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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray. God of love, whose Spirit is known by those with thankful hearts and who makes cheerfulness a companion of strength, lift our hearts to a joyous confidence in Your care. Lord, give us opportunities to tell of all the marvelous things You have done in our Nation's history, as we seek to glorify Your Name.

Lord, guide and protect our lawmakers. Teach them to find and trust You as they grow in grace and in a knowledge of Your providential leading. Remind them that when they feel overwhelmed, You stand behind the dim unknown to deliver them from doubt. May they claim Your promise to provide them with mercy and grace to help them in their time of need.

We pray in Your sovereign 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 11, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. DUCKWORTH 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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Jasmine Hyejung Yoon, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Virginia.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on Friday, the Senate completed its work on annual appropriations for six major areas of the Federal Govern-

ment: agriculture and rural development; commerce, justice, and science; energy and water development; interior and environment; military construction, veterans' affairs; and transportation, housing, and urban development.

The Senate's vote was a major milestone in a process our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee began the better part of a year ago. Thanks to Senator COLLINS and Senator MURRAY's commitment to operating in good faith and adhering as much as possible to regular order, a significant portion of the Federal Government's discretionary budget is complete.

As I mentioned last week, the agreement before the Senate includes a number of conservative accomplishments that Vice Chair COLLINS fought for upfront. I am especially pleased that it will advance priorities near and dear to the hearts of my fellow Kentuckians—from rural transportation to military readiness to stopping the flow of illegal drugs.

I am proud to represent three military installations in Kentucky that are vital to America's national defense strategy. And the bill the Senate passed last week will fund critical construction projects at each of them. It green-lights the construction of top-of-the-line training and operational capabilities at Fort Knox and Fort Campbell, both home to a number of our Nation's most storied Army units. And it resurrects resources from a National Guard training range in Greenville, KY, a long-overdue project that has fallen by the wayside for nearly two decades.

Hundreds of millions of dollars will also go toward helping rural Kentuckians and the rest of Middle America: urgent funding to overhaul aging roads, bridges, and river ports that hold back Main Street; investments for clean, reliable water infrastructure; funds to continue environmental clean-up efforts in Paducah; and resources to

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



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expand broadband access to every corner of the Commonwealth. It also empowers law enforcement with new resources to combat the opioid crisis that has devastated my home State and remains a top killer of young Kentuckians.

So I was glad the Senate finished the job on a major portion of our government funding responsibilities, and I was especially proud to deliver on some of my fellow Kentuckians' top priorities.

SWEDEN

Madam President, on another matter, last week, I was proud to welcome the Prime Minister of Sweden to the Capitol on a historic day in his Nation's history and a great day for America and fellow members of the transatlantic alliance.

Earlier today, the flag of Sweden was raised over NATO headquarters for the first time. Sweden is our newest NATO ally, and the Prime Minister's visit to Washington marked the culmination of a process that began more than 2 years ago. As Russian forces amassed on Ukraine's border in the winter of 2022, Putin's aggressive ambitions clarified the thinking of some of Europe's strongest security partners.

From outside NATO, Sweden and Finland had already built advanced economies, capable militaries, and impressive defense industries. But in the face of an axis of revisionist powers, our Nordic friends decided it was time to cast their lot with the most successful military alliance in history.

Their path to accession is a clarifying reminder that NATO has always been a defensive alliance. Its members first undertook the responsibility of collective security to defending against growing Soviet aggression. Central and Eastern European members pursued membership after the fall of the Iron Curtain to protect their newly reclaimed sovereignty and democracy.

NATO's expansion has always been linked to the threat posed by outside forces; and today, it is no different. I have been proud to walk with our newest allies at every stop of the process. I will never forget standing with them 2 years ago in Stockholm and in Helsinki on the very day the Swedish and Finnish Parliaments voted overwhelmingly to launch their NATO axis bills.

Russia's escalation in Ukraine has unified Swedish and Finnish leaders. In both countries, strong support for NATO and a willingness to share the burden of collective defense literally transcends party lines.

Today, America's newest treaty allies are poised to make significant, immediate contributions to the transatlantic alliance. With highly trained forces equipped with cutting-edge capabilities, their commitment to NATO is a tremendous vote of confidence in the enduring importance of collective defense.

With Sweden and Finland in our ranks, the West stands even more united against autocrats with imperial

designs. With two new frontline allies, America's interests are more secure.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Madam President, on another matter, this week, the Senate will get yet another chance to put the emergency brakes on a particularly harmful piece of the Biden administration's Federal regulatory state.

The Federal Highway Administration finalized a rule late last year that would force States and local planning agencies to set declining greenhouse gas emissions targets and require them to meet those targets. The idea is to make the entire country build its infrastructure the way the bluest coastal cities, like San Francisco, do. Subway stops, electrical vehicle chargers, and bike lanes in rural places like North Dakota? It is a one-size-fits-all mandate. In other words, it forces Middle America to say goodbye to urgent projects on the sort of transportation infrastructure that actually makes sense for them.

What is more, FHWA lacks the authority to implement this rule. Congress explicitly debated and rejected language to authorize this type of target during the lead-up to the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

So I am very grateful to my colleague Senator CRAMER for taking the lead on this CRA, and I would urge all of our colleagues to support him on the floor this week.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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.

COMMUNICATION OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair lays before the Senate a communication from the Secretary of the Senate regarding a message from the President received during the adjournment of the Senate.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Dear Madam President, on Saturday, March 9, 2024, the President of the United States sent by messenger the attached sealed envelope addressed to the President of the Senate dated March 9, 2024, said to contain a message regarding the designation of funding as an emergency requirement in H.R. 4366, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024. The Senate not being in session on the day which the President delivered this message, I accepted the message at 12:05 p.m., and I now present to you the President's message, with the accompanying papers, for disposition by the Senate. Respectfully, Sonceria A. Berry, Secretary of the Senate.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

PRESIDENT BIDEN'S BUDGET

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, today, President Biden released his budget for fiscal year 2025. President Biden's budget can be summarized in three words: bold, optimistic, responsible.

President Biden's budget highlights the sharp contrast between the Democrats' positive, proactive vision and the Republicans' negative, regressive vision for our country.

Democrats are focused on growing the economy in a responsible way, while making smart investments in the American people and our future. That is why a centerpiece of President Biden's budget focuses on creating opportunity for working Americans by ending the reckless Trump-era tax scam, which overwhelmingly cut taxes for the wealthiest few and large corporations and added trillions to the national debt.

It was recently confirmed that the Republican tax law did not pay for itself, as we heard over and over again from our Republican colleagues. Democrats know that we can and must do better.

As the President pointed out during his State of the Union Address last week, a fair Tax Code is how we can better invest in things like healthcare, education, and economic opportunity for more Americans. President Trump's tax scam proved everything but fair. It rewarded the wealthy and well-connected, while leaving working families with the tab.

Time has shown that this tax scam was a dud for our economy and a political loser for the Republican Party because the American people saw it for what it was.

Republicans also talk a big game about lowering the deficit, but President Biden's budget actually proposes measures to do it. It proposes measures to reduce the deficit by nearly \$3 trillion over the next decade.

That budget will help improve the solvency of vital programs like Medicare and Social Security, which tens of millions of Americans rely on every single day.

It will reinstate the child tax credit we passed in the American Rescue Plan, which greatly reduced child poverty before expiring.

That is not all. President Biden's budget builds on the progress Democrats have made to help grow America from the middle out and the bottom up. From the infrastructure law, to the CHIPS and Science Act, to the Inflation Reduction Act, to the PACT Act, and more, Democrats made a lot of good investments that are already paying off for the American people. Inflation is cooling down. Manufacturing is surging. Consumer sentiment is growing. The cost of insulin and other drugs

is falling. We have created a record 15 million new jobs since President Biden took office. President Biden's budget will help ensure we continue to make good on the investments from our agenda and build an economy that works for everyone.

Here is the bottom line: President Biden's budget shows there are two clear choices for America's future and highlights Democrats' vision for a better America.

Democrats want to keep taxes low for middle-class families and make the ultrawealthy pay their fair share, while Republicans fight to make it easier for wealthy tax cheats to pay less than middle-class families. Democrats will protect Medicare and Social Security, while Republicans look to cut these hard-earned benefits. Democrats want to make investments so every American family can do better, while Republicans want those who have already done very well to do even better.

So I thank President Biden for releasing a bold, optimistic, responsible budget for the Nation.

HEALTHCARE CYBER ATTACK

Madam President, now on the healthcare cyber attack, after last month's devastating, unprecedented cyber attack on tens of thousands of hospitals, pharmacies, and doctors' offices in New York and across America, I am proud that last week HHS and CMS heeded my call to provide healthcare providers immediate relief to help get their systems back up to speed.

This weekend, we received more good news: CMS expanded its response to the cyber attack to include Medicare Part B providers. This new action by CMS will directly help our doctors on the frontline of this crisis continue to stay open and provide care for their patients. Because of the cyber attack, people weren't getting the dollars they had to expend to do their jobs. I commend CMS for continuing to heed my call for an all-hands-on-deck approach to this crisis.

For over 3 weeks now, providers—including hospitals, doctors, and pharmacies big and small—have all been unable to submit medical claims as a result of this cyber attack, leaving many facing imminent insolvency. I met with Rome Health in Rome, NY, and Cayuga Health in Ithaca, who told me they are losing hundreds of thousands of dollars a day and have stacks of claims nearly 2 feet high that they are unable to file.

The American people are feeling the pain of this cyber attack too. Many are struggling to refill prescriptions, some are having their care delayed or denied, and others are unable to use patient assistance programs they rely on.

Had CMS not stepped up to the plate, hospitals and pharmacies—especially the smaller ones that don't have large cash reserves—faced the risk of laying people off or even shutting down entirely because they were not being reimbursed.

So this new action by CMS to expand its response and include Medicare Part B providers in relief efforts is an encouraging step, but this crisis is far from over. I will continue working with the administration, my colleagues in Congress, CMS—I talked to the Administrator just a few hours ago—and others in the healthcare industry to get providers the relief they need and to protect our healthcare system from future attacks.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

Madam President, now on the American Rescue Plan anniversary, today is the 3-year anniversary of President Biden signing the American Rescue Plan into law, which I was proud to lead here in the Senate.

After Congress passed the ARP plan, I said, "Help is on the way." That was the promise of the American Rescue Plan—to put shots in arms, to put money in people's pockets, and to propel our country out of the COVID crisis. Three years later, it is safe to say these investments have paid off and that the American Rescue Plan put America and our economy on a path toward the historic recovery we are witnessing today. Before the American Rescue Plan, job growth was unsteady, and millions were at risk of losing their jobs. Three years later, we have seen the strongest 3-year job growth in American history—in American history—over 15 million new jobs since President Biden took office.

Before the American Rescue Plan, the United States was losing manufacturing jobs by the day. Three years later, manufacturing investment—something that plagued America even before the pandemic—is near an all-time high, more than double its highest point during the previous administration.

Critics argued that the American Rescue Plan would cause excessive inflation. Well, 3 years later, inflation has cooled down to the lowest levels since the start of the pandemic, from 9 percent to just below 3 percent, meaning the prices of things like groceries, appliances, car rentals, and airfares have all come down.

In the American Rescue Plan, we secured significant pension reform through the passage of the Butch Lewis Act, which has helped millions and millions of American workers receive the financial security they earned through their labors.

I was proud to bring Deborah Hartman from Buffalo, NY, as my guest to President Biden's State of the Union last week. She called this critical plan "the best thing that has happened to labor in I don't know how many years." It means the world to working people.

We also included a dramatic expansion of the child tax credit, which helped millions and millions of families afford the cost of childcare and other needs. We provided billions in rental relief to help people keep a roof over their heads; billions in fiscal relief for

States, cities, and localities to help them stay afloat; billions for education and broadband access to help kids get back in the classroom; and much more.

The bottom line is this: Three years after President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan, it is proving to be a historic win for American families, workers, and the economy. And it is thanks to the American Rescue Plan and other landmark legislation we passed—like the infrastructure law, Chips and Science, and the Inflation Reduction Act—that today the U.S. economy is the envy of the world. Of course, our work is far from over, but we can look back and be very proud of what we accomplished in the ARP.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam 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.

SUNSHINE WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, every year, at this time of the year, Sunshine Week is held around the birthday of James Madison—not only a former President but one of our greatest Founding Fathers and the acclaimed "Father of the Constitution."

Sunshine Week is a critical reminder of the need for transparency and open government. And our government is not as open as it should be.

President Madison famously said that a great difficulty in forming a government operated by imperfect people was that you must oblige it—meaning the government—to control itself. Well, amen to what Madison said.

As a conservative, I have worked especially hard on Madison's challenge, making sure that the government controls itself. One way to do that is to limit the size and scope of the government. It is hard to control a government that does everything but make your bed and tuck you in to sleep.

Another check on out-of-control government is separation of powers—the same separation of powers when you study the essentials of American government. Congress doesn't execute laws. The President and the executive agencies shouldn't try to make laws. And neither should our courts.

To control a government as big as ours, it takes a lot of very bright light shining on every Agency and Office. And instead of 1 week called Sunshine Week, we ought to have 365 days a year in which we have sunshine on our government's operation.

I have long supported the Freedom of Information Act. And that act urges Agencies to be more responsive to record requests. That is essential to open government because it gives citizens access to information. As the old saying goes, knowledge is power.

Congress also has a solemn constitutional duty to conduct strong oversight to ensure that the executive branch executes the laws as Congress has intended. You learn that in eighth grade civics class, called checks and balances of government. I call it oversight. But it is a constitutional responsibility.

We can't legislate effectively unless we in Congress know what is going on behind the scenes, and most of that behind-the-scenes is in the executive branch of government. That is why whistleblowers are so very important and why I rely on whistleblowers to give me a lot of information I would not have other access to. So I consider them a very important part of doing my role, my constitutional responsibility of oversight to see that a President does what the Constitution says, and his oath says to faithfully execute the laws.

These whistleblowers are patriots and our most powerful tool in rooting out waste, fraud, abuse, and misconduct. Despite their vital contribution to good government, they are often targeted for retaliation and harassment. That should stop. In so many speeches, I have come to the floor of the U.S. Senate to point out specific examples of where these patriotic people we call whistleblowers are retaliated against and retaliated in a way that—the law says that retaliation is not lawful.

There is a growing trend among Federal Agencies to place a blanket of silence over whistleblowers. The Agencies do this by violating whistleblower disclosure laws, including withholding notice of what we call anti-gag provisions. In other words, if you are the head of an Agency and you have a whistleblower, you can't tell them they can't talk to Congress.

The law requires all Federal Agencies to include an anti-gag provision in their nondisclosure policies and forms. This provision notifies employees of their rights to report misconduct to Congress, to inspectors general, and to the Office of Special Counsel.

Without knowing of the anti-gag provision's protections, employees who see government wrongdoing often stay in the shadows. If people are notified that they can talk to Congress and the law protects them, we are more apt to get information on wrongdoing, the misexpenditure of money, or laws not being carried out as we intended that Congress wouldn't even know about.

The reason they don't speak is they fear the retaliation if they do speak out, and this is what I have spoken about so many times on the floor of the U.S. Senate. The fact that they are retaliated against is something that I say over and over again is unacceptable. That is why this week I wrote to all of our inspectors general of the executive branch of government, requesting they ensure this provision is included, as required by law, which will make it harder for Federal Agencies to conceal their wrongdoing.

This year, whistleblowers have helped to let the sunshine in where it matters most. They are helping me track down vulnerable migrant children the Biden Department of Health and Human Services has failed to protect against potential trafficking. As we speak, law enforcement is working through information I provided to hopefully bring their own special kind of sunshine to the criminals taking advantage of these young kids.

I have also sought information from government contractors who receive billions of taxpayer dollars to care for unaccompanied children but whose practices and failures are largely shielded from public knowledge and scrutiny. We need a full accounting of how contractors spend the taxpayers' hard-earned money.

That is why last year I also launched an investigation into one of the Environmental Protection Agency's grant programs. That exposed significant waste. It turns out that the EPA doesn't even require the program's grantees to submit financial documents during the grant that show how taxpayer money is being spent by those various organizations.

You would think Agencies would be very grateful when these failures are exposed. Instead, you know what—I was met with delay and obstruction by this administration's EPA. Accountability can be uncomfortable, and bureaucrats don't like it. After I reported that obstruction to the EPA Office of Inspector General, it agreed to audit the program and look into how EPA influenced grantees to obstruct my oversight.

Then we get to the Justice Department and the FBI. Recently, the Justice Department indicted an FBI confidential human source who served as the basis for what is commonly known as the document 1023. That is the FBI-generated document that Chairman COMER in the House and I made public alleging criminal bribery schemes between the Biden family and a foreign national. Embarrassingly, for 3 years, the 1023 collected dust—until Congress and Justice Department whistleblowers forced the FBI and U.S. Attorney Weiss to interview that FBI source.

The Federal indictment doesn't explain the full set of facts and leaves many questions unanswered. Those questions include how the Justice Department and the FBI could use this confidential human source for approximately 13 years, pay him hundreds of thousands of dollars, use his information in investigations and prosecutions, and then ultimately determine after 13 or 14 years that this guy is a liar. According to government documents in the court case, the FBI source was reporting information to the FBI as late as December 2023.

This is a matter that requires extensive sunlight.

If not for whistleblowers, my securing the document 1023 and releasing that document, do you know what? The

FBI would still be believing the lies of their confidential human source, and they would still be paying taxpayer dollars to this confidential source for the lies he was giving to the FBI. Now, they have arrested him because of my oversight work. So what is the government doing to get all the money back that they paid him?

In addition to my investigative efforts, I have worked with a bipartisan set of colleagues to strengthen attorney misconduct oversight at the Justice Department. For example, I co-sponsored bipartisan legislation to close a loophole that prevents the inspector general at the Department of Justice from investigating alleged Justice Department attorney misconduct. Now, understand, in the Department of Justice, the inspector general, who is supposed to sort out wrongdoing, can't even investigate the lawyers of that Department when they do misconduct.

My consistent efforts to let in sunshine continue across our government, whether it is asking the FBI to explain a memo targeting Catholics based on biased sources, ensuring our immigration officials follow the law and collect DNA from illegal migrants they encounter at the border, or even exposing flaws at the Veterans' Administration that endangered the privacy of our veterans.

So we all ought to be thankful for Sunshine Week, which is an opportunity for us doing our constitutional duty of oversight to highlight these efforts and to remind us that shining a consistent light is essential to make government accountable to "we the people."

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

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

The Senator from Louisiana.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I am here to talk about flood insurance, an issue facing Louisiana, and, I am sorry to say, an issue now facing the Presiding Officer's State.

Floods can occur anywhere—for example, on the top of a mountaintop. People don't realize that, but you have this gully going down from the top to the bottom, and if it gets a big rain—boom—going down from the top of that mountain, you will have a flood.

And that has occurred, unfortunately, in California. I spent several years in Southern California, and I can relate to that.

But it happens regularly in my State. Now, why in my State? Well, folks think of hurricanes as wind, rain, and lightning, but one of the greatest threats is actually the risk of flooding.

And these floods can destroy homes, businesses and leave them—if they don't destroy them right away, they can leave them moist. And when it is moist, it begins to rot from the inside. And homes that families have lived in for over 50 years that have never flooded before can become unlivable.

So if you come down to Louisiana or California or Pennsylvania or West Virginia or other things, and you ask folks in the bottom of a riverbed, for example, if a flood can upend their life, they will say emphatically yes.

So if we know the answer is an emphatic yes, then what can Congress do about it, if anything? Well, we have a mechanism to address it, the National Flood Insurance Program which currently ensures 4.7 million American families. It is a Federal program, and we are the ones that can change it to make it more reliable, more affordable, more sustainable.

But the challenge is that it is a tough topic. A lot of folks in Congress just don't understand the issue. And so we need to have the understanding, but then we also need the political will.

Now, this has just kind of—boom—up, up, up in urgency. The Federal Emergency Management Agency recently implemented a new risk assessment called Risk Rating 2.0. Now Risk Rating 2.0 affects Louisiana, and the Gulf Coast—frankly, all coasts and anyplace where there is a river or stream that can overflow, and it particularly affects folks who are lower income.

Sometimes people say that the flood insurance program is a program for rich people. Not true; 62 percent of all NFIP policies are in parishes or counties where the median household income is below the national average of \$54,000. And truth be told that, as we again just saw in California—what you think of as a desert State—flooding can occur in any State.

So if we look here, here are NFIP claims by cost: 44 out of 50 States have had over \$50 million of National Flood Insurance Program claims from 1978 to 2021. And there are only 6 States that have less than \$50 million in claims; 13 States have had over a billion in damage, and they are all over the map. It is Virginia—and not just the coastal states—it is Missouri; it is the States on the gulf; it is California; it is going up the northeast. This is geographically distributed.

And, by the way, these are the States hit hardest, but they are not the only States. Every State has had at least an NFIP claim somewhere, sometime, because every State is affected by flooding.

Now, the way the program is currently being conducted, however, is putting it into what is called an actuarial death spiral. Rising premiums mean fewer can afford the insurance. So let's set this up. Right now, you have people at high risk; and the way insurance works is it spreads it over plans over homes that have a lower risk. But if you raise everybody's pre-

miums dramatically, the people who are at lowest risk will drop their coverage. And so you have the same amount of risk, but now it is concentrated upon a smaller pool of homes. That concentration raises the rates even more. And those who are the lowest risk in that pool drop their insurance, which further concentrates. That is called an actuarial death spiral.

I hate to put it this way, but it is visual. Think of when you flush the toilet and it begins to spin, and then that spin goes down. Well, that spinning is that death spiral, and the water in the pool gets smaller and smaller and smaller until it is gone and there is no one left who can afford the cost for the insurance, and it ceases to exist.

Now, by the way, this is true of every insurance program. I am describing the National Flood Insurance Program, but this actuarial death spiral is actually known to be just an insurance—that is just how insurance works. If your pool gets too small, risk too concentrated, the whole thing goes away.

But the problem is, what is happening to the National Flood Insurance Program ignores the fact that the program is actually a bargain. And this is the real problem: When I have telephone townhalls and meeting with constituents, they tell me that their property—their property insurance, their casualty insurance—if you add that to their flood insurance, it is now more than their mortgage. So they are making the tough decision: Do I either leave my home, or do I drop my coverage?

So let's just talk a little bit more about Risk Rating 2.0. First, recognize that this rate hike that we are currently going under could have been stopped with the stroke of a President's pen. Either President Biden or President Trump could have told FEMA to delay or cancel the implementation.

In 2019, my staff worked with and my office worked with the Trump administration to successfully delay the implementation because of concerns about how FEMA was calculating costs. The concern remains, but the Biden administration has decided to go forward, ignoring the concerns of people in Louisiana and elsewhere.

The results are that about 900,000 people have dropped their insurance because they cannot afford it—900,000. That is the beginning of this death spiral we spoke of.

Now, there is some promising news. The Banking Committee recently had a hearing on the National Flood Insurance Program that I put forward, and we got excellent input. There is a consensus that no family in America should be forced to move because of unaffordable flood insurance premiums, that flood insurance premiums should remain affordable, accessible, and accountable to the taxpayer and sustainable to the future.

So my challenge to my colleagues: Designate somebody on your staff. This

is a complicated topic. But whether a Californian, a Virginian, a Missourian, you name a State that is in yellow of some tint, ask somebody on your staff to become familiar with the flood insurance program. Then let's come together and move the legislation that will reform it.

The first issue is to gain understanding, then the second issue is to have the political will. If we do this, we can maintain a program which has meant so much to Americans in every State—but certainly in 43 out of 50 States—to enable them to maintain the coverage to protect them should their home flood, that they would be able to build back.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Illinois.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I ask that the scheduled vote begin immediately.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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. 543, Jasmine Hyejung Yoon, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Virginia.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Raphael G. Warnock, Gary C. Peters, Tim Kaine, Richard Blumenthal, Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse, Peter Welch, Mark R. Warner, Christopher A. Coons, Tammy Duckworth, Benjamin L. Cardin, Debbie Stabenow.

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 Jasmine Hyejung Yoon, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Virginia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 85 Ex.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—38

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Britt	Hoeben	Schmitt
Budd	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Lee	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lummis	Thune
Cotton	Marshall	Tuberville
Crapo	Moran	Vance
Daines	Mullin	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young
Fischer	Ricketts	

NOT VOTING—10

Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sinema
Cramer	Kennedy	Stabenow
Cruz	Menendez	
Hassan	Shaheen	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 38.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am back again with the old battered “Time to Wake Up” graphic here. The Smithsonian can’t have it quite yet.

This “Time to Wake Up” climate report starts with the unfortunate proposition that we are in terrible danger on climate. Obviously, a critical part and an essential explanation of the danger is that the Republican Party has been turned, by fossil fuel industry dark money, into little more than the political wing of the fossil fuel industry, slavishly dependent on the fossil fuel polluters to fill up its super PACs and shameless about parroting the polluters’ obnoxious lies.

But all that happens in the political world; where the danger gets real is in the physical world. And a recent study suggests that we have, perhaps, already blown through the 1.5 degrees of world heating safety limit.

That 1.5-degree limit was always just an estimated upper bound. Unlike many estimates, it could have been too high. It could be that the true safety barrier was always below 1.5 degrees.

But in any event, assume that it actually is 1.5 degrees, which is sort of the midpoint of the estimates. Well, it is starting to look like we may be losing even against that metric.

Here is a chart that summarizes over a thousand different projections that have been done from different sources as to where our CO₂ emissions are going to take us. It is actually more than 1,200 different scenarios.

Some of them take global temperature increase over 5 degrees of increase, which will lead to disruption on an astonishing scale that leaves many parts of the planet uninhabitable, as presently experienced.

So there are an awful lot of them. Some of them, we have already made decisions that make them impossible to achieve. Some of them are essentially dead letters. If you look at the ones that are still viable and at the ones that—this is the 1.5-degree safety barrier. If you look at those 1,200 scenarios and you look at the ones that are still viable and get us, at some point, back under 1.5 degrees, do you know how many of them there are? Eleven. Out of 1,200 predicted scenarios, 11 are all that is left to keep us at some point below 1.5 degrees. Almost all of them blow significantly over 1.5 degrees and then come back down, which makes investments in carbon capture extremely important.

But that is not a whole lot of shots out of 1,200 scenarios that we started with. And each of them is ranked by where we are on the different components that get us there: carbon removal technology, carbon removal with land interventions—planting trees and so forth—carbon intensity reduction, energy demand adjustment, and less methane. In every single one of those categories, these are ranked as challenging. None of this is easy. All of it is going to require real effort, real diligence, and serious attention to the problem.

So we are not in good shape. And that is the sad and bitter news. We could have been in good shape. Back in 2007, 2008, and 2009, there was bipartisan work happening on climate change in this Chamber all the time. And then came the Supreme Court’s wretched decision in Citizens United and the instantaneous response by the fossil fuel industry to flood politics with its money and the instantaneous response by Republicans to abandon all of their bipartisan climate work and pitch us into a lost decade-plus on climate action.

That is where a lot of these that could have gotten us out of trouble disappeared in that lost decade of fossil fuel dark money blocking American democracy’s ability to respond to this problem.

So to stay below the 1.5-degree safety threshold requires two measures. Again, these are estimates. It could well be that we need to do more than this, but these are the ones we are working with. One is reducing emis-

sions by roughly half by 2030. And the other is reaching net zero by 2050.

So here is the latest estimate of how we are doing with respect to the 2030 50-percent reduction goal. That is what this line is. That is 50-percent reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. And here is where we are. And here are a bunch of different scenarios and how they end up.

The only one—the only scenario that gets us to this goal by 2030—here is 2030, if you can’t see it from the television—the only thing that gets us there is a carbon fee, putting a price on carbon emissions so that it is no longer free to pollute.

Let’s say we go ahead with a carbon fee but part of the IRA gets pulled away—that is this purple line—we miss by a little. Let’s say we go with the clean electricity standard instead of a carbon fee; we miss by more.

Let’s say that we expand the IRA—do more of that positive investment through the IRA but without a carbon price—we miss by even more.

Here is where we are under current law—this red line. Here is where we are under current law if the EPA’s proposed emission rules go into effect. That is our current likely outcome. And as you can see, that is a long way from 50 percent by 2030. That blows through it sometime after 2035.

If there are no new emissions rules just under the IRA, we are all the way out to 2040 before we cross that safety threshold. And if we do what our Republican friends, at the behest of the fossil fuel industry, are threatening to do, which is to repeal the IRA and block the new emissions rules, you are out here. And who knows when you get to 50 percent.

So to hit that first target, we have to wrap our minds around carbon pricing—pricing polluter emissions. Polluters should pay for the pollution they cause. It is not complicated. But they have been able to get away with it.

Of course, if you are living in a polluter money la-la land, none of this is real to you. And the numbers that matter to you are how much money get poured into your super PACs by polluters, not what the scientists are carefully analyzing and saying and modeling.

But if you are out of climate-denial polluter la-la land, and you are trying to grapple with this as a real problem in the real world, carbon pricing is essential.

So where are we on that? Well, I have two bits of good news. One is that, just like many major corporations do, the Biden administration has put an internal price on carbon at a very respectable \$190 per ton. And the Office of Management and Budget—the OMB—has given guidance to executive Agencies to build that internal price on carbon into all their relevant decision-making.

What is an internal price on carbon? It means that the government’s decisions have to bake into their decision-making—the \$190 per ton price on carbon. If you are buying fleets of cars,

you compare the emissions, and that goes into the cost equation. If you are setting the price on land use of various kinds—like drilling wells—you bake in the \$190 per ton. In regulatory decisions, of course, you would do that.

So it is a big deal, and it is part of the good news. Of course, the question is: How will the executive Agencies comply? The OMB has issued its guidance—boom, done. It was issued in September of last year. The \$190 per ton went active in December—boom, done. But it is time now for all the executive Agencies to react and respond and comply. And that is what we haven't seen yet.

So we are looking into that as an oversight matter to try to make sure that the executive Agencies are doing their best to comply with the OMB guidance as to the internal price on carbon. So that is good news item 1, assuming implementation is not ineffective.

The second good news item is that the European Union—our friends across the pond in our Atlantic alliance—are locked in to a carbon border adjustment mechanism, a tariff mechanism called CBAM, Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.

The further good news is that the United Kingdom has announced that it has made the decision to join the EU in that same CBAM program. Why is that good for us? It is good for us because this will create significant pressure here at home for a price on carbon in the United States because without one, if we don't have a proper price on carbon here in the United States, it will be very, very, very difficult for American companies exporting to the United States and to the UK to avoid those carbon tariffs. We will be paying tariffs to the UK and to the EU whenever our production of goods is more carbon-intensive than theirs. One of the ways you solve that is by adopting a carbon price. Then you get into the club, and you don't have to pay the tariffs any longer.

So the tariff pressure on American businesses ought to disrupt significantly the general political indifference of the American corporate sector about the fossil fuel industry's political hegemony over Republicans. That could open a potential pathway when the steel industry, the aluminum industry, the chemical industry, the cement industry, the pharmaceutical industry, and others are coming to their elected representatives and saying: Why am I paying this tariff? What is up with that? Why do I have to do that?

The answer from our Republican friends is that it is so the fossil fuel industry can keep polluting for free.

I don't think that is going to sell well in other board rooms. So that creates a little bit of industry-on-industry counterpressure. With any luck, that will be good enough to help us pass a proper carbon fee.

By the way, I happen to have a bill for that. It would do all of those

things. It is called the Clean Competition Act. I would commend that to the administration's attention.

The Biden administration seems to be shedding what was initially anti-CBAM skepticism. It has seemingly abandoned an effort to undercut the CBAM with a weak so-called steel and aluminum arrangement that deservedly belongs in the bin as a climate response. I hope very much the administration will begin developing a positive response to the CBAM, and there is my bill as a model for them to take a look at.

If we do this right, it spares American exporters paying these tariffs. That is a good thing. It also supports a global pressure against carbon pollution that puts us on a potential path to climate safety that we are not on now.

Together, those two pieces won't match a full, proper price on carbon, as proposed in my separate pollution fee bill, which I also commend when we get to a full, proper price on carbon, but it will get us a good ways there.

While we are at it, we could add carbon pricing on luxury aircraft travel emissions to reduce those pollutants. There is no reason that somebody sporting around in a private jet shouldn't be picking up the tab for the pollution they are leaving behind. We could add carbon pricing on shipping, which many of the leading shipping lines actually support. So we have a constituency to get this done in the industry. Those two things would help make more progress, and, yes, I have bills on each.

But ultimately, we need to stop the fossil fuel industry's dangerous and fraudulent pollute-for-free business model by making them pay to pollute, which is what they should be doing as a basic economic market theory principle. But instead of obeying economic market theory, they are floating on a subsidy that the International Monetary Fund has estimated at over \$600 billion with a "b"—billion dollars—every single year. It makes it tough for renewables to compete against a \$600-plus billion subsidy every single year. By the way, it also makes it easier to throw a few million dollars into controlling Congress if you are protecting a subsidy of \$600-plus billion every single year.

So there is this conflict between free market principles and fossil fuel subsidies. Unfortunately, our Republican friends inevitably resolve that conflict in favor of fossil fuel subsidies, while conveniently taking billions of dollars in fossil fuel political money.

Let me close by turning to methane. This graphic talks about economy-wide CO₂ emissions in various climate policy scenarios, but methane is over 80 times as dangerous in the short term as a greenhouse gas than CO₂ is.

Folks, we have been disastrously bad at handling those methane emissions. Indeed, for years, EPA collected and reported artificially low methane numbers that were not real—were not even

close to real. The EPA methane effort was half-baked, ill-informed, and hapless.

But something has changed. Now, we can spot methane emission sources from satellites. We can measure the intensity of the methane leakage. And there is a new methane fee on industry methane leaks from my bill, which got into the IRA, and there is a new methane reg from EPA. The administration has announced a methane enforcement task force to use that new technology and find and fix and finish major methane leaks. If we can do that in this country, then we can go to the next COP with a program to have all international methane leaks found, fixed, and finished. If we do that globally, that is a very big step towards a pathway to climate safety.

Like the social cost of carbon, this plan—the methane enforcement task force—is set, but the implementation is still unknown. A rapid, robust, and efficient enforcement group could really make a difference in getting dangerous methane leaks plugged. A sloppy and indolent group that follows the "inter-agency process" rule of moving at the speed of the slowest bureaucracy would be a real disappointment. So here again, we are doing oversight.

Put these things together—a proper and well-implemented internal social cost of carbon made effective across all relevant Federal Agencies for all relevant Agency decision making; plus a positive response, not a weak sister response, to the EU-UK CBAM carbon border tariff; plus a tough, multi-Agency crackdown on industry methane leaks—and this trajectory towards climate safety begins to get more possible.

Unfortunately, we just had bad news from the EPA on their powerplant pollution rule. If you can believe it, their rule, which has been months and months and months in the making, will regulate coal-fired powerplants, which are dying out on their own, under their own sheer dead economic weight, and they will regulate new gas-powered powerplants, which aren't built and therefore don't have any emissions, but they won't be regulating in this rule the part of the powerplant market that this year and in all future years will produce the majority of the emissions from that sector. It is the biggest piece of the powerplant emission sector, and they are simply not going to regulate it. That piece is the existing fleet of gas-powered powerplants.

It is really hard to see the logic of giving that free pass to the major polluting sector of the powerplant emitters, and it sends a terrible signal about the seriousness of the Agency. So let us hope that rule is a unique embarrassment and not a broader signal of weak, even pusillanimous, EPA administrative effort on climate.

The diligence with which the methane task force and social cost of carbon are implemented and the positivity of the U.S. response to the CBAM need to

send a much more serious signal, as should all future EPA rulemakings on powerplants, vehicles, and other large sources of carbon pollution.

We are at a tipping point right now. When you get down to 1,200 different scenarios where only 11 remaining ones still get you near a climate safety pathway, you have to cut the loaf mighty thin. Making sure that we get this right, that we get onto one of those pathways, is going to require a carbon fee. It just is.

By the way, that is what conservative economics tells you should be done. You can go to Milton Friedman, the high priest of free market economics, and he will say that if you are involved in making a product that involves polluting or some other what they call negative externality in economics-ese, you have to bake that pollution cost, bake that negative externality into the price of your product. If you haven't done that, you are being subsidized. If you are being subsidized, that ain't market economics.

So the principle is right for this. Fairness is right because you should not be able to pollute for free, particularly like the fossil fuel industry does, particularly creating the kind of harm they are creating. And, of course, there is this other question of making sure that our planet remains habitable in the manner that we are used to for our children and our grandchildren.

Again, all of that is doable. All of that is doable with a price on carbon emissions. And there are not scenarios to take us down that pathway to climate safety without that carbon price.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). The Senator from Rhode Island.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

RECOGNIZING THE DIKE-NEW HARTFORD WOLVERINES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, it is no secret this U.S. Senator for Iowa loves history. And I love rooting for our Iowa student-athletes who put in the work at practices and in the off-season to play hard and walk off the court as champions, whether or not they win or lose the game that day.

Today, I would like to toot the horn for my hometown team and its victorious, history-making season. The Dike-New Hartford Wolverines won the 2A State basketball title at the Iowa Girls State High School Basketball

Tournament in Des Moines on Saturday, March 2, 2024. Getting to play in the historic and storied annual Iowa Girls State High School Basketball tournament is a privilege sought by 7,500 basketball players across Iowa every year. This was the team's fourth consecutive State basketball title, and with it, the Dike-New Hartford Wolverines became the second program in State five-on-five history to take that crown four times in a row, 2021-2024. The Dike-New Hartford Wolverines now tie with the Ankeny Hawks who won four State titles from 2002-2005. A century earlier, Audubon took home the title 4 years in a row at the six-on-six tournament, 1921-1924.

In an interview after the Wolverine's four-peat State title, the leading scorer in the championship game, Payton Petersen summed up the victory with a hot tip to her teammates and community. "We worked so hard to get where we are. Sometimes you take things for granted, but just knowing you put blood, sweat, and tears into this, we're working hard every day in practice and every summer. That's a testament to what our team is, how our coaches coach and our community."

March is Iowa History Month and National Women's Month, both fitting themes to honor the accomplishments of the Dike-New Hartford Wolverines. Over their career, Barbara and I had the chance to see the team play and enjoyed every minute of it. We congratulate the players, managers, trainers, coaches, cheerleaders, fans, and family members for their history-making season. It is a thrilling achievement that will bring these young student-athletes a lifetime of memories and lessons for years to come, from the pageantry of the tournament to the teamwork it takes to overcome obstacles, build confidence, and lead to succeed.

From the varsity starters to the bench players and fans in the stands, this was a team effort the entire community can take pride in celebrating. Congratulations to the coaches who devoted countless hours of time and preparation, led by head coach Bruce Dall and assistant coaches Matt Dove, Ashley Beninga, Craig Chapman, and Mandy Danner. Notably, Coach Dall has been named a finalist for the 2024 National High School Athletic Coaches Association Coach of the Year. To all the athletes on the roster, keep up the good work. #RollBlue:

PLAYERS

Abby Jensen, Addy Joslin, Autumn Meester, Izzy Norton, Jady Petersen, Josey Syhlman, Joy Eilderts, Kailyn Meester, Keely Kauten, Kennedy Syhlman, Madde Buskohl, Mallory Petersen, Mariah Asche, Maryn Bixby, Miranda Tyler, Payton Foster, Payton Petersen, Rylee Reicks, Sophia Bennett, Seeri Smith, Silvey Fuller, Sydney Anema.

COACHES

Bruce Dall, Matt Dove, Ashley Beninga, Craig Chapman, Mady Danner.

MANAGERS

Will Huck, Reedlynn Kannegieter, Zari Jones, Ashton Schmitz.

MALPHINE FOGEL AND MARC FOGEL

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I would like to talk about two Pennsylvanians, Malphine Fogel and Marc Fogel. Today, Malphine turned 95 in her Butler, PA, home. She has lived a long and fulfilling life, with a successful career and a loving family. But today, one key part of her life is missing: her son Marc. Vladimir Putin has held Marc as a political pawn for more than 30 months on extreme charges for bringing into Russia less than an ounce of doctor-prescribed medical marijuana to treat his chronic pain. Instead of a nice dinner with Marc and his wife Jane at Malphine's house and the knowledge that they drove safely down Route 8 and the Turnpike back to their Oakmont home, Malphine will be lucky to get a timed call from Marc. Instead of the joy of celebrating her 95th birthday, Malphine woke up and spent her day with the stress of not knowing if she will ever be with her son again.

As Marc Fogel sits in prison after conviction by a kangaroo court, it is critical to highlight not only his plight and treatment by the Russians, but also those affected by it, like his 95-year-old mother. Malphine was born to Italian immigrants Guillianio and Celeste Andreassi on March 11, 1929, in Brady's Bend, PA, just west of Butler. Malphine was always a hard worker and earned valedictorian honors of the 1947 class at East Brady High School. She then worked for many years as a proofreader at the local paper, the Butler Eagle. In 1957, Malphine married Maurice "Cubby" Fogel. Seven years later, they had three thriving children—Mary Elise "Lisa," Marc, and Anne—and Malphine had a bachelor's in economics from Grove City College. While raising her kids, Malphine continued to work periodically at the Butler Eagle and the local elementary school, later joining Nationwide Insurance Company.

All the while, Malphine devoted herself to her family and her community. Every Sunday for over 60 years, she has driven the half hour to Brady's Bend to visit the rest of her family; now, her sisters Lydia, Josephine, and Helen and her brother Silvio. In the midst of raising the family and still today, Malphine has tirelessly volunteered at her church to serve the needs of her local community. Malphine and her husband Cubby's marriage lasted a happy 57 years, until 2014, when Cubby passed away from cancer related to his asbestos exposure while serving in the Navy during the Korean war. Malphine and Cubby's three children all grew up to have successful and engaging careers and families. From meeting her and feeling the warmth of her home, I know why. At 95, Malphine is the proud grandmother of 9 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren and an aunt to 51 nieces and nephews. We can all learn a lot from Malphine about living a good life. I am thankful to her example for the 13 million Pennsylvanians across

the Commonwealth, even as she deals with unimaginable adversity. Given her absolute devotion to her family, it can be no surprise what anguish she must feel now knowing that her own son faces an uncertain, and possibly deadly, future in a Russian penal colony.

As public servants, we have a solemn duty to address the root cause of Malphine's adversity, to advocate for the release of Malphine's son Marc. We must approach the task of bringing Marc safely home with the same commitment, consistency, and patience that Malphine has lived the last 95 years—for Marc does not deserve the 14 years at a remote Russian penal colony which the Russian court leveled on him.

In August 2021, Marc chose to return for a final year of teaching at the Anglo-American School in Moscow, after 9 years at that school and a 35-year career as an international educator. Yes, Marc made a mistake. Russia has not come to accept marijuana as a medical treatment as in the United States. And yes, according to the Russian penal code, Marc's possession of less than an ounce of marijuana warrants a short prison sentence, the same sentence leveled on Russian citizens who have committed similar offenses. But no, justice does not allow, much less require, Marc to spend his sixties and almost half of his seventies in a remote Russian penal colony. Clearly, Marc's 14-year sentence is a bargaining chip for Putin against the United States.

No family deserves to be torn apart, much less Malphine's family. That is why I call on the President to continue to do everything in his power to give Malphine the chance to see her son again. Today, we honor and celebrate Malphine, but we also must recommit to bringing Marc home.

RUSSIA

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, an article in the February 29 New York Times, entitled "5 Convicts Familiar With Navalny's Prison Confirm Hellish Conditions," describes the horrifyingly cruel treatment of political prisoners in Russia. Anyone who reads the article could easily mistakenly assume that they were reading about the shocking ways that prisoners were dehumanized, brutalized, starved, and murdered in the Middle Ages, except this is 2024.

What the article describes is not new, but it has received renewed attention since the murder, on February 16, of Aleksei Navalny, who bravely challenged Putin's corrupt and ruthless crusade to destroy any semblance of democracy and freedom in Russia today.

I want to quote a few passages from the article for the benefit of those who have not read it:

Locked in an Arctic prison, Aleksei A. Navalny is likely to have spent his final days

in some of the most inhumane conditions within Russia's extensive penitentiary system, according to five men who have served sentences in the same penal colony as the Russian opposition leader.

The men described in phone interviews unbearable cold, repulsive food, unsanitary conditions, and beatings in Penal Colony No. 3 of the remote Yamalo-Nenets region, where Mr. Navalny arrived in December to serve out the remainder of his 19-year prison sentence. The former inmates said the conditions were especially brutal in the solitary cells where Mr. Navalny is believed to have been confined on the day he was pronounced dead.

But what made the prison, known as IK-3 or the Troika, dreaded even by Russia's hardened inmates was the exceptional psychological pressure and loneliness, they said. It was a system devised to break the human spirit, by making survival depend on total and unconditional obedience to the will of guards.

"It was complete and utter annihilation," said a former inmate named Konstantin, who spent time in the prison's solitary confinement cells. "When I think about it, I still break into cold sweat," he said, adding that he has struggled with mental illness since his release.

Set in the tundra, the Troika is built to hold about 1,000 prisoners in some of the most remote, strict and harsh conditions in Russia, which former convicts say can cross into torture.

"You had to make peace with the fact that no one will help you, that you're on your own," Aleksandr added.

The article includes a photograph of a sign at the entrance to the penal colony, reminiscent of Auschwitz, with the words "Happiness not far off."

According to a former inmate, "You could spend 10 years there, and not see and not know anything about anyone else."

When asked about the convicts' reaction to Mr. Navalny's death, he said: "No one gives a damn about anyone else there, because everyone only thinks about themselves and when they can get the hell out of there."

Still, he noted that any disruption of routine, such as the arrival of federal officials to the prison following an inmate death, would be welcome as a small respite. He recalled a time in 2022 when another inmate had died.

"It may sound callous, you know, but his death stopped the beatings and somewhat lightened the daily routine," the person said.

Vladimir Putin, who Donald Trump has praised for being a strong leader, is today's version of Joseph Stalin, who killed millions of his own citizens and destroyed any vestige of freedom or prosperity in Russia. Aleksei Navalny was Putin's latest victim. Navalny possessed all the attributes that Putin lacks: honesty, charisma, an inspiring vision for Russia's future, and of course, the admiration, love, and gratitude of millions of Russian citizens.

Countless other Russian prisoners who have dared to stand up for democracy and human rights, like Vladimir Kara-Murza, are at risk of the same fate as Navalny, at any time.

In many respects, the people of Ukraine are no better off. Every day, if they survive the night, they wake up not knowing if it will be their last, the latest casualties of Putin's relentless attacks against civilian targets.

Vladimir Putin reminds us of the massive death and destruction that a

single cruel individual, devoid of morality and motivated by ideology, greed, and a lust for power, can inflict on millions of innocent people. That is not a sign of strength. It is the worst form of criminality. It is what Putin will be remembered for. It will be his legacy.

VENEZUELA

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, indigenous people in Latin America and around the world are facing unprecedented threats to their communities and cultural survival. Faced with increasing intrusions of settlers, illegal miners, loggers, ranchers, wildlife traffickers, narcotics traffickers, and explorers for oil and gas, coupled with woefully inadequate police protection, they are among the world's most vulnerable people.

This crisis is illustrated by the alarming situation facing the Yanomami people in the Upper Orinoco region of Venezuela, an area that is being destroyed by illegal gold miners. It is reminiscent of the decimation of Native American Tribes in past centuries in our own country, when millions were forced off their land, murdered, or infected with smallpox, measles, and other fatal diseases brought by White settlers.

The Venezuelan Government has an obligation to guarantee the right to health, as part of the right to life, enshrined in the country's Constitution. In the case of indigenous people like the Yanomami, this includes the adaptation of health services and programs to their unique circumstances and needs.

After the "Haximu Massacre of the Yanomami" in 1993, when 16 Yanomami were killed by a group of illegal miners, was brought before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Venezuelan Government signed a settlement agreement that established commitments regarding surveillance and control of illegal mining and healthcare for the Yanomami people. Although the Yanomami Health Plan yielded positive results between 2005 and 2010, it began to decline due to lack of resources and is now almost completely defunct. Currently, there is no healthcare available in the Yanomami territory in the Upper Orinoco region.

This crisis has resulted in a sharp increase in the prevalence of and death from preventable and curable diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, among others. Malnutrition is also a pervasive problem, especially among children. Patients who require emergency treatment must be flown to Puerto Ayacucho, the state capital. The Yanomami in the border zone of Sierra Parima must go to Brazil to obtain health care.

The Government of Venezuela has repeatedly failed to protect the Yanomami people from violence, child

labor, and forced labor and sexual exploitation from illegal miners. The increased flow of Brazilian wildcat miners, coming into Venezuela in partnership with the Venezuelan military and corrupt civilian authorities to mine for gold and cassiterite, is contributing to the transmission of infectious diseases for these vulnerable communities due to their lack of immunity. Malaria, sexually transmitted infections, and mercury poisoning are closely linked to illegal mining.

According to the Yanomami's own records, between 2022 and mid-2023, 35 people died from malaria and tuberculosis in different sectors of Sierra Parima, which comprises only a portion of the Upper Orinoco region. The Yanomami reported 350 deaths due mainly to malaria between November 2023 and February 2024. The serious epidemic and negligent inaction of the Venezuelan Government have forced the Yanomami to abandon their villages and flee into the forest to escape the malaria epidemic.

Since 2021, the Venezuelan Government has received support from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The Venezuelan Ministry of Health, through the U.N. Development Program, receives the supplies that are part of the malaria elimination strategy—mosquito nets, rapid diagnostic kits, medical treatments, and other equipment. But sorely lacking are the transportation logistics, infrastructure, and personnel to carry out malaria control and prevention activities in remote indigenous communities.

Anyone who has seen photographs of the devastation caused by illegal mining in the Upper Orinoco region cannot help but be appalled by the capacity of human greed to destroy the natural environment and the people and wildlife that depend on it. The Yanomami are responsible stewards of the forest who are being threatened, attacked, and infected by deadly diseases contracted from those who are illegally extracting resources from their territories.

While the Venezuelan Government has contributed to their plight by allowing and even profiting from the illegal mining in that sensitive region, the United States has a positive role to play. The Barbados Accords, signed by the Maduro regime and the opposition Unity Platform, were the result of negotiations between the Biden Administration and Mr. Maduro. They required the Venezuelan Government to create conditions for a free and fair election in 2024, and in return, the U.S. would grant licenses to relax sanctions on oil, bond, and gold transactions.

Like many, I had hoped the Barbados Accords were the beginning of a path for Venezuela to move beyond the years of internal division, repression, corruption, and misery that have caused millions to flee the country. But Maduro reneged on his commitments and arrested leading opposition candidate Maria Corina Machado, and

on January 29, the administration announced that the sanctions on gold will be snapped back in April.

Perhaps Maduro will reverse course again and do what he agreed to do under the Barbados Accords. But whether he does or not, absent strong action by the international community to make it more difficult for illegal miners and their profiteers to launder the proceeds, the suffering of the Yanomami people is likely to continue unabated.

TRIBUTE TO MISSIE LAMBERT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to honor Missie Lambert, who has been a valuable member of my staff and an incredible resource for the people of Arkansas for more than 15 years. With her compassion, dedication and trademark southern charm, she has helped thousands of people and set a standard for constituent service.

Missie is a 1980 graduate of Decatur High School in Decatur, AL. She attended Auburn University, where she was a cheerleader and graduated with a bachelor's degree in communications. She first used her talents in the business world, nonprofit sector, and as a wonderful wife and mother.

In 2009, she joined my staff in the U.S. House of Representatives to take what she thought was a small, part-time job assisting with veterans' issues. Her tremendous compassion and organizational skills soon made her an invaluable constituent service representative. She worked to create partnerships with veterans' agencies and organizations, quickly becoming a subject matter expert and authority people across the State were eager to consult.

During her time working for the U.S. House and Senate, Missie has handled more than 7,000 cases to help veterans, servicemembers, and their families navigate difficult processes with the Federal Government.

As a caseworker, she is best known for her persistence, never taking "no" for an answer on behalf of a veteran and exhausting every option or resource available. Countless times, it has been her diligence that helped track down a lost record and made the difference for a veteran and their family.

In addition to handling a large caseload, Missie took on the challenge of leading my office's nomination process for young people applying to the U.S. military academies. She spent months each year making sure every candidate would get the best possible consideration. In addition, she provided leadership for the entire Arkansas congressional delegation to improve the process for these youth across the State.

Missie is a multi-talented person with a great singing voice, a green thumb, and the gift of hospitality as she shares her famous cooking with friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Her kindness and expertise helped change

countless lives, comfort numerous families, and set a standard of excellence. Her friendship and counsel will be greatly missed. Although she is leaving us to be with her family in Alabama, Missie will always have a home in Arkansas.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING MARTIN HILDRETH COMPANY, INC

• Ms. ERNST. Madam President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, I am privileged to recognize Martin Hildreth Company of Rockwell City, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Martin Hildreth founded the Martin Hildreth Company in 1954 to provide excavation contracting services in Rockwell City and the surrounding counties. Martin started the company after serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean war. He began his civilian career working with his father Ben in the petroleum industry at Hildreth Mobile Oil and Hildreth Super Service before embarking on his entrepreneurial journey. In 1990, Martin's son Tom joined the company full-time and currently serves as the president. Martin Hildreth Company has remained in the same location on High Street in Rockwell City since its inception, offering excavation services to the telecommunication and utility industries and gravedigging for cemeteries throughout Calhoun and the surrounding counties. In 2009, Tom's wife Theresa joined Martin Hildreth Company as their chief financial officer. In 2023, Martin Hildreth passed away, leaving behind a legacy of hard work and service to the Rockwell City community.

Martin Hildreth Company is truly a family-owned and operated business. Tom and Theresa's son David serves as vice president, marking the third generation of the Hildreth family legacy. David Hildreth started at the company part-time at the age of 14 and plans to lead it following Tom's retirement. In the near future, David's son Collin will be the fourth generation to join the family company.

The Hildreth family is actively involved in both the Rockwell City and Calhoun County communities. Tom Hildreth is a legend in the sport of wrestling. After a decorated college career at Westmar College, Tom coached wrestling at the high school and middle school levels and was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and the Iowa High School Athletic Association Wrestling Hall of Fame. In addition to serving as chief financial officer for the Martin Hildreth Company, Theresa also serves as executive director of the Calhoun County Economic Development Corporation. Service to the

country is also integral to the Hildreth family. Three of Tom and Theresa's children have served in the armed services. Martin Hildreth Company was awarded the ESGR Patriot Award for their dedication to supporting employees who are serving in the military. Due to their hard work, the Martin Hildreth Company celebrated their 70th business anniversary in 2024.

I want to commend the Hildreth family for achieving their American dream and operating a fantastic small business. Congratulations to the Hildreth family and the entire Martin Hildreth Company team on their incredible commitment to our communities. I look forward to seeing your continued growth and success in Iowa.●

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE DESIGNATION AS EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS ALL FUNDING (INCLUDING THE TRANSFER AND REPURPOSING OF FUNDS) SO DESIGNATED BY THE CONGRESS IN THE CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024 AND OTHER EXTENSIONS ACT PURSUANT TO SECTION 251(b)(2)(A) OF THE BALANCED BUDGET AND EMERGENCY DEFICIT CONTROL ACT OF 1985, AS OUTLINED IN THE ENCLOSED LIST OF ACCOUNTS RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON MARCH 9, 2024—PM 42

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on the Budget:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 6 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (H.R. 4366; the "Act"), I hereby designate as emergency requirements all funding (including the transfer and repurposing of funds) so designated by the Congress in the Act pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as outlined in the enclosed list of accounts.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed memorandum from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 9, 2024.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2023, the Secretary of the Senate, on March 8, 2024, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 992. An act to amend the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to designate the Texas and New Mexico portions of the future Interstate designated segments of the Port-to-Plains Corridor as Interstate Route 27, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4366. An act making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2023, the enrolled bills, except S. 992, were signed on March 8, 2024, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 4:29 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2799. An act to make reforms to the capital markets of the United States, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 2799. An act to make reforms to the capital markets of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES DISCHARGED PETITION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, hereby direct that the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 62, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service relating to "Importation of Fresh Beef From Paraguay" and, further, that the joint resolution be immediately placed upon the Legislative Calendar under General Orders.

Jon Tester, Charles E. Schumer, Jacky Rosen, Sherrod Brown, Catherine Cortez Masto, Joe Manchin, III, Margaret Wood Hassan, Ben Ray Lujan, Kyrsten Sinema, Mike Rounds, Jerry Moran, Kevin Cramer, Cynthia M. Lummis, Pete Ricketts, Roger Marshall, Maria Cantwell, Tina Smith, Angus S. King, Jr., Jeff Merkley, Mark Kelly, Jon Ossoff, Alex Padilla, John W. Hickenlooper, Patty Murray, Tammy Baldwin, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Gary C. Peters, Tim Kaine, Robert P. Casey, Jr.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following joint resolution was discharged from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, by petition, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 802(c), and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 62. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service relating to "Importation of Fresh Beef From Paraguay".

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 7511. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-3749. A communication from the Legal Advisor, Office of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the Executive Office of the President, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2024; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3750. A communication from the Chief of the Regulatory Coordination Division, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adjustment to Premium Processing Fees" (RIN1615-ZC05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3751. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementing Rental Housing Assistance for the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant Program" (RIN2577-AD13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 28, 2024; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-3752. A communication from the Fisheries Regulations Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adjustment to Sector Annual Catch Entitlements Under the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan" (RIN0648-XD485) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3753. A communication from the Fisheries Regulations Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pacific Island Fisheries; 5-Year Extension of Moratorium on Harvest of Gold Corals" (RIN0648-BM34) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3754. A communication from the Deputy Chief Financial Officer and Director for Financial Management, Office of the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Civil Monetary Penalty Adjustments for Inflation" (RIN0605-AA66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3755. A communication from the Legal Yeoman, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Ohio River, Mile Markers 46 to 46.5, St. Albans, WV" (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No.

USCG–2023–0648)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3756. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Child Restraint Systems - Side Impact Protection, Incorporation by Reference” (RIN2127–AK95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3757. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Rear Impact Guards, Rear Impact Protection” (RIN2127–AL58) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3758. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Consumer Information; Standard Reference Test Tire” (RIN2127–AL92) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3759. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Minimum Sound Requirements for Hybrid and Electric Vehicles” (RIN2127–AL93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3760. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Civil Penalties” (RIN2127–AM32) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3761. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Exemptions From Average Fuel Economy Standards; Passenger Automobile Average Fuel Economy Standards” (RIN2127–AM29) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3762. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Uniform Procedures for State Highway Safety Grant Programs” (RIN2127–AM45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3763. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

“Federal Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard; Final Listing of 2020 Light Duty Truck Lines Subject to the Requirements of This Standard and Exempted Vehicle Lines for Model Year 2020” (RIN2127–AM41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3764. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Uniform Procedures for State Highway Grant Programs” (RIN2127–AM45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3765. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Bus Rollover Structural Integrity” (RIN2127–AK96) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3766. A communication from the Program Analyst, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking” ((FCC 24–24) (CG Docket No. 02–278)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3767. A communication from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Location-Based Routing for Wireless 911 Calls Report and Order” ((FCC 24–4) (PS Docket No. 18–64)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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 Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 3897. A bill to require the Election Assistance Commission to develop voluntary guidelines for the administration of elections that address the use and risks of artificial intelligence technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

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

S. 3898. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to permanently prohibit operations at Reagan Washington National Airport for air carriers that provide, or facilitate the provision of, transportation of any alien using the CBP One Mobile Application for the purposes of identification; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 3899. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to provide for the generation of Renewable Identification Numbers under the renewable fuel program for electricity from renewable

biomass, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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

S. 3900. A bill to prohibit no-knock warrants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. REED, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3901. A bill to provide employees with a minimum of 2 consecutive hours of paid leave in order to vote in Federal elections; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 3902. A bill to amend the National Housing Act to authorize State-licensed appraisers to conduct appraisals in connection with mortgages insured by the FHA and to ensure compliance with the existing appraiser education and competency requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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

S. 3903. A bill to strengthen reporting requirements for United States assistance to Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mrs. BRITT):

S. 3904. A bill to establish a pilot program to improve the family self-sufficiency program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 3905. A bill to amend title I of the National Housing Act to increase the loan limits and clarify that property improvement loans may be used for construction of accessory dwelling units; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. LUJÁN):

S. Res. 586. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of “Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism Awareness Month”; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 161

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 161, a bill to extend the Federal Pell Grant eligibility of certain short-term programs.

S. 344

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 344, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans’ disability compensation and retired pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.

S. 528

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 528, a bill to require a standard financial aid offer form, and for other purposes.

S. 590

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 590, a bill to allow the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to enter into agreements with private and commercial entities and State governments to provide certain supplies, support, and services.

S. 740

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 740, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reinstate criminal penalties for persons charging veterans unauthorized fees relating to claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1274

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1274, a bill to permanently exempt payments made from the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Account from sequestration under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

S. 1384

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1384, a bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors.

S. 1565

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1565, a bill to require Executive agencies to submit to Congress a study of the impacts of expanded telework and remote work by agency employees during the COVID-19 pandemic and a plan for the agency's future use of telework and remote work, and for other purposes.

S. 1931

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1931, a bill to direct the United States Government to support extending the mandate of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Venezuela until a resolution of the Venezuelan crisis is achieved.

S. 1937

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1937, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on indoor tanning services.

S. 1979

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Cali-

fornia (Ms. BUTLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1979, a bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration of disputes involving age discrimination.

S. 2555

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2555, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to expand and improve the enforcement capabilities of the Attorney General, and for other purposes.

S. 2843

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2843, a bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to provide for same day voter registration.

S. 2888

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2888, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize representatives of veterans service organizations to participate in presentations to promote certain benefits available to veterans during pre-separation counseling under the Transition Assistance Program of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes.

S. 3264

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3264, a bill to establish a manufactured housing community improvement grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 3308

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3308, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to limit the number of local wage areas allowable within a General Schedule pay locality.

S. 3348

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3348, a bill to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, and for other purposes.

S. 3526

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3526, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require a lactation space in each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

S. 3732

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3732, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out a study on the environmental impacts of artificial intelligence, to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and

Technology to convene a consortium on such environmental impacts, and to require the Director to develop a voluntary reporting system for the reporting of the environmental impacts of artificial intelligence, and for other purposes.

S. 3819

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3819, a bill to direct the Federal Trade Commission to issue regulations to establish shrinkflation as an unfair or deceptive act or practice, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mrs. BRITT):

S. 3904. A bill to establish a pilot program to improve the family self-sufficiency program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Madam President, today I am introducing the Helping More Families Save Act with Senator BRITT. This bipartisan legislation would help more families in HUD-assisted housing build savings and improve their financial security by creating a pilot program for Family Self-Sufficiency, FSS, universal escrow accounts.

The FSS Program was established under the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 to help low-income families boost savings and improve their professional, educational, and financial standing. In 2018, I worked with then-Senator Roy Blunt to expand the program to cover more households. Today, millions of public housing residents, Housing Choice Voucher Program participants, and residents of project-based rental assistance, PBRA, housing are eligible for FSS.

FSS provides two key tools for its participants. First, households work with FSS coordinators to develop long-term financial, professional, or educational goals. FSS coordinators also help connect participants with resources, training, and employment opportunities. Second, the program encourages FSS families to save by providing them with an interest-bearing escrow account. Participants who increase their incomes deposit a portion of their additional earnings into their escrow account instead of paying higher rent, as is typically required under federally subsidized housing programs. Upon graduation from the FSS Program, families can use their escrowed savings to pay for job-related expenses, move to private market housing, buy a home, or save for the future.

After more than 30 years, FSS has become a proven financial independence program. Indeed, in 2021 27 percent of FSS graduates no longer needed Federal rental assistance within 1 year of leaving FSS, while 11 percent of graduates were ultimately able to purchase their own home, FSS graduates with

escrow savings, on average, had approximately \$9,495 in their account upon leaving the program—a substantial sum for low-income families.

Despite the program's success and broad eligibility, program participation was effectively capped at about 70,000 enrollees in 2023 because there is simply not enough Federal funding for the required FSS coordinators.

The Helping More Families Save Act would help more Americans access the program by creating a new universal escrow pilot. Under the bill, public housing agencies, PHAs, and PBRA property owners could offer a limited number of additional households escrow accounts identical to those under the current FSS Program without having to wait for an FSS coordinator to be funded by the Federal Government. Although PHAs and PBRA property owners would not be required to offer Coordinator services to these participants, we expect many will work to offer appropriate counseling and support on their own or with outside partners. Moreover, we expect that this pilot will show that those enrolled in the program will be successful and make wise decisions.

If successful, the pilot program could help more low-income families improve their financial security, achieve economic independence, and even purchase their own homes, all with minimal cost to the Federal Government.

This is a commonsense, bipartisan proposal that has the potential to help lift more American families out of poverty. It is a win for families, the Federal budget, and our economy. I thank Senator BRITT for coleading this legislation and Compass Working Capital and LISC for their support. I urge our colleagues to cosponsor the Helping More Families Save Act and support its passage.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 3905. A bill to amend title I of the National Housing Act to increase the loan limits and clarify that property improvement loans may be used for construction of accessory dwelling units; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Madam President, today I am introducing the Property Improvement and Manufactured Housing Loan Modernization Act with Senator LUMMIS. This legislation would strengthen the Federal Housing Administration, FHA, title I loan program to both help more families find and own an affordable home and better preserve our existing housing stock.

Like its better known title II sister program, FHA title I expands access to housing and boosts affordability for families by insuring private market loans. However, title I is targeted towards two underserved portions of our housing market—manufactured homes and property improvement.

For decades, title I has provided low-cost loans that help more families af-

ford a manufactured home or make necessary improvements to their existing home, while expanding and preserving critical portions of housing supply. Indeed, manufactured homes are the largest source of unsubsidized affordable housing in the country, and property improvement loans help prevent more single-family homes and apartments from falling out of our housing stock.

These loans should be a central tool helping to close our nationwide housing shortage, which Freddie Mac estimates at 3.8 million homes. However, outdated loan limits and statutory restrictions have weakened title I's effectiveness and turned the program from success to a missed opportunity.

From the mid-1980s, through the early 1990s lenders offered 15,000 to 25,000 title I manufactured home loans each year, but in 2021, only 3 loans were issued. Similarly, lenders have gone from making more than 70,000 title I property improvement loans annually in the 1990s to making fewer than 1,000 in 2022. That is a 99-percent drop in loan volume. In other words, as many as 99,000 fewer homes being bought, preserved, and included in our housing stock each year.

The Property Improvement and Manufactured Housing Loan Modernization Act would refurbish title I and return it to our housing toolbox. It would expand loan limits and loan terms for all title I loans—making the program fit market demand and needs. Perhaps more importantly, the bill would finally allow FHA to index property improvement loans for inflation and expand the data it uses to set manufactured home loan limits, ensuring title I will remain a crucial tool as home costs rise in future years.

Finally, our legislation makes accessible dwelling units, ADUs, which are small housing units added to a single-family property often for use by a family member, eligible for title I financing. In other words, our bill will make the revamped title I program an even more powerful home-creation program than it was during its prior peak years and will particularly help families who want to provide a safe, comfortable place for aging parents or young adult children to live.

Collectively, these improvements would help more families own a home, remain in homes they have spent decades in, and find an affordable place to live. I urge my colleagues to join Senator LUMMIS and myself, cosponsor this bill, and support its passage.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 586—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF “DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS AND PULMONARY EMBOLISM AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. LUJÁN) submitted the following resolu-

tion; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 586

Whereas deep vein thrombosis (referred to in this preamble as “DVT”) is a condition that occurs when a blood clot forms in the deep veins of the body, such as in the arm, abdomen, around the brain, and most commonly in the leg;

Whereas a potentially life-threatening complication of DVT is a pulmonary embolism (referred to in this preamble as a “PE”), where a blood clot breaks off, travels through the blood stream, and lodges in the lung;

Whereas DVT and PEs are serious but often preventable medical conditions;

Whereas DVT and PEs affect as many as 900,000 individuals in the United States each year;

Whereas DVT and PEs kill an estimated 60,000 to 100,000 individuals in the United States each year, and 1 out of 4 individuals who have a PE die without warning;

Whereas deaths caused by DVT and PEs are often preventable;

Whereas DVT and PEs are among the leading causes of preventable hospital deaths in the United States;

Whereas DVT and PEs are common complications faced by cancer patients, and survival rates are lower for individuals with cancer who also have blood clots;

Whereas pregnancy increases the risk of DVT and PEs, and that risk remains elevated for up to 3 months after giving birth;

Whereas immobility, surgery, older age, and a family history of clotting and thrombophilia increase the risk of DVT and PEs;

Whereas DVT and PEs contribute to up to \$10,000,000,000 in incremental medical costs each year in the United States; and

Whereas the establishment of March as “Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism Awareness Month” would raise awareness about these life-threatening but preventable conditions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of “Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism Awareness Month”; and

(2) recognizes the importance of raising awareness of deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolisms.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. 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:

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct an open hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 4:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 7511

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 7511) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. In order to place the bill on the Calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the Calendar.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF "DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS AND PULMONARY EMBOLISM AWARENESS MONTH"

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 586, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 586) supporting the goals and ideals of "Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism Awareness Month".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that its preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 586) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to. (The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive

session to resume consideration of the Yoon nomination postcloture; further, that all time on the nomination be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and that following the cloture vote on the Harjani nomination, the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; further, that if cloture has been invoked on the Harjani nomination, all time be considered expired at 2:15 p.m. and that if cloture is invoked on the DuBose nomination, all time be considered expired at 5:30 p.m.; that upon disposition of the DuBose nomination, the Senate execute the order of March 8, 2024, with respect to the Maloney nomination; and, finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:02 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 10:30 a.m.