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No. 195

Senate

The Senate met at 10:01 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MICHAEL F. BENNET, a Senator from the State of Colorado.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O Lord, our God and provider, we thank You for the many blessings we enjoy as citizens of this great Nation. May we be good stewards of Your gifts. Lord, as we reflect on the future, we pray that Your sovereign presence will protect our Nation and world from evil. Equip us to do what is right and just and good.

We pray for our Senators today, asking that You would keep them courageous and focused on Your plans to guide and prosper us. We are grateful that You are here on Capitol Hill, listening, watching, and judging. May all of our elected leaders do what is right for Your everlasting glory.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, November 28, 2023.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable MICHAEL F. BENNET, a Senator from the State of Colorado, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey M. Bryan, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

ISRAEL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in the coming weeks, Congress has a responsibility to equip America and our allies to face a historic array of national security challenges. To understand the urgency of this moment, just look at the impossible choices facing our ally Israel as it works to bring innocent people home from terrorist captivity.

These brutal terrorists bankroll their existence with the blood of innocent

people. They know that their hostages can be cashed in for a brief reprieve from justice or in exchange for terrorists incarcerated in Israel. The humanitarian crisis in Gaza is one of Hamas's own design. Just as there is no moral equivalence between terrorism and self-defense, there is no moral equivalence between innocent hostages and convicted terrorists and criminals.

Unfortunately, this is not just a reminder for the activists on elite campuses and in national newsrooms who uncritically lapped up and regurgitated activist propaganda. It is also for some of our colleagues here in Congress.

According to some reports, Senate Democrats will use their caucus lunch today to discuss placing restrictions on U.S. military assistance to Israel. One of our colleagues is already on the record demanding that President Biden "be more aggressive with the Israelis." Another has declared that "not one penny will be coming to Israel" unless our ally bends to his view—offered from the comfort of a Senate office—on how Israel should conduct self-defense operations.

If Senate Democrats want to vote to tie the hands of Israeli soldiers as they defend their country against vicious terrorists, I welcome such a debate.

For anyone who needs to hear it again, the conflict unfolding today is between a sovereign democracy that takes great pains to avoid civilian casualties and terrorist butchers who go out of their way to inflict civilian casualties and put their own civilians in harm's way. Israel deserves the time, the space, and the resources to restore its security, and I will stand by our ally 100 percent.

For that matter, our own people—American men and women in uniform—deserve the same unwavering commitment to restoring credible deterrence against Iran.

Since October 17, Iran-backed terrorists have launched at least 73 attacks against U.S. personnel in Iraq and

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



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Syria. Clearly, President Biden's strikes against desert warehouses have not given our adversaries pause. The world's leading state sponsor of terrorism remains demonstrably undeterred.

Right now, we have a responsibility to equip Israel to destroy Hamas, deter violence against American service-members, and invest seriously in American hard power—a language our adversaries in Iran, in Moscow, and in Beijing actually understand. Supplemental national security legislation is our chance to uphold this responsibility.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. President, on another matter, as my colleagues and I on this side of the aisle have made abundantly clear, national security begins with border security, and any serious supplemental legislation with a shot at passing the Senate in the coming weeks will have to take meaningful steps toward fixing the Biden administration's border crisis.

On President Biden's watch, record-setting illegal migration has strained border protection facilities and personnel to their breaking point. On this President's watch, catch-and-release has gone from a shortsighted policy option to the dangerous first resort for a profoundly broken asylum and parole system. Right now, immigration courts are facing over 2 million pending asylum cases. That backlog has grown by 50 percent just since President Biden took office. The average asylum case waits more than 4 years for judgment. Talk about sending the wrong signal to legitimate asylum seekers and to bad actors alike.

A wide, bipartisan consensus continues to acknowledge that this broken system is the central problem driving the border crisis. Even the administration's border czar, Secretary Mayorkas, has acknowledged that the way the United States handles asylum claims needs to be "reformed from top to bottom." Well, that is exactly what Senate Republicans have been working on for weeks. Senators LANKFORD, GRAHAM, COTTON, and CORNYN are trying in good faith to help DHS solve its problem by identifying policy changes that restore a measure of common sense to the way we process asylum claims and grant parole.

But at the same time, the Democratic leader has called border security measures "the biggest holdup" for passing a national security supplemental. Well, he is right about one thing: The single largest obstacle in the way of urgent resources to help Israel, Ukraine, and Taiwan is Democrats' refusal to address the crisis at the southern border.

National security begins right here at home, and the sooner our colleagues admit it, the sooner the Senate can move forward on the urgent business before us.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, artificial intelligence—or what is referred to as AI—has been with us for quite some time now. And whether it is the chatbot providing help on Amazon, or personalized recommendations on Netflix, or the algorithms that are curating your social media feeds, these days, most of us interact with artificial intelligence on a daily basis. But as the release of ChatGPT to the public last year demonstrated, artificial intelligence is about to take a giant step forward.

The AI applications I have mentioned, like chatbots and personalized recommendations, are examples of so-called narrow AI, which is AI trained to perform specific tasks. But ChatGPT is an example of the next generation of AI—artificial intelligence systems set up to imitate the human brain and produce original content based on the assimilation of vast sets of data.

This next generation of AI—so-called foundation models which underpin systems like ChatGPT—offers tremendous possibilities: advances in medicine, in farming, in manufacturing, the automation of routine tasks, new ways to manage infrastructure, better and more resilient supply chains, advances in national defense. And the list, literally, goes on and on.

But as with any sophisticated technology, this next generation of AI presents risks as well. And those risks are heightened by the enormous capabilities of AI and the potential for this technology to pervade every corner of our society. And our goal needs to be encouraging the promise of AI while putting safeguards in place to minimize potential dangers.

The light-touch approach the United States has taken to internet regulation is a good model to follow as we approach AI regulation. The explosive growth of internet innovation in the United States is, in large part, a result of the fact that the government has not weighed down this sector of the economy with heavyhanded regulation. And we should maintain a similarly light touch when it comes to AI to encourage innovation and keep the United States at the forefront of the next generation of artificial intelligence.

Leadership in AI will benefit our economy. And there are also serious security reasons why staying at the forefront of the AI revolution is important. There is no question that AI will come to play an important role in national defense, and falling behind adversaries—like the Chinese Communist Party—could put our country at a serious disadvantage when it comes to our

national security. So we need to start establishing some basic rules of the road that will allow AI innovation to flourish, while at the same time minimizing the dangers that it presents.

The race to regulate AI has already started. President Biden has released a sweeping Executive order that empowers multiple government Agencies and Departments to regulate all AI systems, and even the algorithms that recommend our next movie on Netflix or remind us that we need to order more paper towels.

And internationally, the European Union has continued to press forward with a heavyhanded regulatory regime. It is time for Congress to ensure that innovation in the United States continues. Regulating AI by Executive order is not the way to go about things.

Even if the President's Executive order on AI weren't overly broad and heavyhanded, Executive orders are, by their very nature, not permanent, since they have the potential to be reversed or amended at any time—and stand a good chance of being reversed or amended when a new administration comes into office. This creates uncertainty for companies, which can stunt expansion and innovation.

The right way to approach AI regulation is to pursue a bipartisan, nationwide approach in Congress that will protect innovation while putting in place the necessary safeguards for the riskiest applications of this technology.

To that end, shortly before Thanksgiving, I introduced bipartisan AI legislation with Senator KLOBUCHAR and several of our Commerce Committee colleagues from both parties. Our bill is intended to establish some basic rules of the road for artificial intelligence while protecting the ability of companies to innovate and advance this technology.

Our bill focuses on two things: transparency for consumers and a tiered, risk-based framework for oversight of the highest impact applications of AI. On the transparency front, our bill would require any large-scale internet platform that uses generative AI to create content to clearly inform consumers of that fact. One of the risks presented by generative AI is the difficulty distinguishing AI-produced content from human-produced content.

Now, that may not be a huge issue if the content we are talking about is an amusing meme, but it is a real issue if a consumer is trying to figure out whether information or an image is real or whether it has been generated by AI. So requiring transparency about whether content is being produced—or at least partially produced—by generative AI needs to be a priority.

The second part of our bill deals with high-impact and critical-impact AI, that is, AI applications used to make significant applications in particularly high-risk sectors. Our bill establishes a two-tiered system for overseeing these applications.

Critical-impact AI applications—for example, like those used to make significant decisions in the operation of critical infrastructure—would be required to self-certified compliance with testing evaluation, validation, and verification standards.

What does all that mean? High-impact AI applications will be subject solely to transparency reporting requirements. Importantly, this part of the bill is carefully tailored to apply only to AI applications making complex decisions in high-risk sectors and is meant to respond directly and narrowly to the recent leap in capabilities of foundation models that power them.

I believe that the bill Senator KLOBUCHAR and I have introduced is the right first step when it comes to AI technology. Unlike the White House's Executive order, our bill doesn't instantly assume that artificial technology is bad and that it should be subject to heavyhanded government intervention, nor does our legislation rush us into regulations before we have a clear idea of what aspects of this technology need to be regulated and in what way.

Instead, our bill puts in place guardrails to mitigate the dangers posed by the highest-impact AI application, while leaving American innovators and entrepreneurs free to move forward with innovation.

I am grateful to Senator KLOBUCHAR and our other cosponsors for working with me on this bill, and we will continue to welcome ideas to further improve our legislation. Legislation on this issue of this magnitude calls for the deliberation of the committee process and regular order consideration, and I will work to ensure that we take it up in the Commerce Committee in the coming months.

This bill will probably not be the last bill that Congress needs to consider when it comes to AI, but I believe it is the right place for us to begin. And I look forward to working with colleagues from both parties to getting this bill through Congress and across the finish line.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO PEGGY J. DUNN

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to address my colleagues here on the Senate floor today.

I come here with a smile on my face because the individuals I want to recognize today are friends, and they are wonderful people who have made a difference in the lives of many of their fellow citizens back home in Kansas.

I want to recognize a lifelong Kansan who has served her family, her community, and her State. Peggy Dunn has been serving the city of Leawood as mayor since 1997 and has cultivated a flourishing and beautiful community. In January, Mayor Dunn's last term will come to an end. Her dedication to the city of Leawood will not be forgotten, and she will be greatly missed.

Peggy J. Dunn was born in greater Kansas City and has been serving the city of Leawood for 31 years. Prior to being mayor, she was a city council member for 4 years until she was sworn in as mayor in 1997.

Mayor Dunn has played a critical role in the growth of Leawood, and during her years in office, many, many notable developments have been made. Shopping centers such as Park Place and Town Center, Mission Farms and Prairiefire have brought immense expansion and success to the area. Buildings like the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection reveal the architectural beauties of the city. These developments were deliberately planned and came to fruition with guidance from Mayor Dunn.

Mayor Dunn has dedicated her life to creating a lasting community by forming relationships with Leawood's business leaders, volunteer organizations, religious communities, and residents, working together for the city's success.

I have seen her meet people and I know when I meet her—every time there is a conversation, you know that she cares about you. She listens, and she cares that way for the people of her city and the people of the State of Kansas.

Through Mayor Dunn's work, new fire stations, police headquarters, and courts protect the community. Beautiful parks, golf courses, and recreational centers provide opportunities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy what the city has to offer. Mayor Dunn is a servant leader. She is an innovator, and she is totally dedicated to her community.

Leawood, the city, has close relationships with sister cities. In 2003, Mayor Dunn and Mayor Peter Weiss of the Gezer region in Israel signed a resolution in agreement to become sister cities. Since then, Mayor Dunn has hosted delegations from abroad and traveled to Israel multiple times. Additionally, Leawood dedicated the I-Lan Park to its sister city in Taiwan. The park is home to a lovely Taiwanese garden, an open play space, and a piece of art called Cloud Gate.

Through Mayor Dunn's leadership, Leawood has a very bright future ahead.

Mayor Dunn's family has played a key role in her success as a leader. She has 4 children with her husband Terry and 14 grandchildren. I guess, needless to say, Mayor Dunn has plenty to keep her busy as she retires as mayor.

Thank you to her family for supporting Peggy during her tenure.

I congratulate Peggy on her retirement and wish her the very best in the future.

Thank you, Mayor, for all you have done for the city of Leawood, its citizens, and all you have done for the State of Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BOEHM

Mr. President, for two decades, Michael Boehm has served as the mayor of Lenexa, KS, and he will now retire in January, having served as the longest serving mayor in the city's history.

Mike has built his life and career in Lenexa. He is a lifetime resident, and Mike knows the ins and outs of his community. I have never met anyone who knows more about Lenexa than Mike Boehm. He understands the unique importance of every single business on Main Street and the men and women who run those businesses.

During his 20 years as mayor, the population of Lenexa has grown by nearly 20,000 residents. That is remarkable growth, and it is a testament to the quality of the community he has led.

Under Mike's leadership, downtown Lenexa was transformed with the relocation of city hall and the development of a new downtown district known as City Place. With new shops, restaurants, parks, and public spaces, Lenexa is attracting new families and young people who want to put roots down in Kansas. Mike also worked to open the Lenexa branch of the Johnson County Library system, as well as to bring the District Aquatic Center to the city of Lenexa.

I admire Mike's leadership and determination for the city. I have always, always appreciated my conversations with Mike, whether he is visiting me here in Washington DC or when I am meeting with him in Lenexa. He is a true public servant, and the city and State are better because of Mike's service.

I have enjoyed many times conversations on the phone and in person, with solid and good advice about what is in the best interest of the people of Lenexa and Johnson County and Kansas. Mike has been significantly helpful to me as we have worked to try to make sure good things happen in all places across our State.

I congratulate Mike on his retirement and look forward to seeing what this next chapter holds for him.

NOMINATION OF JEFFREY M. BRYAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Judge Jeffrey Bryan to the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota.

Judge Bryan received his B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin and his J.D. from Yale Law School. After clerking for Judge Paul A. Magnuson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota, Judge Bryan worked in private practice at Robins Kaplan Miller & Ciresi LLP on a range of complex civil matters and Federal white collar criminal cases. Judge Bryan then went on to serve as a Federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's

Office for the District of Minnesota for 6 years, where he handled more than 1,000 hearings in Federal court. During his time as an assistant U.S. attorney, he directed the largest cocaine and methamphetamine investigations ever conducted in the district, recovering more than 9,600 grams of methamphetamine and securing the convictions of more than 60 defendants. In 2013, Judge Bryan was appointed as a trial court judge for the Second Judicial District of Minnesota, where he presided over more than 8,000 cases and nearly 120 trials. In 2016, Judge Bryan was appointed to the Minnesota Court of Appeals, where he has participated in more than 500 decisions and has authored over 180 written opinions and orders.

The American Bar Association unanimously rated Judge Bryan “well qualified” to serve on the district court, and he has the strong support of Senators KLOBUCHAR and SMITH. With nearly two decades of public service, as well as his extensive courtroom experience, Judge Bryan is well-positioned to handle the demands of the District of Minnesota from day one.

I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

Mr. MORAN. I yield the floor.

VOTE ON BRYAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Bryan nomination?

Mr. MORAN. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 315 Ex.]

YEAS—49

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

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Boozman	Britt
Blackburn	Braun	Budd

Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Rubio
Cornyn	Kennedy	Schmitt
Cotton	Lankford	Scott (FL)
Cramer	Lee	Scott (SC)
Crapo	Lummis	Sullivan
Cruz	Marshall	Thune
Daines	McConnell	Tillis
Ernst	Moran	Tuberville
Fischer	Mullin	Vance
Grassley	Paul	Wicker
Hagerty	Ricketts	Young
Hawley	Risch	
Hoeben	Romney	

NOT VOTING—5

Graham	Markey	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Ossoff	

The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

NOMINATION OF MARGARET M. GARNETT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Margaret M. Garnett to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Born in Brooklyn, NY, Ms. Garnett earned her B.A. from the University of Notre Dame in 1992, her M.A. and M. Phil. from Yale University in 1995 and 1997, and her J.D. from Columbia Law School in 2000. Ms. Garnett began her legal career working as an associate at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz from 2000 to 2004, where she focused on bankruptcy litigation. She then clerked for the Honorable Gerald E. Lynch on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York from 2004 to 2005. Following her clerkship, Ms. Garnett joined the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York, where she would go on to rise in the ranks throughout her 15-year tenure with the office. Although she presently serves as special counsel, Ms. Garnett has also served the Office as Deputy United States Attorney, Chief of Appeals, Deputy Chief of Appeals, Chief of the Violent and Organized Crime Units, Deputy Chief of the Violent Crimes Unit, and assistant United States attorney. From 2017 to 2018, Ms. Garnett served in the Office of the New York Attorney General, serving as the executive deputy attorney general for criminal justice.

In 2018, Ms. Garnett was nominated by the mayor of New York City and confirmed by the New York City Council to serve as the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation, an agency charged with investigating individual and systemic corruption, waste, fraud, and abuse in city government. A substantial majority of the American Bar Association’s Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary rated Ms. Garnett as “well qualified,” and her nomination is strongly supported by her home State Senators, Mr. SCHUMER and Mrs. GILLIBRAND.

With deep ties to the Southern District of New York and significant experience working on criminal matters, Ms. Garnett will serve on the bench

with distinction. I am proud to support her nomination and urge my colleagues to do the same.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Could we have a bit of order, please?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Order in the Chamber.

NOMINATION OF MARGARET M. GARNETT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, so in a few minutes, we are going to proceed on the nomination of an outstanding public servant, Margaret M. Garnett, whom I was proud to recommend to President Biden as district judge for the Southern District of New York. She is a proud resident of Brooklyn, a brilliant legal thinker, and someone whose entire life story has been defined by public service.

She has had more than a decade of experience prosecuting cases, ranging from murder to robbery, to financial fraud, and more, as part of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. Fifteen times, she has tried a case all the way to jury verdict, including what was, at the time, the largest tax fraud case in U.S. history.

But Ms. Garnett is also a fierce defender of the rights of the accused. She was instrumental in exonerating five individuals wrongly convicted of murder.

She once said that “our job is to do justice, and that is a much broader task and quest than racking up convictions.”

Our courts need more public servants like Margaret Garnett, described by her colleagues not just as brilliant but wise, not just determined but kind, not just an outstanding lawyer but a true friend and defender of our system.

If anyone—anyone—has mastered the recipe for serving as an excellent jurist, it is certainly Margaret Garnett. So I was eager to recommend her to the President for the Federal bench, and I am proud to support the nomination of Margaret Garnett today and encourage my colleagues to support her as well.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 308, Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Mazie Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A.

Coons, Alex Padilla, Patty Murray, Sheldon Whitehouse, Debbie Stabenow, Tina Smith, Benjamin L. Cardin, Chris Van Hollen, Tim Kaine, Brian Schatz, Christopher Murphy, Peter Welch.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 316 Ex.]

YEAS—49

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

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—5

Graham Markey Warnock
Hickenlooper Ossoff

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:28 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJÁN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

VOTE ON GARNETT NOMINATION

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 317 Ex.]

YEAS—49

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

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—5

Graham Markey Warnock
Hickenlooper Ossoff

The nomination was confirmed.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 117, Jose Javier Rodriguez, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Charles E. Schumer, Tina Smith, Tammy Baldwin, Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher Murphy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jeff Merkley, Margaret Wood Hassan, Catherine Cortez Masto, Debbie Stabenow, Jack Reed, Richard Blumenthal, Chris Van Hollen, Tammy Duckworth, Peter Welch.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jose Javier Rodriguez, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 44, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 318 Ex.]

YEAS—44

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

NAYS—51

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

NOT VOTING—5

Graham Markey Warnock
Hickenlooper Ossoff

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 44, the nays are 51. The motion is not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The majority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Motion to Proceed

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 379, Micah W.J. Smith to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Executive Calendar No. 379, the nomination of Micah W.J. Smith, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, as in legislation session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1250; that the Durbin amendment, which is at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. I think I would like to—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I am sorry. Proceed.

Mr. DURBIN. I thought that they told me the script was for some other reason.

I ask consent to withdraw the request until—I made a misstatement, and Senator GRASSLEY and the Senator from Idaho would agree.

Mr. CRAPO. I would. I would agree.

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you. I am new here. I am sorry I made that mistake.

Mr. President, for years, one of the greatest challenges facing American families has been the rising cost of prescription drugs. A recent AARP survey found that the price for the top 25

medications used by seniors has tripled, on average, since those drugs came to market. Those drugs include: Xarelto, Trulicity, Januvia, Jardiance, Humira, and Eliquis.

Now, I imagine most Americans already recognize the names I have read. They sound familiar because they are among the most heavily advertised products and medications on television. You may even have seen one of these ads during the Thanksgiving parade you and your family watched or while you watched a football game this weekend.

Every year, Big Pharma spends more than \$6 billion each year on ads. That is the size of the entire budget of the Food and Drug Administration. In fact, we know that most pharma companies spend more on advertising than on drug research and development of new drugs.

It turns out, the United States is one of only two countries in the world that allows people to run ads on television for prescription drugs. Anybody want to guess the name of the other one? New Zealand. That is the only other country that allows this to occur.

You want to know why pharmaceutical companies spend so much money promoting their drugs? Because it increases their profits dramatically. The average American sees an average of nine ads per day, nine. Pharma thinks if they pummel you with enough ads that you will finally learn how to pronounce and spell Xarelto. You will insist to your doctor that this is the one blood thinner you really need. Sometimes it is easier in a 10-minute meeting for a doctor to just write the prescription than to take the time to explain why the drug may not be needed or a generic version might be just as good for a lot less money.

With billions in targeted spending, patients are bombarded with information but kept in the dark about one fact. Of all the things they mumble and chatter about at the end of these ads, the one thing they never want you to know is how much these drugs cost, the price.

This name is probably familiar to you if you watch television at all, Rinvoq. With billions in targeted spending, patients are bombarded with information like the name of this drug. Take Rinvoq—which is manufactured by an Illinois-based company, AbbVie, for eczema and arthritis—it is now the most advertised drug on TV.

AbbVie spent \$315 million last year on TV ads for Rinvoq alone, but nowhere in the ad did they tell you how much it would cost. Want to guess what it costs for Rinvoq each and every month? The figure is \$6,100. Think about that for a moment.

Well, Senator GRASSLEY and I think it is time for Big Pharma to end the secrecy about the real cost of these drugs. If they are advertising a drug, they should disclose the price upfront. It is a basic transparency measure for patients.

We have introduced bipartisan legislation to require price disclosure in direct-to-consumer drug ads. Our plan is very simple. It has actually passed the Senate once before in 2018. In a minute, we are going to ask consent to pass it again.

Here is why we think this transparency is so important. Earlier this year, a study found that more than two-thirds of drugs advertised on TV were considered “low value.” Those pricey wonder drugs with ads showing people golfing and having fun, they are often no better than the other, more affordable versions of the drugs. So don’t you think it is worth knowing right away that Rinvoq is going to cost you \$6,100 per month rather than waiting for that moment of truth at the pharmacy counter?

One in five Americans do not take their medications as prescribed because they cannot afford it. They cut their pills in half or skip doses because they can’t afford to take the medications as prescribed. Don’t take my word for it. These advertisements often urge you to “ask your doctor if it is right for you.” So we did.

The American Medical Association said:

Direct-to-consumer advertising . . . inflates demand for new and . . . expensive drugs, even when these drugs may not be appropriate.

Think about that—inflating demand for new and expensive drugs, even when they are not the best drug that the person should take.

In 2018, Senator GRASSLEY and I asked the GAO to look at the impact of these ads on television on Medicare’s budget. The GAO found that between 2016 and 2018, these drugs accounted for 58 percent of Medicare spending on drugs. The drugs on television are more than half of the budget of Medicare’s spending on drugs. These ads ballooned Medicare spending to \$320 billion over 3 years. Humira topped the list with \$500 million in advertising in 2018, which contributed to 2.4 billion in Medicare costs.

Let me show you this Humira chart so you get an idea of what we are talking about. I used this chart in 2017 when I first introduced this legislation and when the monthly cost of Humira was a mere \$3,743 a month. Guess what has happened. The cost of Humira has now risen to \$6,900 per month. Shouldn’t AbbVie, the pharmaceutical company that makes Humira, disclose that real cost of the drug to you so you can use the information in making treatment decisions?

Our bill is supported by AARP, which speaks for seniors across America; the American Medical Association, which speaks for doctors across America; the American Hospital Association and 88 percent of Americans support the concept of this bill. How can anyone object to it?

Hold on tight. You will find out.

In fact, President Trump supported it. After our bill passed the Senate but

was stopped by a single House Republican, President Trump issued rules to require these pricetags. Famous for his tweets, here is one that I want to advertise. Look what he said:

Big announcement today. Drug companies have to come clean about their prices in TV ads.

This is from former President Trump.

Historic transparency for American patients is here. If drug companies are ashamed of those prices—lower them.

I didn't always agree with President Trump, but he was sure right on in that statement. In fact, he supported our bill.

Unsurprisingly, Big Pharma went to the courts to stop this legislation. They hate the idea of being open, honest, and transparent with the American people about the price of their drugs because they are afraid it is going to cut into their profits.

Senator GRASSLEY has been a great partner, and I want to ask him why he believes it is important to bring a dose of sunshine to these airways.

Senator GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Well, you just heard Senator DURBIN say that this bill has passed the Senate once. It is still not law. We are back here again, and I hope my fellow Senators will see that Senator DURBIN and I don't give up on this very important issue of trying to bring a dose of sunshine to the airwaves.

Lowering the cost of prescription drugs is a top priority of mine and most of the Senators here. Without prescription medication, millions of Americans would not survive. As a nation, we are incredibly blessed to live in a country where investment and innovation unlock cures and treatments.

But the escalation in price of prescription drugs, partly caused by this advertisement that goes on, are a consuming concern for millions of Americans, including Iowans who bring up this subject regularly at my county meetings.

I have come to the floor of the Senate to address the sticker shock that greets consumers when they pick up their medicine at the pharmacy or open their medical bills after a hospital visit.

In recent years, I have worked in a bipartisan manner to pass the CREATES Act, another bill called the Patient Right to Know Drug Prices Act, and another one, the Right Rebate Act into law. Each of these bills lowered prescription drug prices for patients and taxpayers by stopping anti-competitive practices, putting sunlight on medications for consumers at the pharmacy counter, and to keep drug companies in check.

I was chairman of the Finance Committee when we hauled Big Pharma in for public hearings. As chairman, I also partnered with the senior Senator from Oregon on a groundbreaking 2-year investigation of insulin pricing. That investigation focuses not only on insulin

manufacturers but also powerful pharmacy benefit managers—PBMs.

I have worked to hold PBMs accountable by putting sunlight on their practices and working to ban their anti-competitive behavior that increases the cost to patients, rural pharmacies, and the taxpayers.

In this Congress, I have gotten passed the Prescription Pricing for the People Act out of the Judiciary Committee and with bipartisan support. I hope the Senate doesn't miss the opportunity to hold the Federal Trade Commission accountable by requiring the 6(b) study of drug middlemen to be produced within 1 year instead of the typical 3 to 5 years that it takes the FTC to do something.

I have also worked with the junior Senator from Washington State to pass the PBM Transparency Act out of the Commerce Committee with bipartisan support. The FTC can play an important role in holding PBMs accountable in spread pricing and clawbacks across all health insurance.

I have also contributed to and supported two Finance Committee mark-ups this year that included six of my PBM accountability and transparency provisions. I am supporting the PBM provisions that have come out of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee to deal with this problem in the commercial insurance market.

I hope the full Senate doesn't ignore the aggressive actions the four committees have taken this Congress to hold PBMs accountable. We must enact these bold committee-passed bills into law. If we are timid, we will be right back here a few years from now still fixing the problem.

On top of PBM reforms and accountability, we need price transparency; so that brings me back to where Senator DURBIN and I are right now. With that background, I now go to the purpose of this unanimous consent request and the Durbin-Grassley bill to bring important price information to prescription drug consumers. When patients complain about the high price of drugs, it is usually because they got their bill or found out how much it costs when they were at the pharmacy counter. They didn't have the ability to know the price before they bought it. Knowing what something costs before buying is common sense. So working with the Senator from Illinois to require the disclosure of medication list prices and advertisements makes common sense. President Trump pursued this through regulations, and the Senate even passed this measure—as Senator DURBIN has already said—a few years ago.

Each year, the pharmaceutical industry spends \$6 billion in direct-to-consumer drug advertising to fill the airways with ads, resulting in the average American seeing nine direct-to-consumer ads each day. Studies show that these activities steer patients to more expensive drugs even when a lower cost generic is available.

The Government Accountability Office has found that prescription drugs advertised directly to consumers account for about 58 percent of Medicare spending on drugs. We ought to require the disclosure of this list price so that patients can make informed choices when inundated with drug commercials.

Consumers and taxpayers would benefit from a dose of sunshine. By passing the Drug-Price Transparency for Consumers Act, we could begin the process of reforming the incentives in our prescription supply chain that reward high-cost drugs and their manufacturers, along with powerful middlemen.

If you watch these commercials on television, you see a lot of information very quietly stated by the drug companies such as the side effects possible from using some of these drugs. You get all the information about what these drugs will accomplish, but you don't know what they cost. And that information ought to be available to the consumer.

I thank Senator DURBIN for giving me this opportunity to express my view on this piece of legislation.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1250

Mr. DURBIN. I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY. He is a proud Republican conservative. I am on the other side of the spectrum. I am a Democrat, proud of my progressive background.

The two of us agree on this because it is common sense. If the drug companies are going to spend a fortune, billions of dollars—more than they spend on research for new drugs—advertising these drugs, we have a right to ask: What does it cost? Is that such a tough question to answer? Not if you are proud of your product. Not if you are proud of the price you are charging.

But if you don't want the American public to know, you conceal the price and you send Senators to the floor to object.

Now, both political parties spend an awful lot of money on political opinion surveys: What are Americans thinking? Do you know what shows up as a No. 1 concern year after year after year? The high cost of prescription drugs. That isn't getting any better.

If you ask insurance companies: Why does the cost of health insurance keep going up? The No. 1 driver: the high cost of prescription drugs.

If you ask: What are we going to do about Medicare's runaway costs? You have to do something about the high cost of prescription drugs.

We are addressing that issue directly, but there are only four U.S. Senators on the floor of this Senate for this occasion, because we are not going to go to the measure and actually debate and consider it. It is going to be pushed aside for a procedural reason, and it will go back to an empty floor and an empty Chamber waiting for the next rollcall on a nomination.

The American people have lost faith in this institution because we are afraid to tackle the real issues they

care about. This is one of those issues. It is a bipartisan matter, even approved by former President Trump, and I am sitting here talking about it. It is an indication to me that this an idea whose time has come.

So, Mr. President, now at the appropriate time, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1250; that the Durbin amendment, which is at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, Americans deserve a transparent, affordable, and accessible prescription drug market. I agree with the concerns that each of my colleagues have raised here tonight. The current system fails to meet these needs, and I appreciate the intentions of my colleagues in attempting to shed light on the opaque pricing system that we now face. The problem is that the solution proposed in Senate bill 1250 is the wrong solution.

If you listened carefully to the debate of my colleagues, their main objection was that the prescription drug companies are advertising and promoting and creating markets for their products. Their solution is to have them tell you what the price is, and what they are asking in their legislation is that the prescription drug manufacturers be required to state their list price.

But we all know that the list price is not actually the correct price, and it will actually create confusion even further by forcing these pricing numbers to be put out into the marketplace through commercial advertising in a way that will then, I believe, undercut the major reforms that we are now undertaking in the Finance Committee to get the opaque system eliminated, to shed transparency onto the system, and help all consumers—including the United States Government—to understand what the real price is.

Senator GRASSLEY referenced three or four of his bills that we are working on in legislation right now in the Finance Committee that make major reforms to achieve this very price transparency that I am talking about. We had a markup on that legislation just recently, and it passed 26 to 0 in the Finance Committee. It is ready to come to the floor. It will deal with many of these things that have already been discussed here, but it will not create a mandate that the wrong price be advertised on TV.

Far too often, heavily concentrated health plans and PBMs force consumers to pay on that list price for prescription drugs, exposing seniors and

working families to catastrophic costs. This bill, if enacted, would mandate the inclusion of these inflated figures in virtually all medication ads, reinforcing the notion of the list price as the best pricing opportunity for consumers.

Respectfully, I see these requirements as moving our current system in the wrong direction by affirming deceptive price points that should never be the basis for a patient's cost or decisions.

A drug's list price includes none of the discounts, none of the rebates or other price concessions found in the net price—the real price that is paid between the insurers and the PBMs and often then dealt with in pharmacies that are integrated with the insurance companies and the PBMs.

A recent study showed that this gap between the list and the net price continues to inflate every year. In 2022, for instance, sticker prices for branded drugs, like those you have seen on charts here, grew by 3.7 percent; whereas, the net prices—the real price—which was not able to be figured out by the consumer accounting for rebates and discounts, remained unchanged.

For medicines like insulin, the gap between the list and the net price can exceed 80 percent.

Rather than broadcast and validate list prices, Congress should ensure that patients can share in the savings that are reflected in net price points, enabling both increased transparency and reduced out-of-pocket costs at the pharmacy counter. The better act—the one I just referred to that is coming out of the Finance Committee with a 26 to 0 vote—would take numerous steps toward achieving this goal with sizable cost-sharing reductions for seniors and no premium hikes. This proposal before us today, by contrast, would risk rubberstamping the centrality of sticker prices that no consumer should need to pay under a rational healthcare system.

I share the concerns of scores of patient advocates and clinicians who agree with the need for more transparent pricing but disagree with the approach taken by this bill. As many of these groups have pointed out, list price disclosures can trigger confusion for consumers and deter healthy, proactive doctor-patient discussions.

In fact, I would think that the drug manufacturers would love to have their list price—the one they want to start out asking for—be the one that is marketed.

For Americans with solid prescription drug coverage, list prices provide no direct insight into what a patient will actually pay for a given drug. For the population more broadly and for policymakers, the mandates in this legislation do nothing to unearth critical information on the price concessions routinely withheld from consumers.

Additionally, the bill's free speech concerns warrant further discussion

and scrutiny, and its transformation of CMS into an advertising regulator raises legal questions of mission creep and Agency scope. I stand ready to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reduce patient costs and to move toward more transparency in the marketplace. That said, for numerous reasons, I cannot support this legislation and must object to its passage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from Idaho is my friend. We have worked together and served together, and I count him as my friend.

I would just say that arguing that the list price is deceptive suggests that there is some third party, some Agency—perhaps in Government—that is creating this list price which we are asking to be on the ads that the pharmaceutical companies put on television.

Do you know who creates the list price, Mr. President? The pharmaceutical companies themselves. We go directly to them. Give us the list price. You saw what happens over the span of a few years: The list price can double.

Who is creating that doubling in the price? The pharmaceutical companies themselves. And, now, to argue that the price that they agree on, that they advertise, is one that is somehow deceptive to consumers just doesn't square.

Have you ever heard of AARP, the American Association of Retired Persons? Most of us respect them because we have worked with them over the years. They speak for seniors. They have endorsed this bill. They don't think it is confusing or deceiving to tell consumers how much these drugs actually cost.

Let's get down to reality. Whether it is from healthcare providers or pharmaceutical companies, many times the starting price is not the end price. But you never know where that is going to end up. It depends on the insurance company, for example, as to how much they are going to reimburse or whether there are any copays involved in it. So the one price we can stick with is the price created by the pharmaceutical companies themselves.

Is it so confusing to consumers that you can't state a number? They get it. They know what the cost is. What they don't get and what they may not understand is all of that mumbling that goes on at the end of the ads: Don't take this drug if you are allergic to this drug. Incidentally, this drug may kill you.

You listen to all that stuff, and you say: How in the world can they jam in all of that information in just a few seconds?

Listing the price of a drug on TV is very simple, very straight, and very honest and transparent. Pharmaceutical companies should want to join in that effort.

I thank Senator GRASSLEY for coming to the floor to join in this effort today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

ISRAEL

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, a month and a half ago, Hamas terrorists committed a horrific act of barbarism. More than 1,200 innocent Israelis and 33 Americans were murdered in cold-blooded acts of evil. It was the deadliest massacre of the Jewish people since the Holocaust and the deadliest foreign attack on Americans since 9/11.

The Middle East is no stranger to violence, but the October 7 attack was particularly heinous: systematically hunting down and slaughtering young people at a concert; kidnapping elderly women out of their homes; beheading babies and burning them in ovens. The line between good and evil is as clear as it has ever been.

For the remaining innocent hostages currently being illegally held in Gaza, the terrorists and the terror continue. While we are grateful for the release of some hostages over the weekend, our hearts remain with those still being held. This includes several Americans, including Keith Siegel, a native of my home State of North Carolina.

So let me be as clear as I can: Hamas's continued holding of these innocent hostages is a violation of the law, and it represents a complete disrespect for the value of human life. Every single one of them must be released, and all levels of our government must remain united in working to get them home.

In this clash between good and evil, the question that the United States should be asking is, Who can we count on to be on our side, and who stands on the side of the terrorists?

This brings us to the state of Qatar. This is a nation that hosts Hamas's so-called political office, including Hamas leaders. From the safety of Doha, these terrorists gleefully watched and celebrated the attacks on October 7.

Now, it is important to remember that Qatar is a major non-NATO ally of the United States, and it hosts U.S. military forces at Al Udeid Air Base—a strategically important location for our operations in the Middle East. Our two nations are friends, but sometimes friends must be honest with one another.

You see, Qatar claims that they only host Hamas at the request of the U.S. Government and in coordination with Israel. There is some truth to this. Since October 7, Biden administration officials, such as CIA Director Burns, have beaten a path toward Doha, hoping that the Qatari Government's hosting of Hamas's senior leadership would provide a pathway toward ending the hostage crisis that Hamas initiated.

I certainly agree that the U.S. Government, including both the administration and Congress, should be doing everything it can to bring the hostages home, including working through allies and partners, and, to be sure, Qatar's

mediation with Hamas's leaders has helped free some hostages, but at what cost and to what end?

In exchange for the release of innocent women and children who were kidnapped by Hamas, Israel was forced to exchange three Palestinian prisoners for every one innocent Israeli victim. Many, if not all, of these prisoners were arrested, charged, and sentenced for stabbings, attempted car bombings, and other heinous crimes as part of the campaign of terror. Some have already returned to the fight, donning the infamous Hamas headband and calling for the slaughter of more Jewish people.

Every day that goes by without a resolution to the hostage crisis exposes Qatar's decision to host Hamas as both foolish and flawed.

Earlier this month, I met with the Qatari Ambassador in my office. I told him in no uncertain terms that his government must pressure Hamas leaders living in Doha to immediately and unconditionally release all hostages.

In the nearly 2 months after Hamas's horrific October 7 massacre, however, we need to recognize that Qatar's current approach, while yielding limited successes, is attempting to do something unacceptable, and that is to legitimize Hamas.

Simply put, there is no future for Gaza or the Palestinians that includes Hamas. In the past 2 months, we have watched Hamas leaders use Qatar's hospitality to buy time—prolonging the war and the hostage crisis from the comfort of their luxury accommodations. While Palestinians suffer in Gaza because of the war that Hamas started, we have seen Hamas leaders push their genocidal agenda from Doha, including in multiple meetings with Iran's Foreign Minister and even in a visit to Moscow. If Qatar's leadership believes that any of this is consistent with what Washington has asked of them, it is not.

So my message to the Qatari Government is very simple: Stop this now. You are hosting a brutal terrorist organization with American blood on its hands and who is holding American hostages. Your media organizations, starting with Al Jazeera, are regularly pushing out Hamas's propaganda that only further inflames tensions in the Middle East. Your leadership continues to speak out of both sides of its mouth—on one hand, committing to negotiate a resolution to the hostage crisis while, on the other, blaming Israel and absolving Hamas at every turn.

We need to tell our friends in Doha loudly and clearly: Qatar is accepting a significant liability with its pro-Hamas policy.

So we must end this myth that this policy is something that Washington wants and urge the Qatari Government to end this policy immediately.

This is personal for Americans, and I have met with the families of hostages right here in Washington. I have heard their stories. I look at their photos

every day on my desk. Every day that these families have to live with the pain and uncertainty is unacceptable. We must stand united and say: Not one more day.

We must also start thinking about the day after because there will come a day when Israel will halt its military operations in Gaza because they will have achieved their stated goal of destroying Hamas. The remaining question will then be what to do with the Hamas leaders in Doha. My view is that they should be extradited to the United States so that these terrorists can face justice in a U.S. court of law for killing and kidnapping American citizens.

I would hope that our friends in Qatar will not only be partners for peace and stability but will also be partners in ensuring that Hamas and its leaders are brought to justice for the despicable acts of terror they have committed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

BIDENOMICS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the failures of Bidenomics and to talk about the devastating impact Bidenomics has had on American families.

Certainly, people in Wyoming are worried about the high cost of groceries. I hear it every time I am at the grocery store. People wince every time they fill up the gas tank. People have turned to either raiding their savings accounts or taking on increasing debt just to stay up to the current cost of living.

President Biden has a message for all of these people who are wincing as they fill up, who are worried about the cost of groceries, and who are raiding their savings accounts. Joe Biden's message to them is just this. He says: Don't believe your lying eyes. That is what he believes.

Tomorrow, the President will be in Colorado, and he is going to say some things that the American people just will not believe.

He will say inflation is getting better. He will say Bidenomics is working. He will say that anyone who believes anything other than that is just a victim of misinformation. Well, that is not what the families of America are feeling. Americans know that they are subjected day in and day out to incredibly high prices, and they know that Joe Biden is the President of high prices.

Before Thanksgiving, we got new inflation data, and prices went up again. Prices are now over 17 percent higher today than they were the day Joe Biden took office. In real terms, families are paying over \$900 each and every month more now for their cost of living than they were for the same things the day Joe Biden came into office. Americans are feeling it everywhere but specifically in the cost of gas, the cost of groceries, and the cost of everyday goods.

As prices continue to go up, people are falling further and further behind when it comes to trying to pay their bills.

Let's look at personal savings accounts. Do people have more money or less in their bank accounts now than they did before? Well, the answer is clearly they have less. Bidenomics is forcing three out of every five Americans to live paycheck to paycheck.

Let's look at personal debt. Credit card debt now exceeds \$1 trillion. This is a record high in the history of the United States.

Let's look at interest rates. Americans are maxing out their credit cards just to get by, and they are having to do it at higher interest rates just to pay their bills, so their debt number continues to go up.

Under Bidenomics, Americans barely have enough money to pay their bills, let alone save for the future.

President Biden equates Bidenomics with the American dream. So what do people think about the American dream? Well, for most families right now, that American dream is further and further out of reach than it has ever been before.

According to a recent poll by NBC News, only one in five Americans today feels confident that their children's lives will be better than their lives were. That is an alltime low, and this is talking about the future and the loss of hope for a better future.

President of the United States Joe Biden is disturbingly out of touch. According to NBC News, President Biden is baffled—baffled—that the American people are unhappy with the state of the economy. It is not baffling; it is the definition of “Bidenomics.” Americans are unhappy with the economy because they don't like paying 20 percent more for food, \$1 more for a gallon of gas, or 8 percent mortgage rates. So why is the President of the United States so disconnected from the feelings of everyday Americans?

Well, hard-working Americans deserve better leadership than what they have gotten out of this White House for the last 3 years. On issue after issue after issue, President Biden's actions have made matters worse. He has continued and increased wasteful Washington spending. The Democrats are as guilty as he is. He keeps attacking our affordable, available, reliable American energy, and my home State of Wyoming is America's energy breadbasket. He has pursued the costliest regulatory burden in American history. The regulations coming out of this administration are penalizing and punishing and are costing the American people a lot.

Let there be no confusion that the policies of Joe Biden and the Democrats are why families have suffered the worst inflation in 40 years. Democrats have done nothing to correct course or steer the economy in the right direction. Instead of working to cure inflation, Senate Democrats tell Americans to endure it. They are push-

ing policies that increase spending and choke off American energy—policies that keep driving prices and costs higher.

Two weeks ago, President Biden met with the Chinese President, Xi. It was their first face-to-face meeting this year, 2023. Tensions with China continue to rise. Yet President Biden seems more eager to appease President Xi than to address China's serious threat to America's economy and safety. None of this lowers the cost of living. None of this makes our country stronger.

Republicans have solutions to get the country back on track. Our solutions will lower the cost of living, will increase wages, will reduce Washington redtape, will unleash American energy, and will end our Nation's dependence on China.

In this Congress alone, Republicans have put forward legislative solutions—workable, meaningful solutions—to restore a strong economy. We have introduced bills to reverse these political mandates and eliminate these punishing regulations. We have introduced bills to end America's dependence on China, reduce dependence for manufacturing, reduce dependence for medicines, and to promote our own manufacturing. We have introduced bills to increase America's production of oil, gas, coal, and critical minerals. That would immediately lower the cost of energy and groceries for families all across America.

Under Joe Biden and the Democrats, America is heading in the wrong direction, and by overwhelming numbers, the American people will tell you that.

Republicans have solutions to make a difference—to lower prices, to unleash American energy, to secure the southern border, and, in time, to get America back on track. The time to act is now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

ISRAEL

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, so far—so far—the United States is standing behind Israel, as it should, in Israel's fight against Hamas—so far.

Don't go wobbly on us, President Biden. Don't go wobbly on Israel.

But some people in Washington seem confused as to why America backs Israel. I am seeing a lot of hand-wringing from folks who like to pretend that there is some kind of—they use this word a lot: “nuance”—that there is some kind of nuance we need to apply to the Hamas terrorist attacks of October 7 before we can condemn Hamas and hold its supporters accountable. President Obama has even suggested that somehow we are all complicit in the bloodshed.

Some people promoting this idea of nuance, frankly, believe that Israel got what it deserves. Now, they don't say that, but that is what they believe. They believe that Israel got what it deserved. These folks who believe that

also apparently believe in diversity, equity, inclusion, and the right to kill Jews.

Thankfully, that is not most Americans. That is a lot of people here in Washington, DC.

In Louisiana, however, my State, we understand that the debased people who slaughtered hundreds of young people at a peace concert are the bad guys. In Louisiana, we understand that the odious men who raped women, raped and sodomized women next to the bodies of their dead friends, don't deserve to be on this planet. We in Louisiana understand that the degenerates—the degenerates—who forced kidnapped Holocaust survivors to pose for photos—to pose for photos, for God's sake—next to their terrorist captors are just wrong.

Nothing—nothing—that the Israeli Government has ever done or could do warranted throwing grenades at children hiding in a bomb shelter. Why are some people reluctant to admit that?

You don't need to read a treatise on the Middle East to know that only monsters—monsters with black hearts—would put a baby in an oven and flip on the switch, as one first responder reported. That is not nuance; that is evil.

The evil we saw unfold when Hamas butchered Israeli civilians is indefensible. It is indefensible. Those terrorists brutalized thousands of people, including dozens of our American friends and neighbors. Hearing the stories from the survivors and from the first responders—it is nauseating. It is not nuance; it is evil.

Yet the Hamas terrorists took joy, they yelled for joy, as they massacred civilians. One terrorist called his mom—called his mother—to brag that he had “killed 10 Jews with my own hands.” Who would brag about something like that? Another Hamas official celebrated the violence and vowed to continue to wage attacks like this “again and again and again” until Israel no longer exists.

No family in Israel will be able to sleep soundly at night until these terrorists are wiped off the face of the Earth.

Israel has both the right and it has the responsibility to defend itself. I am proud that the United States of America is supporting Israel.

Don't go wobbly on us, President Biden. Stand your ground. Don't go wobbly.

I am proud that the United States is supporting Israel. The world will be a safer place for Israelis and Americans alike when Hamas ceases to exist.

Hamas leaders told anyone who would listen—anyone who would listen—they told us exactly what they intended to do and wanted to do and will continue to do. They told anyone who would listen that their goal is to kill as many Jewish people as possible, and that is still their goal.

This wasn't a protest against Israel's Government; it was a massacre of Jewish people—the largest since the Holocaust.

It is not surprising, then, that some who oppose intervention in Gaza have turned to attacking Jewish Americans.

In New York City, those people cornered Jewish students in a library, forcing a librarian to offer to hide the students in an attic. At Cornell University, they threatened to shoot up the kosher dining hall. At my State's Tulane University, activists broke a student's nose because he opposed their anti-Israel demonstration.

These protests didn't occur in New York City or Cornell or Tulane by accident; they targeted these areas because they are home to many Americans who happen to be Jewish. That is just a fact. New York is home to the largest Jewish population outside of Israel. Tulane, in my State, which was the first university in the South to welcome Jewish students, has a student body today that is roughly 40 percent Jewish. It was no accident.

When confused activists twist themselves in knots trying to justify the torture and the rape and the killing of Jews in the Middle East, they are feeding the fires of anti-Semitism here at home as well. Unfortunately, we have seen that over the past few weeks.

Let's not forget—it is Hamas who is using civilians as human shields. Hamas is the group also hoarding fuel and food as Palestinian civilians starve. Hamas is the group that dug up water pipes to turn them into rocket launchers.

The truth is that the Palestine people, the people of Gaza, and the Israeli people all suffer because of Hamas, and any suggestion that Israel is culpable for this suffering plays into the hands of the terrorists.

In Louisiana, we can see through the pseudo-intellectual hand-wringing of Israel's critics. The truth is that Hamas brutalized Israeli citizens and then ran home to hide behind their women and children, using those women and children as human shields. They are the lowest kind of pond scum, the lowest kind of sadists imaginable.

Over the past week, Hamas has released some hostages as part of a temporary cease-fire. I am happy for that, and the American people are happy for that. I and they hope that every hostage will be reunited with their family soon. We cannot forget, however—we should not forget, however—that Hamas vowed to continue attacking and kidnapping Israeli citizens again and again and again, and the only way to stop this cycle is to eliminate Hamas.

I was out of the country, in another country, when Hamas attacked Israel, and I did not know what position President Biden would take. I didn't. He said: I am standing with Israel. I was so relieved.

I know President Biden is under a lot of pressure from the loon wing of his party to abandon Israel, to demand a permanent cease-fire, to let Hamas go unpunished. But Hamas doesn't want a permanent cease-fire. Hamas had a per-

manent cease-fire on October 6, the day before they attacked Israeli civilians, and Hamas forfeited that cease-fire unilaterally.

Here is what Hamas wants: Hamas wants to terrorize Israel until all of the Jewish people are dead. Hamas wants to terrorize Israel until all of the Jewish people are dead. Hamas wants to kill Jews. Hamas wants to kill Jews and drink their blood out of a boot.

That is not nuance, President Obama; that is evil.

President Biden needs to show the world—and, frankly, some members of his own party—that the United States of America and its good people will continue to stand with Israel until Hamas is in ruins, until Hamas is dead and we drink their blood out of a boot, until Hamas's genocidal agenda is abandoned.

The world will be safer on that day, and it will certainly be safer because Hamas is not in it. By supporting Israel's efforts, Americans are helping to ensure that an attack like October 7 never happens again, and I think most fairminded Americans understand that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL GLEN D. VANHERCK

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have had an opportunity over the years to work with some extraordinary leaders in our military, but one of the exceptional leaders whom I have recently come to know and work with is Gen. Glen D. VanHerck. He is the commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command—we know it as NORAD—and the U.S. Northern Command, or USNORTHCOM.

General VanHerck is preparing to retire after more than 36 years of service to our Nation. As I mentioned, he is an individual whom I have come to know over the recent years, and I am proud to have been able to work with him in parts of my career. But I want to ensure that his distinguished service, which includes successful commands at every level—as director of the Joint Staff and a long list of U.S. Air Force assignments, flying the F-15, the F-35, and the B-2—is all reflected in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

General VanHerck has led by example and served selflessly throughout his career. He has always, always thought of the men and women under his command. He has thought of their families. He has thought of our future and the world that we all hope to leave for our grandchildren.

I know that General VanHerck and his wife Marilyn are looking forward to his upcoming retirement, but I would hope that he will continue to serve in a different way, utilizing his extraordinary expertise and knowledge.

From August 2020 to November 2023, General VanHerck oversaw the most robust and dynamic transformation in the history of NORAD and USNORTHCOM. This transformation enabled the commands to support the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada while ensuring the defense of both homelands. His direction singlehandedly resulted in decisive national and international military operations that operationalized the commands and shifted from a reactive regional focus to a more proactive and globally integrated campaigning effort.

General VanHerck has also been instrumental in leading a wide range of homeland defense operations, including defense efforts against Russian long-range aviation, North Korean intercontinental ballistic missiles, and Russian and Chinese out-of-area maritime operations. He established a clear strategic vision, focus, and priorities, inspiring consistent operational and organizational excellence throughout pandemic response operations; Operation Allies Welcome, which supported over 84,000 Afghan refugees; and the first kinetic engagements of hostile objects over North America in the whole history of NORAD and USNORTHCOM.

General VanHerck also led a collaborative effort to focus on homeland defense, the top priority of the national defense strategy, by adopting a modernized and integrated deterrence approach toward strategic competitors. Prioritizing domain awareness, information dominance, decision superiority, and global integration empowered NORAD and USNORTHCOM to successfully campaign day to day in competition and will improve the commands' ability to deter in crisis and defeat, if necessary, in conflict.

General VanHerck's strategic foresight and collaboration with members of the highest level of government, both here in the United States as well as in Canada, guided the commands to look beyond traditional approaches and customary missions and to examine evolving adversary actions, capabilities, and intent.

Recognizing an urgent need to advance NORAD and USNORTHCOM's capabilities to outpace peer competitors and rogue nations, General VanHerck operationalized the commands, reaffirming their unyielding commitment to the highest priority mission of homeland defense.

In response to our adversaries' efforts to operate and train in and through the Arctic region, NORAD executed the northernmost deployment of fighter and supporting aircraft from forward operating locations in Northern Canada to Pituffik Space Base in Greenland, formerly known as Thule.

For its part, USNORTHCOM oversaw Arctic Edge—this is the largest exercise in Alaska—in 2020, deploying a joint and combined force of 800 to advance communications, domain awareness, infrastructure, and sustainable

presence in coordinated air, land, maritime, and cyber domain field training.

Additionally, for the first time ever, USNORTHCOM led a large-scale, multicombatant-command, homeland defense exercise from the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group while the strike group was under USNORTHCOM's operational command. This allowed four combatant commands and NORAD to conduct homeland defense operations, exercise joint integration, conduct multinational operations, and strengthen interoperability in command and control.

Throughout, General VanHerck clearly articulated warfighter requirements, including the need for ready, trained, and well-equipped forces that are capable of operating wherever they are needed. That, in turn, has led to significant advances in Arctic capabilities for the joint force, including infrastructure upgrades at northern bases, improvements to the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex, and facilities to support deployment of ground-based air defense systems at Eielson Air Force Base.

These forward-looking efforts have also led to testing cold-weather technologies, developing deployable extreme-cold-weather expeditionary capabilities, evaluating satellite and terrestrial Arctic communication solutions aboard an icebreaker, and significantly increasing communications coverage in the region.

Mr. President, as one who has focused on the Arctic for decades now, I can attest that General VanHerck gets the Arctic. He knows and understands the value and the significance of the Arctic. He gets it.

Across decades and assignments, General VanHerck continuously demonstrated a clear strategic vision for defending the homeland, and his focus and priorities consistently yielded operational success and organizational excellence. His leadership and passion have defended the people of the United States and Canada, and, for that, we are grateful.

So to General VanHerck, I thank you for your long and your distinguished career in the service of our Nation, and on the occasion of your well-deserved retirement, I wish you and your family nothing but the very best and congratulate you for a job well done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

TRIBUTE TO MARY ELLEN STONE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mary Ellen Stone on her retirement, after 44 years of service leading the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, KCSARC. Over that time, she has laid essential foundations, establishing and strengthening the organization into what has become a respected, comprehensive nonprofit provider of supportive services for survivors of sexual assault and their families. Her passion, tenacity, and leadership have shaped KCSARC into the strong, vibrant nonprofit it is today.

Mary Ellen began at KCSARC in 1979, serving about 100 clients with a staff of 3 and a budget of \$50,000. As she retires in 2023, the nonprofit serves 5,000 survivors and their families with a staff of more than 70 and an annual budget of \$8.2 million. Over four decades, Mary Ellen has been a bold, visionary advocate for sexual assault survivors throughout King County and the State of Washington. Mary Ellen was influential in establishing the State's first accreditation process for sexual assault providers, professionalizing service delivery and ensuring core services are available to survivors in every county of the State.

Under Mary Ellen's leadership, KCSARC published one of the first educational pieces in the Nation for parents to talk with their children about sexual assault called "He Told Me Not to Tell." It was a milestone for community awareness about child sexual abuse. Today, this publication remains a foundational educational tool, and its importance and relevance remain to this day as half of KCSARC's clients are children and teens under 18 years old. Mary Ellen's vision and tenacity allowed KCSARC to respond to specific unmet needs in the community, including to sexual assault survivors who are experiencing homelessness, children and youth survivors, and Latino survivors.

Mary Ellen has shared her time and expertise in so many ways to better inform systems and communities about the needs of victims, including serving on the Seattle Archdiocese Review Board, Mental Illness Drug Dependence Oversight Board, Seattle Chief of Police Search committees, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Sex Offender Management Committee, Women's Funding Alliance, and Municipal League Seattle-King County.

It has been a great privilege to work with Mary Ellen—a true trailblazer—over the last four decades. And it is my honor to thank her for her lifetime of dedicated service to people in King County, the State of Washington, and the entire country. I wish her the very best during her well-earned retirement.

HONORING CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 STEPHEN R. DWYER

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, today, I want to honor CW3 Stephen R. Dwyer, who lost his life during an MH-60 Blackhawk crash in the Mediterranean Sea earlier this month.

Steve graduated in 2004 from Enterprise High School in Alabama. He then followed in his parents' footsteps, both Army veterans, and attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He became a field artillery commissioned officer, but his true passion was flying. So Steve returned to Fort Rucker for flight school, becoming a helicopter pilot. During his time in the military, Steve fulfilled multiple missions around the world, including two deployments to the Middle East.

He is remembered as an exceptional pilot, devoted husband, and loving father. His supervisor at West Point Mark Ray said, "Steve Dwyer was an incredible man, son, brother, teammate, and friend. He was a dedicated Special Operations warrior, who went above and beyond to serve our nation in the most difficult missions at hand. He was born into a family of servant leaders and died 'For your freedom and mine'—an act that our nation was created through and defended by today. He will be truly missed by all that knew him. 'Night Stalkers Don't Quit!'"

Steve leaves behind his wife Allie, three boys, parents, and countless other family and friends. We are deeply grateful for his heroic sacrifice to our country.

TRIBUTE TO GRAY MAXWELL

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to share news with the Senate. Dennis Gray Maxwell—Gray to all of us—my floor director and most senior legislative adviser since I arrived in the Senate almost 17 years ago, is retiring at the end of December. For many of us, Senators and staff alike, this is heartbreaking news, as we will miss Gray's good counsel, impeccable speechwriting skills, remarkable knowledge of Senate history, and award-winning home brew. He always has a relevant story, whatever the circumstance. And, of course, Gray was the one who got us to finally put the Senate Democratic Conference rules in writing, so it is no wonder that he knows them inside and out better than any Senator or parliamentarian.

Gray loves the Senate. He loves it for all it was meant to be, as drafted by the Founding Fathers, and all that it should be in modern times—a respected

entity dedicated to upholding the values and ideals that drive this great Nation forward. Year after year, Gray has dedicated himself to finding ways to preserve the Senate's role as the world's greatest deliberative body, which has not always been easy. It pains him to see the rules abused or when 10 years of work to pass a significant law, like the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, is undone in 10 minutes. But he does cherish the days when we finally clear a record vote-a-rama or come together in a landmark bipartisan vote.

Gray has worked for so many Senators over the years that his love of this institution should not surprise anyone. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, John Heinz, Jim Jeffords, Bill Cohen, Moynihan again, Dianne Feinstein, Carl Levin, Frank Lautenberg and, since 2007, he has been part of Team Cardin. This impressive list, nearly 40 years in the making, is why I jumped at the opportunity to hire Gray.

A registered Independent his whole life, Gray lives the words of John F. Kennedy: "Men of goodwill and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or politics."

I hired Gray because, on January 3, 2007, despite being a State delegate, including speaker, for a total of 20 years, and a Member of the House of Representatives for 20 years, I had zero direct experience in the U.S. Senate. Gray Maxwell had more than two decades of legislative service in the Senate with some of the most consequential Senators to walk these halls. I wanted to learn from him. I had brought over some core staff from my House office, but I knew that if I had Gray on my team, he would help me quickly translate my previous legislative experience into this new arena. Today, I love being a Senator, and I credit Gray for sharing his fever for the institution and showing me what great things we could accomplish.

Gray's path to public service perhaps was unexpected. The summer after he graduated Stanford University, he came to Washington, DC, to work at a branch of his father's law firm before starting law school. His life would change though, when his roommate, who worked for Senator Moynihan, told Gray there was an opening as a legislative correspondent, or LC. Gray loved everything about the job and the position. He was promoted quickly within the office and even met his future wife, Eileen, during this time. Eileen, a fifth-generation Washingtonian, came from a long line of public servants and had joined the Foreign Service. Some may not know this, but Gray passed both the written and oral Foreign Service exams in an effort to join his wife for her new posting in Bolivia. In the end, they decided to stay in Washington, and Gray's long career in the Senate would take off.

I have been told that there were quite a few conversations with Gray's dad to explain that he would not be re-

turning home to Connecticut or going to New York to become a lawyer. But life would be okay. His dad came around eventually. He would become one of Gray's greatest cheerleaders and immensely proud of everything his son would accomplish—despite not being a lawyer.

During the late 80s, Gray worked for Senator John Heinz and served as legislative director of the Northeast-Midwest Institute, of which Heinz was a cofounder. Gray was serving as the Senator's legislative director at the time of his tragic plane crash in 1991. He went on to work for Senator Jim Jeffords as his legislative director and then worked for another Republican who made a career working across the aisle, Senator Bill Cohen. He later would rejoin Senator Moynihan's staff as legislative director.

Gray and Senator Moynihan had a close, almost father-son relationship. This is obvious to anyone who has heard Gray tell a story from his Moynihan days. Every tale, even something that might seem embarrassing, like slipping on the floor while walking with the Senator through the Senate, is coated with a sense of care and respect for the man and lawmaker. I know it was a difficult task for Gray when he had to call the then-recently retired Senator on September 11, 2001, to tell him that New York and our Nation was being attacked.

Gray has been a witness to history during his nearly 40 years in the Senate, and he has done his part to make history, as well. As a lifelong public servant, Gray has become one of the most vociferous champions for public service unions and Federal workers, generally. He meticulously combs through data annually from the Office of Personnel Management and other official sources to create the most accurate snapshots of Federal workers in every State and the District of Columbia. Among other uses, these charts have been invaluable each time one of my colleagues dares to attack Federal workers or attempts to use veterans and civil servants as pawns in yet another partisan game or government shutdown. Gray relishes every opportunity to lift up stories about Federal workers, serves as a watchdog for attacks on well-earned benefits, and consistently advocates for the rights of all Federal employees and retirees.

During the Trump years, Gray led the charge to pass S. 24, the Government Employee Fair Treatment Act, which guarantees back pay to Federal workers furloughed during a government shutdown. Thanks to Gray's doggedness, if and when we have another shutdown of the Federal Government, no longer will hundreds of thousands of Federal workers have to wait and see if Congress will provide relief to those workers caught in the crossfire.

Another project Gray helped carry over the finish line was the National Memorial to Fallen Journalists. Based

on his work and coordination with stakeholders, days before the 1-year anniversary of the fatal "Capital Gazette" shooting in Annapolis—the most deadly newsroom shooting in American history—Gray helped finalize legislation I introduced with Senator Rob Portman. Our bill authorized a privately funded memorial within the District of Columbia to honor journalists, photographers, broadcasters, and media workers killed in the line of duty. In later stages, he would identify the ultimate location of the memorial, across the street from the Voice of America and, coincidentally, across the street from the National Museum of the American Indian, where Gray's wife Eileen would work until her retirement in December 2022.

Far too many pieces of legislation that have become law have Gray Maxwell's fingerprints on them for me to name every one. But let me talk briefly about one recent bill that goes to the heart of Gray's integrity and strong belief that Congress should be a leader in protecting civil rights and values. Back in 2020, Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN and I introduced legislation in the Senate that would remove from the U.S. Capitol a statue of fellow Marylander and Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney. Taney was the author of the infamous Dred Scott decision that ruled that African-Americans were not U.S. citizens and that Congress could not prohibit slavery. In addition to removing the Taney bust, our bill authorized the placement of a new bust of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American to serve on the Nation's highest Court, and also a Marylander. The bill was reintroduced this Congress and approved unanimously by the Senate in 2022. Following House passage, President Joe Biden signed the measure into law, and the massive Taney bust was removed in February of this year. If not for Gray's legislative acumen and pure persistence, the bust of a man who actively helped prolong slavery would still greet visitors to the Old Supreme Court Chamber.

I am thankful that Gray shared his knowledge of the Senate with me. I also am grateful that he shares this bounty with every new staffer and intern that walks into our office. Capitol Hill can be a magnet, attracting young people. If we want them to stay, we need more people like Gray to share their experiences and adventures. He is teaching the next generation about how they fit into the history, and the future, of our legislative branch of government. He also is constantly learning, with an understanding that these young people bring with them new perspectives and different ways of solving age-old problems.

I would ask unanimous consent that, after my remarks, the full text of Robert F. Kennedy's "Ripple of Hope" address, which was delivered June 6, 1966, at the University of Capetown, South Africa, be entered into the record. Gray

gives a copy of this speech to every new intern in our office and takes time from his hectic schedule to discuss it with each group. Anecdotes and surveys from interns year after year mention this discussion and how it stays with them long after their semester is complete. RFK's words echo throughout our work.

He said: "It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Gray is proof positive that one person can make a difference.

Finally, I would like to thank Gray for being there for me and for the Senate even when everyone else was home or working elsewhere. Maybe they were asleep because the Senate was voting at 2 a.m. Maybe they were teleworking because of the pandemic. Yes, as media reports have recounted, Gray was one of the few people who worked in his Senate office throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. He actually insisted that he come in so that his wife could be comfortable teleworking from their apartment. Truth be told, traffic was easier, and there were very few people around at that time, so it was seemingly a safe thing to do. We still took precautions. Even if he and I were in the office at the same time, he stayed in his office, and I stayed in mine, and we talked by phone. We wore facemasks and used antibacterial wipes on every door or item we touched.

In another extreme case, Gray was one of only two staffers who were in our Hart office on January 6, 2021. He and our chief of staff, Chris Lynch, sheltered in place together all day while the Capitol was being overrun. Gray charged through the Trump years and the pandemic, but the days and months after January 6 definitely took their toll. I can understand why he and Eileen began to spend more and more time out in rural Rappahannock County, Virginia, where they rented a cottage during the pandemic. They now have a beautiful home on 6 acres of land and are surrounded by wheat and cornfields and dairy farms. I would try to entice them to Maryland, but they have been visiting this area for 40 years, ever since Gray bought Eileen her very first riding lesson as a birthday gift. Even from Virginia, he will forever be a part of Team Maryland and the Cardin family.

I wish Gray all the best in his retirement. He is a good man with a good heart, who has done phenomenal things for the Senate and our Nation. He will be missed, especially by this Senator.

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

[From University of Capetown, South Africa, June 6, 1966]

DAY OF AFFIRMATION ADDRESS, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

(By Robert F. Kennedy)

MR. CHANCELLOR, MR. VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR ROBERTSON, MR. DIAMOND, MR. DANIEL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I come here this evening because of my deep interest and affection for a land settled by the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century, then taken over by the British, and at last independent; a land in which the native inhabitants were at first subdued, but relations with whom remain a problem to this day; a land which defined itself on a hostile frontier; a land which has tamed rich natural resources through the energetic application of modern technology; a land which was once the importer of slaves, and now must struggle to wipe out the last traces of that former bondage. I refer, of course, to the United States of America.

But I am glad to come here, and my wife and I and all of our party are glad to come here to South Africa, and we are glad to come here to Capetown. I am already greatly enjoying my visit here. I am making an effort to meet and exchange views with people of all walks of life, and all segments of South African opinion—including those who represent the views of the government. Today I am glad to meet with the National Union of South African Students. For a decade, NUSAS has stood and worked for the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—principles which embody the collective hopes of men of good will around the globe.

Your work, at home and in international student affairs, has brought great credit to yourselves and your country. I know the National Student Association in the United States feels a particularly close relationship with this organization. And I wish to thank especially Mr. Ian Robertson, who first extended this invitation on behalf of NUSAS, I wish to thank him for his kindness to me in inviting me. I am very sorry that he can not be with us here this evening. I was happy to have had the opportunity to meet and speak with him earlier this evening, and I presented him with a copy of Profiles in Courage, which was a book written by President John Kennedy and was signed to him by President Kennedy's widow, Mrs. John Kennedy. This is a Day of Affirmation—a celebration of liberty. We stand here in the name of freedom.

At the heart of that western freedom and democracy is the belief that the individual man, the child of God, is the touchstone of value, and all society, all groups, and states, exist for that person's benefit. Therefore the enlargement of liberty for individual human beings must be the supreme goal and the abiding practice of any western society.

The first element of this individual liberty is the freedom of speech; the right to express and communicate ideas, to set oneself apart from the dumb beasts of field and forest; the right to recall governments to their duties and obligations; above all, the right to affirm one's membership and allegiance to the body politic—to society—to the men with whom we share our land, our heritage and our children's future.

Hand in hand with freedom of speech goes the power to be heard—to share in the decisions of government which shape men's lives. Everything that makes man's lives worthwhile—family, work, education, a place to rear one's children and a place to rest one's head—all this depends on the decisions of government; all can be swept away by a government which does not heed the demands of its people, and I mean all of its people.

Therefore, the essential humanity of man can be protected and preserved only where the government must answer—not just to the wealthy; not just to those of a particular religion; not just to those of a particular race; but to all of the people.

And even government by the consent of the governed, as in our own Constitution, must be limited in its power to act against its people: so that there may be no interference with the right to worship, but also no interference with the security of the home; no arbitrary imposition of pains or penalties on an ordinary citizen by officials high or low; no restriction on the freedom of men to seek education or to seek work or opportunity of any kind, so that each man may become all that he is capable of becoming.

These are the sacred rights of western society. These were the essential differences between us and Nazi Germany as they were between Athens and Persia.

They are the essences of our differences with communism today. I am unalterably opposed to communism because it exalts the state over the individual and over the family, and because its system contains a lack of freedom of speech, of protest, of religion, and of the press, which is characteristic of a totalitarian regime. The way of opposition to communism, however, is not to imitate its dictatorship, but to enlarge individual human freedom. There are those in every land who would label as "communist" every threat to their privilege. But may I say to you, as I have seen on my travels in all sections of the world, reform is not communism. And the denial of freedom, in whatever name, only strengthens the very communism it claims to oppose.

Many nations have set forth their own definitions and declarations of these principles. And there have often been wide and tragic gaps between promise and performance, ideal and reality. Yet the great ideals have constantly recalled us to our own duties. And—with painful slowness—we in the United States have extended and enlarged the meaning and the practice of freedom to all of our people.

For two centuries, my own country has struggled to overcome the self-imposed handicap of prejudice and discrimination based on nationality, on social class or race—discrimination profoundly repugnant to the theory and to the command of our Constitution. Even as my father grew up in Boston, Massachusetts, signs told him that "No Irish Need Apply". Two generations later, President Kennedy became the first Irish Catholic, and the first Catholic, to head the nation; but how many men of ability had, before 1961, been denied the opportunity to contribute to the nation's progress because they were Catholic, or because they were of Irish extraction? How many sons of Italian or Jewish or Polish parents slumbered in the slums—untaught, unlearned, their potential lost forever to our nation and to the human race? Even today, what price will we pay before we have assured full opportunity to millions of Negro Americans?

In the last five years we have done more to assure equality to our Negro citizens and to help the deprived, both white and black, than in the hundred years before that time. But much, much more remains to be done.

For there are millions of Negroes untrained for the simplest of jobs, and thousands every day denied their full and equal rights under the law; and the violence of the disinherited, the insulted and the injured, looms over the streets of Harlem and of Watts and Southside Chicago.

But a Negro American trains as an astronaut, one of mankind's first explorers into outer space; another is the chief barrister of the United States government, and dozens

sit on the benches of our court; and another, Dr. Martin Luther King, is the second man of African descent to win the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent efforts for social justice between all of the races.

We have passed laws prohibiting discrimination in education, in employment, in housing; but these laws alone cannot overcome the heritage of centuries—of broken families and stunted children, and poverty and degradation and pain.

So the road toward equality of freedom is not easy, and great cost and danger march alongside all of us. We are committed to peaceful and non-violent change and that is important for all to understand—though change is unsettling. Still, even in the turbulence of protest and struggle is greater hope for the future, as men learn to claim and achieve for themselves the rights formerly petitioned from others.

And most important of all, all the panoply of government power has been committed to the goal of equality before the law—as we are now committing ourselves to achievement of equal opportunity in fact.

We must recognize the full human equality of all of our people—before God, before the law, and in the councils of government. We must do this, not because it is economically advantageous—although it is; not because the laws of God command it—although they do; not because people in other lands wish it so. We must do it for the single and fundamental reason that it is the right thing to do.

We recognize that there are problems and obstacles before the fulfillment of these ideals in the United States as we recognize that other nations, in Latin America and in Asia and in Africa have their own political, economic, and social problems, their unique barriers to the elimination of injustices.

In some, there is concern that change will submerge the rights of a minority, particularly where that minority is of a different race than that of the majority. We in the United States believe in the protection of minorities; we recognize the contributions that they can make and the leadership they can provide; and we do not believe that any people—whether majority or minority, or individual human beings—are “expendable” in the cause of theory or policy. We recognize also that justice between men and nations is imperfect, and that humanity sometimes progresses very slowly indeed.

All do not develop in the same manner and at the same pace. Nations, like men, often march to the beat of different drummers, and the precise solutions of the United States can neither be dictated nor transplanted to others, and that is not our intention. What is important however is that all nations must march toward increasing freedom; toward justice for all; toward a society strong and flexible enough to meet the demands of all of its people, whatever their race, and the demands of a world of immense and dizzying change that face us all.

In a few hours, the plane that brought me to this country crossed over oceans and countries which have been a crucible of human history. In minutes we traced migrations of men over thousands of years; seconds, the briefest glimpse, and we passed battlefields on which millions of men once struggled and died. We could see no national boundaries, no vast gulfs or high walls dividing people from people; only nature and the works of man—homes and factories and farms—everywhere reflecting man's common effort to enrich his life. Everywhere new technology and communications bring men and nations closer together, the concerns of one inevitably become the concerns of all. And our new closeness is stripping away the false masks, the illusion of differences which

is at the root of injustice and hate and war. Only earthbound man still clings to the dark and poisoning superstition that his world is bounded by the nearest hill, his universe ends at river's shore, his common humanity is enclosed in the tight circle of those who share his town or his views and the color of his skin.

It is your job, the task of the young people in this world to strip the last remnants of that ancient, cruel belief from the civilization of man.

Each nation has different obstacles and different goals, shaped by the vagaries of history and of experience. Yet as I talk to young people around the world I am impressed not by the diversity but by the closeness of their goals, their desires, and their concerns and their hope for the future. There is discrimination in New York, the racial inequality of apartheid in South Africa, and serfdom in the mountains of Peru. People starve to death in the streets of India; a former Prime Minister is summarily executed in the Congo; intellectuals go to jail in Russia; and thousands are slaughtered in Indonesia; wealth is lavished on armaments everywhere in the world. These are different evils; but they are the common works of man. They reflect the imperfections of human justice, the inadequacy of human compassion, the defectiveness of our sensibility toward the sufferings of our fellows; they mark the limit of our ability to use knowledge for the well-being of our fellow human beings throughout the world. And therefore they call upon common qualities of conscience and indignation, a shared determination to wipe away the unnecessary sufferings of our fellow human beings at home and around the world.

It is these qualities which make of our youth today the only true international community. More than this I think that we could agree on what kind of a world we want to build. It would be a world of independent nations, moving toward international community, each of which protected and respected the basic human freedoms. It would be a world which demanded of each government that it accept its responsibility to insure social justice. It would be a world of constantly accelerating economic progress—not material welfare as an end in of itself, but as a means to liberate the capacity of every human being to pursue his talents and to pursue his hopes. It would, in short, be a world that we would all be proud to have built.

Just to the North of here are lands of challenge and of opportunity—rich in natural resources, land and minerals and people. Yet they are also lands confronted by the greatest odds—overwhelming ignorance, internal tensions and strife, and great obstacles of climate and geography. Many of these nations, as colonies, were oppressed and were exploited. Yet they have not estranged themselves from the broad traditions of the West; they are hoping and they are gambling their progress and their stability on the chance that we will meet our responsibilities to them, to help them overcome their poverty.

In the world we would like to build, South Africa could play an outstanding role, and a role of leadership in that effort. This country is without question a preeminent repository of the wealth and the knowledge and the skill of the continent. Here are the greater part of Africa's research scientists and steel production, most of its reservoirs of coal and of electric power. Many South Africans have made major contributions to African technical development and world science; the names of some are known wherever men seek to eliminate the ravages of tropical disease and of pestilence. In your faculties and councils, here in this very audience, are hundreds

and thousands of men and women who could transform the lives of millions for all time to come.

But the help and leadership of South Africa or of the United States cannot be accepted if we—within our own countries or in our relationships with others—deny individual integrity, human dignity, and the common humanity of man. If we would lead outside our own borders; if we would help those who need our assistance; if we would meet our responsibilities to mankind; we must first, all of us, demolish the borders which history has erected between men within our own nations—barriers of race and religion, social class and ignorance.

Our answer is the world's hope; it is to rely on youth. The cruelties and the obstacles of this swiftly changing planet will not yield to obsolete dogmas and outworn slogans. It cannot be moved by those who cling to a present which is already dying, who prefer the illusion of security to the excitement and danger which comes with even the most peaceful progress. This world demands the qualities of youth: not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the life of ease—a man like the Chancellor of this University. It is a revolutionary world that we all live in; and thus, as I have said in Latin America and Asia and in Europe and in my own country, the United States, it is the young people who must take the lead. Thus you, and your young compatriots everywhere have had thrust upon you a greater burden of responsibility than any generation that has ever lived.

“There is,” said an Italian philosopher, “nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.” Yet this is the measure of the task of your generation and the road is strewn with many dangers.

First is the danger of futility; the belief there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills—against misery, against ignorance, or injustice and violence. Yet many of the world's great movements, of thought and action, have flowed from the work of a single man. A young monk began the Protestant reformation, a young general extended an empire from Macedonia to the borders of the earth, and a young woman reclaimed the territory of France. It was a young Italian explorer who discovered the New World, and 32 year old Thomas Jefferson who proclaimed that all men are created equal. “Give me a place to stand,” said Archimedes, “and I will move the world.” These men moved the world, and so can we all. Few will have the greatness to bend history; but each of us can work to change a small portion of the events, and in the total of all these acts will be written the history of this generation. Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers are making a difference in the isolated villages and the city slums of dozens of countries. Thousands of unknown men and women in Europe resisted the occupation of the Nazis and many died, but all added to the ultimate strength and freedom of their countries. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage such as these that the belief that human history is thus shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

“If Athens shall appear great to you,” said Pericles, “consider then that her glories

were purchased by valiant men, and by men who learned their duty." That is the source of all greatness in all societies, and it is the key to progress in our own time.

The second danger is that of expediency; of those who say that hopes and beliefs must bend before immediate necessities. Of course if we must act effectively we must deal with the world as it is. We must get things done. But if there was one thing that President Kennedy stood for that touched the most profound feeling of young people across the world, it was the belief that idealism, high aspiration and deep convictions are not incompatible with the most practical and efficient of programs—that there is no basic inconsistency between ideals and realistic possibilities—no separation between the deepest desires of heart and of mind and the rational application of human effort to human problems. It is not realistic or hard-headed to solve problems and take action unguided by ultimate moral aims and values, although we all know some who claim that it is so. In my judgement, it is thoughtless folly. For it ignores the realities of human faith and of passion and of belief; forces ultimately more powerful than all the calculations of our economists or of our generals. Of course to adhere to standards, to idealism, to vision in the face of immediate dangers takes great courage and takes self-confidence. But we also know that only those who dare to fail greatly, can ever achieve greatly.

It is this new idealism which is also, I believe, the common heritage of a generation which has learned that while efficiency can lead to the camps at Auschwitz, or the streets of Budapest, only the ideals of humanity and love can climb the hills of the Acropolis.

A third danger is timidity. Few men are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change the world which yields most painfully to change. Aristotle tells us "At the Olympic games it is not the finest or the strongest men who are crowned, but those who enter the lists . . . so too in the life of the honorable and the good it is they who act rightly who win the prize." I believe that in this generation those with the courage to enter the conflict will find themselves with companions in every corner of the world.

For the fortunate amongst us, the fourth danger is comfort; the temptation to follow the easy and familiar path of personal ambition and financial success so grandly spread before those who have the privilege of an education. But that is not the road history has marked out for us. There is a Chinese curse which says "May he live in interesting times." Like it or not, we live in interesting times. They are times of danger and uncertainty; but they are also the most creative of any time in the history of mankind. And everyone here will ultimately be judged—will ultimately judge himself—on the effort he has contributed to building a new world society and the extent to which his ideals and goals have shaped that effort.

So we part, I to my country and you to remain. We are—if a man of forty can claim the privilege—fellow members of the world's largest younger generation. Each of us have our own work to do. I know at times you must feel very alone with your problems and with your difficulties. But I want to say how impressed I am with what you stand for and for the effort you are making; and I say this not just for myself, but men and women all over the world. And I hope you will often take heart from the knowledge that you are joined with your fellow young people in

every land, they struggling with their problems and you with yours, but all joined in a common purpose; that, like the young people of my own country and of every country that I have visited, you are all in many ways more closely united to the brothers of your time than to the older generation in any of these nations; you are determined to build a better future. President Kennedy was speaking to the young people of America, but beyond them to young people everywhere, when he said "The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world."

And, he added, "With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth and lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own."

I thank you.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN SWARTOUT

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise to commend a great public servant, John Swartout, for his dedicated service to the citizens of Colorado. After more than three decades of tireless service in the public policy arena, I congratulate John on the occasion of his retirement.

John worked as an adviser to Colorado Governors Bill Owens and JOHN HICKENLOOPER and U.S. Senator Wayne Allard on environmental, natural resource, energy, and public lands policy. John was instrumental in Federal land negotiations involving the Roan Plateau settlement, the closing of Rocky Flats, and the designation of Browns Canyon National Monument, James Peak Wilderness, Great Sand Dunes National Park, and the Spanish Peaks Wilderness Area. He also served as the head of policy for the State of Colorado on habitat protection efforts for the greater sage grouse and the Gunnison sage grouse. In these efforts, he showed an uncanny ability to balance habitat conservation goals with the private property rights of landowners.

John grounded his work in integrity, trust, humor, and an innate ability to form coalitions and partnerships among even the most diverse groups. John himself would probably tell you his greatest accomplishment was helping people find common ground that then allowed them to work toward collaborative policy solutions that benefited their community and region. The fact that he worked for governors from both parties demonstrates his ability to work in a strong bipartisan manner to deliver results for Colorado.

In addition to his roles working for elected officials, John also led multiple Agencies and nonprofits. He served as executive director of Great Outdoors Colorado—GOCO—helping to guide millions of dollars of investments in public recreational amenities like trails, playgrounds, parks, fishing ponds, and campgrounds. As the executive director of the Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts, he helped preserve and protect thousands of acres of open space, wildlife habitat, and working agricultural lands.

John most recently served as executive director of Colorado Counties, Inc.—CCI—a nonprofit organization that provides advocacy and education for county governments around the State. Under John's leadership, CCI negotiated an opioid settlement with Colorado's Attorney General and various pharmaceutical companies that provided millions of dollars for local addiction counseling and treatment. He also successfully steered CCI through the COVID-19 pandemic. CCI was integral in assisting county commissioners provide frontline health services and invest millions of dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act and CARES Act in community programs, business retention, and infrastructure improvements.

John served as the campaign manager for my opponent in my first race for the U.S. Senate. In Colorado, we believe in working together despite different political beliefs, and I came to know and respect John for his ability to work in a pragmatic fashion with everyone. John became a dependable ally and friend as we worked together to advance the interests of Colorado.

Throughout his career, John embodied the notion put forward by Wallace Stegner, that the American West is still "the native home of hope." Our great State is better for his vision, his compassion, and his service, and I wish him well in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT JOSHUA K. LEONARD

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize CMSgt Joshua K. Leonard for his dedicated service to the U.S. Air Force and the Senate as a legislative defense fellow. Josh has served as a vital part of my team since January 2023. He has been a trusted adviser on issues relating to the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security.

Josh enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in June 2005. His continued service is a reminder of the dedication and sacrifice of every servicemember who protects our Nation and defends our freedoms. His effort and passion distinguished him as a valuable member of my legislative team. I am proud to have someone like Josh on my staff, who understands the significance of maintaining America's air superiority and caring for our servicemembers and their families.

During his tenure in my office, he led the charge in introducing the Gerald's Law Act. This critical initiative would expand the Department of Veterans Affairs burial benefits eligibility to terminally ill veterans who pass away at a non-VA facility while receiving hospice care. As he is soon to be promoted to the rank of chief master sergeant, Josh's character and consistent display of knowledge, leadership, and devotion deserve to be recognized and rewarded. I am confident he will continue to serve our country honorably.

I am incredibly grateful for his support on behalf of the people of Arkansas. Both in the Nation's Capital and while visiting the Natural State, he spoke with and listened to the concerns of Arkansas's veterans and their families. While stationed at the Little Rock Air Force Base, Josh worked tirelessly to ensure the concerns of our veterans and military community were heard and their issues were resolved. We have been very fortunate to have Josh serve Arkansans as a legislative defense fellow. I also want to thank his wife Mrs. Shaunta Leonard and his beloved children Josiah, Lincy, and Kayla for their support during his time in uniform. Growing up in a military family, I understand that service in the Armed Forces is a family affair and impossible without their sacrifice and unconditional support.

Josh, thank you for your continued service to the U.S. Air Force and all your heartfelt, committed work as a member of my staff. Having you on my team has been a privilege, and you will always be welcomed here. I know that you will remain an asset to our military and veterans in addition to any other endeavors you pursue; I wish you and your family the best and congratulate you on this well-deserved promotion.

TRIBUTE TO BILL LAW

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the exemplary career of Goshen County Fire Warden Bill Law. Bill is retiring after six decades of service to Torrington, Goshen County, and the State of Wyoming.

Wyoming adopted its official ethics code, known proudly as the Code of the West, in 2010. One of the principle tenets is "talk less and say more." Bill Law, a humble and devoted public servant, fully embodies this value in everything he does. He invested time, experience, and effort in each of his careers, to the benefit of others. Bill demonstrated his capacity for leadership while serving a greater cause at a young age. While in high school, he enlisted in the Wyoming National Guard. Following his graduation in 1955, he proudly enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a radio technician. He served 3 years and was honorably discharged in 1958.

Following his military service, Bill found other ways to invest in his community. He moved to Torrington, WY, in 1962 after serving 4 years as the Yoder Fire Chief. This was the first of a long line of roles in fire management.

During this time, Bill met and married the love of his life, Betty Korhonen Law. Bill and Betty raised two children, Alicia and Trevor. This year, Bill and Betty are celebrating their 60th anniversary. Theirs is a remarkable partnership that has endured all of life's challenges.

Bill began as a firefighter with the Torrington Volunteer Fire Department in 1962. Though he enjoyed other successful careers, he remained a com-

mitted TVFD member. He often put his life on hold to respond to emergencies in surrounding communities. His dedication to fire safety is unmatched. From 1969 to 1988, Bill worked for Torrington radio legend Kerm Kath, owner and operator of the local KGOS and KERM radio stations. He worked in sales and became the station manager following Kerm's death in 1982. In 1991, Bill became the State provider relations representative for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming. He worked to secure agreements with hospitals, clinics, and medical offices around the State. I was pleased to work with him during my time as an orthopedic surgeon in Casper and as a member of the Wyoming State Senate. Bill retired from Blue Cross in 2004 after a rewarding 16-year career. Shortly after retirement, the Goshen County Commission appointed Bill as the county fire warden. From 2004 to 2012, he served dual roles as the fire warden and the City of Torrington's emergency management coordinator. Bill organized the county's fire suppression and prevention efforts, including communicating with the county's 11 fire districts and 9 fire departments.

A natural leader, Bill served two terms on the Torrington City Council, from 2012 to 2020. His civic engagement also includes serving as a board member for both Eastern Wyoming College and the county chamber of commerce. Bill is a devoted member of Our Savior Lutheran Church, where he held numerous leadership positions. Bill is a remarkable advocate for rural fire districts and firefighters. He spent many years lobbying on behalf of local and State organizations and agencies. In January 2023, the Wyoming Legislature recognized Bill's years of advocacy. Given an opportunity to comment, Bill quipped, "I look at when I first put the uniform on; the first 40 (years) seemed to drag—I got to tell you, the last 20 (years) go in a hurry."

After an outstanding career in public service, I hope Bill will enjoy a well-earned retirement with his family. In addition to Betty, his legacy is celebrated by his son Trevor Law of Laramie, his daughter Alicia and Jeff Ayres of Lehi, UT, his granddaughter Emily Ayres, and great-grandchildren Mia Ayres and Drixton Ayres.

Honest and humble, Bill is a man of great integrity. He dedicated his life to serving others, making his community and state better in the process. Though his experience and wisdom will be missed, I know he will continue serving as a mentor, advocate, and trusted adviser. Bill's nephew Chuck Kenyon, Torrington's current emergency management coordinator, said of Bill, "He is the foundation that makes everything work."

Bobbi joins me in extending our congratulations to Bill for his outstanding legacy of service.

TRIBUTE TO ANI KINCAID

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

Ani is a native of Lander. She is a freshman at Casper College, where she studies political science. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO RICH HILLMAN

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Arkansas Farm Bureau president, Mr. Rich Hillman, and the integral role he has had in serving the State of Arkansas and her agricultural pursuits and to celebrate his years of fervent dedication and leadership as his tenure at the helm of the organization comes to a close.

For the past 4 years, Rich has served faithfully as the Arkansas Farm Bureau State president, preceded by 11 years as vice president, and prior involvement on the Arkansas Farm Bureau board of directors dating back to 2001. His influence on the industry is further proven through his service in a number of leadership positions on the national and State levels and especially in his local community.

For more than 20 years, farm families and rural communities across the Natural State have welcomed Rich's leadership with gratitude and depended on him to be a true advocate of their needs. They have relied on him to ensure that policies developed in Washington will benefit farmers and ranchers and the communities that surround them.

Rich's leadership has been marked by wisdom gained through experience. To lead by example is a trait worthy of admiration and one that Rich has undoubtably exemplified. He is a proud sixth-generation farmer in Lonoke County, where he and his wife Tina have grown rice, soybeans, corn, and most importantly, a capable and passionate seventh-generation of agriculturalists in their children Collin and Caroline; their grandchildren; and generations to come.

It is because of people like Rich that I remain hopeful for the future of agriculture. His pragmatic advice has long been paramount in informing our work on the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition,

and Forestry Committee and been instrumental in crafting important legislation to support Arkansas agriculture.

I cherish the friendship and counsel I have found in Rich and wish to thank him again for his unwavering dedication to Arkansas's agricultural producers. Though he is stepping down from his role as Arkansas Farm Bureau State president, I know that he will continue to be a fierce advocate for the needs of the industry.

I wish Rich, Tina, and the Hillman family the best as they enter into this new chapter of their lives.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL KAREN A. BERRY

● Mr. COONS. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise, along with Senator TOM CARPER of Delaware and Representative LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER of Delaware, to honor BG Karen A. Berry, a Delawarean who has provided exemplary service to the National Guard.

With more than three decades of distinguished military career service dedicated to the National Guard, BG Karen Berry has represented Delaware in a variety of leadership capacities, including company command of the HHC 280th Signal Battalion and Officer Candidate School, 193rd Regional Institute, and the 261st Tactical Theater Signal Brigade. She completed a yearlong deployment serving as the deputy commander of the 335th Signal Command in Afghanistan, acting as the senior communications officer and providing essential guidance for the communications network theater. Moreover, in 2019, she transferred to the Connecticut National Guard, serving in two key leadership positions: assistant to the Adjutant General Army and the Director of the Joint Staff. There, she oversaw the training and deployments of the Connecticut Army National Guard and ensured mission readiness and support to State and Partnership Programs between Connecticut and its partner Uruguay, a role critical to the success of countless overseas missions.

Brigadier General Berry has built on her extensive experience to lead with practical knowledge. Her educational background includes a bachelor of science in agricultural engineering and technology from the University of Delaware, a master's degree in education from Salisbury University, and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. Her promotions and list of major awards over the years are extensive and include National Defense Service Medals, Army Commendation Medals, and Delaware National Guard Medals for Military Merit, just to name a few.

Brigadier General Berry is also the first female Army guardsman to hold a brigade command in the Delaware Army National Guard, as well as the first female in the Delaware Army National Guard promoted to the general office rank of brigadier general. Briga-

dier General Berry has opened the door for countless others to follow, serving as an example of strong leadership, phenomenal work ethic, and service before self.

Brigadier General Berry has provided reasoned, invaluable, and experienced counsel while serving as chair of my Military Service Academy Board since my arrival in the Senate. A hallmark of Brigadier General Berry's leadership has been her high regard for the servicemembers she leads and their families. Brigadier General Berry has also been instrumental in forging enduring relationships with local community members and organizations. These bonds will serve the Delaware National Guard and Delaware communities well for years to come.

The values of hard work and serving others are second nature to the Berry family. Karen, her husband MG Michael Berry, and the entire family are known throughout the State of Delaware for their generosity and support of education and local community initiatives, sowing seeds of success for the future. We are truly grateful for all they have done to inspire the next generation of military leaders in Delaware and beyond.

We wholeheartedly congratulate BG Karen Berry on over three decades of service in the National Guard. Your strong dedication and leadership serve as a phenomenal example for many others. We wish you and your family the very best. Thank you.●

TRIBUTE TO CONNOR NICOL

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Connor Nicol of Hampton as November's Granite Stater of the Month. For the last 3 years, 15-year-old Connor has helped to ensure that servicemembers who died overseas are remembered. Connor creates dog tags for people to carry, or place somewhere prominent, so that servicemembers' names and sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Connor was inspired to create the military identification tags, commonly called "dog tags," while watching a movie about World War II, and he was struck by how young the servicemembers were. Knowing that many servicemembers never came home, he wanted to make sure that those who died overseas are always remembered. Using information from the National Archives, Connor has now made dog tags for 40,000 servicemembers who died in the Korean war, and he has recently expanded the project to create tags for those who died serving in the Vietnam war.

The tags have been distributed across the country, including to veterans service organizations, church groups, Scout Troops, and schools. Connor works to ensure that the tag goes to someone who actively wants it and is dedicated to honoring the name of the servicemember. In addition to keeping the name and memory of the fallen

servicemember alive, the tag also serves to remind the person carrying it of the sacrifice these men and women made in service to our country.

Connor's goal is to create and distribute dog tags for those who died in additional overseas conflicts, including World War II, the Vietnam war, and the Global War on Terror. If you would like to request a tag, you can do so through his website, www.wewillremember.us. Connor's dedication to respecting and commemorating military service is a strong reflection of the Granite State spirit of patriotism. In New Hampshire, we honor those who keep our country safe, secure, and free. I thank Connor for his work to make sure that those who died in service to our country will never be forgotten.●

TRIBUTE TO JADA VARGAS

● Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the recipient of the 1 millionth Child Development Associate—CDA—credential. Jada Vargas is an Arizonan who is dedicated to serving her community as an early childhood educator, and I am very pleased to recognize her achievement.

Jada lives in Whiteriver, AZ, and is a member of White Mountain Apache Tribe. She also serves on the White Mountain Apache Youth Council. A recent high school graduate, Jada said she realized she wanted to become an early childhood educator after a career and technical education course that allowed her to work in a childcare center at her high school. Now, she is headed to college to study education—and, with her CDA, already has a leg up.

Early exposure to the early childhood landscape was clearly critical for Jada as she thought about her next steps after high school. And it couldn't have come at a more needed time. The childcare industry, which already standing on unsteady legs, took a heavy hit from the COVID-19 pandemic. We asked early childhood educators to be heroes as so many worked to keep their doors open so parents could do essential work. Early in my time in the Senate, I voted to pass the American Rescue Plan, which provided \$39 billion in support for childcare.

I hear from Arizonans that this funding was transformative, that childcare assistance was critical to keeping their doors open and lights on to serve families. Today, the funding provided through childcare stabilization grants has expired, yet challenges remain in finding and retaining early childhood educators. The market is still broken. Too many children remain stuck on waiting lists without the essential early education that we know makes a long-term difference.

Research tells us that if a student can't read well by the time they are in the third grade, they are more likely to drop out of high school. That has an impact on our productivity, our economy, and on our military. Early childhood educators like Jada are often the

ones who are helping children develop the skills to become readers, preparing them for the years of education that lay ahead.

This is a worthwhile investment. High-quality childcare is imperative to strong communities, and I am committed to working with my colleagues to provide long-term stability and support to this industry. Part of that is finding ways to encourage more folks to dedicate their lives to the next generation—and as a CDA holder, Jada is part of that solution. She wants to return home once she finishes her education to, as she puts it, be a light to the children in her community. We are grateful to her for her hard work and dedication to the children and families she will serve as a CDA holder, and I hope to see many more Arizonans follow in her path.●

THE PUBLIC SERVICE REVIEW

● Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, a great privilege of my job as a U.S. Senator is having the opportunity to meet young people who are eager to serve. Talented young leaders like those featured in the Summer 2023 edition of “Public Service Review” inspire me, and I am hopeful their stories will inspire others. This edition features insightful reflections from aspiring public servants with diverse backgrounds and interests who are passionate about serving their communities, their country, and the world.

The 10 authors featured in the Summer 2023 edition are Jamya Davis of Xavier University of Louisiana, Lydia Sigman of George Mason University, Rohini Achal of the University of Washington, Christopher Robinson of Mississippi State University, Mateus Voltolini of the University of Southern Maine, Samina Patel of Georgia Institute of Technology, Tatyana Mayo of Howard University, Julia Comino of American University, Brina Ratangee of Vanderbilt University, and Tony Ruan of Yale University, whom I had the pleasure of having in my office as an intern and speaking with for his article.

The “Public Service Review” is produced by the Stennis Center for Public Service, and the Summer 2023 edition is available at www.stennis.gov. I encourage all to read it.●

RECOGNIZING COUNCIL MOUNTAIN COFFEE & LAUNDROMAT

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, which encourages Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the

Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat as one of Idaho’s Local Gems.

Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat is a staple in the Council community. Owned and operated by Jacob and Samantha Sturlin since 2021, the coffee shop and laundromat are popular among locals for daily cups of coffee and visitors passing through town. The Sturlins moved to Council and bought Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat in pursuit of a more rural lifestyle and an opportunity to get involved in the community. Council Mountain Coffee features an eclectic menu of coffees, teas, Italian sodas, pastries, seasonal specials, and all are served by the friendliest staff.

The Sturlins’ passion for the community shines through in their sponsorship of the local rodeo, vacation Bible school, and the annual Fourth of July fireworks show. They encourage even the youngest community members to get involved, allowing Council Elementary School students to decorate coffee sleeves to brighten customers’ morning joe.

Congratulations to Jacob and Samantha Sturlin and the employees at Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho’s Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING 2ND SOUTH MARKET

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, which encourages Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor 2nd South Market as one of Idaho’s Local Gems.

Idaho’s first food hall was born in 2019, when owners Dave and Lisa Buddecke purchased the historic 1926 Kregel Machine Company building. Paying homage to its location in Twin Falls’ historic warehouse district, 2nd South Market hosts six locally owned food vendors and full bar, which together employ more than 50 people. The food hall features 14,700 square feet of outdoor space, known as the Yard, which provides additional seating, live music, cornhole, firepits, and space for private events. 2nd South Market is a space where the Magic Valley can gather, work, socialize, and eat—a place

where the Magic Valley can build community.

The Buddeckes embraced the history of the former blacksmith, boilermaker, welding, hardware, and most recently, thrift store building, to create a vibrant epicenter for the Magic Valley. During the restoration of the building, original wood and metal paneling, doors, windows, signage, and old whiskey bottles dating back to Prohibition were recovered. A wall at the entrance of the food hall highlights many of these materials and shares the land and building’s unique story since 1907.

Congratulations to Dave and Lisa Buddecke and the vendors at 2nd South Market. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho’s Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING SEVEN RIDGES AG SERVICE LLC

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, to encourage Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Seven Ridges Ag Service LLC as one of Idaho’s Local Gems.

Tad and Kayce Brown, of Kendrick, opened Seven Ridges Ag Services in 2019. After working as a service technician for a John Deere dealer for more than 11 years, Tad decided to explore his own off-road equipment repair service for the local agricultural, construction, and forestry industries. Seven Ridges originally operated out of a single truck and garage. Each year of operation, demand grew. The Browns continue to find new facilities to accommodate their customers’ demand. Most recently, Tad and Kayce joined Jimmie and Cindy Breckenridge to purchase a local parts and repair shop—Kendrick Ag & Supply—where Seven Ridges Ag Services can grow and expand.

Aside from Seven Ridges’ service repairs, Tad and Kayce actively support Kendrick’s youth through the JK Baseball Association and the Kendrick FFA. The Browns proudly support the annual Juliaetta Blackberry Festival Car Show and the University of Idaho Vandal Cheer Team.

Congratulations to Tad and Kayce Brown at Seven Ridges Ag Service LLC. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho’s Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING ROYAL THEATERS

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our state. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, which encourages Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Royal Theaters as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

With two locations in Idaho Falls and one in Blackfoot, Royal Theaters is beloved by southeast Idaho's moviegoers. Kent and Ingrid Lott purchased the Centre Theater, originally a 1913 Vaudeville Theater, in 1993. Once a single-screen theater, the Lotts turned the balcony into a second theater 3 years after its opening. Royal Theaters' second Idaho Falls location boasts four screens, while the Lotts' Blackfoot location houses seven.

The Lotts' passion for the movie business is evident in their renovation projects throughout the years. In 2013, Royal Theaters upgraded the 35mm film projectors to digital projectors. In their latest project, the Lotts remodeled both Idaho Falls locations with stadium seating and VIP seats. For more than 30 years, Royal Theaters has offered a special moviegoing experience for southeast Idaho.

Congratulations to the Lott family and the employees at Royal Theaters. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING VICKERS WESTERN STORE

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our state. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, to encourage Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Vickers Western Store as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

Vickers Western Store has outfitted southeast Idaho cowboys and cowgirls since 1976. Bill Vickers, an Idaho State University alum, opened the western wear store in Pocatello, which offers a

vast inventory of apparel, accessories, home decor, a pawn shop, and boot repair operation. Vickers' 22 employees offer the highest quality customer service, enticing customers to come back time and time again. In 2001, Vickers' booming success encouraged Bill to expand and open a second store in Idaho Falls.

Bill Vickers operated Vickers Western Store until he passed away in 2013. Bill enjoyed rodeo, winning All-Around Champion at the Idaho State High School Rodeo Finals, and announcing rodeos throughout the West. Bill was later inducted into the Idaho Cowboy Hall of Fame. In memory of Bill, the Vickers family founded the Billy D. Vickers Memorial Endowment for Idaho State University students passionate about rodeo. Even after Bill's passing, Vickers continues to provide the high-quality, phenomenal customer service he championed and founded the store on. Bill's memory lives on through his family and his store. The Vickers family continues to operate the store in southeast Idaho.

Congratulations to the Vickers family and all of the employees at Vickers Western Store. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great state proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING WHITE CROSS PHARMACY AND COMPOUNDING

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, to encourage Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor White Cross Pharmacy and Compounding as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

In 1922, White Cross Pharmacy opened its first location in Priest River. In its 101-year history, only five owners have ever operated the store, which shows their strong commitment to helping keep our communities happy, healthy, and well-informed. Since 1922, the pharmacy has grown to serve Sandpoint, Oldtown, and Spirit Lake. Today, Gary de Blaquiére, Rich de Blaquiére, and Shannon McGlashan own and operate the pharmacy, which truly stands out by providing student work positions under hard-working pharmacy staff, who diligently serve the community.

Due to its rural Idaho location, White Cross Pharmacy, like many rural pharmacies, plays a vital role in providing healthcare for residents, in-

cluding the elderly. Rural pharmacies are often the only healthcare facility for miles around. In these towns, the pharmacy employees treat customers like family, and in turn, customers trust pharmacists with critical healthcare services. This is the niche filled by White Cross Pharmacy in Oldtown, Priest River, Spirit Lake, and Sandpoint.

White Cross Pharmacy offers patient services ranging from treatment protocols for minor and self-limiting ailments to advice on over-the-counter remedies to guidance on prescription medication. But the pharmacy is not stopping there because it is looking to add new services to better serve the community. It works to help those in need by donating money to assist those who cannot afford their medications and actively participating in community events and donating to local food banks.

Congratulations to de Blaquiére Enterprises, Inc., and all of the employees at White Cross Pharmacy. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

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-2833. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Congressional Mandate: Part B Payment Amounts for Two Drugs Included Noncovered Self-Administered Versions in 2022"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2834. A communication from the President of the United States to the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, transmitting, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, a report relative to United States forces conducted discrete strikes against facilities in Iraq used by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and IRGC-affiliated groups; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2835. 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 defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Sweden in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 22-045); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2836. 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 defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Sweden in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 22-059); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2837. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting,

pursuant to law, the Department's Semi-annual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2838. A communication from the Chairman of the United States International Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2839. A communication from the Chairman of the Board, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's consolidated report addressing the requirements of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA or Integrity Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2840. A communication from the Associate Director for Economic Policy, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Issuance of Revised OMB Circular No. A-94, 'Guidelines and Discount Rates for Benefit-Cost Analysis of Federal Programs'" (Docket No. OMB-2023-0011) received during in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2841. A communication from the Administrator of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Issuance of Revised OMB Circular No. A-4, 'Regulatory Analysis'" (Docket No. OMB-2022-0014) received during in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2842. A communication from the President and CEO, Inter-American Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Foundation's Annual Management Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2843. A communication from the Director, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2844. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2845. A communication from the Director, Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2846. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive and Administrative Officer, Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General Semiannual Report for the period of April 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023 received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2847. A communication from the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Performance and Accountability report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2848. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, trans-

mitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2849. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, a legislative proposal relative to amending the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015 to no longer restrict the use of Disabled Veteran Leave to a 12-month period following the point in time at which leave eligibility is first established; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2850. A communication from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment:

S. 90. A bill to require the disclosure of a camera or recording capability in certain internet-connected devices (Rept. No. 118-114).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. WYDEN for the Committee on Finance.

*Martin O'Malley, of Maryland, to be Commissioner of Social Security for the remainder of the term expiring January 19, 2025.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. BRITT (for herself, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. VANCE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BUDD, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 3349. A bill to prohibit the Federal Insurance Office of the Department of the Treasury and other financial regulators from collecting data directly from an insurance company; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. FETTERMAN:

S. 3350. A bill to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to ensure consideration of affordable housing in the reconnecting communities pilot program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. WICKER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KING, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ROUNDS,

Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MORAN, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 3351. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to extend certain expiring authorities, to restore certain expired authorities, and to institute reforms to protect the civil liberties of United States persons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. YOUNG, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 3352. A bill to provide for outreach to build awareness among former members of the Armed Forces of the process established pursuant to section 527 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 for the review of discharge characterizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 3353. A bill to accelerate the identification of solutions to the challenges of the Joint Force by assigning to specific components of the Department of Defense certain responsibilities for the delivery of essential integrated joint warfighting capabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. Res. 476. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of a National Move Over Law Day; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. Res. 477. A resolution commending the University of Mississippi for 175 years of service to the State of Mississippi and the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. BARASSO, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. Res. 478. A resolution designating November 2023 as "National Hospice and Palliative Care Month"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 26

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) 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. 91

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 91, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

S. 234

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S.

234, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 497

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to exclude a basic allowance for housing from income for purposes of eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

S. 1030

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1030, a bill to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and other laws to clarify appropriate standards for Federal employment discrimination and retaliation claims, and for other purposes.

S. 1105

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1105, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to codify the Trump administration rule on reporting requirements of exempt organizations, and for other purposes.

S. 1252

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1252, a bill to support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct civilization and identity, and for other purposes.

S. 1267

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1267, a bill to amend the Fair Housing Act to prohibit discrimination based on source of income, veteran status, or military status.

S. 1756

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1756, a bill to amend the Farm Credit Act of 1971 to support the commercial fishing industry.

S. 2158

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) 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. 2230

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2230, a bill to prohibit the Se-

curities and Exchange Commission from requiring that personally identifiable information be collected under consolidated audit trail reporting requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 2258

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

S. 2330

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2330, a bill to authorize the Small Business Administration to provide business loans to finance business software or cloud computing services, and for other purposes.

S. 2397

At the request of Mr. SCHMITT, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2397, a bill to amend section 495 of the Public Health Service Act to require inspections of foreign laboratories conducting biomedical and behavioral research to ensure compliance with applicable animal welfare requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 2861

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2861, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King, an American icon, in recognition of a remarkable life devoted to championing equal rights for all, in sports and in society.

S. 3013

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3013, a bill to permanently authorize the exemption of aliens working as fish processors from the numerical limitation on H-2B non-immigrant visas.

S. 3047

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3047, a bill to award payments to employees of Air America who provided support to the United States from 1950 to 1976, and for other purposes.

S. 3193

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 3228

At the request of Mr. KELLY, the name of the Senator from North Caro-

lina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3228, a bill to prohibit certain members and former members of the Armed Forces from accepting employment with government entities of the People's Republic of China or the Russian Federation.

S. 3237

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3237, a bill to amend the Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2022 to ensure claimants are adequately informed regarding filing a Federal cause of action.

S. 3276

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3276, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow certain alien veterans to be paroled into the United States to receive health care furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

S. 3278

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3278, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to identify each alien who is serving, or has served, in the Armed Forces of the United States on the application of any such alien for an immigration benefit or the placement of any such alien in an immigration enforcement proceeding, and for other purposes.

S. 3280

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3280, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a veterans visa program to permit veterans who have been removed from the United States to return as immigrants, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 2

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 2, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to limiting the number of terms that a Member of Congress may serve.

S.J. RES. 49

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 49, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to a "Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status".

S.J. RES. 50

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from

North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 50, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to “Cybersecurity Risk Management, Strategy, Governance, and Incident Disclosure.

S. RES. 385

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 385, a resolution calling for the immediate release of Evan Gershkovich, a United States citizen and journalist, who was wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation in March 2023.

S. RES. 463

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 463, a resolution recognizing Operation Green Light for Veterans for supporting veterans and raising awareness about important county resources available to help veterans transition to civilian life.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 476—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF A NATIONAL MOVE OVER LAW DAY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 476

Whereas the Senate wishes to recognize traffic incident management responders (as described in the Traffic Incident Management Handbook of the Federal Highway Administration), which include law enforcement officers, fire and rescue personnel, emergency medical services personnel, tow truck operators, and transportation workers;

Whereas many traffic incident management responders are seriously injured or lose their lives while performing their duties each year as a result of being struck by speeding, impaired, or distracted motorists and motorists who are not aware of move over laws;

Whereas, in 2022, 50 traffic incident management responders were killed in the United States due to roadside collisions;

Whereas the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration of the Department of Transportation host the Crash Responder Safety Week annually in November as part of a national effort to—

(1) protect traffic incident management responders who are at the scene of highway crashes; and

(2) remind the public of their responsibility to slow down, move over, and stay alert when driving near roadside incidents involving traffic incident management responders;

Whereas each State has a move over law, which has correlated directly with a safer environment along the roadsides of the United States for traffic incident management responders and stranded travelers;

Whereas move over laws generally require motorists to move at least 1 lane over when there is an emergency or rescue activity taking place on the shoulder or side of the roadway, or, if unable to do so safely, to slow down and pass the scene with caution;

Whereas the Government Accountability Office report entitled “Emergency Responder Safety: States and DOT Are Implementing Actions to Reduce Roadside Crashes” (GAO-21-166) noted that State officials cite raising public awareness as the most prevalent challenge to move over laws; and

Whereas providing traffic incident management responders with an enhanced opportunity to inform the motoring public about move over laws is critical to the public safety: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of a National Move Over Law Day; and

(2) urges national, State, and regional incident management organizations—

(A) to spread awareness and promote the existence of, and adherence to, State move over laws; and

(B) to educate the public further on the dangers and loss of life that occur if State move over laws are not faithfully observed.

SENATE RESOLUTION 477—COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI FOR 175 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI AND THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. WICKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 477

Whereas the University of Mississippi began its first session on November 6, 1848, with a 4-member faculty offering a liberal arts curriculum to 80 students;

Whereas the University of Mississippi established one of the first State-supported law schools in the United States in 1854, and it was the first university in Mississippi to establish a school of engineering in 1900;

Whereas, in 1882, the University of Mississippi became one of the first universities in the South to admit women and, in 1885, was the first university in Mississippi to hire a female faculty member;

Whereas, in 1903, the University of Mississippi began providing medical education on the Oxford campus;

Whereas the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi—

(1) was established by the Mississippi Legislature in 1950;

(2) became the first and only academic medical center in Mississippi when it opened in 1955; and

(3) was the site of the first lung and heart transplants into a human in the world, in 1963 and 1964, respectively;

Whereas, in 1962, the University of Mississippi broke a racial barrier by admitting its first African-American student, James Meredith, who remains a source of inspiration today;

Whereas, from its first class of 80 students, the University of Mississippi has grown to host more than 23,000 students participating in 120 programs of study across 7 campuses, including a medical center;

Whereas thousands of students of all races, creeds, backgrounds, and beliefs receive world-class education at the University of Mississippi;

Whereas the University of Mississippi advances academic excellence through the ac-

tivity of the faculty and staff in departments and more than 75 academic, research, and community service centers;

Whereas, in 2016, the University of Mississippi received a classification of “R1: Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity” in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, an honor bestowed on the top doctoral research universities in the United States;

Whereas the University of Mississippi has produced 55 Fulbright Scholars, 27 Rhodes Scholars, 44 Boren Scholars, 18 Truman Scholars, 24 Goldwater Scholars, 8 Portz Scholars, and 11 National Science Foundation Graduate Fellows;

Whereas the University of Mississippi has played a significant role in producing future public service leaders;

Whereas, in 2008, the University of Mississippi hosted the first presidential debate between Senators John McCain and Barack Obama, which was the first presidential debate held in Mississippi;

Whereas, for 14 years, the University of Mississippi has been recognized as a “Great College to Work For”, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education, in addition to earning honors in all 10 categories of recognition;

Whereas the University of Mississippi is dedicated to supporting the academic success of student-athletes while striving for on-field success;

Whereas the Ole Miss Rebels are composed of 18 men’s and women’s intercollegiate athletic varsity teams that represent the University of Mississippi;

Whereas the University of Mississippi, a charter member of the Southeastern Conference, claims 5 collegiate team national championships, and Ole Miss Rebel student-athletes have captured 25 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division 1 individual titles; and

Whereas the University of Mississippi has produced notable alumni in the fields of government, public policy, research, medicine, business, education, literature, the arts, journalism, athletics, and more: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the University of Mississippi for its 175 years of service to the State of Mississippi and the United States;

(2) recognizes the University of Mississippi for its academic, research, cultural, and athletic excellence; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the Chancellor of the University of Mississippi, Dr. Glenn F. Boyce;

(B) the Vice Chancellor for Intercollegiate Athletics of the University of Mississippi, Mr. Keith Carter; and

(C) the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Dr. LouAnn Woodward.

SENATE RESOLUTION 478—DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 2023 AS “NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH”

Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. BAR-RASSO, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 478

Whereas palliative care and hospice services—

(1) can empower individuals to live as fully as possible, surrounded and supported by family and loved ones, despite serious illnesses or injuries; and

(2) are critical parts of the continuum of supports and services that individuals with serious illness and their families need;

Whereas ensuring access to palliative care and hospice for all individuals in the United States who are in need, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, is important;

Whereas palliative care and hospice aims to bring patients and family caregivers high-quality care delivered by an interdisciplinary team of skilled health care professionals, including—

- (1) physicians;
- (2) nurses;
- (3) social workers;
- (4) therapists;
- (5) counselors;
- (6) health aides;
- (7) spiritual care providers; and
- (8) other health care professionals;

Whereas there is a need to increase training opportunities for health care professionals to receive interdisciplinary team-based training in palliative care and hospice;

Whereas hospice focuses on quality of life through pain management and symptom control, caregiver assistance, and emotional and spiritual support, with the goal of allowing patients to live fully until the end of life, surrounded and supported by loved ones, friends, and caregivers;

Whereas trained palliative care and hospice professionals, during a time of trauma and loss, can provide grief and bereavement support services to individuals with a serious illness or injury, the family members of those individuals, and others;

Whereas palliative care is a patient and family-centered approach to care that—

- (1) provides relief from symptoms and stress;
- (2) can be complementary to curative treatments; and
- (3) improves the quality of life of patients and their families;

Whereas, in 2021, more than 1,700,000 individuals in the United States living with a serious illness or injury, and the families of those individuals, received care and support from more than 5,350 hospice providers in communities across the United States;

Whereas volunteers continue to play a vital role in supporting hospice care and operations; and

Whereas palliative care and hospice providers encourage all patients to learn more about their options for care and to share their preferences with family, loved ones, and health care professionals: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates November 2023 as “National Hospice and Palliative Care Month”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States—

(A) to increase their understanding and awareness of—

(i) care for hospice patients with a serious illness or injury;

(ii) the benefits of integrating palliative care early into the treatment plans for patients with a serious illness or injury; and

(iii) the importance of grief support for caregivers and loved ones during hospice care and after death;

(B) to recognize the care and dedication of—

(i) millions of family caregivers; and

(ii) tens of thousands of palliative care and hospice staff and volunteers; and

(C) to observe “National Hospice and Palliative Care Month” with appropriate activities and programs.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have two 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 FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 476, S. Res. 477, and S. Res. 478.

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

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

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, were printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2023

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, November 29; 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 Smith nomination; further, that the cloture motions filed during yesterday’s session ripen at 11:30 a.m.; further, that if cloture is invoked on the Smith nomination, all time be considered expired at 2:30 p.m. and that if cloture is invoked on the Semper nomination, all time be considered expired at 5:45 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Wednesday’s session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:46 p.m., stands adjourned until Wednesday, November 29, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 28, 2023:

THE JUDICIARY

MARGARET M. GARNETT, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

JEFFREY M. BRYAN, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA.