore the uniform are more likely to go in than those who didn't have a mother who served.

But right now, today, 37 percent of Active-Duty families are likely to recommend military service—37 percent. They see what is going on today.

And I have heard my colleague say we shouldn't be injecting politics into

the military and that President Biden did that and Lloyd Austin, Secretary of Defense, did that. But what are we doing to these military men and women? Politics are being injected right here, today. We have men and women who deserve to be promoted, to serve where their country knows they are needed.

And our military families today are saying: You know what, I don't want my kid serving in the military because they will be used as political pawns.

That is dishonorable, and it is abhorrent. So I served. Col. DAN SULLIVAN served. We understand the significance of service and being willing to lay down your life for a fellow countryman.

This next gentleman that I am bringing forward, we have something in common because this gentleman is a native of Spencer, IA. He enlisted into the Iowa Army National Guard. OK? He enlisted in 1981. He also was salt of the Earth, just like my father, who enlisted in the Iowa Army National Guard.

This gentleman is LTG James J. Mingus. He has been appointed to the grade of General and nominated to be the next Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. Again, he enlisted into the Iowa Army National Guard in 1981. He graduated from Winona State University in Minnesota, our neighbor to the north, and he commissioned into the Army infantry.

During more than 38 years of service, Lieutenant General Mingus has commanded at every echelon from company to brigade in addition to working in key staff positions in both Army, Special Operations Forces, and joint units. He is a decorated warfighter with extensive combat service. He deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom 12 times from 2001 to 2012.

Lieutenant General Mingus has distinguished himself with honor, having been awarded for meritorious achievement in a combat zone. He is a hard-working public servant who knows the needs of our soldiers and their families.

I have full confidence that he will continue to modernize the Army and maintain our highly trained and lethal force to fight and win our Nation's wars. The problem is, he can't do it if he is not serving in that position.

I firmly believe that his qualifications, record, and character—and, of course, his great home State of Iowa—make him the right nominee to serve in this important role.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: War hero Executive Calendar No. 288, James J. Mingus, to be General and Vice Chief of Staff of the Army; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, now, I have the honor and privilege of talking about MG John W. Brennan, Jr., on his appointment to the grade of Lieutenant General in the U.S. Army and his nomination to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Africa Command.

Major General Brennan is currently serving as Special Assistant to the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command. This is no paper pusher, Madam President—and I have heard that phrase.

Army Special Operations play a crucial role in competition and deterring great power war. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure this deserving officer, who earned this promotion, is confirmed to this key national security position.

The good Major General is a decorated warfighter with extensive combat service in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in the Inherent Resolve Campaign, having recently served as Commander of Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve just last year. He distinguished himself with honor, having been awarded a Bronze Star with "V" for valor.

I firmly believe that Major General Brennan's qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion, and I look forward to confirming him to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Africa Command, a very important position. Again, "V" for valor.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 130, John W. Brennan, Jr., to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commander, U.S. Africa Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, another great, decorated officer—and we are going to keep going because these men and women deserve to be confirmed.

Madam President, I am going to talk now about CAPT Frank Schlereth on his appointment to the grade of Rear Admiral, lower half, in the U.S. Navy. CAPT Frank Schlereth is currently serving as the Senior Defense Official and Defense Attache within the U.S. Embassy, Israel.

It is crucial at this time in history to ensure this deserving officer, who

earned this promotion, is recognized for serving in a key position to national security and regional stability. The Captain is a two-time Naval Attache, having served in Athens, Greece; and Tel-Aviv, Israel.

He has extensive experience within the Defense Intelligence Agency Directorate of Operations, having served as the Chief of Operations for the DIA, Defense Attache Service, and the East Asia Division Chief.

He is a decorated warfighter with extensive combat service, having deployed to Afghanistan in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom as a team leader in support of a sensitive collection mission.

Captain Schlereth distinguished himself with honor, having been awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V" for valorous achievement in a combat zone during his deployment.

I also believe that the Captain's qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this appointment and promotion.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 103, Frank G. Schlereth, III, to be Rear Admiral (lower half); that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we will proceed to COL Peter G. Hart.

I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 94, COL Peter G. Hart, to the grade of Brigadier General.

Colonel Hart is currently fulfilling a crucial role as an Army Strategist for the U.S. Central Command. As a 23-year combat veteran and retired Lieutenant Colonel of our great U.S. Army, I am proud to stand up for this valiant officer who has answered the selfless call to service and earned this promotion in the U.S. Army.

Again, I want to talk about making these individuals political pawns in the grand scheme. So the VFW had recently done a survey. And they did surveys in every State and overseas territory of their members.

These are veterans. Polls indicate there is a growing wedge between the veteran community and the colleagues on this side of the aisle and "political decisions that harm the troops will affect the decisions of BFW members in upcoming elections."

People don't like men and women who are used as political pawns, especially those who are sworn to be apolitical. Those are the men and women



who serve in uniform. There is a growing division. It will continue to grow wider.

So, therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Colonel Peter G. Hart to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Army, under Executive Calendar No. 94; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I just want to talk about an issue I just heard about from two officers just today on this issue of readiness, on this issue of maybe this whole episode is creating a "Fat Leonard" scandal 2.0 that is like I said earlier when the Navy had some of their top officers kind of wiped out due to corruption. They lost a whole generation of senior officers with specific fleet experience, which we are still actually dealing with.

What we are starting to see here—I am hearing it; I have a lot of contacts; I have my colleagues whom I have served with. We are starting to see that here. Imagine we are facing a really, really dangerous world, that we have Senate politics driving military officers—our best—I mean, are you listening to these bios? All 30, 35 years of incredible combat experience. And we are driving them out.

As Senator GRAHAM said, some are going to be timed out, eventually. A couple are hitting that already. If you get selected and you don't pin on by a certain time, you are gone. Think about how bitter you would be.

But here is the other thing. Just today, I heard it, too—I am not going to name them—Navy officers who are saying: You know, I think I am done with this. I did 28 years. I did seven deployments. My family sacrificed. And I am sitting here being held up, when my country needs me, on an issue I have nothing to do with—and, by the way, Navy, submarine commanders, aircraft carrier commanders, pilots—these guys can go out and make huge money. So I am hearing it. I am hearing it.

We—not we—some of us are driving our senior Admirals and Generals out. They are saying: I am done with this. I can serve my country another way. I can make a ton of money in the private sector. My family deserves it.

That is happening. That is happening. And it is wrong. It is wrong. We all know it is wrong. By the way, if we are here like a year from now and we are still dealing with this and we look back, we are like, holy cow, look at

these great combat veterans with all this experience, and they left us; they left us because we forced them out. We are going to look back at this episode and just be stunned at what a national security suicide mission this became.

By the way, I am so honored to be standing shoulder to shoulder, literally, here on the Senate floor with my good friend and colleague Senator ERNST. You know, we have the Army and Marine Corps represented right here on the floor. This is a joint op. It is a joint op. Protecting our troops. Fighting for our troops. That is what marines and soldiers do well. This is a joint op. And we are going to stay here until our list is done. Because you know what? There are a lot of people who sacrifice so much for this country.

And to my colleague from Alabama, you still haven't answered the question—this is regular order, by the way. All these noms have been voted out of committee. I am sure you voted for most of them. I voted for almost all of them. Regular order, out of committee. And again, I am quoting you: I am not blocking anyone from getting confirmed. I am not blocking a single vote. If they want those votes on these nominees one at a time, I am all for it, and we will probably vote for them.

That is the quote from my colleague from Alabama. So what is up with that? We are right here. One at a time. One at a time. Regular order.

This is regular order, by the way, because for 200 years, the Senate has voted for nominees by voice vote at one- and two- and three-star General levels. It is different for the four-star. But this is regular order.

So my colleague hasn't answered the question yet. It would be good to hear why because we are putting time and effort into it. I actually thought he was going to come down and say, Hey, you know what? You guys did what I mentioned, one at a time, each one, regular order.

So, what, are you going to make us vote on a Brigadier General with a Silver Star twice? That probably has never happened in U.S. history. I don't know. It would be good to get an answer to that question.

By the way, on Iowa, what a great story from my colleague. You know, I was doing some training in Alaska many years ago, and the Iowa National Guard was out there. These guys were huge, big. Got a picture, sent it back to Senator ERNST. Corn-fed. You don't want to mess with the Iowa National Guard, I would say that for sure.

So, Madam President, let's get back to this. Maybe my colleague will have a change of heart here. Maybe he will get back to folks—whoa, maybe we should. And, by the way, we have the perfect opportunity for someone in a really, really important billet. And this is for Maj. Gen. David Iverson, U.S. Air Force, to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commander of U.S. Forces, Korea. U.S. Forces, Korea is really, really important. It is run by a

four-star General. And this would be the Deputy Commander.

By the way, the Korean Peninsula could go any day. Tomorrow, we could be at war in Korea. I am a big Korean war history buff. Do you know what happened in 1950 in the Korean war? We had civilian and senior military leaders in America who did not care about readiness. Sound familiar? And when the North Koreans launched their surprise invasion, American soldiers by the thousands were killed because there was no readiness. We don't want that to happen again on the Korean Peninsula. We don't want it to happen. So this guy needs to be confirmed.

And look at his resume: Maj. Gen. David Iverson most recently served as the Vice Director for the Joint Force Development on the Joint Staff. His over 32 years in the military, served in a variety of flying duties to include evaluator instructor, flight commander, chief of weapons, director of operations, commander at the squadron level. He has commanded at the flight squadron, twice at the wing level. That is huge. Incredible military experience. Two wing commands. He also served as a congressional legislative liaison in the 609th Air Operations Center command in Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. Iverson is a command pilot with over 5,400 hours.

America, you should be proud of these people. And I know you all are. He has 5,400 hours, including 1,500 combat hours. And we are making this guy sit. We are making him sit—1,500 combat hours. F-15, TF30. I mean—Madam President, we should confirm this great American right now. And we have the opportunity to do it.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 187, David R. Iverson, to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commander, U.S. Forces Korea—Commander, Combined Air Component Command; United Nations Command, Commander, Combined Air Command, Combined Forces Command, Korea, and Commander, 7th U.S. Air Force, Pacific Air Forces; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, well, that was another downgrade of readiness for America right there.

Madam President, let me go into another very, very impressive military member. We don't talk about this part of our military that much; but, boy, oh boy, is it important. And this is for Maj. Gen. Andrew Gebara, of the U.S. Air Force, to be promoted to Lieutenant General and Deputy Chief of Staff

for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force.

Let me run that by you again: strategic deterrence with nukes and nuclear integration.

I would say that is a pretty darned important billet.

Let's hear about Major General Gebara's 32-year career. He has served as the Commander of the 325th Weapons Squadron, Eighth Air Force, and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center. Major General Gebara is a command pilot with more than 3,800 flight hours.

There you go. The best, most experienced military members in the world, right here, sitting on the sidelines, not in the game. On the bench. And we can change that right now; 46 combat air sorties, and everything—get this—from the A-10 to the B-2. This guy is a stud.

In support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Major General Gebara most recently served as Special Assistant to the Director of Staff of the Headquarters of the U.S. Air Force. And we can confirm this nomination by a voice vote right now.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 51, Andrew J. Gebara, to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, headquarters: U.S. Air Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, again, strategic nuclear deterrence. Pretty darned important. I guess he is going to have to sit on the sidelines for longer.

I want to go now to another element of our military, and that is Special Operations. And this is an opportunity for a really storied military leader, Lt. Gen. James Slife, U.S. Air Force, to be four-star General and Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force. Again, you have the Chiefs of Staff—those are the Joint Chiefs—and then they have the Vice Chiefs. The Vice Chiefs are so important because they run the enterprise of the Air Force. This General will essentially run the Air Force in so many ways. Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force. This is one of the most important nominations of the evening.

Let's hear about Lieutenant General Slife. Again, 33-year career. Putting all his time, effort—I am sure his family's effort—dedicated patriot to America. Has served most of his career in aviation special operations. Senator ERNST knows a lot about that. He has held

commands at the Air Force Special Operations Command, 1st Special Operations Wing, and 27th Special Operations Group—33 years. Imagine what this patriot has done to protect America. He probably can't talk about half of it. He has deployed extensively over three decades in support of combat operations all over the world, most recently in Afghanistan. Lieutenant General Slife most recently served as Deputy Chief of Operations for Headquarters, Air Force.

This General, right now, if we just have one Senator say "good to go," will be confirmed as Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force. Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 338, James C. Slife to be General and Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. This next one, I believe, is an empty billet. I am pretty sure. I have to double-check my math here.

This is Shoshana Chatfield to be Vice Admiral and U.S. Military Representative to NATO. NATO. There is a lot going on in NATO right now, and we don't have this Vice Admiral in her position as a Military Representative to NATO? That is not impacting readiness?

Let's hear about Rear Admiral Chatfield's 35-year naval career. She is a pilot. She has commanded HC-5 and, upon its disestablishment, was the Commanding Officer of HSC-25, the Island Knights. She subsequently commanded a Joint Provisional Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan, was a Type Wing Commander of the HSC Wing in the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and the Commander of the Joint Region Marianas.

Think about that experience. Think about that experience. We need people understanding INDOPACOM, Marianas, to take on China.

Operationally, she has flown the SH-3, the CH-46 Delta, the MH-60 Sierra, and deployed in helicopter detachments to the Western Pacific and the Arabian Gulf, supporting carrier strike groups and amphibious-ready group operations—carrier strike groups and amphibious-ready strike groups. Those are Marine amphibious-ready groups. She has done both, INDOPACOM and in the Middle East.

Now she is going to be a three-star Representative Admiral at NATO, and we are keeping her on the bench. We

could confirm her right now. Look at that experience—35 years as a naval aviator.

She most recently served as the President of the Naval War College, so she is brilliant as well. Sitting on the bench.

Madam President, we need to confirm her now; therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 90, Shoshana S. Chatfield to be Vice Admiral and U.S. Military Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let's go directly to our great U.S. Navy. This is James P. Downey to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command.

Again, we all know that the Navy is the critical service. They are all critical, but when it comes to China, we have some catching up to do. This is a critical command billet.

Let's hear about Rear Admiral Downey, James P. Downey. He has served in the Navy for 36 years.

I would like to—Senator ERNST, maybe we just need to add up the experience that we are talking about tonight. Everybody is at least 30 years. It is like over 1,000 years. It makes you proud as an American. It makes me sure darn proud.

Thank you, Rear Admiral Downey, for your 36 years of service to our great Nation and great U.S. Navy.

He served as the Commander of the Navy Regional Maintenance Center—boy, do we need expertise in maintenance for our Navy—and as the Program Executive Officer for U.S. Aircraft Carriers. Wow, that is great experience, and we need that every day.

He most recently served as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition. Additional operational assignments include Intelligence Briefing Officer to the Commander and Chief, Combined Forces Command, U.S. Forces Korea, and multiple deployments in the North Atlantic, Baltic, Arctic Circle—probably up in my neck of the woods in Alaska—and the Indo-Pacific. Incredible experience here.

We need to promote him, and we can do it right now with a voice vote, right here. We are bringing up individual nominees, individual votes, as my colleague from Alabama requested, so let's do it.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of

the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 113, James P. Downey to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let's go back to my beloved Marine Corps. I love the Marine Corps. I mean, I love all the services, but I really love the Marine Corps.

Madam President, this is another critical element of the Marine Corps. Of course, everybody thinks about infantry with the marines, but our aviation component is so important and so darn good. Marine Corps aviation has made Americans proud for decades and decades and decades.

We have Bradford J. Gering to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps Aviation Section at Headquarters, Marine Corps.

Maj. Gen. Bradford Gering has served in the Marine Corps since 1988. He most recently served as the Commanding General of I MEF.

Just so everybody knows, I MEF, which I talked about earlier, is the I Marine Expeditionary Force, commonly known in the Marine Corps as the Imperial MEF, probably the best combined warfighting machine in the U.S. military. I am a little biased, but it is true.

He is a I MEF Commander. In the Marine Corps, you don't get any better than that. You don't get any more experienced than that. And he has had multiple deployments. He is a combat veteran with unbelievable experience, and he is sitting on the bench.

We need to get him in the fight, and we can do it right now. We can confirm this great American patriot by voice vote right now. Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 111, Bradford J. Gering to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant, Aviation Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we have another opportunity to vote on another outstanding officer. This one is COL Scott D. Wilkinson, and he has been promoted to the grade of Brigadier General.

As an Army veteran myself, I know and I understand the importance of recognizing this deserving officer who earned his promotion in the U.S. Army. He is a decorated warfighter. He distinguished himself with honor for meritorious achievement in a combat zone during his deployment.

As a Captain—a young O3 is what we call them in the Army—Colonel Wilkinson provided precision close air support over a 6-hour period using night vision goggles, with zero illumination, in a complex urban environment, enabling the assault and exfiltration of a combined joint task force under heavy enemy fire.

I am proud to be here on this floor as well standing shoulder to shoulder with my Marine Corps friend, Col. DAN SULLIVAN of Alaska.

You can read through this little, brief description of COL Scott D. Wilkinson.

For those of us who have served and have been part of a team and have been deployed, we understand the significance of having close air support.

I served as a Transportation Company Commander when I deployed, and I will tell you that having close air support—knowing they were a phone call away—always made my drivers and me feel a lot better about things. I know Colonel SULLIVAN, as an infantryman, also understands what it is to have that close air support and how important those men and women overhead are during battle.

So, COL Scott D. Wilkinson, I am really glad to give you close air support tonight. Those of us who have worked on a team understand how significant it is to have one another's back and make sure these men and women are protected.

With this close air support, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: COL Scott D. Wilkinson to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Army under Executive Calendar No. 94; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we are going to move next to COL Joseph W. Wortham II.

I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 94, COL Joseph W. Wortham II to the grade of Brigadier General.

Again, we are seeing a pattern. We have Colonel Wortham. He is a decorated warfighter and, again, as a Captain, as an O3, his brave and decisive actions saved the life of a severely wounded American and defeated a large enemy force in Iraq in 2005.

My colleague Colonel SULLIVAN, Senator SULLIVAN from Alaska—we have been talking about what it is to serve and the way these heroes have reacted in combat. Because of Colonel Wortham's actions in combat, he saved the life of a fellow countryman, saved the life of an individual willing to lay down his life for his country.

Colonel Wortham was willing to do the same. He saved the life of a severely wounded American, and he defeated a large enemy force in Iraq in 2005. Again, he was part of an incredible team. He didn't turn his back on his teammate; he saved his life. It is crucial to ensure that this deserving officer, who earned this promotion, is afforded the opportunity to be recognized.

Colonel Wortham, again, is part of a glorious team and was first commissioned into the Army in 1996 through Auburn University's Reserve Officer Training Corps.

During his 25 years of service, he participated in operations in Egypt, Israel, and Lebanon, as well as combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. His understanding of Kurdish culture and training in the Turkish language proved essential for his repeated deployments to the Kurdish regions of Iraq and Syria.

I firmly believe that Colonel Wortham's qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion, and by the fact that he went through Auburn University's ROTC Program.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: War hero who saved the life of a fellow soldier, COL Joseph W. Wortham II, to be Brigadier General in the United States Army under Executive Calendar No. 94; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. And the objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Next, Madam President, we will move on to CAPT Thomas A. Donovan—CAPT Thomas A. Donovan, for appointment to Rear Admiral (lower half). Captain Donovan is currently serving as the Executive Officer to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

I know Captain Donovan, and I know of his service. I will not go into details tonight on this floor. I will explain it

to Members who are on this floor, off the floor, if they would like to talk about Captain Donovan.

I truly believe that we must stand up for the security and protection of our Nation, and I am proud to recognize this deserving officer, who earned this promotion, and highlight his selfless call to serve.

I firmly believe that Captain Donovan's qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this appointment and promotion.

Now, again, I know Captain Donovan. I know him quite well. There may be mumbblings over some of these younger officers. We have spent just a brief time talking about them on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Those who are out watching on C-SPAN, or maybe in clips tomorrow, will understand why some of these presentations are very brief.

For those in this Chamber that don't understand why these presentations are very brief, they shouldn't be here objecting to these nominations. I will let that sink in.

OK, CAPT Thomas A. Donovan.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: CAPT Thomas A. Donovan to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the Navy, under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. And I am very sorry to hear that.

Again, we have got another very short presentation here. I will have to explain it to my colleagues that maybe haven't served why they are brief.

Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 97, CAPT Joshua Lasky, for appointment to Rear Admiral (lower half).

As a 23-year combat veteran myself and a retired Lieutenant Colonel of our great U.S. Army, I am proud to stand up for this valiant officer who has answered the selfless call to service and earned this promotion in the U.S. Navy.

I firmly believe that Captain Lasky's qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion. And, again, I will have to visit with folks off the floor to explain more about Captain Lasky. He is fully deserving of this promotion, and I am very sorry to acknowledge that he also will probably be objected to—one more hero that will be objected to this evening.

So not only have we seen Senator SCHUMER dragging his feet on these nominations, but tonight we have had

the exceptional opportunity—I think we have had maybe 40 of these nominations brought forward, but we are still dragging our feet on these. We are voting on them one by one, one by one, one by one—just as our colleague asked, one by one. These are men and women of honor. They are sworn to uphold the Constitution, the very Constitution that my colleague is saying he is protecting. They are sworn to uphold, and they would do it with their blood. Some of these men have done it with their blood. I am waiting.

So, Madam President, we can confirm this nomination by voice vote right here, tonight, individually—individually brought up, just as my colleague has asked.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: CAPT Joshua Lasky to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the Navy under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am still—I think we are both, Senator ERNST and I. We are still just kind of confused on the “one by one,” as my colleague and friend—he is my friend. So I mean that sincerely. He said: I am all for it if nominees come up one at a time. I am all for it. That is a quote. That is what we are doing—one at a time, one by one, as Senator ERNST has said.

And some of these, you know, if you serve in the military long enough, you know these people personally. And the next nominee I want to talk about I know quite well, Kenneth Wilsbach. He is a four-star General right now, and he is in charge of the Pacific Air Forces—incredible experience. General Wilsbach will move in to be the U.S. Air Force Commander of Air Combat Command, one of the top billets in the U.S. Air Force—a guy with incredible experience, with a wonderful wife and a wonderful family.

He served as the Alaska Command Commander. That is the subcomponent command under INDOPACOM and NORTHCOM for Alaska—a three-star General in charge of all forces in Alaska. So I know him. He is an exceptional patriot and so deserving of this promotion.

And, by the way, it has nothing to do with the policy dispute that we actually agree on, all my colleagues here. We think what Secretary Austin did to light this fire was not helpful at all. The civilian military leadership over at the Pentagon—that is where I do

agree with my colleague from Alabama. Certainly, there is more focus on nonwarfighting issues—the civilians, not the uniformed ones.

But let's go back to General Wilsbach, a 38-year career in the Air Force—38 years. I know this guy, a great family. He is a patriot warrior. He has commanded a fighter squad and operation group, two wings, two numbered Air Forces, and held various staff assignments, including Director of Operations, Combined Air Operations Center; Director of Operations U.S. Central Command.

Central Command—that is the Middle East. I was a staff officer out there, for a year and a half, to our CENTCOM Commander many years ago.

So General Wilsbach has great Middle East experience, which we need today, but he also has great INDOPACOM experience. Right now, he is the Commander of Pacific Air Forces—right now. He is doing a great job. If there is going to be a war with China, this is the guy who knows it. I mean, you can't ask for better experience.

Let's continue with General Wilsbach. He is a command pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying—and we are going to put him on a bench—in multiple aircrafts, primarily F-15Cs, F16Cs, MC-12s, and F-22 Alphas. We have a lot of those in Alaska. And he has flown 71 combat missions in Operation Northern Watch, Southern Watch, and Operation Enduring Freedom.

As I mentioned, General Wilsbach currently serves as the Commander of the Pacific Air Forces, the Air Component Commander of U.S. INDOPACOM, and the Executive Director of the Pacific Air Combat Operations staff.

A great patriot, whom we need to confirm right now—we can do it. We can do it right now by voice vote—regular order, by the way, regular order. Don't say it is not because it is, and we are doing them individually, which is what was asked.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 198, Kenneth S. Wilsbach, to be Commander of U.S. Air Combat Command, one of the most important commands in the U.S. Air Force—in the U.S. military, let's face it—that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let me talk about another really important billet that I know a lot about, given that a lot of its assets are in

Alaska, and, again, this is such an important billet to not leave without a leader. This will be for Heath A. Collins to be Lieutenant General and the Director of the Missile Defense Agency.

What does MDA do? What does the Missile Defense Agency do? Oh, it just protects America from all incoming missiles. Huh, that is not important. That is what the Missile Defense Agency does. Maj. Gen. Heath Collins, U.S. Air Force, needs to be promoted to be the head of the MDA.

So in Alaska, we call ourselves the cornerstone of missile defense. All the ground-based missile interceptors that protect the whole country are in Alaska, at Fort Greely. All the radar systems that essentially can track anything coming from North Korea, Iran, it is all in Alaska. We protect everywhere: Iowa, Alabama, Rhode Island, Florida. That is Alaska. We protect the whole darn Nation, our great warriors up there, and the Missile Defense Agency is in charge of overseeing all of it. So it is pretty darn important, especially with Iran wanting to lob missiles all over the world.

Let's talk about Maj. Gen. Heath Collins. Again, with a 30-year Air Force career, he served as a program executive officer for fighters and bombers, System Program Director for the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent Program, Deputy Director for Infrared Space Systems Directorate and the Remote Sensing Systems Directorate, and Commander of Space Based Infrared System Space Squadron.

Now, I am not going to repeat what I just said, but he is obviously incredibly smart. Think about all that he has commanded and the technological elements of his experience to protect America. Almost every billet he has had has been about protecting America. He is perfectly qualified to be the Director of the Missile Defense Agency.

He recently served as the Program Executive for the ground-based weapons systems for the Missile Defense Agency, Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

He probably loves the Crimson Tide, or maybe I should say Auburn. I don't want to get in trouble in that regard with my colleague here.

So, again, America needs the Director of Missile Defense—like, hello. So let us do it. Let us do it right now. Here is the opportunity. The Missile Defense Agency is really, really important. My state knows a lot about it.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 237, Heath A. Collins, to be Lieutenant General and Director of the Missile Defense Agency; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, by the way, thank you for presiding tonight. It is important, what we are doing, and we always need people, and all the staff. It is getting a little late here. So we appreciate it. This is important for our country, and maybe we are going to get a change of heart from my colleague at a certain point because I am going to turn now to the Navy. I got a bunch of nominations that relate to the Navy.

Now, I have been very critical of the Biden administration. The President's budget the last 3 years has shrunk the Army, shrunk the Navy, shrunk the Marine Corps; right? That is the wrong message to send to Xi Jinping and Putin right now. But we do need these leaders here. And, by the way, a lot of leaders are frustrated with the Biden administration, but they are professionals. So they don't say anything. They are apolitical. They are not involved in this dispute that is riling up their promotions.

But let me just talk about a really important member of the Navy, and I happen to know a lot about it since I serve on the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Naval Academy.

This is the nomination of Yvette M. Davids to be Vice Admiral and Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy.

Now, as I mentioned, I have served on the Board of the Naval Academy since I got here. One of the biggest honors of my life was when Senator McCain, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, asked me to sit on that Board in his stead. And he told me: DAN, I went there. My dad went there. My grandpa went there. This is really important.

So I pretty much make every Board meeting. I take it very seriously, and I will tell you this: This is one of the best, if not the best—sorry to my colleague from Rhode Island—military academy, but college in the United States. I mean, especially now that we are seeing this. Look, I went to Harvard, and I am so embarrassed by that place that I don't even like admitting it, what is happening right now on the campus there, anti-Semitism, weak leadership.

The Naval Academy, our service academies are fantastic. They are not perfect, but they do such a great job. But they need leadership. And I have gotten to know the other Naval Academy Superintendents—fantastic leaders. Right now, we don't have one. The billet is empty. We have an acting. Actually, he is acting because he is getting ready to go to the Seventh Fleet, but my colleague from Alabama just didn't allow him to go to the Seventh Fleet. So the Acting Superintendent of the Naval Academy should have been out to the Seventh Fleet.

Let us look at Yvette Davids' bio—so impressive. She is a Rear Admiral right

now, with 34 years in the Navy. She commanded the USS *Curtis*, deploying to the Western Pacific and the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, and the USS *Bunker Hill*, serving as the Air Defense Commander for the Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group. Think how impressive this is. Her most recent operational assignment was as Commander of the Nimitz Strike Group. She was a Commander of a carrier strike group in the Carrier Strike Group 11. That is the ultimate in American power.

You can't teach that in 2 years. It takes 30 years. She can go teach Naval Academy students right now—the next leaders of the Marine Corps and the U.S. Navy—and she is sitting on the bench.

Her flag assignments include Senior Military Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs at the State Department, Carrier Strike Group Command, Chief of Staff, U.S. Southern Command, and the Director of the Navy's Learning to Action Board drive team.

Rear Admiral Davids is currently the Acting Commander for Naval Surface Force for the U.S. Pacific Fleet—an incredible bio. The Naval Academy—I know it because I am on the Board. We want her to get there. We certainly want her to get there in time for the Army-Navy game so the U.S. Naval Academy can beat Army badly. Sorry, my colleagues from the Army. We got to have a little fun here tonight.

So let us do it right now, by voice vote, for this great patriot.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 192, Yvette M. Davids, to be Vice Admiral and Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is noted.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let us continue with the Navy—again, such an important service. They are all important. But in a big throw-down with China, we have to have a stronger Navy, a bigger Navy, a more lethal Navy, and this next nominee is going to be that person—RADM Brendan R. McLane, U.S. Navy, to be Vice Admiral and Naval Surface Forces Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

What does that mean? That is the Surface Commander for all U.S. naval forces in the INDOPACOM theater, who would be in charge if we had a contingency with China. That is pretty darn important.

So let us hear about Rear Admiral McLane's 33-year Navy career.

Again, are you noticing something? It is 33, 34, 35—General Wilsbach, 38 years. Patriots—and now they are like: Wait. Why am I stuck? Why are they going after my career? It is something I have nothing to do with.

It is wrong. We all know it is wrong. It is wrong.

In Rear Admiral McLane's 33-year naval career, he has served as the Commodore of Destroyer Squadron 50—a huge deal—commanded Task Force 55 and Coalition Task Force 152, U.S. Fifth Fleet. Additionally, he served aboard the USS *Lewis B. Puller*, the USS *Vicksburg*, the USS *Moosbrugger*, Destroyer Squadron 14, the USS *Simpson*. Jeez, look at all of these commands and deployments.

While in command of the USS *Kearny*, his ship won the Battle "E" and Battenberg Cup and deployed with the Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group for the U.S. Fifth Fleet. By the way, the "Ike" carrier strike group is in the Middle East right now.

In major command, he served as Commodore of Destroyer Squadron 50, commanded Task Force 55 and Coalition Task Force 152, U.S. Fifth Fleet—again, the Middle East.

Most recently, Rear Admiral McLane served as the 60th Commander of Naval Surface Force Atlantic.

The amount of experience we are hearing tonight that we are not letting go fight and protect our nation—it makes you humble, by the way, when you hear about all these great patriots, but it sure makes me frustrated. They are on the bench.

But let us try and get them off the bench. We can confirm this nominee by voice vote right now.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 193, Brendan R. McLane, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Naval Surface Forces; Commander, Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am going to talk about one more Navy officer. We have a number to go. I am going to do this quick. This is Christopher S. Gray to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Navy Installations Command. He has got a great resume, a 34-year Navy career.

Rear Admiral Gray has been the Commanding Officer of the Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron before reporting as Operations Officer aboard

the USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, where he conducted back-to-back deployments to the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

At sea, Gray has served in operational assignments with Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadrons and a flag aide to the Commander in the U.S. Second Fleet, Striking Fleet Atlantic.

More recently, Rear Admiral Gray served as the Commander of the Navy's Mid-Atlantic Region on June 30, 2020.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 195, Christopher S. Gray, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Navy Installations Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I would ask that my colleagues yield so that I can ask unanimous consent to prepare for tomorrow's session.

Ms. ERNST. I yield the floor.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

##### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 367; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Herro Mustafa Garg, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

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

The nomination was confirmed.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, November 2; that following the prayer and pledge, the journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Franchetti nomination; further, that if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. REED. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of my Republican colleagues.

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

Mr. REED. Madam President, I yield the floor, and I yield back to the Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS— EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, our next nomination is a fine officer serving in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. Our colleague from Alaska, Col. DAN SULLIVAN, also serves in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. I will read a little bit about this gentleman, and we will take an individual vote on the floor this evening, I am hoping, because this gentleman does deserve to be promoted and placed into his next position.

So this gentleman is Maj. Gen. Leonard F. Anderson IV, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, to be Lieutenant General and Commander of Marine Forces Reserves, Commander Marine Forces, South.

So here is a little bit about the good General. The Major General most recently served as the Commanding General of the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. He does have some prior experience as well in serving as the Assistant Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations, but Major General Anderson also served in a marine aviation logistics squadron. So it is interesting that the Executive Calendar number for Maj. Gen. Leonard F. Anderson is 248 as I also—not in the Marines, but I served in an aviation support battalion, which is a logistics battalion, supporting aviation, the 248th Aviation Support Battalion. This gentleman has



served in the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron, and his experience has allowed him to support those men and women who are in the air, similar to the circumstance we talked about prior with a pilot who provided close air support during combat. These are the guys and gals who keep those aircraft up, flying, fueled, maintained—ready to go.

So this is an important position he is going into. It is the Marine Forces Reserves, Commander Marine Forces South, and I am hoping we will be able to take a vote on him this evening.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 248, Leonard F. Anderson IV to be Lieutenant General and Commander Marine Forces Reserves Commander, Marine Forces South; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. OK, Madam President. We are just going to keep going. We have quite a few exceptional men and women who are proud to defend our glorious Nation. Many of them, again, have served in combat. We just came out of 20 years of the Global War on Terror, and we know what service is. Many of us know what service is. The Presiding Officer—her father certainly knew what service was, so I thank him very much for his service to our Nation.

So we will proceed to Executive Calendar No. 262, Timothy D. Haugh. I apologize to the gentleman if I am mispronouncing his name. It is H-A-U-G-H. He is a member of the U.S. Air Force, and he has been nominated to be the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command and Director, National Security Agency.

At a time when we see many nations around the world using grey-zone techniques to infiltrate various infrastructures in the United States of America and that of allied nations, we know how important Cyber Command is to protect not only our military assets but then to track and push back against those foreign agents who are going after civilian infrastructure as well.

Lieutenant General Haugh's 32-year career has been exemplary, and he has commanded intelligence and cyber commands at every level as the Commander of 16th Air Force, Air Forces Cyber, and Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber, where he was responsible for more than 44,000 personnel conducting worldwide operations.

The Lieutenant General most recently served as Deputy Commander of U.S. Cyber Command. Anyone, if they are paying attention, understands how important Cyber Command is. Again, the Lieutenant General has served as the Deputy Commander of U.S. Cyber Command. We would love to see him confirmed this very evening, with a single vote, into the position of Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, and Director of the National Security Agency—an extremely important position.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 262, Timothy D. Haugh, to be Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, and Director of our National Security Agency; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. REED). Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, our next nominee as well is hoping to be confirmed this evening, again, by an individual vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Just as my colleague has asked, has demanded, my colleagues and I this evening are attempting to satisfy that demand for single votes on the floor of the U.S. Senate. We are providing that avenue of opportunity this evening and are hoping that we will see the confirmations of some of America's finest fighting men and women, who have absolutely nothing to do with the policy that has been proposed by Secretary Lloyd Austin.

In front of us, we have MG Charles D. Costanza. He is a member of the U.S. Army. He is being nominated as Lieutenant General and Commanding General of V Corps.

Over Major General Costanza's 32-year career—again, another plus 30 years of experience and decorations during war—he has served as the Commanding General of the 3rd Infantry Division, the Deputy Chief of Staff for U.S. Army Forces Command, and the Director of Training for the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff. Major General Costanza's deployments include to Iraq in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Major General Costanza has most recently served as Special Assistant to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Forces Command.

Once again, as an individual vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination of this fine individual: Executive Calendar No. 290, Charles D. Costanza to be Lieutenant General and Com-

manding General, V Corps; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. OK. We will move on to the next conferee, and we will bring to the table now No. 291, James H. Adams III to be Lieutenant General, and this is a fellow marine.

Mr. SULLIVAN. "Oorah."

Ms. ERNST. "Oorah."

OK. A fellow marine.

To my good friend and colleague, Col. DAN SULLIVAN, Senator SULLIVAN of Alaska, we have Maj. Gen. James H. Adams III to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources Headquarters of U.S. Marine Corps.

Brigadier General Hanson has most recently served as the Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Operations for Air Combat Command. A number of us who serve in the Senate have worn the uniform of our Nation and have deployed, and we understand how important these activities are, especially when you have a good friend at Mobilization and Operations for Air Combat Command.

Through the mobilization process, there are a lot of logistics there in moving folks around. So we know that Brigadier General Hanson is very well qualified to move into this position at Programs and Resources at the Headquarters of the U.S. Marine Corps. He has served in numerous positions at the squadron, the group wing, and numbered Air Force and Combatant Command levels as an Active-Duty and traditional Reservist and individual mobility augmenting member.

General Hanson has flown the A-10 and F-16 in a variety of operational assignments and is a command pilot with more than 3,400 flying hours and over 200 combat hours. He has deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Willing Spirit, and Enduring Freedom.

Mr. President, I bring forward to you for an individual vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, as requested by my colleague. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 291, James H. Adams III to be Lieutenant General; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. It is good to see the Presiding Officer in the Chair. I appreciate his being here.

Mr. President, several of my nominations that I have been trying to get my colleague to agree with—again, he still hasn't answered the quote "If they want to vote on these nominees one at a time, I am all for it. I will probably vote for them." He still hasn't answered that. We are doing it. We are doing it. This is not a joke either. We are watching the experience of America's greatest military generation probably since World War II just kind of being flushed down a river right now. Just listen to this.

Now, the one thing that is really disturbing to me is how many of these nominees are from the U.S. Navy. My dad was in the Navy. I love the U.S. Navy. But we know that the Navy right now is being stressed. The President sent two carrier strike groups over to the Middle East. We need carrier strike groups in the INDOPACOM.

President Biden—and I criticize him a lot for this—is shrinking the Navy. That is idiotic. But our Navy officers and enlisted are going through a really stressful period because they are needed all over the world, and they are ready or are trying to be ready for any kind of contingency. It is tough to do a 9-month deployment and then come around, do the maintenance, and get back at it.

But what I have been noticing is how many of these holds are impacting the Navy. I am going to go through like five more right now. I just did five. If we want to be a global, capable, powerful nation, especially today, you need a strong U.S. Navy.

And the idea of reading these military members' experiences and how there is this big jam-up now, that this is not impacting readiness is patently absurd—patently absurd—with all due respect to my colleague.

So let's just keep talking about the Navy and the men and women in the Navy and the great experience that they have. We need a lot of help from the Navy right now, and we have the Senate making leaders in the Navy sit on the bench. So let's talk about some of these leaders, and maybe my colleague will budge—maybe my colleague will budge.

Let's talk about James E. Pitts to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Requirements and Capabilities, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. Rear Admiral Pitts, a 38-year career in the Navy—there you go, 38 years—let's sit him on the bench during this really difficult time. It includes extensive numerous deployments on nuclear attack submarines. Do you think we need that experience in the South China Sea

right now? That is one of our great strategic advantages over the Chinese—notably, as the Commander of USS Tucson and the Submarine Squadron 7 and a number of shore assignments in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Naval Submarine School, and the Joint Staff.

So we have one of America's top naval submarine-experienced Admirals, which is exactly what Xi Jinping and the Chinese fear, and he is sitting on the bench over a dispute, which is a serious dispute. I don't deny that at all. Again, I am where the Senator from Alabama is on that. But these guys have nothing to do with it. All we are doing is hurting our own national security by keeping them on the bench.

So let's get him confirmed right now. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 197, James E. Pitts, to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Requirements and Capabilities, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, here we go again, more Navy. Like I said, the Navy is stressed, but we do have a great Navy. God love the U.S. Navy. And our submarine force, like I said, keeps Xi Jinping and his communist dictator admirals up at night. And it should because we could crush them with our Navy, as long as it is ready—as long as it is ready.

Well, let's see whom we have next, whom we are holding up next. RADM Robert Gaucher, U.S. Navy, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Naval Submarine Forces Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Commander of Allied Submarine Command. It sounds like a pretty darn important bill, if you think subs are important, which they are critical.

Let's hear about Admiral Gaucher. He is currently Director of Strategic Integration, the N2, the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral Gaucher's prior operational assignments include service in both fast attack and ballistic missile subs. Who has that experience? No one else in the whole world but our Admirals. It includes service as a division officer, USS *Flying Fish*, SSN-673; navigator operations officer, USS *Oklahoma City*, SSN-723; executive officer, USS *Maryland*; commanding officer, USS *City of Corpus Christi*; and Commodore of Submarine Development Squadron 5.

I certainly hope that this isn't one of these Admirals who is going to be like:

You know what, 35 years, I have all of this experience, I am sick of this. I am leaving.

Could you imagine if this Admiral, with this submarine experience, walked out the door because of the games being played right now? That is a risk. That is a risk, and we don't seem to give a damn. I give a damn.

During these tours, he completed three strategic deterrent patrols in U.S. submarines, as well as deployments to the Arctic—my neighborhood—the Caribbean, North Atlantic, and the Mediterranean. This is incredible submarine experience.

By the way, Xi Jinping is watching us right now going: I can't believe they are not letting these guys command. I am scared to death of subs.

He is loving this, so is Putin. They are loving it. How dumb can we be, man?

But we can confirm this guy, if my colleague just has a change of heart, because we are going to bring them up individually.

So, therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 204, Robert M. Gaucher, to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Naval Submarine Forces Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, and Commander of Allied Submarine Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we are going to continue with the U.S. Navy. Again—I just thought of this—the Chinese admirals and their military, they are probably watching this debate right now, going: I can't believe my luck. I can't believe our luck. Maybe we should attack Taiwan tomorrow.

The whole Navy is being held up. Let's go to another Navy officer.

This is Daniel W. Dwyer to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

OK. We have had a lot of good bios here tonight, with a lot of experience. When I saw Vice Admiral Dwyer's experience, I was like: Wow. This should scare the heck out of every Chinese admiral, every Chinese military official when they read this guy's bio.

So let me read it. I hope we can get him confirmed because he is sitting on the bench, and the Chinese are cheering.

Over Vice Admiral Dwyer's 35-year naval career—there we go; 35 years, 40 years—he has commanded Strike

Fighter Squadron, VFA-27; Provincial Reconstruction Team, Kunar Province, Afghanistan; Fleet Replacement Squadron, VFA-106; Carrier Air Wing 8; Carrier Air Wing 17.

As a flag officer—that means as an Admiral—Admiral Dwyer commanded the Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group, the big stick that every country in the world, including China, fears. He commanded the Teddy Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group. That is unbelievable experience. And he was the 36th Chief of Naval Air Training.

Vice Admiral Dwyer is a career F/A-18 naval aviator, a graduate of the Navy Fighter Weapons School, a.k.a. TOPGUN, in which he completed eight carrier deployments to the Western Pacific, North Atlantic, Mediterranean, and North Arabian Sea, supporting Operation Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, and New Dawn, flying over 75 combat missions.

Vice Admiral Dwyer was most recently the Commander of the Second Fleet and Joint Forces Command.

Xi Jinping reads about a guy like this, and he is scared to death, and we bench him over a dispute Vice Admiral Dwyer has nothing to do with. But maybe we can fix that right now.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 180, Daniel W. Dwyer, to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations—so dammed qualified; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, here we go, crushing the Navy. Here is another Navy Admiral that we are going to have him sit on the bench. This is kind of remarkable. I mean, we are going to get to about 60 of these tonight. The experience here is unbelievable, but the U.S. Navy is really being hurt by this, and we need a strong Navy.

Again, the Chinese are like—they are watching it, I guarantee you.

Hello, guys.

And they are like: Gosh. I can't believe how dumb these guys are.

So let's keep talking about whom we are going to bench now. This is Douglas G. Perry to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Second Fleet, Commander of Joint Forces Command Norfolk.

Let's look at Rear Admiral Perry's incredibly impressive career—over 30 years. He began his career serving as a sea division officer, Navy diver, aboard

the USS Pittsburgh, SSN-720; executive officer, operations officer aboard Submarine NR-1; and executive officer of the USS Maine. These are all subs. This is another great Admiral with great submarine experience, just what keeps the Chinese up at night, and we are going to bench him. That is SSBN-741.

His deployment experiences span the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic, and Pacific—essentially, the whole world. As commanding officer of the USS Pasadena, SSN-752, he led the ship on highly successful deployments to the Eastern and Western Pacific. Again, that is a sub.

Perry has served as Commander of the Submarine Development Squadron 5, where he led Submarine Force Development of Unmanned Systems and Tactics and Employment and commanded the Navy squadron of Seawolf-class fast-attack subs. These guys are all submariners. The Chinese are scared to death of them, and we are benching them. What are we doing?

Most recently, Perry served as Director of Undersea Warfare Division of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He is another great submariner to keep Xi Jinping up at night, and we are not going to allow him to get confirmed. But maybe we will.

So, Mr. President, as my colleague had asked, we are bringing individual votes. He still hasn't answered the question why he is not doing what he said he was going to do. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 205, Douglas G. Perry, to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Second Fleet and Commander of Joint Forces Command Norfolk; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I have one more before I turn it over to my colleague from Iowa. It is a joint operation here. The only reason I am doing one more is because, guess what, another Navy officer—another Navy officer. The Chinese are like: Man, I can't believe it. We have been wanting to take out the U.S. Navy for decades, and the U.S. Senate is doing it right now.

So what do we have here, another Vice Admiral, VADM Craig Clapperton, U.S. Navy, to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Fleet Cyber Command, 10th Fleet Commander, Navy Space Command—boy, oh boy.

He has had almost 35 years in the U.S. Navy. He has commanded the Shadowhawks of VAQ-141, the U.S. 6th

Fleet, and the NATO command ship, USS Mount Whitney, the USS Theodore Roosevelt. That is a carrier, Carrier Strike Group 12.

These guys are incredible. As an American, it makes you almost want to weep, how great they are.

Listen to this career: During his command tours and his ship and squadron tours, he supported Operation Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, New Dawn, Inherent Resolve, and operated in the Baltic, Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, and Pacific Ocean.

Some of the best naval officers in America, certainly, right here, tonight. And the Chinese are scared to death of Vice Admirals like this, and we are going to let them sit on the bench. But maybe not. So we can confirm him right now by voice vote, individual voice vote, which is what our colleague has asked for.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 138, Craig A. Clapperton to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fleet Cyber Command; Commander, Tenth Fleet; and Commander, Navy Space Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, so I am going to pick up where my colleague is leaving off. We will keep on with the Space Force theme as we go forward here.

I am bringing forward another really fantastic nominee, and this is Maj Gen Douglas A. Schiess. And I apologize again if I am getting these names wrong, but, heck, maybe we will get them confirmed tonight, and we won't have to read it again on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

So Maj Gen Douglas A. Schiess, U.S. Space Force, to be Lieutenant General and Commander, U.S. Space Forces—Space/Combined Joint Force Space Component Commander—again, serving in a joint force, just as Senator SULLIVAN and I are operating as a joint force here on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

We have another really great nominee with a lot of years of service to this incredible country. He has a 31-year career. And we have heard a lot of these guys. They are 30-plus. We have seen some lower officers just being promoted to Brigadier General. But let me tell you, these men and women who have over 30 years of service are to be commended. As my colleague from

Alaska has said, they have been put on the bench. I would think we would want the players with the most experience, the most finesse, the means to get a job done—I think we would want them in the game.

So Maj Gen Douglas Schiess has that 31-year career. He has commanded 4th Space Operations Squadron. He has been with the 45th Operations Group, the 21st Space Wing, and the 45th Space Wing. He deployed to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Resolute Support, and Inherent Resolve. Most recently, he served as the Vice Commander for Space Operations Command, U.S. Space Force.

Those who have paid attention in the last handful of years as we have developed our U.S. Space Force understand that this is a very important domain moving forward. So not only do we have land, sea, and air; now we have space as well.

I am very hopeful that we will move forward on this nomination—again, 31 years of honorable service. He certainly deserves to be placed in this position of authority, Mr. President.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 392, Douglas A. Schiess to be Lieutenant General and Commander, U.S. Space Forces—Space/Combined Joint Force Space Component Commander; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, we will move on to the next individual vote, as requested by my colleague from Alabama. Here we are moving on the floor of the U.S. Senate. I am glad to be joined by a number of colleagues in the Chamber this evening to support our men and women in uniform.

I do want to make the point—because we continue to talk about these incredible nominees and their service to our Nation during times of war and times of peace—I do want to bring it back to the reason that we are here. It is because of the abhorrent policy that has been put into our Department of Defense by a political nominee, Secretary Lloyd Austin. He is the civilian in charge of the Department of Defense. Again, it is about an abortion policy that has been placed in the Department of Defense.

I will remind everyone once again that I am a pro-life woman. I am also a veteran and a combat veteran, at that. I do believe in protecting innocent life. I will continue to fight for in-

nocent life. It was my amendment that was taken up in the Armed Services Committee earlier this year as we debated this policy during the debate on the National Defense Authorization Act.

I have been a pro-life leader for well over 30 years now, since I was a young woman going through Iowa State University; making my career in the civilian workforce; then going into the Iowa Senate, where I was a proud defender of life; and now into the U.S. Senate, where I continue fighting for life in ways that make sense.

We have civilian nominees who can be held and held responsible for this very, very bad policy at the Department of Defense. The men and women who are being brought forward tonight by Senator DAN SULLIVAN, by Senator TODD YOUNG, by Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, and myself, they have nothing to do with the DOD abortion policy—nothing to do with the DOD abortion policy.

I have joined in life marches. I have given life speeches. I have objected to the practice of abortion, late-term abortion, in Western Iowa, in Council Bluffs. I have done this, as I said, for three decades—three decades. I challenge anybody in this Chamber to be more pro-life than I am or more military than I am. I have served, and I have borne a child.

So our next nominee is Michael Guetlein. He is a Lieutenant General, U.S. Space Force, to be General and Vice Chief of Space Operations—another incredible individual, a 32-year career. He also has served in command, leadership positions, at the flight, squadron, division, directorate, Program Executive Officer, and field command levels.

Lt Gen Guetlein's commands include the Director of Remote Sensing Systems and the Commander for the Rapid Reaction Squadron. Lieutenant General Guetlein most recently served as the Commander of Space Systems Command.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 292, Michael A. Guetlein for appointment to the grade of General with assignment as Vice Chief of Space Operation; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, we will continue again with the U.S. Space Force theme.

We have another gentleman: Lt Gen Stephen N. Whiting of U.S. Space

Force to be General and Commander of U.S. Space Command—again, a very, very important position to have. As we are working in the gray zone areas, we need to know that our space assets are protected, and we have the right man for the job.

So this is Lt Gen Stephen N. Whiting. He has a 34-year career as a Space Operations Officer. He has commanded the 13th Space Warning Squadron, the 614th Air and Space Operations Center and Joint Space Operations Center, the 21st Space Wing, and the Combined Force Space Component Command and 14th Air Force.

Lieutenant General Whiting most recently served as the Commander of Space Operations Command—again, a gentleman who has absolutely nothing to do with DOD abortion policy, a man who has honorably served his country in uniform for 34 years.

We are probably going to see and witness the back-benching of Lt Gen Stephen N. Whiting this evening, but, as my colleague from Alaska says, maybe not. Maybe we will see a man of honor step forward and voice vote on the confirmation of this officer by allowing us to move forward individually, as requested, on votes on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 328, Lt Gen Stephen N. Whiting for appointment in the U.S. Space Force to be General and Commander, U.S. Space Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, this one hits home. It is another nominee from the Navy. Hey, I am Army, but I love my Navy brothers and sisters. I love them all. This one is a Navy sister.

This is Executive Calendar No. 347, Heidi K. Berg to be Rear Admiral. RDML Heidi K. Berg has—and as I was reading through these nominees, this struck me because she has an over 30-year career.

Now, I know—because I was commissioned over 30 years ago—I know what a difficult climb it has been for women who were entering into the U.S. armed services at that time. Those women who entered in the seventies, eighties, nineties—they were trailblazers. They increasingly were put into positions of authority.

This Rear Admiral, Heidi Berg, has commanded in some very significant positions. She has commanded the Navy Information Operations Command in Bahrain, the Navy Element of

the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Joint Military Intelligence Training Center.

Rear Admiral Berg's operational tours include Navy Security Group Activity in Rota, Spain, where Berg flew over 1,000 hours as a Communications Intercept Evaluator on board EP-3E aircraft in support of Operations Provide Promise/Sharp Guard, aboard the USS *LaSalle*, Italy, and as Director of the International Security Assistance Force Red Team at ISAF headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Most recently, Rear Admiral Berg served as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy. And, again, we have had a number of women who have been brought up this evening in this debate, many of them having decades-plus experience. And I can tell you that women who were commissioned and have served over these last number of decades, they are to be commended. They have broken down barriers and allowed other women to see her and be her.

So for You, Admiral Heidi K. Berg, I commend you.

And I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 347, Heidi K. Berg, to be Rear Admiral; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. And there is another one that, as I said, you can see her; you can be her. Unfortunately, young ladies won't see her, at least for a while.

Mr. President, I have a couple here more before I turn it back over to my colleague from Alaska.

We are on a Navy theme again. So we have in front of us Michael T. Spencer, to be Rear Admiral Lower Half. He is a Navy 06, a Captain in the Navy, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Captain Spencer's 30-year naval career has been exemplary. He has commanded VFA-102 and CVW-11 and served in leadership positions for Fighter Squadron VF-211 Carrier Air Wing CVW-1 and VFA-213. His deployments include aboard the USS *Nimitz*, the USS *John C. Stennis*, the USS *Enterprise*, the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*, and the USS *George Washington*, and again, most recently, on the USS *Nimitz*.

Again, an admirable career. We are bringing him up for an individual vote on the U.S. Senate floor, as requested by my colleague from Alabama. So we will try once again.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nom-

ination: Executive Calendar No. 327, Michael T. Spencer, to be Rear Admiral (lower half); that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Another one that I have known for a number of years now—this one is in the U.S. Army—and I am very proud to be able to bring forward this nomination this evening—again, an individual vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, as asked by our colleague from Alabama. I hope that we can get this one over the finish line tonight.

So this nominee is Executive Calendar No. 390. It is Douglas A. Sims II. And he has been nominated to be Lieutenant General and Director of the Joint Staff.

We have brought up so many incredible individuals this evening. All of them are incredibly important positions.

Now, if you are familiar in the military, we do have a Joint Staff. And as a Director, this gentleman would be making sure that that Joint Staff operated seamlessly. Things just don't happen in the military, especially when you don't have the right leadership in the right positions.

So we have Lieutenant General Sims. He has a 32-year career. He has served as the Commanding General of the First Infantry Division, the Deputy Director for Regional Operations and Force Management, and the Deputy Commanding General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan.

Let me say that again: the Deputy Commanding General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan. The weight of his authority.

Lieutenant General Sims has completed three deployments to Afghanistan and two to Iraq. Most recently, Lieutenant General Sims, an exemplary man serving in the U.S. Army, served as the Director for Operations of the Joint Staff J-3.

Mr. President, I am going to try again. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 390, Douglas A. Sims II, to be Lieutenant General and Director, Joint Staff; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I just want to comment on my colleague here—Joint Forces, Marine Corps—Army operation—but Senator ERNST was talking; she is being very humble. She is such a strong leader on pro-life issues in the Senate and such a strong voice. And I just wanted to really commend her on that. We have had Senator GRAHAM here before. I am proud of my strong record on pro-life issues. I care deeply about it.

Ironically—I mean, of course, we don't know, but I guarantee you—both of us know in the military so well—that these 380 officers and their families—I am sure not all but probably many, many—have very similar strong views on that important issue. And it is ironic that, somehow, they are being caught up in this, when you think about it. I am sure it is really bitter for them.

It is not just pro-life; it is pro-military views that we have here. And it is not just words. A lot of people just say: I support the troops. No. We have lived it. That is why we are here. It is 10 at night. That is why we have been on the floor for 4 hours. We have lived it, and we have seen the heroes we are talking about today. And we have seen their families.

When you join the military—I always tell my wife and three daughters—you know, whether you are wearing a uniform or not, you are serving. And sometimes—in my view, a lot of times—it is harder for the spouse and the kids who are home when you have deployments and they are caught up in all of this. We haven't even talked about them. They are caught up, thousands of them—thousands of them. And there is polling out right now that is showing that the kids of military families, who are really the big pipeline in the continuing recruiting and people wanting to join the service, that the numbers are declining dramatically, where they are saying: You know what? I don't think I want to do what mom and dad did. I think I am going to not do that. Those numbers are declining. And this isn't helping. This isn't helping.

And I will say another thing in terms of, you know, officers who are dealing—I have talked—again, my grade, I am a senior Colonel. I talked to some Brigadier Generals very recently who are in the Middle East, some of whom are caught up in this. Guess what they are doing right now. They are putting on flacks. They are putting on helmets. They are taking incoming. Right? Just read the paper. And they literally said to me: We can't believe that we are, like, taking incoming again for our country and this is happening.

There is real bitterness. We better wake up. There is a recruiting retention problem. And we better wake up to the fact that this is not helping.

Again, my colleague—oh, no readiness problem. That is such baloney. Baloney. And everybody knows it. Spend one day in the military, and you know it. It really makes me frustrated. Really frustrated. Yeah, guys taking incoming right now caught up in this. I have talked to them. This is just not right. It is not right. We all know it. We all know it.

Mr. President, let's continue on. Another important promotion: a Major General in the U.S. Army, David Isaacson, to be Lieutenant General and Director for Command, Control, Coms and Computers and Cyber Chief Information Officer, J-6, for the U.S. Army.

By the way, that is another theme: subs, Navy, and a lot of cyber—a lot of cyber, which is the new gray area of warfare as Senator ERNST mentioned. And we are keeping our cyber leaders on the bench.

So let's hear about Major General Isaacson's 35-year career in the U.S. Army. He has served as Deputy Commanding General of Army Network Enterprise Technology Command—thank God for smart officers like that—the Deputy Chief of Staff of the G-6 of the Army; Director of Network Services and Strategy for the Department of the Army. Major General Isaacson has multiple operational deployments, including Operation Just Cause in Panama, Desert Shield, Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Uphold Democracy in Haiti, several tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, supporting the Global War On Terrorism and overseas contingencies.

Major General Isaacson most recently served as the Director of Manpower Personnel For Joint Chiefs.

Incredible experience right here. So let's move him. Let's move him. We can do a voice vote. My colleague wanted voice votes on individuals. He still hasn't answered the question why he is objecting to everything.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 391, David T. Isaacson, to be Lieutenant General and Director for Command, Control, Communications, and Computer/Cyber and Chief Information Officer, J-6, Joint Staff—I misstated it earlier. That is not just for the Army. That is for the J-6. That is for the Joint Staff of the U.S. Military. Wow. Really important—that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we haven't had a marine in a while. I love the Marine Corps. It is not the big serv-

ice, though, so we haven't had as many marines. I will tell you this: This Colonel, Kelvin Gallman, to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Marine Corps, he certainly is not a paper pusher. He is not some woke guy. He is a warrior. He is a warrior.

Let's read about Colonel Gallman: 29 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He served as the Commanding Officer of the Marine Corps Marine Air Group 26—MAG-26—personnel support detachment. Marine Tilt Rotor Squadron, VMM-261. Those are Ospreys. Marine Aviation and Weapons Tactics Squadron, MAWTS-1. Colonel Gallman has several deployments in support of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Here we go, another Marine hero—another Marine hero. By the way, he has nothing to do with this—nothing. He sacrificed—I am going to read what he did. And we are saying: Oh, these guys aren't the warriors. What? Who the hell is saying that?

Colonel Gallman received the Air Medal with a Combat Distinguishing Device for heroic achievement in connection with operations against the enemy as a pilot of a CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter while attached to Marine Air Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, on 1 April, 2003, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, while providing assault support under direct enemy fire for the U.S. Army 1st Ranger Battalion, in a daunting quest to rescue a U.S. Army prisoner of war from the Saddam Hussein hospital in Nasiriyah, Iraq, and the recovery of nine U.S. casualties, previously killed in action. This mission served as one of history's most daring and successful prisoner-of-war rescues.

Do I need to read that again for anybody? Pure courage. Pure heroism. And what is happening here? This Colonel needs to be promoted to Brigadier General in the Marine Corps.

By the way, that is really hard to do in the Marines. There are not many Brigadier Generals.

Heroic actions. Combat Distinguishing Device flying a helicopter—I guarantee it was at night. He recovered nine U.S. casualties previously killed in action. He went and got dead Americans so they wouldn't be left in the desert of Iraq. And this body is holding him. Come on.

Whatever you think about this issue—and we all agree with the Senator from Alabama—this is not the guy to make a point with. Flying at night recovering POWs and dead Americans—heroic actions—and the U.S. Senate response is “Thank you very much. You are not going to go anywhere. We are going to punish you. Why? Because we can. Because we feel like it.” What a bunch of baloney.

Let's try to at least get this guy promoted. Let's try to get this hero, Col. Kevin Gallman, U.S. Marine Corps, to be a Brigadier General because he is not no woke paper-pusher, I guarantee you that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Col. Kelvin W. Gallman to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Marine Corps under Executive Calendar No. 95; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Let's move to the Air Force. Let's move for Scott L. Pleus to be Lieutenant General and Director of Staff at the U.S. Air Force. As you know, Mr. President, being an Army man, West Point grad, Director of Staff of your service is one of the most important positions in your service.

Let's look at Lt. Gen. Scott Pleus's remarkable career. He has 34 years in the Air Force. Lt. Gen. Pleus's time in the Air Force has included serving as Director of Air and Cyber Space Operations and as Executive Officer to the Air Force Chief of Staff. Lieutenant General Pleus is also a command pilot with more than 2,500 flying hours, with combat hours earned during Operations Desert Fox and Southern Watch. Most recently, Lieutenant General Pleus served as Deputy Commander for U.S. Forces Korea—all forces, not just Air Forces—and Commander for the Air Component in United Nations Command in Korea.

Again, phenomenal—phenomenal—American patriot. Thirty-four years. And he is being benched at one of the most dangerous times since World War II. This isn't hurting readiness? Come on. Mr. President, maybe we can get him confirmed.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 184, Scott L. Pleus to be Lieutenant General and Director of Staff, U.S. Air Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, let's go back to our great U.S. Navy.

CAPT Craig Mattingly to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the U.S. Navy. Let's look at Captain Mattingly's 28-year career. He has led Squadrons on deployments supporting EUCOM,



AFRICOM, and CENTCOM; areas of responsibility as commander of multitask force groups. His major command was Commodore of Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 11. During his tenure as Commodore of CPRW-11, supported global initiatives include the inaugural INDOPACOM deployments of the MQ-4 Charlie Triton unmanned aerial systems in the PA Poseidon Advanced Airborne Sensor—that is a sub hunter—as well as the P-3C radar system.

Captain Mattingly's most recent assignment was serving as Senior Military Advisor to the Secretary of the Navy. He is a naval aviator. He hunts subs, Russian and Chinese subs. How long has he been doing that? He has a little bit of experience here. Captain Mattingly—3,900 flight hours in P-3C Orions and P-8 Poseidon aircraft.

If you are a sub and you are an enemy of America, this guy has tracked you. Again, subs. The Chinese are scared to death of P-8s, and we have one of the best P-8 pilots in America, and he is on the bench, and Xi Jinping and his communist dictator buddies are smiling.

Maybe we can get him done with a voice vote because our colleague asked for individual votes. I think we are almost at 60 individual votes right now—great Americans.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: CAPT Craig T. Mattingly to be Rear Admiral (lower half) of the U.S. Navy under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, let's go back to the importance—you are seeing some themes here. Navy, certainly. Boy, are we decimating the U.S. Navy. Decimating. Unbelievable. I am just shocked at how many Navy Admirals we are putting on the bench right now. The Chinese are smiling. Whoa, are they smiling.

But this is another theme tonight, and, again, we didn't really plan it, Senator ERNST and I; it is just what is happening. We have a big military. Space ops. Cyber and space ops. That is another theme tonight. It is a really, really important area of warfare. The Chinese and Russians are gaining on us. We have the best, though. Here is another one.

David N. Miller to be Lieutenant General and Commander, Space Operations Command, U.S. Space Force. That is a really big, important billet.

Maj Gen David Miller has an over 30-year career where he has commanded at the squadron group and wing levels, including the 2nd Range Operations Squadron, 21st Operations Group in the 46 Space Unit.

Most recently, Maj Gen Miller served as a Special Assistant to the Vice Chief of Space Operations. This is a hugely important billet to protect our entire country. He has incredible background in this area.

Space, cyber, missile defense—those have all been brought up tonight, and all were shut down—without explanation, by the way. We are bringing up individual votes. We still haven't heard why we are not going to allow those to move.

But anyway, Mr. President, we can confirm this nomination right now by a voice vote. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 351, David N. Miller, Jr., to be Lieutenant General and Commander, Space Operations Command, U.S. Space Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, we have just a couple more to go as we wrap up the evening. We have been reading off these nominations as fast as our staff could get them to us, and I guarantee that my colleague, Senator SULLIVAN of Alaska, and I would go all night if we could. We won't keep you in the Chair, Mr. President.

But we have seen a number of really incredible human beings come in front of us. Before I move on these nominations, that is what I want all of us to remember.

For those who might be viewing this evening, those who will read through this tomorrow, I want them to understand that these are human beings. They are men and women who serve our country for all different reasons.

I can't speak for Col. DAN SULLIVAN, but I know that when I decided as a young woman to serve my country, it was truly because I wanted to serve my country because I believe that our country provided great opportunities for kids like me who came from nothing.

I literally came from nothing in Southwest Iowa. I am the first in my family to graduate from a 4-year school. My brother did not have the opportunity to go to college. He went into the workforce. My sister has an associate's degree from a community college. My parents are both high school educated, and I am blessed that they were high school educated.

I had the great opportunity to attend an agricultural exchange while I was at Iowa State University, and that ag exchange took me to the USSR in 1989, to a place we now know as Ukraine. After living on that collective farm with my Ukrainian brother and sister and their family—no running water, no refrigerator, no car, no telephone. The kids I lived with had never traveled off of the collective farm.

After that experience and coming back to the United States, I understood that, growing up on a tiny little farm in Southwest Iowa, that I was so very blessed to be an American.

My country afforded me all kinds of opportunities. Even though I came from a family without means, I could do anything. And I tell you what, when I was that kid, that 19-year-old kid who had traveled to the Soviet Union and back, I can tell you that my grandparents, at that time, would have never believed that that little kid would grow up and become a U.S. Senator.

But what I took from that experience was that I was blessed. DAN was blessed. Coach is blessed. I think all of us are blessed by virtue of our birth and our citizenship here in the United States.

So it was that experience that led me into the U.S. Army ROTC Program at Iowa State University because I didn't come from wealth or means, but what I did have was my service. And I knew that I needed to give back to my country and protect the values that we all hold dear. And I do not question anyone who serves in this U.S. Senate. We are all sent here for a purpose.

But I do know that many of these men and women whom we have talked about tonight, they believe in their country as well. They are human beings. Many of them have backgrounds just as I do. They are flesh and blood, and they have chosen to wear the uniform and the flag of our United States.

They have done that without any mental reservation. They have stepped forward to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. And they do it because they believe in our country. And it is really unfortunate that tonight these men and women have been denied their promotions. We have done the best that we can to honor the request of a fellow Senator that these nominations be brought to the floor and voted on individually.

And I really respect men of their word. I do not respect men who do not honor their word. We have brought forward nearly 60 nominees. Every one of them have been denied an opportunity to move forward.

They have given more than most of us have. Certainly, they have given more than I have in this Chamber. They have given more than Dan has given in this Chamber. We talked about many that had over 30 years of honorable service, and we are punishing them for what all of us here believe to

be a very bad policy at the Department of Defense—a policy that they have absolutely nothing to do with.

There are 379 nominations as of the end of October, concerning 375 general and flag officers here in the Senate for consideration. Of the 375 officers, 362 are currently impacted by a blanket hold as they wait here on the Senate floor pending confirmation.

We gave opportunity to nearly 60 of them this evening. These military families are in limbo. The families of 172 officers have been disrupted by these holds. Again, these are men and women. They have families who are being impacted. Their salaries are being impacted. Their retirements are being impacted. They had forced cancellations of coast-to-coast moves with homes that were sold. Many of them are now living in temporary housing and paying out of pocket for storage without any clarity about the length of time that they will be in this hold.

Many of their children were disenrolled from current schools and—and—again, these are innocents—they are unable to reenroll in school or enroll in a new school since they do not have a permanent address. And there were many spouses who had employment that was terminated. That is a kick in the seat. I was a military spouse. I understand how difficult it is doing those PCS moves from duty station to duty station because your country demands it and having to start your life all over again.

So I am going to bring up these last two nominations, and maybe we will see a result, again, bringing the nominations individually to the floor of the U.S. Senate to be voted on. I anticipated a man of his word would honor his word. We haven't heard an explanation. But I will tell you, this was not time wasted tonight. I will do this all over again. I will do it all over again.

I am bringing forward now Capt. Frederic C. Goldhammer to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the U.S. Navy, under Executive Calendar No. 97. Captain Goldhammer has a 28-year career, actually over 28 years now, and he has held several command positions, including while deployed aboard USS *Enterprise*, USS *Nimitz*, and USS *Eisenhower*, supporting Operation Southern Watch, Joint Endeavor, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.

Captain Goldhammer also completed Individual Augmentee assignments as an Air Planning Officer for the Coalition Combat Air Operations Center in Saudi Arabia, Liaison Officer to the U.S. Army's 18th Airborne Corps in Afghanistan, and as a Combat Search and Rescue Watch Officer for the U.S. Navy 5th Fleet staff in Bahrain.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Capt. Frederic C. Goldhammer to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the U.S. Navy, under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the

nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. And our final nomination this evening—so I mentioned that I was a former military spouse, and Senator SULLIVAN had brought up First Ranger Battalion. And those who have served around many of those in the Rangers, they understand that there is a—there is a stanza of the Ranger creed that is “I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy.”

We have talked about those who have saved the lives of other men and women in uniform. We heard about the marine who saved a life of many other men and women in uniform and went to retrieve those who have fallen so that they wouldn't forever be in the hands of the enemy.

We have heard about women who led the way, as well, with their service and showing other young women that they could serve and do great things for the Nation that has given them so much. We have heard so many stories about heroics and combat, “V” for Valor, Silver Star. We have heard brief resumes of warriors we really can't go into on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Again, those of us who served understand why we can't do that.

But these are people. They are human beings. They are flesh and blood. They have done everything they possibly can and given more than most for their country: duty and honor, their service, sacrifice for this Nation.

And what is this body, this Nation doing to them? This will be remembered. It is a dark evening. This will be remembered. I want to thank them so much for their service to our country. We will continue pressing forward because we will not leave them to fall. We will not leave them to fall.

So, with that, I will turn the floor back over to my colleague and thank you—oh, excuse me, I haven't completed this final nomination.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I have three more.

Ms. ERNST. Oh, we have more. We could go all night, Dan. We have done it before.

But I am going to move on Col. Kevin J. Merrill to be a Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force. Col. Kevin Merrill most recently served as the Deputy Director of Strategic Plans, Programs and Requirements for Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command.

Previously, Col. Merrill was the Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Operations for the Air Force Special Operations Command, AFSOC.

Col. Merrill conducted around-the-clock HH-60G battlefield and medical

evacuation for coalition forces during Operation Enduring Freedom. He most certainly did not leave a man behind. He led rescue operations in response to the aftermath of Hurricane Rita and provided 24-hour combat search-and-rescue coverage for coalition assets during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Col. Kevin J. Merrill to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force under Executive Calendar No. 86; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we have three more that we are going to do. That will be 61 tonight. And Senator ERNST and I—and I know a lot of our other colleagues want to join us—we are going to keep coming down here. So let me get through these, and then I will have a few words to conclude. And I want to thank the Presiding Officer for staying late. I know you care about this issue as well.

This is Brig. Gen. Robert M. Blake, and he is being considered to be promoted to Major General in the U.S. Air Force—again, incredible, incredible background. He most recently served as the Mobilization Assistant to the Commander Air Force Global Strike Command, Barksdale Air Force Base, LA.

He has flown the C-130 H2 Hercules. He has amassed more than 4,500 hours in military aircraft, including combat sorties and tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Brig. Gen. Blake flew 16 total missions, including 12 air refueling sorties supporting C-5s and C-17s in Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. And he flew 10 missions in support of humanitarian relief for operations for Operation Southern Watch and Enduring Freedom.

Again, a transport aviation pilot, incredible. Just, I mean, we look at these numbers like oh, no big deal—4,500 flying hours in military aircraft. That is incredible experience for our military. So let's get him confirmed. Let's get him confirmed by voice vote, right here, individual, as our colleague requested.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Brig. Gen. Robert M. Blake to be Major General in the U.S. Air Force under Executive Calendar No. 88; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon

the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, another heroic Air Force pilot with incredible experience. Let's just move on to Brig. Gen. Mitchell Hanson. We are trying to get him confirmed to be Major General.

By the way, Senator GRAHAM made this point at the beginning: All of these military members went through their promotion board process. As we all know, the military is kind of an up-or-out organization, right? So for Brigadier General Hanson to go from Brigadier General to Major General—a two-star General—that is really hard to do. These guys are the best, right? We just kind of take it for granted. That is all done by the military, in the military selection boards. They are picking their own, but we have to confirm it.

So, again, think about the frustration—let me read about his background—that they have done all this, the boards have met, they said these are our top people, and we are going to keep promoting them.

Normally, for the last 200 years—by the way, as stated earlier, there are a lot of holds. I have put holds on. No one has ever done a blanket hold on every flag officer promotion for this long in the history of America. Let me repeat that. There has never been one-, two-, three-, four-star Generals and Admirals, a blanket hold on all of them.

People have threatened it. They have done it for a couple of weeks, but it has never been done for almost a year in the history of the United States of America. That is a fact. Contemplate that one.

So let's look at Brigadier General Hanson's background. He most recently served as Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Operations, Air Combat Command. Brigadier General Hanson has served in numerous positions at the squadron group wing in numbered Air Force. That is getting bigger in each unit. You know that, Mr. Chairman, but some people watching might not know.

Brigadier General Hanson has served as a reservist, an individual mobilization augmentee member on the Reserve side of the military. He has flown the A-10 and the F-16 in a variety of operational assignments and as a command pilot, with more than 3,400 hours—again, just enormous experience, flying over 200 combat hours.

He has deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Willing Spirit, Enduring Freedom. Brigadier General Hanson executed 20 close air support combat missions supporting NATO and international security assistance forces battling Taliban insurgent fighters in Afghanistan.

He provided armed overwatch for dismounted infantry patrols—the grunts on the ground looking up: Oh, my God, I got air cover. Thank God.

He conducted convoy and helicopter escorts and responded to U.S. infantry platoons on the ground receiving effective fire from an insurgent machinegun team. He employed 160 rounds of 30 mike-mikes against the insurgents and killed them all—killed them all. He saved American grunt lives on the ground. Another hero. Another hero. So we are going to put him on a bench.

By the way, it is a great way to say thanks for your service, Brigadier General Hanson. We will just keep you on the icebox. Thanks for your service. Very heroic.

But maybe my colleague will relent here. We are down to one more. So maybe, maybe it will work.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Brig. Gen. Mitchell A. Hanson to be Major General, U.S. Air Force, under Executive Calendar No. 88; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President immediately be notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, the final one. It is so ironic. I didn't mean it to be this way, but I am so proud of it. It is a U.S. Marine Colonel—I am a U.S. Marine Colonel; these are my peer groups—to be Brigadier General of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Let's read about Col. Richard Joyce to be Assistant Deputy Commandant for Aviation, U.S. Marine Corps—again, another heroic American.

Colonel Joyce has deployed numerous times to Iraq and Afghanistan and served as the Commanding Officer of an attack squadron. He is a Cobra pilot. That is an attack helicopter, the AH-1. He was Director of the staff group for Gen. Robert Neller when he was the 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Colonel Joyce received the Air Medal with the combat distinguishing device—that means heroism in combat—for heroic achievement while participating in aerial flight as an attack helicopter pilot of an AH-1—that is a Cobra helicopter—assigned to Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169, deployed with Marine Air Group 40 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on 22 May 2009. He was under direct fire from three different directions, with enemy forces effectively engaging his aircraft—incoming from three different directions. He placed precision fires on each of these enemy positions, destroying them and pro-

viding direct relief to outnumbered friendly forces on the ground.

Not a paper pusher. Not a woke warrior. A real, true American hero right here, and we are going to tell him: Stay on the bench.

Maybe not. This is the last one, Mr. President, No. 61 for the night—a Marine Colonel to be promoted to Brigadier General, who has nothing to do with this damn dispute on the floor here—nothing—and, somehow, he is going to get caught up in this.

By the way, these are the kinds of guys I am hearing about. These are my peer group. They are saying: You know what? Seven deployments, tough on the wife and kids. I am getting stuck in an issue that I have nothing to do with. I can't—you know what, I am punching out. I am punching out.

So we are going to lose guys like this. We are going to lose guys like this.

The Chinese, Putin, Xi Jinping—they are going to be like: Oh, my God, I am so scared of a marine like this. He would come over and kick the you know what out of the Chinese and Russians.

We are going to drive him out of the Marine Corps—drive him out of the Marine Corps.

But maybe not—maybe my colleague will relent on this just last one, just out of good grace. He still hasn't explained why, all that he said about not blocking a single vote if you bring up nominees one at a time. I am all for it. I will probably vote for them. We just brought up 61, one at a time, in regular order. Come on.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Col. Richard D. Joyce to be Brigadier General of the U.S. Marine Corps on Executive Calendar No. 95; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I am just going to conclude. I am disappointed. We are done here. We don't have any more for tonight, but I think this has been enlightening. I think this has been enlightening because what we have been able to do—hopefully, some people are watching in our great Nation—is to distill to the people of the country: Look at how blessed we are to have these incredible Americans. Look at how blessed we are, how heroic they are.

So my message to our Generals and Admirals who are being held up: Hang in there. Hang in there. Some of us have your back. We have your back. We

will be coming here every night to try and get you guys confirmed.

I have been very honored to be here with Senator ERNST on the floor. And I will tell you that I think she and I both have a feeling that I think a lot of people have—but people who served, mostly—just the love for our military, military families.

I am coming up, just at 30 years in the Marine Corps. The INDOPACOM theater has been the bookends of my career. My first deployment was the INDOPACOM, a Marine amphibious ready group, in the Taiwan Strait.

When the Chinese were threatening to invade Taiwan, we sent a Marine amphibious ready group. I was on that as a young infantry officer, in two carrier strike groups. And we went in the Taiwan Strait and looked at the Chinese and said: Not today, guys. Not today. Not today. The U.S. Marine Corps is here. The U.S. Navy is here. Don't even think about it.

That was almost 27 year ago, and I am out at the Marine Force's Pacific Command. In between, I have deployed as a staff officer in the Middle East, in Afghanistan.

But I think, like Senator ERNST, the biggest honor of my life has been serving and leading marines. I have a lot of good friends in the Senate. I have met a lot of good people in the U.S. Senate. The best people I have ever met in my life by far—not even close—are U.S. marines. They are the best.

And I think what is happening right now—you know, the Marine Corps' motto is *Semper Paratus*, always faithful. And this body is not keeping faith with our military right now. It is not, and the military knows it, and they are frustrated.

So many of these officers had 30 years or more of experience, thousands of years of experience we are putting on hold. The distinct comparative advantages we have say, for example, in submarine forces in the Indo-Pacific theater that the Chinese fear—they fear it—we are putting that on hold.

So I am hopeful that my colleague who left, Senator TUBERVILLE, can work with us. I have been working with him for months. This is just kind of a frustration moment, right? Enough. But I am hopeful we can still work together. I am hopeful we can find a way forward. The idea that I have been pitching to him: Hey, let's lift the hold on the men and women who have nothing to do with this and put a hold on the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, who is in charge of the abortion issue, and he is a civilian. That is the way to use the hold, not to take out a Marine Corps Brigadier General who is a war hero.

So I am hopeful that we are going to make progress on that. We are facing a really dangerous period right now, as you know, as Senator ERNST knows, and we are impacting readiness. We are definitely impacting morale, and that is readiness.

So, again, to my colleague saying, "Don't worry; there is no problem, no

readiness problems," no offense, but that is just ridiculous, and he knows it. We all know it.

So we are going to keep working this. I am honored to be on the floor with Senator ERNST. I appreciate, Mr. President, your sticking around.

We are not done. If you are a flag officer—one-star, two-star, three-star, or four-star General—we have got your back. We are going to work this. We are going to work it. You deserve it, and our Nation has to have it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

## MORNING BUSINESS

### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise to provide a brief statement on the rollcall votes on October 26, 2023. I was unable to attend the votes because I was in Maine to respond to a mass shooting in Lewiston, ME. Had I been here on Thursday, October 26, 2023, I would have voted in "nay" on vote No. 270, on the Motion to Discharge S. J. Res 44, a joint resolution directing the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Niger that have not been authorized by Congress.

I rise to provide a brief statement on the rollcall votes on October 26, 2023. I was unable to attend the votes because I was in Maine to respond to a mass shooting in Lewiston, ME. Had I been here on Thursday, October 26, 2023, I would have voted in "nay" on vote No. 271, on the Braun Amdt. 1182 to S. Amdt. 1092 to H.R. 4366, to prohibit earmarks.

I rise to provide a brief statement on the rollcall votes on October 26, 2023. I was unable to attend the votes because I was in Maine to respond to a mass shooting in Lewiston, ME. Had I been here on Thursday, October 26, 2023, I would have voted in "nay" on vote No. 272, on the 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".

### GAO LEGAL DECISION REGARDING SEC STAFF ACCOUNTING BULLETIN 121

Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, on March 31, 2022, the Securities and Exchange Commission—SEC—issued Staff Accounting Bulletin 121—SAB 121—which purported to address the accounting treatment of crypto assets. The bulletin was not issued as a rule under the Administrative Procedure Act—APA—and was not submitted to Congress as required by the Congressional Review Act.

On August 2, 2022, I sent a letter to the Comptroller General requesting a

GAO legal decision regarding the applicability of the Congressional Review Act to SAB 121. On October 31, 2023, GAO issued a legal decision finding that SAB 121 was a rule under both the Administrative Procedure Act and the Congressional Review Act and that no exception applied.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the GAO legal decision regarding SAB 121 be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

#### DECISION

Matter of: Securities and Exchange Commission—Applicability of the Congressional Review Act to Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 121.

File: B-334540.

Date: October 31, 2023.

#### DIGEST

On March 31, 2022, the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 121 (Bulletin). The Bulletin provides interpretive guidance regarding how covered entities should account for and disclose their custodial obligations to safeguard crypto-assets held for their platform users. SEC did not submit a report pursuant to the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to Congress or the Comptroller General on the Bulletin.

CRA requires that before a rule can take effect, an agency must submit a report on the rule to both the House of Representatives and the Senate as well as the Comptroller General, and provides procedures for congressional review where Congress may disapprove of rules. CRA adopts the definition of rule under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) but excludes certain categories of rules from coverage. We conclude the Bulletin is a rule for purposes of CRA because it meets the APA definition of a rule, and no exceptions apply. Therefore, the Bulletin is subject to the requirement that it be submitted to Congress.

#### DECISION

On March 31, 2022, the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC or the Commission) issued Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 121 (Bulletin) and published it on the Commission's website. SEC, Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 121, available at <https://www.sec.gov/oca/staff-accounting-bulletin-121> (last visited Oct. 25, 2023). The Bulletin became effective on April 11, 2022, and was published in the Federal Register on that same date. 87 Fed. Reg. 21015. We received a congressional request for a decision regarding whether the Bulletin is subject to the Congressional Review Act (CRA). Letter from Senator Cynthia M. Lummis to Comptroller General (Aug. 2, 2022). For the reasons described below, we conclude that the Bulletin is a rule under CRA and thus subject to CRA's submission requirement.

Our practice when rendering decisions is to contact the relevant agencies to obtain their legal views on the subject of the request. GAO, Procedures and Practices for Legal Decisions and Opinions, GAO-06-1064SP (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 2006), available at <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-06-1064sp>. Accordingly, we reached out to SEC to obtain the agency's legal views. Letter from Assistant General Counsel, GAO, to General Counsel, SEC (Oct. 24, 2022). We received SEC's response on November 21, 2022. Letter from General Counsel, SEC, to Assistant General Counsel, GAO (Response Letter).

## BACKGROUND

*SEC's Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 121*

SEC was established in the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the Exchange Act). 15 U.S.C. 78a–78rr. The Commission is composed of five commissioners who are appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. Id. The Exchange Act grants SEC broad authority over the securities industry. Id. The Act delegates to SEC the power to oversee certain organizations dealing with securities, to exercise disciplinary authority over covered parties that participate in prohibited conduct, and to require the periodic reporting of information by companies with publicly traded securities. Id. In exercising these powers, SEC publishes some its interpretations relating to financial reporting matters in the Code of Federal Regulations. See 17 C.F.R. Part 211. These interpretations include Financial Reporting Releases (Subpart A), Staff Accounting Bulletins (SABs) (Subpart B), and Accounting and Audit Enforcement Releases (Subpart C). Id. SEC also publishes these interpretations on its official website in order to “provide guidance to those who must comply with the federal securities laws.” SEC, Staff Interpretations, available at <https://www.sec.gov/regulation/staff-interpretations> (last visited Oct. 25, 2023).

SABs in particular are used by SEC to publicize its staffs’ “views regarding accounting-related disclosure practices” under federal securities laws. SEC, Selected Staff Accounting Bulletins, available at <https://www.sec.gov/regulation/staffinterpretations/accounting-bulletins> (last visited Oct. 25, 2023). According to SEC, SABs specifically represent the interpretations and policies followed by the Commission’s Division of Corporation Finance (Division) and Office of the Chief Accountant (OCA), two internal organizational units of SEC. Id. The Division is tasked with ensuring that investors are provided with material information to make informed investment decisions. SEC, About the Division of Corporation Finance, available at <https://www.sec.gov/divisions/corpfm/cfabout> (last visited Oct. 25, 2023). In furtherance of this goal, the Division selectively reviews filings made under the Exchange Act in order to both monitor and enhance compliance with disclosure and accounting requirements. Id. Division staff “may issue comments to a company to elicit better compliance with applicable disclosure requirements,” and, in response, a company has the opportunity to amend its disclosure or revise its financial statements and other disclosures. Id. Additionally, the Division may “refer[] matters to the Division of Enforcement” when appropriate. Id. OCA, headed by the Chief Accountant, provides advice to the Commission on accounting and auditing matters, including accounting policy determinations. SEC, Office of the Chief Accountant, available at <https://www.sec.gov/page/oca-landing> (last visited Oct. 25, 2023).

Starting in 1975, the Division and OCA instituted the practice of releasing SABs to more widely publicize staff interpretations regarding the disclosure requirements of federal securities laws. 40 Fed. Reg. 53557 (Nov. 19, 1975). SABs were created to level the competition among accounting firms; the Commission noted that large accounting firms generally had multiple opportunities to exchange information and views with SEC staff, but that small accounting firms might have been disadvantaged by a lack of similar opportunities. 40 Fed. Reg. 53557. To rectify this imbalance, the SAB was thus instituted as a tool for the Division and OCA to use to “quickly and easily communicate[]” their staff’s new and revised practices and interpretations to the public. 40 Fed. Reg. 53557.

On March 31, 2022, SEC published the Bulletin to express its staff’s views regarding the accounting obligations for covered entities that provide custodial services of crypto-assets. SEC, Bulletin, available at <https://www.sec.gov/oca/staff-accounting-bulletin-121> (last visited Oct. 25, 2023). The Bulletin was issued in response to SEC staff’s observation of an increase in the number of entities providing platform users with the ability to transact in crypto-assets. Id. In the Bulletin, SEC staff state their belief “that the recognition, measurement, and disclosure guidance[] will enhance the information received by investors and other users of financial statements . . . thereby assisting them in making investment and other capital allocation decisions.” Id. The Bulletin presents a hypothetical situation regarding Entity A, an example entity engaging in crypto-asset services, and then provides interpretive responses to three questions concerning how SEC staff would expect Entity A to account for and disclose its custodial obligations. Id. For example, according to the Bulletin, covered entities that are responsible for safeguarding platform users’ crypto-assets may be required to present a liability on their balance sheets to reflect this obligation. Id. Additionally, the Bulletin states staff would expect such entities to include clear disclosures of the nature and amount of cryptoassets they are responsible for holding for their platform users in the notes to their financial statements, with separate disclosure for each significant cryptoasset, and the vulnerabilities they have due to any concentration in such activities. Id.

Also on March 31, 2022, one of the commissioners released a public statement questioning SEC’s use of a SAB to make and publicize the Bulletin’s change in accounting practices. SEC, Statement of Commissioner Hester M. Peirce, Response to Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 121, available at <https://www.sec.gov/news/statement/peirce-response-sab-121-033122> (last visited Oct. 25, 2023) (criticizing the use of an SAB to provide the “definitive interpretive guidance” conveyed in the Bulletin).

*The Congressional Review Act*

CRA, enacted in 1996 to strengthen congressional oversight of agency rulemaking, requires all federal agencies to submit a report on each new rule to both Houses of Congress and to the Comptroller General before it can take effect. 5 U.S.C. §801 (a)(1)(A). The report must contain a copy of the rule, “a concise general statement relating to the rule,” and the rule’s proposed effective date. Id. CRA allows Congress to review and disapprove rules issued by federal agencies for a period of 60 days using special procedures. 5 U.S.C. §802. If a resolution of disapproval is enacted, then the new rule has no force or effect. Id. CRA makes clear that its provisions “shall apply notwithstanding any other provision of law.” 5 U.S.C. §806(a).

CRA adopts the definition of rule under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. §551 (4), which states that a rule is “the whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of an agency.” 5 U.S.C. §804(3). CRA excludes three categories of rules from coverage: (1) rules of particular applicability; (2) rules relating to agency management or personnel; and (3) rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice that do not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties. Id.

SEC did not submit a CRA report to Congress or to the Comptroller General in regard to the Bulletin. In its response to us, SEC

maintained that the Bulletin is not subject to CRA because it does not meet the APA definition of a rule as it is not an “agency statement” of “future effect.” Response Letter, at 2–4. For the reasons explained below, we disagree. We find that the Bulletin does meet the definition of a rule under APA and that no exception applies. Thus, the Bulletin is subject to CRA’s submission requirement.

## DISCUSSION

At issue here is whether the Bulletin is a rule for purposes of CRA. First, we must consider whether it meets the definition of a rule under APA. We conclude it does. We next must examine whether any exception applies. We find that none apply. Therefore, we conclude the Bulletin is a rule for purposes of CRA.

*The Bulletin is a Rule Under APA*

The Bulletin meets the APA definition of a rule. First, the Bulletin is an agency statement because it was published on SEC’s official, public-facing website as a representation of the views held by its own employees. Second, the Bulletin is of future effect because it explicitly states that it applies to certain entities and contains “guidance for [these] entities to consider when they have obligations to safeguard crypto-assets held for their platform users.” Bulletin. From this, we ascertain that SEC intended the Bulletin’s guidance to apply prospectively to covered entities’ future accounting and disclosure practices. Lastly, the Bulletin interprets and prescribes policy because it announces a preference for how covered entities should account for and disclose cryptoasset-related custodial obligations. Id.

SEC contends that the Bulletin is not a rule under APA because it is not an agency action. Response Letter, at 2. In its response to us, SEC stated that the Bulletin is not an agency statement because it is not binding on the agency and “at most” indicates “how the Office of the Chief Accountant and the Division of Corporation Finance would recommend that the agency act.” Response Letter, at 3. Additionally, SEC asserts that the Bulletin is not an agency statement because the Exchange Act and SEC’s organizational rules prohibit the Commission from delegating general rulemaking authority to an individual Commissioner or to staff. Response Letter, at 2–3 (citing 17 C.F.R. 200.43).

We recognized in an earlier opinion that “in order [for an agency action] to be a rule [under APA], the statement must be made by an agency.” B–238859, Oct. 23, 2017. The Bulletin is a statement made by SEC. While it is true that the Bulletin was not held out by SEC as a statement representing the full Commission, a statement issued by a subset of the agency may still constitute an agency statement for CRA purposes.

In particular, our prior opinions have recognized that agency actions published by less than the full agency can still constitute agency statements for the purposes of APA, and thus CRA. In three of our previous opinions, we examined whether various Supervision and Regulation Letters (SR Letters) issued by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (FRB or Board) were rules for purposes of CRA. B–330843, Oct. 22, 2019 (finding that SR 12–7 and SR 14–8 are rules under CRA, but that SR 15–7 is not a rule under CRA because it fell within an exception to the Act), B–331324, Oct. 22, 2019 (finding that SR 11–7 is a rule under CRA), and B–331560, Apr. 16, 2020 (finding that SR 15–18 is a rule under CRA). In those opinions, we noted that FRB has the authority to inspect the financial condition of financial institutions under its jurisdiction. B–330843, B–331324, and B–331560. We explained that FRB examiners tasked with inspecting and monitoring these

institutions can issue SR Letters when they believe guidance on a particular issue is necessary and clarified that such guidance is not binding on any institution. B-330843, B-331324, and B-331560. In all three of our opinions involving FRB SR Letters, we concluded that the SR Letters at issue were agency statements within the APA definition of rule. B-330843, B-331324, and B-331560. We explained that the SR Letters were agency statements “as [they were] issued by FRB.” B-330843, B-331324, and B-331560. The fact that such SR Letters were issued by examiner employees of FRB rather than the Board as a whole did not diminish the fact that the SR letters constituted the FRB speaking as an agency.

While we recognize that the Exchange Act and SEC’s organizational rules limit the Commission’s authority to delegate its general rulemaking function to its staff, these sources speak only to how the Bulletin does not stem from the Commission’s general rulemaking authority. On this point, we find it helpful to draw a parallel between the organizational structure and practices of both the SEC and FRB. Both are multi-member, independent government agencies that are statutorily restricted from delegating rulemaking authority. The Federal Reserve Act expressly does not authorize FRB to delegate its rulemaking function “to . . . members or employees of the Board.” 12 U.S.C. §248(k). FRB adopted this language from the Federal Reserve Act as an organizational rule. Similar to how SEC’s Division and OCA publish SABs to announce how staff intends to administer certain accounting-related disclosure practices, FRB’s Division of Supervision and Regulation publish SR Letters to “address significant policy and procedural matters related to [FRB’s] supervisory responsibilities.” As these SR Letters are published by a division FRB, we can presume that the letters are published outside of FRB’s rulemaking authority since FRB is not authorized to delegate its rulemaking function to its employees. Our determination that the Bulletin is an agency statement is consistent with our previous recognition of FRB’s SR Letters as agency statements in B-330843, B-331324, and B-331560.

Additionally, we have consistently concluded that CRA also covers agency actions outside the APA rulemaking process. For example, in B-331171, Dec. 17, 2020, we recognized that “[t]he sponsors of CRA intended the definition of rule to be as broad as possible to ensure congressional review of agency action.” In B-331324, Oct. 22, 2019, we cited to a CRA sponsor’s statement that “[a]lthough agency interpretive rules, general statements of policy, guideline documents, and agency policy and procedure manuals may not be subject to the notice and comment provisions of [APA], these types of documents are covered under the congressional review provisions of [CRA].” Id. (quoting 142 Cong. Rec. H3005 (daily ed. Mar. 28, 1996)). Moreover, SEC acknowledged that “CRA can apply to agency actions that do not require notice and the opportunity for public comment [under APA].” Response Letter, at 4. Although the Bulletin was published by staff who lack the Commission’s general rulemaking authority, our prior precedent and CRA’s legislative history demonstrate that the Bulletin is still covered by CRA.

The Bulletin was issued by SEC staff as a representation of how the Division and OCA interpret accounting-related disclosure requirements. Since one of the Division’s roles is to monitor companies’ compliance with accounting and disclosure requirements, and, since the Division’s practice is to refer non-compliant companies to SEC’s Division of Enforcement when appropriate, it is reason-

able to believe that companies may change their behavior to comply with the staff interpretations found in the Bulletin. SEC published the Bulletin on its public-facing website to “add[] interpretive guidance for entities to consider when they have obligations to safeguard crypto-assets held for their platform users.” Bulletin. Like the SR Letters issued by FRB’s examiners, the Bulletin was issued by agency employees to provide non-binding guidance that covered entities were nevertheless expected to follow. We therefore find that the Bulletin is an agency statement within the meaning of APA.

As stated previously, the Bulletin is also of future effect and was designed to interpret and prescribe policy. Accordingly, we conclude that the Bulletin meets the definition of rule under APA.

#### *No CRA Exceptions Apply to the Bulletin*

Having concluded that the Bulletin meets the APA definition of a rule, we next consider whether any of the three CRA exceptions apply. We conclude that none apply. First, the Bulletin is a rule of general applicability because it neither identifies specific entities by name nor does it address specific actions for a named entity to take.” Second, the Bulletin concerns actions that covered entities should take, rather than actions that SEC management or personnel should take, and is, therefore, not a rule of agency management or personnel. This leaves the third exception, the exception for rules of “agency organization, procedure, or practice that do[] not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties.” 5 U.S.C. §804(3)(C). The Bulletin does not qualify for this last exception because it has a substantial impact on its regulated community.

In analyzing the third CRA exception, we have previously held that agency rules that encourage the regulated community to change internal operations or policies have a substantial impact on non-agency parties and thus do not qualify for the exception. B-334032, Dec. 15, 2022. See B-330843, B-331324, and B-331560. Additionally, we more specifically determined that agency rules that recommend specific actions, such as best practices the regulated community should take, do not qualify for the exception. B-334032.

We examined a similar issue in B-330843, Oct. 22, 2019, where we found that FRB’s SR 12-17 did not meet the third CRA exception because it had a substantial impact on the regulated community. SR 12-17 put forth actions institutions should take to ensure their resiliency if they enter a period of financial distress and to prevent harm to the financial system in case of the institution’s failure. Id. We noted that the actions from SR 12-17 could change covered entities’ expectations of FRB and could lead to and encourage changes in the covered entities’ internal operations and policies. Id. For those reasons, we determined that SR 12-17 had a substantial impact on the regulated community and thus did not qualify for the third CRA exception. Id.

Here, the Bulletin recommends best practices for how covered entities should account for their obligations to safeguard the crypto-assets they hold for their platform users. Bulletin. Similar to the FRB guidance in B-330843, the Bulletin advises these covered entities on how they can fulfill certain financial disclosure obligations to ensure compliance with SEC staff’s interpretations of these obligations. By advising the covered entities in this manner, the Bulletin is encouraging the regulated community to change its internal operations or policies to comply with the Bulletin’s guidance.

Additionally, since the Bulletin was published on SEC’s official website, it is reason-

able for covered entities to believe they are expected to, at minimum, consider the Bulletin’s guidance when preparing their own financial disclosures to the agency. SEC states that the Bulletin reflects policies followed by the Division and OCA. Response Letter, at 3. According to SEC, the Division uses its filing review process to monitor and to enhance compliance with disclosure and accounting requirements. Since SEC monitors the covered entities’ compliance with certain financial disclosure requirements, it is reasonable to believe that these entities might change their internal operations and policies to align with the accounting practices suggested by the Bulletin.

Furthermore, in a public statement about the Bulletin, an SEC Commissioner recognized that the Bulletin “provides definitive interpretive guidance” for public companies and contains a “detailed description of disclosure the staff expects to see, including a full paragraph describing relevant disclosures that ‘may also be required outside the financial statements under existing Commission rules.’” We agree with this characterization. Because the Bulletin changes covered entities’ expectations of how SEC will evaluate their compliance, and because it encourages these entities to change their internal operations and policies, we conclude that the Bulletin has a substantial effect on the financial disclosure obligations of non-agency parties. Thus, the Bulletin does not fall within CRA’s exception for rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice that do not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties.

#### CONCLUSION

The Bulletin is a rule for purposes of CRA because it meets the APA definition of a rule and none of the three CRA exceptions apply. Accordingly, the Bulletin is subject to the CRA’s submission requirement.

EDDA EMMANUELLI PEREZ,  
General Counsel.

#### RECOGNIZING A1W TURNOVER AT IDAHO NATIONAL LABORATORY

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, alongside my esteemed colleagues Senator JIM RISCH and Representative MIKE SIMPSON, I rise today to honor the formal turnover of the Naval Reactors A1W Prototype from Naval Reactors Idaho Branch Office and Fluor Marine Propulsion, LLC, to the U.S. Department of Energy Idaho Cleanup Project and Idaho Environmental Coalition. This momentous occasion marks the early completion of the turnover of the A1W Prototype, a defueled naval nuclear propulsion plant, which holds significant historical and strategic importance in the ongoing decommissioning efforts of this facility.

The goal in this endeavor is clear: to remove the three prototypes, S1W, A1W and S5G, from the Naval Reactors Facility by 2030. This effort aligns perfectly with the program’s unwavering commitment to managing radioactive and hazardous materials from cradle to grave, ensuring no adverse effects on the environment or public health. Decommissioning older, nonmission-critical facilities not only reduces workforce needs but also allows us to allocate resources more efficiently towards our core mission, while creating space for the workplace of the future.



The significance of this turnover lies in the remarkable collaboration among various Agencies involved. Originally scheduled for 2027, achieving this turnover 4 years ahead of schedule is a monumental achievement. It is a testament to the unwavering dedication of hundreds of professionals from all four organizations involved. We express our deepest gratitude to the entire team whose exceptional teamwork has made this moment possible. Their remarkable efforts throughout this endeavor have been truly extraordinary.

The A1W Prototype, born in 1956 and operational from October 1958 to January 1994, stands as a technological marvel. It represents a pivotal chapter in our Nation's scientific and engineering history. Over nearly four decades, this remarkable prototype played a critical role in training over 14,500 enlisted personnel, officers, and civilian operators. As the second prototype built, the A1W's contributions to science, technology, Cold War military applications, and the U.S. Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program have earned it the esteemed recognition as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Moreover, the A1W Prototype paved the way for the construction and commissioning of the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS *Enterprise*, CVN-65, which utilized the A1W design. *Enterprise's* 51-year journey serves as a testament to the dedication and strength of our naval forces, as it stood as a guardian of freedom, protector of our national interests and a symbol of American power worldwide.

While there is still more work ahead, it is important that we take a moment to celebrate this milestone. It serves as a testament to the incredible results that can be achieved when people and organizations come together with a shared purpose. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each person involved for their unwavering dedication and hard work. This turnover signifies a significant step toward ensuring that the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program continues to power maritime dominance for the Navy and our Nation well into the future. It also reaffirms our steadfast commitment to safeguarding our national defense, paying homage to our history, and preserving our national treasures.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DUCKWATER SHOSHONE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

• Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School and the important place this school occupies in our great State's history. The Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School exists because parents wanted to provide their children with the best education pos-

sible and help them take pride in their heritage. The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe came together in 1973 to create their own school, founded on the principle of self-determination, to better oversee their children's instruction, and preserve their culture. And the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School has continued that legacy ever since.

The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe is located in the Railroad Valley of central Nevada near the Big Warm Spring, one of the largest geothermal hot springs in the State. Taking their children's education into their own hands, the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe formed an education committee, which became the Duckwater Shoshone School Board, on July 26, 1973. The parents and community of the Duckwater Shoshone were committed to their children receiving every opportunity, no matter who they were or where they lived and worked hard to establish their own school. This commitment is reflected in a statement hanging on the main hallway of the school: "The mission of the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School is to provide a learning environment that promotes individual student success and develops lifelong learners."

On November 26, 1973, the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School opened its doors. The school remains a centerpiece of the Tribe's efforts to support its families and stands as a testament to the value the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe places on supporting future generations. On the wall of the school, there hangs an accounting of the school's formation written in longhand by former Duckwater chairman Paul Walker, and it reads in part: "What is hard to convey is the determination and work of a whole rural Indian Community to see that their children receive a better education than they obtained and to witness a general betterment of our people."

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School for 50 years of service to the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe and surrounding communities and the important role the school plays in educating children and preserving traditions.●

##### TRIBUTE TO DR. REIKO JOHNSON AND DR. NATHAN SWANSON

• Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Dr. Reiko Johnson of Newfields and Dr. Nathan Swanson of Durham as October's Granite Staters of the Month. The duo is working to provide free dental care for patients in need, including recently hosting a Dental Day of Caring this past month.

In March 2021, recently vaccinated and with an urge to give back to her community, Dr. Johnson began looking for medical volunteer opportunities. In the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, she had provided telehealth services as a primary care provider at

Catholic Medical Center, and she was itching to be face-to-face with patients again. When she was not able to find a volunteer clinic in the area, she decided to take matters into her own hands and start her own mobile clinic, modeled on a free health clinic that she had previously volunteered at in Hampton.

Dr. Johnson established the Volunteers in Medicine of New Hampshire—VIM-NH—and held its first free clinic in January of this year, providing primary and acute care services for uninsured and underinsured patients and connecting them to long-term primary care providers. However, over the months that followed, it became clear to Dr. Johnson that many of the clinic's patients had critical dental issues that she and her volunteers were not equipped to deal with.

To address this issue, Dr. Johnson partnered with Dr. Nathan Swanson last month to host VIM-NH's first Dental Day of Caring. Dr. Swanson had learned about Dr. Johnson's work from Emily Komerska, a UNH pre-med student and longtime family friend, and he immediately knew he wanted to get involved. During the event, which took place at Dr. Swanson's office using his equipment, the 4 volunteer dentists and 6 assistants provided 19 extractions, 10 fillings, and 1 root canal—donating \$11,531 total in services.

Dr. Johnson and Dr. Swanson's partnership is a shining example of the Granite State spirit of coming together to help people in need. Many of the clinic's patients, including people experiencing homelessness and people without insurance, would not be able to receive this vital care otherwise. I applaud Dr. Johnson and Dr. Swanson's dedication to making a difference, and I look forward to seeing how they continue their Dental Day of Caring initiative.●

##### TRIBUTE TO LYDIA EDWARDS

• Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I would like to offer my congratulations to Ms. Lydia Edwards as she becomes a Judge Advocate General in the Massachusetts Army National Guard. Senator Edwards has devoted her career to protecting our most vulnerable—from her time as a public interest attorney with Greater Boston Legal Services, to her service on the Boston City Council, to her current role as Massachusetts State senator, Lydia Edwards never forgets who she is fighting for. Lydia has achieved great things for people across the Commonwealth, including passing the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, protecting Boston's affordable housing stock, creating the Restaurant Revitalization Fund, passing the CROWN Act, which bans discrimination based on hair texture or style, and reforming the budgetary process to bring participatory budgeting to the city of Boston.

Lydia is a dedicated public servant who approaches every question before

her with passion, deep intellect, and a commitment to make government work for everyone, not just those at the top. It is a reflection of Lydia's character and her commitment to our country that Lydia has chosen to serve not only in the State senate but also as a member of the Massachusetts National Guard. I congratulate Lydia on her commissioning as a Judge Advocate General officer and am grateful for her continued partnership and service.

I once again congratulate her on her commissioning and wish her the best of luck in this new chapter.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Stringer, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

#### REPORT RELATIVE TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 12938 OF NOVEMBER 14, 1994, WITH RESPECT TO THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION—PM 27

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction declared in Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2023.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, November 1, 2023.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:25 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4394. An act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

H.R. 4394. An act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

#### 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-2690. A communication from the Executive Secretary, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status" (RIN3142-AA21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2691. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2692. A communication from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementation of Additional Export Controls: Certain Advanced Computing Items; Supercomputer and Semiconductor End Use; Updates and Corrections" (RIN0694-AI94) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2693. A communication from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Export Controls on Semiconductor Manufacturing Items" (RIN0694-AJ23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2694. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, notification of his intent to terminate the designation of the Central African Republic, the Gabonese Republic (Gabon), Niger, and the Republic of Uganda as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries under the African Growth and Opportunity Act; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2695. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Mortality Tables for Determining Present Value under De-

finer Benefit Pension Plans" (RIN1545-BQ14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2696. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "User Fees Relating to Enrolled Actuaries" (RIN1545-BQ26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2697. A communication from the Security Officer II of the Office of Senate Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report regarding Determination Under Section 7034 (I) (5) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2023 (OSS-2023-1053); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2698. A communication from the Security Officer II of the Office of Senate Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report regarding Determination Under Section 7034 (I) (5) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2023 (OSS-2023-1054); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2699. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Publication, Coordination, and Reporting of International Agreements: Amendments" (RIN1400-AF63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2700. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of intent to provide assistance to Ukraine under drawdowns previously directed under section 506(a) (1) of the FAA, including for self-defense and border security operations; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2701. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of firearms, parts, and components abroad controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Israel in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 22-051); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

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

S. 3175. A bill to establish a grant program to support schools of medicine and schools of osteopathic medicine in underserved areas; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 3176. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose an excise tax on excessively disparate wages paid to chief executive officers; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 3177. A bill to provide for a review of sanctions with respect to Hong Kong; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

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

S. 3178. A bill to establish the Children's Court to improve the adjudication of immigration cases involving unaccompanied alien children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHMITT (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. BUDD):

S. 3179. A bill to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to amend a rule of the Commission relating to shareholder proposals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED):

S. 3180. A bill to establish a working waterfronts grant program; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 3181. A bill to designate the Air and Marine Operations Marine Unit of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection located at 101 Km 18.5 in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, as the "Michel O. Maceda Marine Unit", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 3182. A bill to prohibit actions recognizing the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. BUDD, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 3183. A bill to consider, for purposes of the Immigration and Nationality Act, that officers, officials, representatives, spokespersons, and members of Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda, and ISIS, and individuals who endorse or espouse terrorist activities conducted by such organizations are engaged in terrorist activity; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 3184. A bill to require institutions of higher education to include reporting regarding campus anti-Semitism in the annual security report required under the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, to ensure that institutions of higher education do not support terrorist activity of foreign terrorist organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH:

S. 3185. A bill to establish the Tribal Cultural Areas System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. HEINRICH:

S. 3186. A bill to protect Native cultural sites located on Federal land, to improve consultation with Indian Tribes, to bring parity to Indian Tribes with regard to Federal public land management laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. VANCE, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. BUDD, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. DAINES, Mr. LEE, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. HAWLEY, Mrs. BRITT, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 3187. A bill to require the Department of Homeland Security to publish various publications and reports regarding the number of aliens seeking entry along the southern border of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 3188. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to extend eligibility for

child's benefits until age 26 for certain individuals who are at least half-time students at a post-secondary school, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 3189. A bill to authorize assistance to support activities relating to the clearance of landmines, unexploded ordnance, and other explosive remnants of war in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, to recognize the refugee and immigrant communities that supported and defended the United States Armed Forces during the conflict in Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s, including Hmong, Cham, Cambodian, Lu Mien, Khmu, Lao, Montagnard, and Vietnamese Americans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. 3190. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to exclude as income certain payments received by household members from certain employment programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

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

S. 3191. A bill to improve online ticket sales and protect consumers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. HAGERTY, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. ERNST, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BARRASSO, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. CASSIDY, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 3192. A bill to designate Ansarallah as a foreign terrorist organization and impose certain sanctions on Ansarallah, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. Kaine, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KELLY, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 3193. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to allow for the use of telehealth in substance use disorder treatment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 3194. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to achieve parity between the cost-of-living adjustment with respect to an annuity under the Federal Employees Retirement System and an annuity under the Civil Service Retirement System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 3195. A bill to designate the General George C. Marshall House, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as an affiliated area of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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

S. 3196. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide a State option to extend Medicaid coverage for foster care children while receiving treatment from a qualified residential treatment program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 3197. A bill to establish and authorize funding for an Iranian Sanctions Enforce-

ment Fund to enforce United States sanctions with respect to Iran and its proxies and pay off the United States public debt and to codify the Export Enforcement Coordination Center; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 26

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) 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. 134

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 134, a bill to require an annual budget estimate for the initiatives of the National Institutes of Health pursuant to reports and recommendations made under the National Alzheimer's Project Act.

S. 161

At the request of Mr. Kaine, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 161, a bill to extend the Federal Pell Grant eligibility of certain short-term programs.

S. 288

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 288, a bill to prevent, treat, and cure tuberculosis globally.

S. 359

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 359, a bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide for a code of conduct for justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 610

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

S. 799

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 799, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare coverage for all physicians' services furnished by doctors of chiropractic within the scope of their license, and for other purposes.

S. 949

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 949, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to transition the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and for other purposes.

S. 1024

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1024, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement a comprehensive program to promote student access to defibrillation in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

S. 1144

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1144, a bill to establish a grant program to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 1706

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

S. 1906

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors 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. 1954

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1954, a bill to improve the provision of health care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans diagnosed with diabetes and heart disease, and for other purposes.

S. 2158

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2158, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for disciplinary procedures for supervisors and managers at the Department of Veterans Affairs and to modify the procedures of personnel actions against employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2176

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2176, a bill to prohibit commercial sexual orientation conversion therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 2238

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2238, a bill to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to develop a National Strategy to Close

the Digital Divide, and for other purposes.

S. 2372

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

S. 2377

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2377, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve coverage of audiology services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2477

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2477, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide pharmacy payment of certain services.

S. 2555

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2555, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to expand and improve the enforcement capabilities of the Attorney General, and for other purposes.

S. 2713

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2713, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 to make commodities available for the Emergency Food Assistance Program, and for other purposes.

S. 2860

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) were added as cosponsors of S. 2860, a bill to create protections for financial institutions that provide financial services to State-sanctioned marijuana businesses and service providers for such businesses, and for other purposes.

S. 2998

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2998, a bill to amend the Food and Agriculture Act of 1977 and the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 to modify provisions relating to matching funds requirements for research and extension activities at eligible institutions and related reporting requirements.

S. 3008

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3008, a bill to provide back pay to Federal contractors, and for other purposes.

S. 3068

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 3083

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3083, a bill to reallocate funding originally appropriated for Gaza to grants to Israel for the Iron Dome short-range rocket defense system.

S.J. RES. 47

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 47, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Justice relating to "Office of the Attorney General; Home Confinement Under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act".

S. RES. 109

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 109, a resolution requesting information on Saudi Arabia's human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, a resolution designating 2024 as the Year of Democracy as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of Government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED):

S. 3180. A bill to establish a working waterfronts grant program; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise today to introduce the Working Waterfront Preservation Act, legislation to help preserve access by our Nation's fishermen and maritime workers to the waterfronts in coastal communities. I would like to thank my friend Senator Jack Reed from Rhode Island, who joins me in introducing this legislation.

According to the most recent data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, commercial and recreational fisheries are responsible for more than 1.7 million jobs in the

United States, \$253 billion in sales, and \$117 billion in value-added impacts. In Maine, our fisheries are one of our State's most important resources and are vital to our economy. A report of Maine's seafood sector as a whole, which included downstream contributors, found that in 2019, the sector contributed more than \$3.2 billion to Maine's economy. Although the fishing industry is a significant economic contributor both nationwide and in Maine, it is losing access to the working waterfronts that are vital to the industry's survival.

A working waterfront is defined as land that is used for or that supports commercial fishing, aquaculture, boatbuilding, or the for-hire recreational fishing industries. That may be a technical definition, but these areas represent much more to coastal communities. A recent study conducted by the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association sums it up perfectly: "Working waterfronts are more than just a place of business for commercial fishermen; they are a hub of information, a collection of salty characters, a safe haven, a meeting room, a space for support, and they are well-deserving of both a place in Maine's history and its future." The importance of these areas cannot be overstated.

In Maine our fishermen and women are losing access to waterfront property up and down the coast. In some coastal Maine communities, once thriving working waterfronts no longer exist. Recent interviews conducted by the Island Institute in Maine uncover that "for all practical purposes, working waterfront access [in these towns] is essentially gone." The reasons for this are complex. In some cases, burdensome fishing regulations have led to a decrease in landings, hindering the profitability of shoreside infrastructure. In other cases, soaring land values and rising taxes have made the current use of commercial land unprofitable. Property is being sold and quickly converted into private spaces, which means that they are no longer available to support our fisheries.

While this trend has been happening for decades—in 2006, Maine's working waterfront only took up 20 miles of Maine's nearly 3,500 miles of coastline—the recent demand for coastal properties has intensified this problem in Maine. We can help preserve these areas for the next generation of fishermen, boatbuilders, and maritime workers with dedicated investments. Currently, the primary mechanism for preserving Maine's waterfronts is through a State-run program called the Working Waterfront Access Protection Program. Since 2008, that program has helped preserve 34 waterfront properties. The legislation I am introducing today would help scale up that model program so that more communities can be assisted.

There is currently no targeted, Federal assistance program to help the commercial fishing industry and other

maritime sectors gain or preserve access to working waterfront areas. The Working Waterfront Preservation Act would create a \$20 million program to help municipal and State governments, nonprofit organizations, and participants in maritime industries improve working waterfront property in our coastal States. Grants would be administered by the Economic Development Administration, and successful applicants would need to be endorsed by State fisheries agencies, which have the local expertise to understand the needs of each coastal State. In order to be eligible for a grant, recipients would be required to permanently protect an area as working waterfront, to ensure that it can be used for commercial purposes for decades to come, and to invest in the cost themselves.

This legislation is crucial for the continued prosperity of coastal communities across the country. I urge my colleagues to join Senator Reed and me in supporting this important legislation.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 3194. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to achieve parity between the cost-of-living adjustment with respect to an annuity under the Federal Employees Retirement System and an annuity under the Civil Service Retirement System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of the Equal COLA Act, which I reintroduced today.

The Federal Government's workforce is central to protecting our national security and delivering critical services to hundreds of millions of Americans. As such, it is essential that the Federal Government attract and retain an effective workforce and, once their service is complete, ensure retirees receive the dignified retirement that they deserve.

Unfortunately, in 1986, Congress created a two-tiered system that now prevents nearly 800,000 retired Federal employees from receiving a full cost-of-living adjustment when consumer prices increase more than 2 percent from year to year.

In January, some Federal retirees will receive a 3.2-percent COLA. However, other Federal retirees will receive only a 2.2-percent increase due to this policy, which fails to protect retired employees living on a fixed income.

That is why I am proud to reintroduce this legislation to fix this unfair system and ensure that all retired Federal employees receive full retirement benefits that keep up with the cost of living.

I hope my colleagues will join me in support of this bill to ensure that retired Federal employees no longer pay the price of a misguided law and that their benefits fully keep pace with the cost of living.

By Mr. KAINÉ (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 3195. A bill to designate the General George C. Marshall House, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as an affiliated area of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. KAINÉ. Madam President, today, I am introducing legislation to designate the General George C. Marshall House, also known as the Dodona Manor, in Leesburg, VA as an affiliated area under the National Park Service.

The legislation will be the final step in the year-long effort to recognize the Dodona Manor as a unit of the National Park System. It will also promote the public appreciation of the significant historic contributions made by U.S. military leader and statesman George C. Marshall.

George C. Marshall was an American hero, playing a significant role in the Allied victory in World War II and serving as an architect of one of the most significant foreign policy initiatives in our country's history. He led a lifetime of public service, serving as Chief of Staff to the Army during America's entry into World War II, as Secretary of State, where he orchestrated the historic Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe following the war and provided counsel to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, and as Secretary of Defense after the onset of the Korean war. He acquired Dodona Manor while serving as the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army in 1941 and lived there until his death in 1959.

Today, the George C. Marshall House is dedicated to preserving and advancing General Marshall's life's work and legacy by hosting international exchanges, historical exhibits, and community events, and supporting educational programming based on General Marshall's desire to inspire future leaders. The legislation would bring greater resources, including technical assistance, accessibility improvements, and new programming, to this historical site and enable the Marshall House to improve and expand its work.

I am hopeful that this designation will provide new resources to preserve, honor, and celebrate General Marshall's legacy at this historic site, and I am pleased that companion legislation is also being introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by my colleague, Representative JENNIFER WEXTON, who has led this effort for years.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. REED. Madam President, I have seven requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 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, November 1, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a classified briefing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 3:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Caroline Newsom, a valued intern from my office, be granted floor privileges until November 17 of this year.

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

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following interns in my office be granted privileges of the floor until December 15, 2023: Seamus Creighton-Kirk and Adam Weiss.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.  
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:42 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 2, 2023, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

KURT CAMPBELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE, VICE WENDY RUTH SHERMAN, RESIGNED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL A. AKE  
COL. ALLEN D. ALDENBERG  
COL. TOBY J. ALKIRE  
COL. ERICH H. BABBITT  
COL. RONNIE S. BARNES  
COL. ANDREW J. BATES  
COL. JASON P. BENSON  
COL. KEVIN M. BERRY  
COL. BRIAN S. BISCHOFF  
COL. TODD M. BOOKLESS  
COL. GEORGE H. BRAUCHLER  
COL. DANIEL N. BREWER  
COL. KENT D. CAVALLINI  
COL. ERICA M. CHRISTIE  
COL. RICHARD P. CIPRO  
COL. PATRICK G. CLARE  
COL. ANDREW W. COLLINS  
COL. ANDREW T. CONANT  
COL. HERMAN E. CROSSON  
COL. JON D. FARR  
COL. THADDEUS D. FINERAN  
COL. PETER E. FIORENTINO  
COL. JOHN R. FLEET  
COL. JEREMY R. FOOT  
COL. STEVE A. FOSTER  
COL. PAUL M. FRANKEN  
COL. JASON W. FRYMAN  
COL. DAVID L. GIBBONS III  
COL. BOBBY M. GINN, JR.  
COL. JERRY B. GLASS  
COL. ALAN R. GRONWOLD  
COL. BARRY W. GROTON, JR.  
COL. WYATT E. HANSEN  
COL. ALEXANDER V. HARLAMOR  
COL. KRISTINE L. HENRY  
COL. GEORGE W. HORSLEY  
COL. ROBERT C. HORVATH  
COL. DAVID L. JOHNSON  
COL. MARVIN D. JOHNSON  
COL. ROBERT C. JORGENSEN, JR.  
COL. GUNNAR D. KIERSEY  
COL. JEFFREY G. LAPIERRE  
COL. LEON M. LAPOINT  
COL. ERIC J. LECKEL  
COL. BRADLEY A. LEONARD  
COL. EDWARD W. LEWIS  
COL. REECE J. LUTZ  
COL. CRAIG M. MACERI  
COL. JASON P. MAHFOUZ  
COL. CHARLES B. MARTIN, JR.  
COL. MARC R. MCCREERY  
COL. JOHN W. MCELVEEN  
COL. RUSSELL E. MCGUIRE  
COL. BRIAN L. MEDCALF  
COL. DONALD S. MITCHELL  
COL. SETH L. MORGULAS  
COL. LAWRENCE M. MUENNICH  
COL. HEIDI R. MUNRO  
COL. TRACY R. NORMAN  
COL. ZOE M. OLLINGER  
COL. BRYAN K. OUELLETTE  
COL. ANDREW S. RENDON  
COL. LINDA J. RIEDEL  
COL. PIA ROMERO  
COL. KEIR A. SCUBES  
COL. JAMES D. SEWARD  
COL. CHRISTOPHER M. THOMAS  
COL. STEVEN R. TODD  
COL. STEVEN C. TURNER  
COL. THEODORE O. UNBEHAGEN  
COL. MATTHEW A. VALAS  
COL. RAVINDRA V. WAGH  
COL. EDWARD J. WALLACE  
COL. ZARA A. WALTERS  
COL. JEFFREY D. WOOD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. CHRISTOPHER C. LANEVE

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14 U.S.C., SECTION 2121(D):

To be rear admiral

SEAN P. REGAN  
JOSEPH R. BUZZELLA  
JOHN C. VANN  
WAYNE R. ARGUIN  
MICHAEL E. PLATT  
DAVID C. BARATA

JO-ANN F. BURDIAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203(A):

To be rear admiral

FRANKLIN SCHAEFER  
TIFFANY DANKO

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JAYMI F. JEFFERY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

KIRSTEN H. THOMPSON

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

THOMAS T. BOOTH, JR.  
ANDREW S. CULBREATH  
DAVID I. GONZALEZ  
MICHAEL A. GRAHAM  
KILEY R. HYATT  
LEAH D. LINGER  
LONNIE J. MCALLISTER II  
JESSAKA MENZIEKWAKYE  
ROBERT J. SANDER  
MATTHEW C. SCOTT  
VICTOR D. SMITH  
EAN P. WHITE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

MOISES A. CASTILLO  
JASON S. FRANKENFIELD  
TRUMAN L. TINSLEY IV

IN THE SPACE FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

KELLY N. ALEXANDER  
JASON A. ALTENHOFEN  
CURTIS A. BABBIE  
STEVEN L. BENTHAL  
MATTHEW SCOTT BLYSTONE  
MATTHEW S. BRADY  
CHAD J. BRENNER  
CHERIE L. BUDAY  
BERNARD JAMES BRAVO BUNAL  
DAVID P. BUTZIN  
JEFFREY J. CAMPEAU  
TYLER D. CARSON  
ROBERT F. CAULK  
KUAN HSUN CHEN  
KYLE DAVID CLEMENTS  
RYAN C. CONWAY  
MATTHEW M. CORK  
TATIANA C. CORNIER  
COREY W. CROWELL  
NATHANIAL ERIC DELEON  
AMBER N. DERIGGI  
KEITH R. DERR  
GARRETT E. DILLEY  
SCOTT A. DREUP  
CHRISTINE M. EWING  
COLIN M. FINK  
ASHLEY E. GONZALES  
COLLIN M. GREISER  
WESTON J. HANOKA  
JUSTIN D. HARMS  
GREGORY CHARLES HARTMAN  
JASON C. HELLER  
STEPHEN K. HENDERSHOT  
JUSTIN T. HEPPE  
JOSHUA H. HESS  
LIANGKUAN HO  
JONATHAN D. HOGAN  
RUBEN ISAIAS IHUT  
ROBERT B. JONES  
RUSSELL P. KRONES  
JAIME O. LARIOSBARBOSA  
CHRISTIAN M. LEWIS  
SHARON LAI MEI LI  
JESSICA B. MAHONEY  
JOSEPH D. MARKOFF  
ORLANDO A. MARTINEZ  
ERIC B. MILLER  
LINCOLN K. MILLER  
GABRIELLE ZIMMERMAN NOCE  
KATHRYN LYONS NORRIS  
JOSEPH C. OLETTI  
DANIEL J. O'CALLAHAN  
DERICK I. PERRY  
BRIAN W. PITTMAN  
MARK R. PRATT  
CHARLES F. RIORDAN



KEVIN C. RIVERS  
MICHAEL H. RYAN  
RALPH W. SALAZAR  
AMANDA J. SALMOIRAGHI  
ANDREW EARL SINGLETON  
IVAN S. SLATER  
ANDREW J. SMALL  
BLAINE L. STEWART  
KRISTINA D. STEWART  
MATTHEW A. STOEERNER  
JUSTIN M. TARR  
JARED D. TUINSTRA  
ALBERT R. VASSO  
KEVIN P. VITAYAUDOM  
DANIEL P. WHALEN  
MCKAY D. WILLIAMS  
JONATHAN W. WRIGHT  
NICHOLAS Y. YEUNG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES  
SPACE FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be colonel*

BRANDON P. ALFORD  
BRYAN M. BELL  
ERIC D. BOGUE  
EVAN J. P. BRIGGS  
CHRISTOPHER T. CASTLE  
BRIAN L. CHATMAN  
JOSEPH G. CLEMMER  
AARON L. COCHRAN  
JAMES RICHARD CURRAN  
GERRIT H. DALMAN  
BRANDON LEWIS DAVENPORT  
ERIN T. DOYLE  
RYAN T. DURAND  
CHRISTOPHER J. EVEY  
ANGELO T. FERNANDEZ  
BREE BRYAN FRAM  
MANDI L. FULLER  
MICHAEL CRAIG GUERRERO  
EDUARDO N. GUEVARA, JR.  
ANNA E. GUNNGOLKIN  
ALAN M. HAEDGE  
BRIAN E. HANS  
DANIEL PAUL HIGHLANDER  
RYAN MCHENRY HISEROTE  
BRENDAN JOSEPH HOCHSTEIN  
JONATHAN KINGSTON KEEN  
THOMAS LAFLASH  
PAUL A. LATOUR  
RYAN CHRISTOPHER LAUGHTON  
KEITH M. MORRIS  
SCOTT DANIEL MUNN  
SHYAM R. MUNSHI  
SAMUEL RICHARD OPPELAAR II  
JOHN V. OTTE  
JOSEPH CARLYLE POMAGER  
MARTIN POON  
ROBERT A. PORTER  
RYAN A. ROSE  
TAMMY A. ROSE  
MATTHEW M. SCHMUNK  
DANIEL CHARLES SEBECK  
KENNETH J. SMITH  
JUSTIN B. SPRING  
KRISTA N. ST ROMAIN  
MARGARET ANN SULLIVAN  
JOSHUA TYE WERNER  
CHRISTOPHER C. WOOD  
MATTHEW C. WROTEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES  
SPACE FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be lieutenant colonel*

MATTHEW GUY ADAMS  
CASEY L. ALEXANDER  
DANIELLE S. AMASON  
JON R. ANDERSON  
PHILIP W. BACHMEYER  
PATRICK G. BALASTA  
MICHAEL D. BEAVER  
BRADY L. BEHRENDT  
ROBERT L. BENT  
MARK A. BOATMAN  
NEIL F. BOCKUS  
RUDOLPH THOMAS BOWEN II  
JEFFERY L. BROWN, JR.  
ANDREW J. BUCHANAN  
MICHAEL J. CABIG  
CHARDAY S. CAMINERO  
BRYCE K. CARLSON  
JOSHUA J. CARLSON  
JOEL N. CHALMERS  
JOHN H. CHAMBERLIN  
LIAM D. CONLEY  
ELLIE J. CONSTANTINE BARREDO  
CAMERON R. CUNNINGHAM  
RONALD C. DAVIES  
LUKE N. DINH  
TROY NICHOLAS DULANEY  
ADAM K. EASLEY  
AARON C. ECHOLS  
CHRISTOPHER J. EWALD  
JENNIFER FARKAS  
RYAN J. FOSTER  
JEREMY D. FOX  
MATTHEW J. FRANTZ  
NATHAN D. GLANDON  
RYAN T. GRIGGS  
JEREMY J. HANCOCK  
ANDREW MICHAEL HICKS  
MICHAEL JAMISON HOGGARD  
PAUL E. HYDE

JARED MICHAEL JACOBS  
BRANDEN P. JARMON  
DANIEL JENSON  
BRETT T. KASISCHKE  
KYLE P. KEITH  
BARRY E. KNOBLOCK  
BRANDON A. LEVESQUE  
KEITH C. MARSHALL  
GENELLE M. MARTINEZ  
MICHAEL E. MCCORMICK  
JOSEPH MCDONOUGH  
ISAIAH L. MONTEMAYOR  
MARK D. NATALE  
DUSTIN J. O'DONNELL  
RAYMOND MARIANO J. PARNTHER  
MARCIANNA J. PEASE  
CHLOE A. PEREZ  
BRIAN A. PETERSON  
JOSHUA R. POLK  
WILLIAM W. POLLARD  
JESSICA M. PRATT  
JULIE N. RAY  
LUIS O. SANTIAGO  
SEAN E. SCARCLIFF  
MARK A. SCOTT  
DANE PAUL SKOUSEN  
RUSSELL C. SMITH  
JAMES JOSEPH STALL  
DEBRA ELLEN STARKEY  
LEONARD DANIEL STIFFLEMIRE  
JONATHAN R. SZUL  
CHRISTOPHER S. TAYLOR  
CHASE W. THORNTON  
CHRISTOPHER Y. TOVAR  
BRADY ALLEN URBANOVSKY  
MATTHEW VALLERAND  
FRANCISCO VAZQUEZ  
AARON M. WARREN  
WILLIAM L. WESTCOTT, JR.  
JOSEPH L. WILLIAMS  
SHAWN WOODALL, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES  
SPACE FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be major*

ELIZABETH A. AGNEW  
GREGORY A. ALLEN  
JOEL EUGENE ARNETT  
SKYLER J. AWISUS  
TERRY R. BABASA  
JOSEPH BABITSKY  
MARCO J. BARRAL  
TYLER D. BATES  
BRENDAN M. BECKER  
CARL R. BLACK  
REBECCA E. BOSWORTH  
PATRICK E. BOYLE  
MICHAEL DEAN BROOKS  
ERIN NICHOLE JEWELL BROWN  
TYLER J. BROWN  
SAMANTHA AERIEL S. B. BURNS  
JOSHUA M. BUTTERWORTH  
JACOB S. BYERS  
JONATHAN W. A. CAMPBELL  
JAMES P. CAREY  
RANELL V. CAVITT  
BRENT S. CLARK  
KASEY LEN CROWE  
KASEY S. CRUMPTON  
JORDAN W. CRUZ  
KLARA I. DAVIS  
LANCE S. DAVIS  
RICHARD M. DAVIS III  
IAN J. DAY  
TREVIS JACK DAY  
STEVEN JAMES DILLMAN  
JACKSON C. DIXON GALBREATH  
MARK ANTHONY G. DIZON  
MICHAEL SCOTT DRESS  
LEVI REUEL DUNCAN  
MELISSA A. FARMER  
BRIAN MING FONG  
GREGG M. FORREST  
VICTORIA GARCIA  
BRANDON ALLEN GILLILAND  
MAX S. GROSSENACHER  
DILLON H. HAGERTY  
JOSHUA LAVON HANELINE  
WILLIAM ROBERT HASHMAN  
SHELBY N. HEINZLER  
JONATHAN P. HEMINGWAY  
DALTON WILLIAM HENDERSON  
KEGAN A. HIGGERSON  
KEITH H. HILL  
STEPHEN A. HINDMAN  
RYAN E. HORNUNG  
SAMUEL M. JACOB  
SAMUEL D. JOLLEY  
MAGGIE J. JONES  
STEVEN PIERRE JONES, JR.  
JEREMY R. KARR  
SIMONE Y. KEITH  
LEE RICHARD KOZOKAS  
EMILY A. LAGARILE  
LAUREN ONEIL LEBLANC  
LINDSEY J. LEWIS  
HAYDEN LAWRENCE LOPEZ  
CAMERON S. LOVE  
KEVIN D. MC LAUGHLIN  
RONALD JOHN MILLER  
JULIE ALLISON MINNOCK  
RAHNI JO MOON  
STEVE ANTHONY MURO  
JOHN S. NEWELL

ANNA ELIZABETH NOCK  
SEAN W. NUTTALL  
HEATHER A. OLIVER  
NATHAN R. PADDOCK  
ALEXANDER G. PANEK  
GABRIEL G. PENTKOWSKI  
CARL J. D. POOLE  
KARL M. PRUHSMEIER  
STEVEN J. RAMOS  
AMOLKUMAR G. RATHOD  
IAN MACLEAN GRIFFITH REDDING  
THOMAS E. REICHERT  
DANIEL REYES  
BILAL A. RIDDICK  
MATTHEW JON ROSENFELDT  
JAMES FALCONER ROSS  
ANNA CHRISTINE ROWE  
NICHOLAS J. RUIZ  
JONATHAN A. SAKULICH  
JONATHAN MINWOO SAMPSON  
LYDELL L. SCOTT  
JAMES MICHAEL SELIX  
AUSTIN J. SELLERS  
JULIA N. SERVOS  
JOSHUA PAUL SHAFFER  
SEAN P. SHERLOCK  
PETER L. SIMON  
MATTHEW JACOB SIMPSON  
LEAH E. SMITH  
MICHAEL PAUL SOUTHAM  
MYLES J. SPETSIS  
STEVEN MICHAEL ST JOHN  
KRISTEN E. THOMASSON  
KEVIN J. TORMASI  
MAICHI M. TRAN  
JUAN TEANCUM TRUJILLO  
RYAN M. VICKERS  
CHRISTOPHER SCOTT WADE  
RONALD E. WAGNON  
BRENT THOMAS WALLACE  
SEAN M. WILLIAMS  
COLIN D. WOLFF  
LUKE G. WUNDERLICH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES  
SPACE FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be major*

ALEXANDER R. ALLARD  
GREGORY STEPHEN ANDERSON  
JOEL SAMAR ATIENZA  
DANIEL R. BARNES  
DAVID BEALE  
ESTEBAN BEDOYA HERNANDEZ  
ZACHARY J. BENSON  
CHARLES A. BOLEN  
ERIC J. BONICK  
KELSEY M. BROFFORD  
CAMERON C. BURCHAK  
MICHAEL ALAN CHRISTENSON  
CHRISTOPHER MARK COURY, JR.  
SAMUEL T. CROUCH  
TARA E. CROUCH  
WILLIAM E. DALLMANN  
RAIN FORREST DARTT  
CHRISTOPHER JAMES DAUGHERTY  
BRIAN J. DAVIDSON  
FOSTER ELLIOTT DAVIS  
BLAKE T. DENNISTON  
ANDREW L. DONLIN  
KEITH P. DREYER  
PATRICK N. DUNKEL  
HAI HOANG DUONG  
JEREMY SCOTT EMERSON  
BRIAN A. ERICKSON  
ERIC J. FONNESBECK  
MEGAN M. FRECHETTE  
MONICA ALICE FURST  
ZACHARY K. FUNKE  
SHANE C. GARDNER  
JOSHUA J. GARRETSON  
JOSHUA M. GASSER  
MATTHEW ALFONSO GAVILANES  
LINDSEY G. GORSKI  
JENNIFER L. GUION  
CONNOR D. GURLEY  
DALE AUSTIN HARTLEY  
DEREK B. HARTMAN  
CLARA S. HEFFERNAN  
AYESHA G. HEIN  
MATTHEW W. HELVEY  
DEREK A. HESSAPPLE  
TERRANIKIA DENISE JOHNSON  
DANIEL J. KANG  
DAVID M. KIM  
PETER C. LAILEPAGE  
YOUNG C. LEE  
DAX ALEXANDER LINVILLE  
JONATHAN LONDONO  
KURT W. LUETZOW  
MICHAEL MANOUK MAKARDISH  
KYLE DANIEL MCCLEARY  
EVAN J. MCDOWELL  
TROY THOMAS MCGUIRE  
RYAN B. MCVAY  
PAUL C. MOBERG  
REY S. MOLINA  
DAVID J. MULQUEEN  
NOEL P. NCCUM  
KYLE E. O'BRIEN  
RACHEL OLIVER  
RAYMOND PEREIRA, JR.  
CHRISTINE M. ROBINSON  
BRETT A. ROSS  
ADAM A. SAMLOWSKI  
DYLAN J. SHILTZ

NICHOLAS E. SHOWALTER  
DENNIS C. SIEBER  
BRADEN C. SMITH  
JEFFREY W. STENQUIST  
ALEXANDER D. THOMAS  
ANDREW L. TYMCHENKO  
MICAH A. UCHIDA  
DOMINIC C. VICINO  
TRENT W. WARGO  
ALEXANDER C. WARNER  
DAVID L. WEATHERS  
EMMA L. WEBB  
NATHAN P. WEISS  
TYLER T. WILLIAMS

#### IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14 U.S.C., SECTION 2121(E):

#### *To be captain*

JENNIFER J. ANDREW  
MATTHEW S. AUSTIN  
MICHAEL W. BAIRD  
PATRICIA M. BENNETT  
TORREY H. BERTHEAU  
BRIAN R. BETZ  
MICHAEL D. BRIMBLECOM  
MARY D. BROOKS  
KEVIN A. BROYLES  
BRADLEY A. BRUNAUGH  
KENNETH J. BURGESS  
JASON A. BUSTAMANTE  
JOEL B. CARSE  
AARON J. CASAVANT  
ERIC W. CHANG  
BRADLEY D. CONWAY  
JEREMY A. COURTADE  
ALLISON B. COX  
JONATHAN W. COX  
BYRON A. CREECH  
MICHAEL R. DARRAH  
JESSICA S. DAVILA  
ARTHUR M. DEHNZ  
PHILLIP A. DELISLE  
JARROD M. DEWITZ  
JENNIFER R. DOHERTY  
PATRICK A. DRAYER  
LAUREN F. DUFRENE  
STANLEY P. FIELDS  
JASON S. FRANZ  
MATTHEW A. GANS  
LISA L. GARCEZ  
CHRISTIAN C. GAUDIO  
SARAH J. GEOFFRION  
JASON D. HAGEN  
JUAN M. HERNANDEZ  
MICHAEL J. HUNT  
RAYMOND D. JACKSON, JR.  
KEVIN L. KAMMETER  
LUANN J. KEHLENBACH  
MARGARET D. KENNEDY  
COREY M. KERNS  
MATTHEW R. KOLODICA  
RICHARD E. KUZAK  
AMANDA M. LEE  
CLAY D. MCKINNEY  
JESSE M. MILLARD  
BORIS MONTATSKY  
SAMUEL R. NASSAR  
ERIC G. PARA  
CHRISTOPHER R. PARRISH  
LUKE R. PETERSEN  
JEFFREY R. PLATT  
JASON T. PLUMLEY  
BEAU G. POWERS  
RANDY L. PRESTON  
MILES R. RANDALL, JR.  
KENT R. REINHOLD  
KENNETH H. ROCKHOLD  
THOMAS C. RODZEWICZ  
ELIZABETH M. ROSCOE  
JENNIFER M. RUNION  
STACI K. RUTSCH  
BRENT R. SCHMADEKE  
JONATHAN D. SHUMATE  
DANIELLE M. SHUPE  
LUKE M. SLIVINSKI  
BENJAMIN J. SPECTOR  
ROBERT E. STILES  
STEVEN D. STOWERS  
KEITH O. THOMAS

JAROD S. TOCZKO  
JORGE L. VALENTE  
ALLISON M. WALLACE  
MATTHEW J. WALTER  
REBECCA A. WALTHOUR  
RYAN A. WATERS  
MATTHEW G. WEBER  
CHARLES K. WILSON  
CHRISTOPHER J. YOUNG

#### FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 9, 2023:

JOHN C. BREWER, OF VIRGINIA  
IAN JOSEPH MCCARY, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

WILLIAM JOHANN SCHMONSEES, OF FLORIDA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO BE A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN, OF VIRGINIA  
RICHARD JOHN AMBROSE, OF OHIO  
ALYSHA S. BECKER, OF VIRGINIA  
SARAH ALLISON BEDENBAUGH, OF VIRGINIA  
BENJAMIN JAMES BERK, OF NORTH CAROLINA  
ROBERT JAMES BLEECKER, OF VIRGINIA  
LINDSEY K. BOWMAN, OF NORTH CAROLINA  
MONICA B. BRINN, OF VIRGINIA  
JOCELYN ANN BROWN, OF VIRGINIA  
KI C. BULLOCK, OF VIRGINIA  
MI KYONG CANALE, OF VIRGINIA  
CINDY CARDONA-DIAZ, OF VIRGINIA  
PHARES LYNN CARROLL, OF VIRGINIA  
YUTHAKORN CHAIMONGKOL, OF VIRGINIA  
THOMAS EDWARD CHIDIAC, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ANDREW JOHN CHIZER, OF VIRGINIA  
JONATHAN G. CHRIST, OF TEXAS  
ANNE KARI CLARE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
GRACE BERNADETTE CLEGG, OF VIRGINIA  
NICOLE M. COLAMETA, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
PETER THOMAS COREY, OF NEW YORK  
BRYAN A. COX, OF TEXAS  
KYLE A. CROSBY, OF VIRGINIA  
LINDSAY L. DANA, OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
JESSE LEE DAVEY, OF WASHINGTON  
EMILY S. DEL MORONE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
LAUREL CATHERINE DELMONICO, OF COLORADO  
CHRISTOPHER JAMES DOEGE, OF WISCONSIN  
JOHN W. DROLLETTE, OF OREGON  
JOSHUA M. FALBO, OF VIRGINIA  
DAVID T. FEIN, OF VIRGINIA  
JAMES WILSON FROMSON, OF NEW YORK  
GABRIEL O. FUENTES, OF VIRGINIA  
RACHEL COTE GILSON, OF VIRGINIA  
CHRISTIAN DAVID GILSON, OF VIRGINIA  
DARRYN BAE GLENN, OF GEORGIA  
ZACHARY C. GRAHAM, OF VIRGINIA  
SANDHYA GUPTA, OF OHIO  
GRAY D. F. GUSTAFSON, OF VIRGINIA  
DEBRA ASHLEY HAJIAN, OF VIRGINIA  
FAIK MESUT HALICI, OF VIRGINIA  
TAKESHA N. HARDAWAY, OF VIRGINIA  
ALYSON G. HIRATA, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
KRISTIN L. HITT, OF VIRGINIA  
ERIC MATTHEW HOLDER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
ARIANA IRANPOUR, OF VIRGINIA  
ELIJAH JATOVSKY, OF CALIFORNIA  
BROOKE H. KANTOR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BRIAN CHRISTOPHER KATO, OF WASHINGTON  
TRACEY LYN KETTER, OF VIRGINIA  
WILLIAM A. KENDRICK, OF VIRGINIA  
WHITNEY BRYCE KINCAID, OF FLORIDA  
REED DAVID GEORGE LANGERUD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DAVID COE LANPHER, OF VIRGINIA  
ZACHARIAH B. LOHNES, OF MARYLAND  
GET KIM LUONG, OF VIRGINIA  
MATTHEW DAVID MADDEN, OF GEORGIA  
DAVID W. MAHER, OF NEBRASKA  
FATIMAH Z. MARTIN, OF NEW MEXICO  
ELIZABETH A. MAYNARD, OF MARYLAND  
JON C. MCCAHLIL, OF FLORIDA

JACOB A. MCCLELAND, OF VIRGINIA  
CONOR P. MCGUIRE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
MELISSA MIRANDA-MARIN, OF OHIO  
JALITA A. F. MOORE, OF CALIFORNIA  
DUNG P. NGUYEN, OF GEORGIA  
ALLEN NOSRATI, OF VIRGINIA  
MARCELLE S. OHALLORAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
MORGAN L. OSBORNE, OF CALIFORNIA  
SARAH M. OTEY, OF VIRGINIA  
SIDDHA STELLA PAGE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
SEAN C. PANE, OF VIRGINIA  
ALLEN EUGENE PARK, OF FLORIDA  
CASEY DAREN PETTZNER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
JEFFREY BINGHAM PRESNELL, OF CALIFORNIA  
JENNIFER M. PRILLAMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
MAGGIE S. RAJALA, OF VIRGINIA  
DANIEL MARK REBACK, OF NEW JERSEY  
DAVID EDWARD RETZ, OF VIRGINIA  
KEVIN PASQUALE RILEY, OF PENNSYLVANIA  
KALEB J. ROGERS, OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
REBECCA B. ROLFE, OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHARLES THOMAS ROUGHSEGE, OF VIRGINIA  
HILLARY JEAN RUGGLES, OF CALIFORNIA  
LAUREN MICHELLE RYAN, OF MINNESOTA  
RAMI H. SAYED, OF COLORADO  
CIERRA GENEVA SAYLOR, OF FLORIDA  
KATHERINE R. SCHEIDT, OF VIRGINIA  
MERYN NOEL SCHNEIDERHAN, OF VIRGINIA  
KYLE DAVID SCOTT, OF VIRGINIA  
ALIAKSANDR S. SERBAU, OF VIRGINIA  
JOHN RICHARD SIAS, OF VIRGINIA  
RACHEL E. SIMON, OF CALIFORNIA  
SYDNEY A. SKOV, OF CALIFORNIA  
KAUKAB J. SMITH, OF VIRGINIA  
MATTHEW W. SPENGLER, OF VIRGINIA  
LETICIA C. STOVER, OF VIRGINIA  
EMMA RACHEL STRAUS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
KHAJA M. SUBHANI, OF VIRGINIA  
ANDREA M. TAPPEMEYER, OF MISSOURI  
JEFFREY A. TAYLOR, OF VIRGINIA  
ADRIANA MARCELA TERAN DOYLE, OF TEXAS  
MATTHEW ALLAN THOMPSON, OF MARYLAND  
SADE L. TUCKETT, OF NEW YORK  
JAMES THOMAS WALLWORK, OF VIRGINIA  
MARCUS LAWRENCE WARNER, OF VIRGINIA  
TRAVIS KAISER WEINGER, OF VIRGINIA  
CRAIG EDWARD WEITMORE, OF VIRGINIA  
BENJAMIN K. WHEELER, OF MINNESOTA  
JOSEPH MARCEL ROMAN WILLIAMS, OF GEORGIA  
CHANNING PHILIP WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA  
ISMAT M. YASSIN-OBLA, OF CALIFORNIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

ALICIA P. ALLISON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate November 1, 2023:

#### DEPARTMENT OF STATE

HERRO MUSTAFA GARG, OF CALIFORNIA. A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT.

## WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on November 1, 2023 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

LAURA DANIEL-DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, VICE JOSEPH BALASH, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 23, 2023.