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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal and powerful God, don't hide from us. Don't stand so far away, for our Nation and world need You. Lord, bring peace where there is war, hope where there is despair, and faith where there is cynicism.

Arise, mighty God, for we put our trust in You. Today, we trust You to guide our Senators. Lord, warn them through their mistakes, encourage them with their successes, and enrich them through life's seasons of gladness and sadness. Inspire them to be worthy of the honor of being Your sons and daughters as You give them a renewed sense of Your providential presence.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 10, 2024.

To the Senate:

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

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ann Marie McIff Allen, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, former President Trump reminded us just a few days ago that he—he—is to blame for the grotesque reversal of women's personal freedom. He said it himself. He said he is ''proudly the person responsible'' for the annihilation of Roe v. Wade.

Let me repeat those words because the American people need to hear it over and over again. Donald Trump said he is ''proudly the person responsible'' for ending Roe.

Yesterday, we saw another consequence of a post-Roe America. The Arizona Supreme Court upheld a Civil War-era law banning abortion almost entirely, without exceptions for rape or for incest. The Arizona Supreme Court's decision goes as far as to suggest that doctors can be prosecuted for assisting in an abortion. All of these regressive MAGA judges on the Supreme Court, in some of the other Federal courts, and in the State courts—all come from Donald Trump and he, appointing MAGA judges, and his goal to restrict women's freedoms and to have Roe v. Wade be annihilated.

Make no mistake about it. Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans own the consequences of the Arizona Supreme Court decision. Does anyone seriously doubt that, should Trump become President again, he won't try to add even more extreme jurists to the bench so he can continue his assault on women's reproductive freedoms? Of course, they will. If Trump and MAGA Republicans get into power they would see to it that reproductive freedoms are curtailed even more, from the local level to the national level.

Even in his remarks the other day, when he was trying to cover up what he did, he couldn't resist saying he is ''proudly the person responsible'' for the annihilation of Roe v. Wade. He couldn't resist because that is where he is at. We know that.

And don't take it from me. House Republicans included a national abortion ban in the Republican Study Committee budget. And remember, the Republican Study Committee includes a majority of House Republicans and their leadership, and they came out for a national abortion ban.

On IVF, Republicans try to talk a good game about supporting access to reproductive services, but not 1 month ago—not 1 month ago—Republicans blocked legislation in this Chamber that would have preserved IVF protections under Federal law. And, while

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

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Donald Trump hopes people forget, he himself is on record supporting a national abortion ban when he was President.

So, unsurprisingly, Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans are now trying to hide their antiabortion records because they know how dangerously out of step their views are with the public. But they can't help themselves, as the President's speech showed 4 days ago. Again, he had to repeat that he was responsible—the one responsible—for the abolition of Roe.

Make no mistake, that is what they will do. And, make no mistake, Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans will have to answer to the American people for what they have done to fundamental liberties in this country—today, tomorrow, and in November.

MAYORKAS IMPEACHMENT

Mr. President, on impeachment, as we enter the height of the spring season, there is a lot on the Senate's agenda. We continue to confirm more judges and nominees. We must ensure FISA authorities are renewed during this work period.

Off the floor, we continue to work on a host of issues, like lowering the cost of prescription drugs, increasing travel safety, and AI, and so much more.

As busy as we are, one issue the Senate will soon have to address is the House vote to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. As everyone knows, yesterday, Speaker JOHNSON announced he is delaying transmitting the articles to the Senate until sometime next week.

Our plan over here has not changed. The Senate is ready to go whenever the House is. We want to address this issue as expeditiously as possible.

And, as I said yesterday, impeachment should never be used to settle policy disagreements. That sets an awful precedent.

So, when the time comes for the Senate to receive the Articles of Impeachment from the House, we will be ready. In the meantime, we are going to keep working on legislation that matters to the American people and do it in a bipartisan way whenever we can. The American people demand, expect, and deserve nothing less.

CAPITAL ONE AND DISCOVER MERGER

Mr. President, now, on the proposed merger of Capital One and Discover, earlier this week, I sent a letter to Capital One and Discover asking for more information about their plans for a multibillion-dollar merger. If history has taught us anything, it is that, when big financial institutions get even bigger, it can have serious consequences for consumers and small businesses alike. Higher interest rates, bigger fees, diminished competition—these can all be at stake. So my letter asks some questions to both Capital One and Discover that the American people deserve to have answered before this merger goes forward.

We need to know about market shares in this industry. We need to know about potential increases in fees. We need to know if any workers will be laid off. We need to know how consumers are being made aware of this planned merger. Capital One and Discover are two of the largest credit card-issuing institutions in America. If this merger continues as planned, the new company would likely become the largest credit card issuer in the United States of America, with over 400 million customers.

So, before these two companies merge, the American people deserve answers to these questions to be sure they won't receive the short end of the stick.

SUPPLEMENTAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, on the supplemental, not a generation ago, the thought of any American political party, much less the party of Ronald Reagan, spreading the gospel of Russian propaganda was deemed unthinkable. But, today, the apple has indeed fallen very far from the tree.

Today, a growing contingency within the hard right is corroding their party from within, turning the party of Reagan, little by little, into a messaging arm of the Kremlin. Two months ago, former President Donald Trump, the presumptive Presidential nominee of the Republican Party, said he would encourage Russia to ''do whatever the hell they want'' to the countries of NATO.

Let me say that again.

The things that come out of President Trump are really frightening about the future of America, if, God forbid, he should ever get back in power. I hope and believe he won't. But here is what he has said, again. Two months ago, Donald Trump, the presumptive Presidential nominee of the Republican Party, said he would encourage Russia to ''do whatever the hell they want'' to the countries of NATO—unbelievable, unbelievable.

In the House of Representatives, pro-Putin radicals say we should reward Russia's violent invasion with a peace treaty, instead of standing with Ukraine as they fight for their survival. Sadly, we hear similar things every now and then coming from the fringes of this Chamber—arguments that the war in Ukraine is hopeless, that Ukraine should cede their territory, and that we should cut a deal with Putin, as if he would be satisfied with any deal.

These modern-day Neville Chamberlains ignore the warnings of history. Autocrats have insatiable appetites. If you give an autocrat a little land, he will seek to take a country. And if you give an autocrat a country, he will seek to take a continent.

So the stakes of the war in Ukraine could not be higher. It is not just the war between two nations, but it is a struggle between two conflicting ideals, between democracy and autocracy. As the greatest democracy in the world, the United States has been called on to take a stand.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

NATO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, the strongest and most successful military alliance in the history of the world marked an impressive milestone. Seventy-five years ago, at the dawn of the Cold War, with decades of superpower competition on the horizon, the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization convened here in Washington to formalize a commitment to collective security.

In the years since, NATO has grown from 12 to 32 allies. The transatlantic alliance has always required management. Alliances always do. But, as Churchill observed, the only thing worse than fighting alongside allies is fighting without them.

While we have experienced periods of pronounced tension within the alliance, today is not one of them. Nations on both sides of the Atlantic have increasingly concluded that common threats are best met with shared resolve.

Most recently, of course, the alliance has been proud to welcome Sweden and Finland to our ranks. With highly capable militaries and advanced economies, our newest allies were already taking their own defense seriously. In the face of Putin's brutal escalation in Ukraine, they decided to share the burden of collective security.

But Russian aggression hasn't just expanded the NATO alliance; it has also prompted longtime allies to take their treaty obligations more seriously. Just last week, the Norwegian Government confirmed that it would meet the NATO 2-percent defense spending target this year and that it would nearly double its defense budget over the next 12. For a wealthy country like Norway, with one of the highest per capita GDPs in the world, this is a big deal. Across the alliance, members are making historic new commitments to strengthen their militaries and expand their defense industrial capacity. European allies have contracted to buy 600 cutting-edge American F–35 aircraft to add to their arsenals. On the whole, they are already meeting the 2-percent target, and NATO leaders expect more individual members to reach it by the July summit here in Washington.

There is still work to be done. Not every ally is taking its treaty obligations seriously enough. One of the most concerning laggards isn't even a European country, but it is our neighbor to

the north. Like America, Canada is at once an Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic nation, and it is time for Ottawa to take its obligations to NATO, to NORAD, and to its own defense more seriously.

That said, for our European allies, the holiday from history really is over. Their greater investments in collective defense also include growing contributions to Ukraine's defense. In fact, 18 countries are making larger relative contributions to helping Ukraine resist Russian aggression than the United States. Of course, this doesn't absolve America from playing a leading role. America is the glue that keeps the alliance together. We are a critical catalyst of allied contributions. Nations all over the world look to Washington for guidance.

From before Russian forces even advanced in February of 2022, I have urged the Biden administration to quit its hand-wringing and hesitation over delivering Ukraine the lethal tools it needed to defend itself. The President's unfounded fear of escalation deprived our friends of the advanced, long-range capabilities they needed to make a more decisive stand against Putin sooner. Avoidable supply shortages continue to prevent Ukraine from taking the fight to Russia across the frontlines.

The conflict is at a critical moment, and it is exactly the wrong time for folks on our side of the aisle to imitate and compound the timidity and shortsightedness of our Commander in Chief, which he displayed from the outset of the conflict.

The vast majority of armed conflicts end in negotiated settlements, but whenever and however this particular conflict is resolved, it is in America's interests that Ukraine operate from a position of strength.

Our own security, the security of our closest allies and most important trading partners, the credibility of America's commitments—none of these interests are served by withholding assistance to Ukraine or withholding urgent investments in the sort of industrial capacity and capabilities that both our friends and our Armed Forces need.

Starving Ukraine of needed capabilities wasn't the smart way for the Biden administration to avoid escalation, and neither is it a political masterstroke by some of the administration's Republican opponents. It is strategic and moral malpractice that risks dooming Ukraine and undermining our own national interests.

From Europe, to the Middle East, to the Indo-Pacific, the world is watching to see whether the United States still has a will to lead the West and preserve the international order responsible for our own prosperity for the better part of a century.

So I will continue to urge our House colleagues to take up and pass the national security supplemental without delay.

H.J. RES. 98

Mr. President, now on a different matter, I have spoken before about the effort led by our colleagues, Senator CAPITO and Senator CRAMER, to block a coercive, one-size-fits-all mandate from the Federal Highway Administration that would force States and localities to build transportation infrastructure the way the bluest coastal cities do. I am glad our colleagues will have a chance to support this resolution. I am grateful to our colleagues from West Virginia and North Dakota for their leadership.

The Senate will also vote today on a resolution to overturn the administration's latest attack on small businesses and consumers. President Biden's Big Labor allies at the NLRB have issued a new rule that would expand the definition of an employer in a way that would make employers liable for other business employees whom they don't even directly oversee.

Known as the joint employer rule, the new standard amounts to more regulatory redtape, threatening the very existence of small businesses—especially those that follow the franchise model.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of the American dream. As many of our colleagues who own small businesses know, it requires a tremendous amount of hard work, long hours, and sleepless nights to own and operate a business. The Biden administration's regulatory state is already putting that dream out of reach for many hard-working Americans, but this new labor rule would add even bigger headaches and turn small business owners—including many in my home State of Kentucky—into middle managers.

One such Kentuckian wrote me a letter saying that this rule has the potential to kill his small, independent marketing organization. Here is what he said:

> I implore you to stop [them] from killing many small businesses like mine. . . . This government overreach has got to stop. We are no longer a country that supports small businesses.

I have always been a proud supporter of small businesses in this country, and I have spent years fighting the joint employer rule. I am glad to join Senator CASSIDY and Senator MANCHIN in leading the CRA to block this rule.

One Federal court has already put this rule on ice. As the appeals take their course, I would encourage each of our colleagues to join us in rejecting the radical NLRB's new rule.

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.

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

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

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, despite President Biden begging bureaucrats to return to work, government buildings remain largely abandoned, and Washington, DC, is a ghost town. Heads of Agencies have mysteriously disappeared without a trace. Even the White House was left in the dark when the Secretary of Defense vanished for days.

I am hearing from folks in Iowa who tried calling Federal Agencies for help but didn't hear boo. A nonprofit serving vulnerable, disabled, elderly, and other Iowans in need contacted my office, frustrated by the growing delays that organization is experiencing dealing with the Social Security Administration. The executive director tells me that prior to the COVID–19 pandemic, the response time from the local Social Security office was just a few days at most but that now it takes weeks and even months to get a call back. Some of the folks the nonprofit serves have gone without benefits as a result of unreturned phone calls. Approvals to provide support to others seeking assistance are also being delayed.

The agency's executive director says the lack of communication ''is having an impact on the clients we serve and our ability to provide quality service'' and that ''they are running us out of business.''

While the Social Security Administration's headquarters is nearly empty, with just 7 percent of its office space being used, these folks serving Iowans in need are showing up. Because the support they provide is being threatened by the Social Security Administration's unresponsiveness, I called on the Agency's inspector general to investigate.

And folks, well, that seemed to do the trick. Almost immediately, the phone finally started ringing, and the Social Security Administration is once again working with this agency to make sure my Iowans are being taken care of.

Another Iowan who worked for the Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Services tells me his former colleagues describe working from home as ''like being on vacation. Very little work was assigned and all they had to do was be available by phone.''

But according to another whistleblower within the Department who contacted me, it is even difficult to get in touch with coworkers. Here is some direct quotes from this particular whistleblower:

> On occasions I have gone to USDA headquarters in Washington, D.C. . . . it resembles a ghost town.
>
> As a supervisor, I can tell you that full-time remote work and extensive telework are negatively affecting productivity, efficiency, and cooperation.

And yet another:

> Remote work and telework employees are often unreachable and do not respond to simple email questions for hours.

When I questioned the USDA Secretary recently about these claims, he

pushed back, insisting his staff are required to be in the office a majority of the week. Yet, according to the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office, nearly 90 percent of the office space in USDA's headquarters is sitting idle and unused.

Folks, if USDA staff aren't showing up for work in Washington, we should put them out to pasture by relocating the Department to Iowa.

With the spring planting season upon us, I know farmers and ranchers would appreciate some helping hands from USDA's experts in the field—literally, in the field, tilling the dirt and pulling the weeds.

Growing up on a farm, I can tell you that is what we in Iowa call ''working from home.'' But in Washington, working from home apparently means having a field day. That is why I have asked the USDA's inspector general to investigate and track down the location of these ghost employees.

I have also heard similar stories from folks who work for other Federal Agencies—like the employee who hasn't even seen their manager in weeks—as well as other Iowans experiencing the same frustrating lack of responsiveness.

Folks, enough is enough. It is time for Washington to get back to work, and I need your help to make that happen. The bureaucrats may not be showing up or interested in answering your call, but I am. So if you are trying to get in touch with a government Agency and keep getting ghosted, ''Who you gonna call?'' Right there, folks, right there—202–224–3254—or if you are working in a government building all alone, pick up the phone and call. I want to hear from you and other government whistleblowers. Together, we can be ghost busters and make Washington work again by getting the bureaucrats back to their old haunts ''cuz I ain't afraid of no ghosts.''

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4093

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, it has been more than 6 months since Hamas committed heinous acts of evil against innocent civilians. It was the worst attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

Tragically, the attack included the murder and kidnapping of U.S. citizens. For the hostages still being held in Gaza, the terror continues. The hostages are being deprived of food, water, and medicine. They are being subjected to unbearable violence, abuse, and torture by Hamas terrorists.

Think about the pain, the uncertainty, and the fear that has gripped the families day after day for more than 180 days. This is personal for Americans, but it is particularly important to those of us in North Carolina.

One of our fellow citizens is among those still being held, Keith Siegel. Seeking the release of hostages demands strength, demands moral clarity. We demand it from our own leaders, and we should require it from our major allies.

I believe it is time for our Nation to reexamine whom we can count on to be on our side and who stands on the side of the terrorists.

The State of Qatar, for example, hosts Hamas leaders in their capital of Doha. Now, initially, Qatari officials claimed that they were exercising leverage on Hamas. Then, they publicly stated thereafter that they don't have any leverage. And now, they are promoting a cease-fire, regardless of the release of the hostages.

After 6 months, the patience of the United States has run out. The truth is that Qatar does have significant leverage over Hamas. They have the ability to expel these terrorists if they don't release the hostages or at least engage in reasonable negotiations.

In fact, last month, a bipartisan group of Senators stated clearly that ''if Hamas refuses reasonable negotiations, there is no reason for Qatar to continue hosting Hamas' political office or any of its members in Doha.''

After multiple more than fair offers from Israel, Hamas has refused to accept any deal or even show flexibility on terms. The truth is that Hamas is not interested in releasing the hostages, and Qatar seems equally uninterested in forcing them to do so. It is time that we hold nations like Qatar accountable for their dithering and for their stalling.

Since 2022, Qatar has enjoyed ''Major Non-NATO Ally'' status. This designation is a privilege that nations like Qatar must continuously earn.

Failure to take action against Hamas is beginning to look like tacit support for a foreign terrorist organization designated by the United States. This is not acceptable behavior for a Major Non-NATO Ally.

That is why I introduced a bill this week to require the Secretary of State to formally certify four things: One, whether it is in the national interest of the United States for Qatar to maintain its designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally; two, whether Qatar has exerted any and all leverage it has over Hamas to secure the release of the U.S. hostages from Gaza; three, that Qatar does not directly or indirectly support—financially or otherwise—acts of international terrorism or foreign terrorist organizations, including Hamas; and, four, that Qatar has expelled or agreed to extradite to the United States any individuals bearing responsibility for the terror attack on October 7, 2023.

If the Secretary of State cannot make the certification in good faith, then the President is required to immediately terminate the designation of the State of Qatar as a ''Major Non-NATO Ally.''

I don't introduce this bill lightly. It is not where I started with this relationship, but it is a reflection of where we are today as a result of the repeated warnings that Members of Congress have given to Qatar about the liability of continuing to host Hamas.

Since October 7, I have engaged privately and publicly with Qatar. At times, I have even thanked them, including for the November hostage deal, which included the release of some U.S. citizens. But I have also been clear about expectations for Qatar's relationship with Hamas and mediation of a hostage crisis moving forward.

You see, the United States expects its allies to use all leverage and exert all possible pressure to secure the release of our citizens when they are taken hostage.

At the beginning of this year, I told the Qataris that time is up and the United States will be watching. It is now long past time, and we have been watching closely. The time for talking is over, and the time for action is now. If we don't see action, then Qatar must face consequences.

At the end of the day, the bill represents another step toward securing the freedom of our fellow Americans. It is my sincere hope that this Chamber can speak with one voice in solidarity and assure these families that we are indeed doing everything to bring their loved ones home.

So as in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4093, which is at the desk; I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I agree with the Senator from North Carolina that our priority as a nation and as a Senate should be negotiating the release of the hostages that Hamas currently holds. But the surest way to guarantee that those hostages never get released is to pass this resolution.

I get it. We may not like the fact that we have to be negotiating with a terrorist organization. We may not like the fact that someone in the region has to be the conduit for those talks. But we don't live in a world of fantasy; we live in a world of reality.

And the reality is, without Qatar playing a role, as they historically have, to try to unwind crises in the Middle East more broadly and specifically between Israel and Hamas, there is no existing alternative. If you don't want the hostages released, then pass this resolution.

Further, with great respect for my colleague, I think this resolution is fundamentally dangerous when it comes to protecting broader U.S. interests in the region.

We have 10,000 Americans right now based in Qatar, mostly at Al Udeid Air Base. That airbase allows the United

States of America to project power and to protect our interests throughout the region.

It is naive to think that you can pass a resolution downgrading our status with Qatar without there being an impact on that base, our personnel there, and our ability to use that base as a means to protect our interests around the region.

Qatar is the third largest customer of U.S. defense systems in the world. There are a lot of American jobs at stake when it comes to our relationship with Qatar. And the Qataris, over and over again, respond when America is in crisis. They housed more than 70,000 Afghans during the evacuation of our forces and of Afghan allies. Almost nobody else in the world would do that. But the Qataris said yes because the United States asked them.

They are an imperfect ally. They are an imperfect ally. This is a repressive regime with a bad history on human rights and worker rights, but they are a critical ally.

But more to the point of the Senator's resolution, the Senator's main critique is that Qatar hosts Hamas, a terrorist organization. I can understand why some bristle at that notion of an ally of the United States playing host to Hamas. Qatar plays host to Hamas because they were requested to do so by the United States. Hamas established an office there because the United States asked them to do that in 2012 because we knew we needed an ability to talk to Hamas.

Qatar played a contributing role in Egypt-led negotiations to get a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in 2014, 2019, and 2021. Why? Because we were able to talk to Hamas through their presence in Qatar.

And yes, Qatar has been a conduit to send money to Hamas. A lot of people may bristle at that notion, as well—our ally Qatar sending money to the Hamas political organization inside Gaza, as they have done for years. Qatar did that at Israel's request. Israel approved, in a security Cabinet meeting in 2018, an arrangement whereby Qatar, through their relationship with Hamas, would send money into Gaza ''in coordination with security efforts to return calm [in] villages of the south, but also to prevent a humanitarian disaster'' in Gaza. That was the Israeli position.

So I understand the discomfort of an ally having a relationship with Hamas. It has come at the request of the United States and at the request of Israel and is absolutely vital to protecting our ability to get hostages out.

If you want to make sure those hostages never leave, then cut off Qatar's role as an intermediary. You want to fundamentally harm U.S. interests in the region, you want to shut down our airbase, you want to eliminate the ability of Qatar to help us again when we are in need, as we were as we evacuated Afghanistan—then downgrade their status.

For those reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Connecticut. That was beautiful, articulate. It was a beautiful articulation of all the reasons to support my bill.

You see, this week, some of the hostages' families are in Washington to meet with leaders from all branches of government. I have met with them many, many times, and every time I come away deeply moved by the strength and resilience that they are showing in the space of an unspeakable evil.

I let them know that not only are all levels of our government working to bring their loved ones home safely, but that I would do everything in my power to make it happen. Sometimes that means being direct, even with friends like Qatar. Sometimes, that means making allies uncomfortable.

But the truth of the matter is that friends are honest with one another. So this is more than about just a bilateral relationship between two nations. This is about the well-being of U.S. citizens and a native of my home State, North Carolina.

While the Senate won't be able to pass this today because of the objection, it is my hope that we can work through the committee process to get this bill across the finish line. But, more importantly, while Qatar has done less than hoped and expected, and other allies like Egypt have thankfully stepped up to fill the unfortunate void, let this bill be a tool to move the hostage negotiations forward and secure the release of all the hostages being held in Gaza.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

JUDICIAL CONFERENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last month, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas resisted Democrats' latest attempt to intimidate the Federal judiciary.

This all started a year ago, when Senate Majority Leader SCHUMER sent a letter to the chief judge of the Northern District of Texas, urging him to change the ways that cases were assigned in that district. In short, the majority leader is unhappy with single-judge divisions in Texas that have handed down rulings that he doesn't agree with.

Well, forget for a moment the fact that the left has been more than happy to file lawsuits in courts they believe will be friendly to their arguments. Set that aside for a moment. But the majority leader seeks to avoid more liberal losses in the courtrooms. He wants the chief judge to ignore Federal law—literally, ignore the law—which establishes which courts have jurisdiction and venue over a given case. As Senator SCHUMER sees it, this change, which would create a random selection assignment system, would prevent judges who are nominated by Republican Presidents from hearing as many high-profile cases.

Well, the majority leader might be forgiven for his naivete or his misunderstanding of actually what controls what venue and what jurisdiction is under the law, but the problem is that he went a step further. He ended his letter with a clear threat. If the Northern District didn't comply with his demands, he said, ''Congress will consider more prescriptive requirements.'' In other words, he said: Do what we want, and, if you don't, we will do it for you.

Well, for some reason, the Senator from New York thinks he should be the one to decide how cases are assigned in the Northern District of Texas.

Late last month, Chief Judge David Godbey wrote the majority leader a letter reminding him of something that the leader already knew, which is that assignment of cases is not governed by politics but by existing law. A Federal statute that Congress passed, signed by a President, gives district courts the authority to decide how to assign cases for a given district.

Unsurprisingly, there is no requirement that chief judges consult with the majority leader of the Senate when deciding how to assign cases within their district. There is this thing called separation of powers that the majority leader may have overlooked or forgotten about.

As Chief Justice Godbey noted in his letter, the district judges in the Northern District of Texas met to discuss this topic and reached a consensus not to make the changes requested by Senator SCHUMER.

While the chief judge of the Northern District was not swayed by the majority leader's implicit threat, that wasn't the end of the story. Regrettably, the Judicial Conference of the United States, in an effort to placate the majority leader, recommended that district courts across the country randomly assign certain cases that seek to invalidate State or Federal law. In other words, now the Judicial Conference has gotten into the act, ignoring existing laws passed by Congress and signed by Presidents that establish which courts have jurisdiction and venue over a given case.

Well, that provoked another telling reaction on the part of our Democratic colleagues. The majority leader rejoiced that this guidance that he sought would prevent ''MAGA-right plaintiffs'' from being able to ''all but guarantee a handpicked MAGA-right judge.''

How insulting is that? These are life-tenured judges nominated by a President, confirmed by the U.S. Senate, and the majority leader is suggesting that a judge who has taken an oath to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States can be depended on to reach a predetermined result. Well, I know that is politics, but that is not

the way the laws are supposed to be interpreted or applied by the courts.

Thank goodness we have an independent judiciary in this country. It is one of the things that makes us unique in the world among democracies—a truly independent judiciary that calls balls and strikes; that interprets the Constitution and laws and applies them to a given case, even when politicians get caught up with their rhetoric and their political desires.

Well, the majority whip—the chairman of the Judiciary Committee—echoed the majority leader's position and noted that changing the way cases are assigned, he says, ''will help restore the public's trust in our court system and strengthen our democracy.''

I think what undermines the public's trust in our court system and undermines our democracy are these baseless attacks on judges, assuming that they are Republican judges or Democratic judges or MAGA-right judges—whatever that is supposed to mean. I guess that means they were appointed by President Trump, but also confirmed by the U.S. Senate. The irony of calling a Senate-confirmed Federal judge a ''MAGA judge'' in talking about the importance of public trust in the judiciary is pretty rich.

I want to commend Chief Judge Godbey and the judges of the Northern District of Texas from resisting this political pressure and commend them for doing what they know is right for their district and the people who live and litigate within that district. This was, without a doubt, the right decision for multiple reasons.

As a practical matter, the majority leader's preferred case assignment scheme would likely subject litigants to logistical nightmares. I know Texas is a lot bigger than New York. But take the Northern District of Texas, for example. It is one of the largest judicial districts in the country. It stretches over 100 out of our 254 counties and encompasses more than 96,000 acres. If the Northern District of Texas were a State, it would be the ninth largest State. If Senator SCHUMER had his way, a suit filed in one division could ultimately be heard by any division within the Northern District.

Someone—say a woman challenging the State's abortion laws in Fort Worth—could have to travel all the way to Lubbock for her day in court. And a company in Dallas challenging government overreach or perhaps a new environmental regulation would have to go all the way to Amarillo to have that case decided, under this random assignment system. This would obviously create a lot of burdens on litigants—my constituents, Texans, American citizens. It would create burdensome and expensive hurdles that both parties in a case would have to overcome for no real purpose.

We all know that cases decided by district judges get considered by circuit courts—appellate courts—and, potentially, even the U.S. Supreme Court. But the majority leader's political pressure on the Northern District would ultimately harm access to justice for those litigants who don't have the time or the money to travel long distances or to pay their lawyers in order to do so.

But the more fundamental issue is the constitutional one. Under the law, only Congress has the power to pass venue changes—that is where a case is heard—not the courts. The courts apply laws that the Congress passes and were signed into law by the President. The Constitution vests Congress with the sole authority to determine the structure and organization of the lower courts, and that includes venue laws, where cases are heard. From there, each individual district has the latitude to determine how cases are ultimately assigned.

So if the majority leader wants to change the way that venue laws are applied, he can try to do so, but he has to do so through a change in the law, not by trying to intimidate the judges in that division.

Over the last years, our Democratic colleagues have repeatedly launched deeply concerning attacks against America's independent judiciary. Several years ago, five of our Democratic colleagues threatened that the Supreme Court would be ''restructured'' if it failed to rule a certain way in a case related to the Second Amendment.

The following year, the majority leader, the Senator from New York, stood in front of the Supreme Court and threatened two sitting Supreme Court Justices by name if they didn't rule the way he wanted them to rule in a case involving abortion. He said:

> I want to tell you Gorsuch. I want to tell you Kavanaugh. You have released the whirlwind and you will pay the price. You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions.

How shameful on the part of the majority leader to stand on the steps of the Supreme Court and to threaten the sitting Justices unless they ruled in a particular way.

The next year, just a few months after President Biden took office, our Democratic colleagues in both the Senate and the House introduced a bill that would allow him to pack the Supreme Court with four new liberal Justices.

A couple years later, Senator WYDEN, the Senator from Oregon, advocated for the Biden administration to ignore a potential court order from a Northern District of Texas court because he didn't agree with it. He actually said that the Biden administration should ignore the ruling of a Federal judge—not appeal it; ignore it.

Then 15 of our Democratic colleagues recommended slashing the Supreme Court's budget if it failed to meet their demand to implement a new code of ethics that had our Democratic colleagues' stamp of approval.

And, more recently, some of our Democratic colleagues have called on Justice Sotomayor to retire so President Biden can install a new liberal Justice, likely to serve for many years in the future.

Democrats' attacks on our judiciary have varied, but the theme is always the same. It is all about control; it is all about politics; it is all about outcomes—not justice and the rule of law.

Their message is: Deliver the wins we want, impose a code of ethics that we wrote, and retire when we say.

Well, we all know that lifetime tenure is provided for Federal judges to provide for their independence so they can't be intimidated, so they can't be forced to retire. And we can't cut their pay for the same reason.

Forget this idea of fair and impartial courts. They want judges who fall in line, salute smartly, and follow orders. As I said earlier today, an independent judiciary is essential to our democracy and the rule of law. It is the crown jewels of our government, of our Constitution. The courts cannot and must not be subjected to pressure campaigns from anyone—politicians, political activists, or anybody else.

The Federal judiciary certainly is not subservient to Congress; it is a separate and coequal branch of the government—coequal. Our Founders deliberately designed a system of checks and balances to prevent any one branch from forcing the other two to bend to its will. But that is exactly what our Democratic colleagues are trying to do, and it is wrong. It is unconstitutional, and it must be stopped.

Today's Democratic party is trying to blur the lines between the legislative and judicial branches of our government in order to secure partisan wins. And there is a reason why their efforts haven't had much success. Their proposals are unpopular. They are unwarranted, and they are flatout unconstitutional.

I am glad the Northern District of Texas did not cave to Senator SCHUMER's demands or the Judicial Conference's ill-conceived guidance. Democrats have made it clear that they will do whatever it takes to secure partisan wins in the courts.

They ought to try passing laws here in Congress with open debate and opportunity for everybody to participate in the process; but the problem is, when they lose legislative battles, they simply rely on the courts to get the wins that they ultimately want.

But the American people can rest assured that Republicans will continue to defend America's independent judiciary and fight these attacks no matter what form they may take.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to speak for up to 7 minutes.

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

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, inflation numbers came out this morning, and it won't surprise anyone to discover that it was yet another month of elevated inflation, par for the course for the Biden administration.

Inflation that not only remained well above the Federal Reserve's target inflation rate for yet another month, it actually kicked up in March to 3.5 percent, not exactly a hopeful trend.

It has been a rough few years for the American people under President Biden, thanks in large part to the President and Congressional Democrats' decision to push forward with their American Rescue Plan spending spree, despite, I might add, warnings even from liberal economists that it ran the risk of setting off inflation. But now the entire Biden administration has been one long inflation crisis.

Today, a typical family is paying $1,000 more per month to maintain the same standard of living they enjoyed when President Biden took office. Now, think about that for just a moment. Today, a typical family is paying $1,000 more per month—$12,000 more per year—to maintain the same standard of living they enjoyed when President Biden took office—if, of course, these families even have that money available. There is no question that there are families out there—a lot, I suspect—whose standard of living has diminished since President Biden took office because they simply don't have the money to maintain the same living standard with the elevated prices in the Biden economy.

The list of price hikes in the Biden economy is long. Groceries are up 21 percent since President Biden took office. Energy prices are up 38 percent. Gas prices are up 47 percent and are on the rise. The cost of shelter is up 20 percent. Car repairs and maintenance are up 30 percent. And the list goes on.

I mentioned the increase in grocery prices. The cost of food now takes up a larger share of Americans' disposal income than it has in 30 years.

A recent Bloomberg article noted:

> Nationally, seven in 10 consumers say they are very or extremely concerned about the cost of groceries. . . . Forty-two percent said they were worried about having enough money to buy food in December, the last time FMI asked, compared to 26 percent at the March 2020 onset of the pandemic.

Well, that is a pretty grim statistic, and it is not the only one. On the home-buying front, one recent article reported:

> The income needed to comfortably afford a home is up 80 percent since 2020.

Let me just repeat that.

> The income needed to comfortably afford a home is up 80 percent since 2020.

Mr. President, 80 percent—and I don't need to tell anyone that incomes have not risen by 80 percent over the same period.

President Biden loves to talk about giving Americans ''a little bit of breathing room.'' Well, Americans have lost their breathing room in the Biden economy. They have seen their disposable income dry up. They have had to downgrade their standard of living. They have had to turn to savings accounts and credit cards to make ends meet. It is no wonder that nearly half of voters say their personal financial situation is getting worse or that 55 percent of Americans say they worry a great deal about inflation or that 58 percent of voters say the economy is on the wrong track.

The sad thing is that President Biden has apparently learned nothing from his inflation crisis. He is still set on the same kind of massive government spending that helped plunge us into this inflation crisis in the first place. The budget he released last month was full of massive new spending programs, accompanied by a staggering $5 trillion in tax hikes—tax hikes that would unquestionably have their own damaging economic effects, like discouraging job creation and driving up energy prices for hard-working Americans.

President Biden's first term in office has been characterized by economic misery for Americans, and if the President gets his way, a second term would likely be characterized by economic misery as well. It has been 36 months of elevated inflation in the Biden economy—36 months—and the end is still not in sight. It is starting to look like it won't be as long as President Biden is still in office.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF ANN MARIE MCIFF ALLEN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Judge Ann Marie Allen to the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah.

Born in Richfield, UT, Judge Allen earned her B.A. from Brigham Young University and her J.D. from Brigham Young University J. Reuben Clark Law School.

After teaching at BYU J. Reuben Clark Law School and Utah Valley University, Judge Allen began working in private practice under a public defender contract with Beaver County, UT, handling indigent defense cases and Criminal Justice Act panel appointments in Federal criminal matters.

In 2007, Judge Allen became the deputy Iron County attorney and prosecuted a range of felonies and misdemeanors. She returned to private practice in 2013 while also serving part-time as the deputy Garfield County attorney. In 2016, Judge Allen was appointed by the president of Southern Utah University to serve as the university's special counsel and director of ethics and compliance. She became the university's first general counsel in 2018. In 2020, Judge Allen was appointed by then-Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert to the Utah State Fifth District Court. Over the course of her judicial career, she has presided over hundreds of civil cases and thousands of criminal cases resulting in plea bargains.

The American Bar Association unanimously rated Judge Allen as ''well qualified,'' and she has the strong support of Senators LEE and ROMNEY. Her nomination was unanimously advanced by the Judiciary Committee.

Judge Allen's significant courtroom experience and dedication to service make her an excellent nominee to the District of Utah. I will vote in favor of her confirmation and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

VOTE ON ALLEN NOMINATION

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 120 Ex.]

YEAS—100

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

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO ''NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MEASURES; ASSESSING PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM, GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS MEASURE''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session and proceed to the consideration of S.J. Res. 61, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 61) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to ''National Performance Management Measures; Assessing Performance of the National Highway System, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Measure''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

ISRAEL

Mr. WELCH. Madam President, it has been more than 6 months since Hamas's horrific attack on October 7 that killed 1,200 innocent Israelis and led to the capture of 240 hostages. Around 130 people are still being held hostage, and an estimated 100 are alive and remain in captivity in absolutely horrific conditions. The cruelty that has been and continues to be inflicted on them is horrendous, and obtaining their freedom becomes a more urgent priority every day.

In the past 6 months, Israel's indiscriminate bombing has obliterated most of Gaza's infrastructure. Nothing has been spared. More than 33,000 Palestinians have been killed. Another 7,000 are believed to be buried beneath the rubble. And among the dead are hundreds of aid workers and health workers. Nearly 2 million people have been displaced. Aid trucks are lined up for miles in Egypt waiting to get into Gaza, while the bombs and shells keep exploding. The magnitude of this calamity is staggering.

Now, 6 months into this war, Prime Minister Netanyahu has announced that a date has been set for an invasion of Rafah. Rafah today is jammed with an estimated 1 million desperate, destitute Palestinians who were ordered by the Israeli military to leave their homes in the north—homes that have since been demolished—and who are now sheltering under plastic with the few possessions they could carry and not nearly enough food.

And last week, less than a month after Jose Andres briefed me and other Senators on the daunting challenges his remarkable organization, the World Central Kitchen, faces in getting food to desperate families in Gaza, Israeli missiles destroyed three of their vehicles and killed seven of their aid workers.

The descriptions and coordinates of the World Central Kitchen vehicles that were targeted had been shared with the Israeli military. There was nothing about those vehicles or the people in them that could reasonably have been confused with Hamas. The vehicles were far apart. They were labeled as World Central Kitchen vehicles. Each was targeted and destroyed separately.

The deadly attacks on aid and health workers in Gaza have become shockingly common. World Central Kitchen and other humanitarian organizations, which so many people depended on, have had to suspend operations in Gaza. This incident and the killings of other aid and health workers must be thoroughly and independently investigated. Calling it a mistake begs the question: We need to know what happened and why.

This outrageous attack on aid workers and Prime Minister Netanyahu's plans to invade the very place his government told Palestinians to go is the latest evidence that the way the Netanyahu government is conducting this war is terribly wrong. It is yet another tragic reason why a cease-fire is immediately needed.

Our priority must be to secure a cease-fire to free the hostages and get adequate food, water, and medical care to the Gazan population before more innocent people die needlessly. This was affirmed unanimously in the resolution recently adopted by the U.N. Security Council.

But rather than acknowledge Israel's responsibility to implement that resolution and secure a cease-fire, Prime Minister Netanyahu criticized the United States for allowing it to pass. He said the U.S. abstention harms both the war effort and the effort to release hostages.

I could not disagree more. After 6 months of relentless bombing, the war in Gaza has been a disaster. It has been a disaster not only for the Palestinian people but for Israel, for the United States, for the hostages, and for the cause of peace and security in the Middle East.

Last week, families of the hostages were among the tens of thousands of Israeli protesters calling for Netanyahu to resign.

We need to ask ourselves what could possibly need to happen before the United States finally stops financing a war strategy that has so disproportionately killed civilians, used food as a weapon, made Gaza unlivable, and that has no realistic vision of a peaceful future for either Palestinians or Israelis.

I believe that the time has already come. Israel does not need more bombs for Gaza. The United States should stop paying for this.

What Mr. Netanyahu consistently fails to acknowledge is that the American people are paying for this war—a war that most Americans do not support. It is their tax dollars that have purchased the bombs, tanks, artillery shells, machine guns, and ammunition that have been used by Israel in what has become a war not just against Hamas but a war against the Palestinian people.

Overwhelmingly, Vermonters who have contacted me, like a substantial majority of the American people, are absolutely horrified about what is happening in Gaza.

In all the years he has served as Prime Minister, Mr. Netanyahu has never articulated the vision for an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. To the contrary, he has been on a mission—which he has confirmed publicly—to destroy any possibility of a future Palestinian state while preserving Israel as a Jewish state.

Those goals are fundamentally incompatible, if Israel is to remain a democracy. And we support the Jewish democratic State of Israel. Yet, on March 22, the Netanyahu government announced the largest seizure of land in the West Bank since 1993.

Nothing can excuse the brutality of Hamas—we all know that—which, for years, has squandered precious resources that could have been used to improve the impoverished lives of the people of Gaza.

But just as Hamas's atrocities and the Iranians and others who aid and abet them should be absolutely universally condemned, so must we recognize that there is a long history to this conflict.

For years, the United States—Republican and Democratic administrations and this Congress—has unconditionally supported increasingly extreme right-wing governments led by Mr. Netanyahu, even though he has consistently acted in ways that are directly contrary to our policies, our principles, and our national interests.

In the West Bank in the past 3 years alone, Israeli land seizures, settlement construction, demolitions of homes, and violence against Palestinians have soared, in flagrant violation of international law.

But rather than hold the Netanyahu government accountable, U.S. government officials keep repeating the same tired refrain that such actions are ''an obstacle to peace.'' And nothing changed. And despite evidence of human rights violations by Israeli soldiers, the Leahy Law has never been applied to Israel—not by this administration or any of its predecessors. And, meanwhile, Congress has continued to approve billions of dollars unconditionally for the Netanyahu government.

I have spoken many times about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Month after month, as Gaza was being destroyed, I and others have called for greater access for aid trucks and the protection of civilians and aid workers. I have called for indefinite cease-fire. President Biden has called for a cease-fire. Vice President HARRIS has called for a cease-fire. And so has the U.N. Security Council.

And Prime Minister Netanyahu has ignored it all, the humanitarian crisis has grown steadily worse, and the war is far from being won. Netanyahu's strategy in Gaza is reminiscent of that famous quote of an unnamed U.S. major in Vietnam who said:

> It became necessary to destroy the village in order to save it.

That is what is happening to Gaza. It won't work here, as it didn't work there.

Nobody—nobody—disputes Israel's right to go after the perpetrators of the October 7 massacre. But that atrocity and that security failure did not provide license for Israel to go to war against an entire population killing tens of thousands of defenseless people, targeting aid workers, preventing life-saving aid from getting to the victims—all while the hostages remain trapped underground not knowing if they will survive another day.

This is not the Israel the American people have supported and defended—with my support—with $300 billion since its founding 75 years ago—far more aid than we have provided to any other country.

As Jose Andres said:

> Israel is better than the way this war is being waged. . . . You cannot save the hostages by bombing every building in Gaza. You cannot win this war by starving an entire population.

The words of Chef Andres.

I recognize that the Prime Minister makes his own decisions, and it is for the Israeli people to hold him accountable. But he is not—and in my view, has never been—a credible partner for the United States. Combating ruthless terrorists like Hamas is a challenge we face, Israel faces, the world faces. But this war is not making any of us safer from terrorism. It is creating the next generation of terrorists.

With an invasion of Rafah looming, the Biden administration has warned Mr. Netanyahu that unless there is a credible plan to relocate the Palestinians who are trapped there, such an invasion would cause unacceptable civilian losses. That, however, does not appear to have dissuaded Prime Minister Netanyahu.

World opinion has shifted sharply against Israel and the United States. The administration, while calling for a cease-fire and more humanitarian aid, is simultaneously sending more bombs and ammunition to Israel. It is an inconsistency that is not sustainable.

It is long past time for the U.S. to adopt a consistent policy, to stop financing a war strategy that was deeply flawed from the very beginning—a strategy of unending death and destruction without any plan for what comes next.

Instead of prolonging this catastrophe, let's use our influence and our resources to advance a consistent policy for the Middle East—a policy that has to be grounded in the recognition that the people of Israel will never be secure without upholding the inherent rights and dignity of the Palestinian people as well.

After 6 months of war, the situation, regrettably, in Gaza is worse than ever. Hamas is not defeated, nor do the experts that I have spoken to believe it can be. Gaza is all but destroyed. Two million Palestinians lack the basic necessities of life and have nothing to return to.

We need to change course. The hostages need to come home. The killing needs to stop. The war must end.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

DOMESTIC SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, it has been more than 5 months since the President submitted a domestic supplemental appropriations request to Congress. And, among other things, it called for funding recovery efforts in communities across the country struck by disasters, including Lahaina Maui.

Every one of these affected communities in Florida, in California, in Vermont, in Mississippi, in Alabama, in Arkansas, in Alaska, in South Dakota, in Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, and Tennessee need help. Each one of them is in the middle of a long and difficult process of rebuilding and getting back on its feet.

Recovering from a disaster—whether natural or manmade—it is hard, it is time-intensive, and it is incredibly expensive; surveying the damage in the immediate hours and days following the event; undertaking the complex and often dangerous process of debris removal; rebuilding homes and roads and schools and other essential infrastructure that were destroyed; providing financial assistance to people, families, and small business owners who lost their jobs and livelihoods overnight. It takes months and years and tremendous effort from thousands of people to return these communities to anything close to normal.

Today, another community is, unfortunately, confronting the colossal task of rebuilding—this time in Baltimore in the wake of the tragic collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge. Our hearts go out to the families of the six men who were lost that day. They were fathers; they were husbands; they were brothers; immigrants who worked day and night to provide for their families. And their losses break our collective hearts.

As Baltimore recovers, we stand ready to support all of the communities and businesses that relied on that bridge and the Port of Baltimore every day to get around and move goods through. And as the Chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, I am committed to doing everything I can to help pass the necessary funding to rebuild.

As we do that, we also have a responsibility to support every other community that has been devastated by a disaster because we are all in this together. No State or county—big or small, red or blue, wealthy or not—can shoulder the burden alone.

When a disaster is so big, so catastrophic for any one State or locality to handle, it falls on the Federal Government to step up and help. It is central to the promise of the Federal Government. We can argue about the size and the scope of the Federal Government all we like—which programs to fund, what levels to fund them at—but even the most libertarian among us can agree that helping our fellow Americans when they are in crisis, when they have lost everything, when they are desperate for support—helping them is patriotic and essential to our roles in the Congress. It is why funding disaster recovery has historically been bipartisan—because people on both sides of the aisle have recognized, rightly, that disasters do not discriminate between red and blue and purple areas. Accidents don't pick and choose their victims. Every community that has had the misfortune of being struck by a disaster needs and deserves help.

Maui is just one example of what these communities are facing. Eight months on from the devastating fires, the needs remain enormous. Thousands of people are still living out of hotels and vacation rentals, unable to rebuild their lives. Roads and water systems have yet to be repaired. Small businesses and their employees continue to struggle without tourism.

For Lahaina to recover, thousands of homes will need be to be rebuilt. Critical infrastructure will need to be restored. Businesses will need to get up and running again. So Congress needs to step up and help. That includes providing funding for the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery—or CDBG–DR—Program, as the supplemental request calls for. CDBG–DR funding has long been a lifeline for families and small businesses recovering after disasters. Maui and many other communities nationwide are waiting on this aid.

It has been nearly 6 months since the President called on Congress to help communities recover from disasters. We have waited a long time, and we can't wait much longer. The disasters keep piling up and, with them, the urgent needs of the survivors. People need help.

We need to pass this supplemental and make sure all the survivors are getting the relief they need. This is not each against all; we are truly all in this together. Every community that has been hurt by a natural disaster deserves help, and Congress must provide it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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

MAYORKAS IMPEACHMENT

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise today because we really are at a very historic time for this Chamber. Soon, the House of Representatives is expected to send over Articles of Impeachment against a Cabinet officer for only the second time in our Nation's history. This is not routine business; instead, this is a very serious moment.

On February 13, the House agreed to Articles of Impeachment against Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas for ''willful and systemic refusal to comply with the law'' and ''breach of public trust.''

This Chamber will soon have a constitutional duty to uphold. I firmly believe that the U.S. Senate must conduct a full impeachment inquiry trial for Secretary Mayorkas. Our Constitution gives the Senate the responsibility and the duty to try all impeachments, and it requires a vote of two-thirds of the Senate present before the Federal officer is convicted. That is a pretty high standard for a constitutional process.

For every impeachment in our history, the Senate has held some form of a trial unless the Federal officer has resigned prior to the trial. This time, it should be no different.

Under President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas, there have been more than 9.2 million illegal crossings along our country's southern border or, to put it another way, the average monthly encounters have increased 400 percent almost under the Biden-Mayorkas DHS.

The record illegal crossings this past February of 189,922 marked the seventh consecutive month of the highest number of encounters that these months have ever seen. On top of this, there have been 36 straight months with higher encounters at the southern border than any month under the Trump administration. I mean, these numbers are just shocking.

Still, and I have spoken on this before, it is just amazing to me that the President and Secretary Mayorkas haven't tried to change this at all.

Unfortunately, these statistics have become a regular occurrence under the leadership of Secretary Mayorkas, and he bears the responsibility for the worst border crisis of our Nation's history.

Let me be clear. As I said earlier, this crisis did not happen by accident. We have seen the Biden-Mayorkas DHS fail to uphold the law and secure our borders starting on day one of this administration. This broad and willful effort by the Biden administration to open our borders began by ending successful Trump-era policies that brought all those numbers down, like contracts to build the border wall, the ''Remain in Mexico'' policy—also known as Migrant Protection Protocols or MPP—and safe third country agreements.

Again, the numbers don't lie, and they certainly do not provide the administration with any cover, unlike the cover the administration gives daily by turning their back to the cartels that are making billions of dollars from human smuggling and drug trafficking operations as long as this crisis continues.

Furthermore, we have seen Secretary Mayorkas abuse the parole process, expanding the program more than any other prior administration, which has led to more than 3 million immigrants coming into our country who would otherwise have been inadmissible. Parole is supposed to be granted on a one-by-one, case-by-case basis, but under Secretary Mayorkas's leadership, DHS has created categorical parole programs to give entry to migrants from many South American and Caribbean countries with minimal vetting.

As the crisis has developed throughout President Biden's 3 years in office, nearly half of the migrants encountered on our southern border are coming from countries outside of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The immigration crisis on our southern border is now more multifaceted than ever. Why is that? Because it has been allowed to keep fomenting. The open border policies from the Biden-Mayorkas DHS have allowed all of this to happen. We truly have no idea who is entering our country illegally.

We have apprehended 336 individuals on the Terror Watchlist who have illegally crossed our southern border during this administration, but these are just the individuals we know of. To put this into perspective, only 14 terror suspects were apprehended between the ports of entry during the Trump administration—14 over 4 years; 336 in this administration.

Not knowing who is in our country is a national security crisis, and at a time of heightened national security, this is a chance we should not be willing to take.

We have also seen the Biden-Mayorkas DHS abuse the asylum process, expanding eligibility to admit a record number of asylum seekers, which has led to creating a decade-long delay and backlog in our immigration courts. This ensures that anyone who enters our country and passes the very low screening standard will be here for years without any fear of deportation.

This policy allowed the alleged killer of Laken Riley—a nursing student in Georgia who was brutally and senselessly murdered—to enter and remain in this country. Even though he was apprehended by our law enforcement on at least one occasion, he still was here. This will ever serve as a reminder that Secretary Mayorkas's catch-and-release policies have allowed the catastrophe at our southern border to impact every single community.

When our already-overwhelmed Border Patrol agents are faced with thousands of encounters per day of migrants claiming asylum, we know that some border crossers are able to slip through. These are the people who don't want to be caught, and they are the individuals we need to worry about the most. But don't just take my word for it. In a recent interview, Border Patrol Chief Jason Owens referred to the situation at the southern border as a ''national security threat'' and that the 140,000 known ''got-aways'' are what is keeping—he says ''keeping me up at night.'' This is something that all of us should be concerned about and the ripple effect that this causes in communities far away from our southern border.

Additionally, the drugs flowing across our border are responsible for fueling the addiction epidemic that has devastated communities across this country, particularly in my home State of West Virginia. In West Virginia alone, it is estimated that during the year 2023, 1,327 residents died at the hands of illegal drugs. That is the highest per capita of any other State.

At the national level, the numbers are just startling. According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, agents seized an alltime high of 27,293 pounds of fentanyl coming across the southern border in fiscal year 2023. That amount of fentanyl is enough to kill nearly 6 million people. However, what is even more troubling is that CBP reported that Federal officials are estimating they were only able to seize between 5 and 10 percent of all the fentanyl that has been smuggled through the southern border. With a Border Patrol that has been stretched unfathomably thin with very little support from this administration, there is no telling the amount of drugs that are getting through undetected.

Regarding the matter that will soon be before the Senate, the impeachment articles against Secretary Mayorkas make serious allegations and detail the crisis we have all seen unfolding for more than 3 years. It is unconscionable for Senator SCHUMER to dismiss these charges without allowing the Senate to hear the evidence. Doing so would deny this body from upholding our constitutional duty to hear a case and decide whether or not Secretary Mayorkas should be convicted or acquitted.

The decision to take up these Articles of Impeachment lies with Senator SCHUMER and the Senate Democrats. They must do the right thing and conduct a full trial.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I appreciate what I heard from the Senator from West Virginia, Senator CAPITO, and I am pleased to follow her and precede a number of my colleagues as we address the issue of the crisis at our southern border.

I want to highlight something I heard her say and reiterate myself, this is a national security threat. There are many reasons to care about what is going on at our borders, and certainly you can take a look at the issue of sovereignty and the nature of our country.

We need to enforce our laws, fentanyl and drugs, human trafficking, but sometimes overlooked is the reality of what a security threat a border like we have between the United States and Mexico is—but really all of our borders. They create a threat to the safety and well-being of the American people, the citizens of our country.

And, yes, we have to deal with the growing drug and crime emergency. It is exacerbated. I have been talking to a number of law enforcement officers in Kansas—sheriff departments and police officers—and there is no question but what they see in Kansas, the challenges are exacerbated by the lack of security, the lack of law enforcement at our borders, and they see the consequences of that activity in human trafficking and drugs.

It is important for us to talk about and focus on all of the things related to our national security. In my view, it is the primary responsibility of the Federal Government to make certain that Americans are safe. And I was on the Senate floor several weeks ago highlighting something I think is hugely important to our national security: the passage of the emergency supplemental.

The consequences of the lack of passing that legislation has consequences to the people of Ukraine and the people of Israel and the Middle East, the safety and security of other countries in the South Pacific, but I highlighted then and would highlight now the passage of that emergency supplemental has a consequence, a negative consequence if it is not passed, on the safety and security of the American people.

And so when I was here to highlight the importance of that legislation and the need to proceed, I also highlighted the consequences of ignoring our border. And I want to say, once again, that our border is a national security issue.

So while we focus on the things that we normally think about national security, sometimes we forget this dangerous circumstance that has been created.

I have been to the border a number of times, numerous times. On my last visit, I watched as Border Patrol agents apprehended Chinese nationals attempting to come into our country illegally. That, in and of itself, ought to cause us to have great concern.

Under Secretary Mayorkas's watch, the U.S. Border Patrol has apprehended 336 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist. Remember the Terrorist Watchlist and the people who came here on 9/11 and the consequences of us failing to exclude them? But 336 have been apprehended from that Terrorist Watchlist, and that doesn't include the ones whom we have not caught.

It suggests to us, suggests to me and I hope to us, that there is a real serious issue about our national security as a result of our country's failures, this administration's failures, on the border.

In fiscal year 2023—a year ago fiscal year—in that year alone, the men and women of U.S. Customs and Border Protection had approximately 2.5 million encounters along that southern border. These historic levels of crossings at the southern border have put an astronomical—just a tremendous strain on our immigration system and seriously compromised, as I say, compromised our national security.

Not every immigrant is a criminal, but the sheer number of migrants at the border enables those with evil and malicious intentions to enter our country undetected and to harm Americans.

This historic failure is not an accident. Migrants making their way to the United States, often through the assistance of organized criminal organizations, know our laws and the current lack of enforcement of those laws. This administration has created these conditions and has done little, if not—really nothing to dissuade migrants from making that dangerous journey to our borders.

Migrants know that the administration has resisted detaining those who crossed the border illegally. They know that this administration has resisted hardening border infrastructure, and they know that the administration's abuse of the parole system will increase the chance of remaining in the United States if they can get across. All of those factors lead us to where we are today.

Last fall, I questioned the Department of Homeland Security Secretary, Secretary Mayorkas. We had a joint Appropriations Committee. The hearing was on our national security, and the topic was the supplemental I referenced in my remarks several weeks ago on the Senate floor and just a moment ago. And when I asked Secretary Mayorkas if he was willing to work on areas of immigration reform where there is bipartisan consensus—certain issues I believe in regard to border security would receive 60 votes on the Senate floor and be signed into law—the Secretary told me that he wanted comprehensive reform.

I have been in this body, the Senate. I have been in the House before then. We have talked about immigration changes. We have talked about border security. Those two things go hand in hand, in my view, and we know where this insistence that we have comprehensive immigration reform ends.

No evidence in my time in the Senate and no evidence in my time in the House that if we have to do everything—the evidence is that we do nothing, and that is what I told the Secretary. I would tell him that again.

If you are unwilling to work with us to find the things we can agree on, then nothing is going to happen to protect our borders, and our immigration system remains so flawed.

There is value, of course, in comprehensive reform—things that deal with all issues top to bottom—to ensure the needs of safety for the American people and the importance of that to our economy. But, again, my experience and my time in Congress is that if we keep waiting for comprehensive reform, the result is we do nothing.

Secretary Mayorkas has an obligation to use the tools Congress has already provided to enforce legislation that has already passed. Waiting for comprehensive reform is an excuse for the Secretary and for the President, President Biden, to do nothing.

Mayorkas's inaction on the border and his leniency toward enforcing the law has resulted in what we see, the crisis we face today. We keep waiting to reach the tipping point in that crisis, but that, I think, has long passed. Migrants are living on the streets of New York. We have lost thousands of Americans to fentanyl poisoning, and our borders have been exploited by our enemies.

My point is that America is in jeopardy in many ways. We face tremendous challenges around the globe, and our adversaries and enemies are aligned to do us harm. And one of the places that we cannot look the other way is our border and our border security. It is too great a risk and too much of an opportunity for death and destruction to come to the United States of America.

The Biden administration has made it clear, over the last 3 years, that securing our border is not a priority; it is not a priority of theirs. And now it is up to the Senate to hold the administration accountable for those failures, the failures at our southern border, again, that affect our national security, the No. 1 priority of the Federal Government.

Every State is a border State, and the American people deserve a secure border.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, in our Nation's 248-year history, the House of Representatives has impeached individuals in 21 cases. Reflecting the grave, highly rare exercise of this constitutional power, the Senate has tried each such case, except where the person resigned office before the Senate trial, rendering such trial moot.

This includes two partisan Democratic impeachments of the former President—one in which the Republicans controlled the Senate and one in which it was equally divided.

Shattering norms, however, is becoming a defining theme for Democrats this year. Why are my Democratic colleagues so eager to shirk their constitutional duty and ignore an impeachment? Because they want to ignore the damning evidence of Secretary Mayorkas's willful violations of immigration law.

I can think of no better example than the Secretary's decision to willfully and knowingly exceed his parole authority set forth in the Immigration and Nationality Act. That law permits the Secretary to grant parole but only

on a case-by-case basis, temporarily, and ''for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit''; for example, when a person is in need of urgent medical care or the person needs to attend a family member's funeral. He has even created a new taxpayer-funded parole program to allow aliens from numerous countries to be flown directly into the United States.

He has abused his case-by-case parole authority beyond any degree imaginable. He is now flying 30,000 illegal aliens per month directly into the United States for resettlement.

This is a blatant violation of the law, and it is abuse of the parole law in particular. Two weeks ago, every single Senate Democrat voted against my appropriations amendment to defund this very parole flight program. That vote is impossible to explain to ordinary Americans. They see the absurdity of flying in tens of thousands of illegal aliens right in the midst of an illegal immigration crisis.

So, instead, partisan so-called fact checkers have recently been quibbling over which flights or which airports are being used. This is clearly an attempt to distract from the basic problem with this taxpayer-funded program, which is that it is illegal and it is absurd.

I understand why Democrats want to cover it up though. It is the same reason they don't want to consider these impeachment articles.

Similarly, the Secretary terminated contracts for border wall construction and refused to expend funds that Congress appropriated for this specific purpose.

Secretary Mayorkas's impoundment of funds is a clear attempt to usurp the will of Congress by refusing their mandate, our mandate, to build the border wall.

The Secretary has also replaced detention mandates in law with unlawful mass catch-and-release policies that encourage illegal immigration.

The law requires that illegal aliens are detained until they are deported, unless they are clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be allowed into the United States. Instead of complying with this requirement, the Secretary has released millions of illegal aliens into American communities.

We have seen the devastating effects of the Biden administration's illegal border policies. We have heard from Americans whose lives and property are being destroyed by droves of illegal aliens who are coming into the United States every single day.

We have heard from Border Patrol agents who want nothing more than to do their jobs and secure the border, but whose hands have been tied by the Mayorkas-led Department of Homeland Security.

The American people have seen the chaotic images of the southern border under this administration. They have witnessed the ravaging effects of illegal immigration in their own communities. This includes drug overdoses, violent crime, local disorder, and the national security threat of unknown bad actors from all over the world coming across our open border.

And 249 people on the Terrorist Watchlist have been encountered at the southern border just last year alone.

Since October, a record number of Chinese nationals—22,000, in fact—have been encountered by Border Patrol; in all, over 10 million illegal aliens have crossed the border under this Secretary's watch. The collapse of our southern border and the devastating consequences and future risks it has created for our Nation is the greatest national security risk we face as a nation.

The House of Representatives took the extraordinary step of impeaching a government official for his role in this, and yet Senate Democrats want to completely ignore all of this? They don't want you to hear about it. They want to sweep it under the rug in an election year.

The Secretary's alleged violations of law warrant a trial before the Senate. It warrants basic diligence in examining the evidence. And every Senator should go on record regarding the charges.

I have cosponsored resolutions by several colleagues establishing impeachment procedures that are in line with past Senate impeachment trials. We are open to debate on the details of the process, but there must be a process.

This is an important point: The current debate is not even whether or not Secretary Mayorkas is guilty as charged but whether we should even examine the question or whether, instead, as the Senate majority leader reportedly plans to do, we should just hide the evidence from the American people and avoid discussing this administration's failures at all costs.

Why? Because this is an election year. If the majority leader wishes to honor and preserve the world's greatest deliberative body, I urge him not to take this unprecedented step of blocking consideration of the impeachment articles against Secretary Mayorkas.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, the fundamental purpose of our Federal Government is to protect Americans, to keep Americans safe. What we have seen happen on our southern border has put Americans at risk. It is a national security crisis, a drug trafficking crisis—child trafficking, sex trafficking. It is putting Americans at risk. And the people responsible for this open border policy are Joe Biden and the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas.

Since the Biden administration has been in power, we have seen a flood of drugs coming across our border. The cartels are making billions. Fentanyl and other illegal drugs are the leading killer of young Americans in this country. If you are in the age of between 18 and 45, the most likely cause of your death is drug overdose, and the majority of that is fentanyl—70,000 young people a year dying because of fentanyl.

When I was Governor, we saw the amount of drugs coming into my State under Joe Biden go up dramatically. We saw twice as much methamphetamine, three times as much fentanyl, ten times as much cocaine.

We have seen the number of people on the Terrorist Watchlist skyrocket as well. Under the Trump administration, a total of 11 people on the FBI Terrorist Watchlist were caught trying to cross the border during 4 years of President Trump. In the last fiscal year, 169 people on the FBI Terrorist Watchlist were trying to cross the border illegally.

In all, since the Biden administration has been in place, 9.2 million people have either tried to get into this country illegally or have succeeded in getting into this country illegally, and Secretary Mayorkas has willfully refused to support our immigration laws at the direction of this administration. He is culpable in what is going on at our southern border.

If you ask Americans, ''Who do you think is responsible?'' 57 percent say there has been a willful unenforcement of our laws. Our laws are not being enforced. That includes 61 percent of Independents and a third of Democrats.

And if you wonder who is responsible for this, you need to look no further than a memorandum—a guideline—that was issued in 2021 from Secretary Mayorkas. According to news accounts, Secretary Mayorkas issued a memorandum to Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials saying:

> The fact an individual is a removable noncitizen therefore should not alone be the basis of an enforcement action against them.

Think about that. What he is saying is that, just because somebody broke the law, it doesn't mean you have to enforce the law against them—in fact, that you shouldn't enforce the law against them. That is not what the law is about. This is absolutely stunning.

When you are in the private sector and somebody is not doing their job, you hold them accountable. We need to hold accountable the people who have opened our southern border.

Madam President, 57 percent believe that there has been a willful disregard. And not only do those people in our country believe that, but the U.S. House of Representatives has passed an impeachment resolution condemning Secretary Mayorkas, for ''willful and systematic refusal to comply with [current U.S. immigration] law'' and for ''breach of public trust.''

Impeachment is serious, and these allegations are serious. We in the U.S. Senate need to treat them with that level of seriousness.

We have seen an open border policy from this administration. Secretary

Mayorkas is responsible for carrying out the policy. It is now our duty, as a U.S. Senate, to have the trial to determine guilt or innocence. This is a constitutional responsibility. However, it appears that our leader and the Democrats are determined to table this, to set it aside in a manner that is unprecedented. It has never happened that the U.S. Senate has refused to take up the charges.

Folks, we don't need to be breaking more norms in the U.S. Senate. We are abdicating our constitutional responsibility if we do not hold this trial.

The people responsible need to be held accountable. We need to hear the evidence. So why don't the Democrats want to hold this trial? Well, perhaps because they are afraid of the American public hearing again how bad the situation at the southern border is, the 9.2 million people coming in here. Or perhaps they don't want to know how this administration and Secretary Mayorkas is abusing the parole function.

Parole is a function that allows the executive branch to bring in foreigners. It is supposed to be done, according to the Immigration and Naturalization Act, on a case-by-case basis, only in instances of extreme humanitarian need or in the best interest of the country. Under the Obama and Trump administrations, it happened about 5,600 times a year—5,600 times a year. Last year alone, this Biden administration paroled into the country 1.2 million people. We are doing whole classes of people. It is a clear abuse of power.

This administration is also abusing the asylum system, and Secretary Mayorkas is overseeing the Department of Homeland Security with both this new policy in parole and what is going on in asylum.

And think about this: Say you are somebody who comes across that border, and you were granted parole to get to this country, like Jose Ibarra, the Venezuelan accused of killing Laken Riley, and you get into this country. What is the first thing you are doing? You are contacting folks back home to tell them what happened to you.

This creates more incentive for people to come here illegally. It is part of why we have this problem. We need to explore topics like this.

Or perhaps the Democrats know how bad this is and don't want to defend the catastrophe that is going on at the southern border. They don't want to have to defend this administration's policy, what Secretary Mayorkas has been doing with regard to parole. Maybe they think it is bad, too, and don't want to have to defend it.

But whatever the reason, if our leader does not have a trial, it will be the first time this has happened. It will be unprecedented, and we will be breaking, again, another norm for the U.S. Senate.

Impeachment is serious. These charges are serious. The American people deserve an answer. We need to have a trial. I call on my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to insist upon a trial and uphold our constitutional authority. Let's have a trial so that we can hear and determine the guilt and innocence. That is what the American people deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, next week, we are scheduled to begin a trial of the Secretary of Homeland Security. It doesn't begin a conversation about homeland security in our country. That conversation started years ago now.

The American people are incredibly frustrated with what they are seeing on the southern border, and they keep saying it over and over again—remarkably so in a nation where inflation continues to be stubbornly high, where it is harder and harder to afford a carton of eggs and gasoline and all of the basics of life. In all of the areas that you would think the economy would be the No. 1 issue in the Nation, actually, national security and border security end up being No. 1, regardless of what State you live in. This is no longer a border State issue. Americans feel this is a problem.

Well, they should. In the past 3 years, more people have illegally crossed our southern border than in the previous 12 years combined, and it is not close—the number. We are approaching 8 million people who have illegally crossed our southern border just in the last 3 years.

Cities feel it. Americans feel it. School districts feel it. Communities feel it. Homeless shelters feel it. It continues to spiral into our country.

This is not some accident of migration, as the administration tries to say over and over again—that there is global migration that is happening everywhere. This was a series of Executive orders that were done in 2021 that were intentionally designed to change what is happening at our southern border, and they certainly have.

Decisions were made in 2021 by the Biden administration to be able to shift multiple things, starting with loosening enforcement. On day one of the Biden administration, stop any construction of the wall and announce it publicly: We are no longer going to do wall construction, not even repair.

Step No. 2, dramatically loosen the actual enforcement within the country so that fewer people would actually be deported when they came. So if you crossed the border illegally, it is a much greater likelihood that, once you get across, you will not be deported.

The third thing, they changed the ''Remain in Mexico'' policy—that simple policy to say that, yes, you can request asylum, but you can't just be released in the country. They shifted it immediately, and shifted it from ''remain at the border or in Mexico.'' Rather than being in detention, you could be released anywhere in the country on your own recognizance and to be able to go anywhere you want. That dramatically increased the number of people who were crossing.

They also shifted where the State Department is no longer negotiating deals with Central America—Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador—to be able to stop migrants from moving through that direction. They have withdrawn those agreements from Central America, and the State Department stopped putting pressure on recalcitrant countries that wouldn't take their people back.

These are not accidental things. These were intentional actions.

But what I don't think the administration intended was how this has spiraled out of control. They sowed to the wind, and the Nation is reaping the whirlwind of it—almost 8 million people now who have illegally crossed our border.

And now it is no longer people from the Western Hemisphere. Literally, it is people from all over the world. Pick up any tracking, at any point, to be able to track what is happening at the border, and you will find thousands of people who are crossing from China, from Russia, from Pakistan, from West Africa, from all over Asia.

When I talk to people at the border—and I do talk often to them—one of the first things I ask is: What are the trends? What are you seeing?

And for the past year and a half, they continue to tell me: a greater and greater number of non-Spanish speakers who are crossing that border, who are males in their twenties, from all over the world, who are coming.

Just in the past year, we have picked up individuals who have al-Shabaab terrorist connections, picked up folks with Hezbollah terrorist connections, picked up folks with all kinds of different connections to all kinds of different terrorist organizations. And we have been able to pick up some, but some have gotten through or have been released. This is an issue I continue to be able to bring up that this administration is not managing. In the past year, there were over 70,000 individuals who were identified as what was defined as a ''special interest alien.'' These individuals crossed our border. The administration designated them as a ''special interest alien'' and then released them on their own recognizance into our country.

Let me clarify what that term is. A ''special interest alien''—this is their definition—is a non-U.S. person who, based on the analysis of travel patterns, potentially poses a national security threat to the United States or its interests. Madam President, 70,000 of those in the past year have crossed the border and have been released into the United States.

This is no longer a simple migration issue; this is a national security issue, and it is one this administration has not only invited but they have now chosen to not even take seriously.

This body knows full well—I believe there are some things that can only be done by acts of this body: changing the definition of ''asylum,'' increasing the number of detention beds. There are multiple issues that we need to do and that we should take responsibility for. But this body should not sit and say that nothing can be done when the White House has authorities they are not using. We should do our job. The White House should do their job. Currently, that is not happening, and the threat continues to increase.

Next week, we start an impeachment trial which has never happened in the history of the Department of Homeland Security—that they would have an impeachment of the Secretary. That starts. But can I say to you, even if the Secretary is removed, the White House still created this policy. The Obama administration had multiple leaders in that role, but they had one policy. The Trump administration had multiple leaders in that role; they had one policy. This White House has a policy of maintaining an open border, and until this White House changes that policy and actually uses the authority they already have, none of this is going to change.

So my challenge is to us. We should do our job and work on the issues we should do, but this White House needs to step up because right now, they are just hoping that none of those 70,000 people they defined as a national security risk actually does an act of terrorism or crime in the country.

I don't want to just hope that someone we have defined as a national security risk doesn't actually carry it out. I think we need to actually enforce the law, I think we need to discourage illegal immigration, and I think we need to actually have a secure border, and I don't believe I am alone in that in this body or in our great country.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and globalist Democrats have been derelict in their duty to secure the border under President Joe Biden—I repeat: derelict in their duty.

Our border is the least secure it has been in the history of our country. In fact, it is almost nonexistent. At least 9 million illegal immigrants have entered our country since the beginning of this administration. Our Border Patrol agents are overwhelmed and receive such little support from the Biden administration to enforce our laws that they have been forced to release millions of illegal immigrants into the United States.

Those who are released on parole are given work permits. Tell me this: How does handing out work permits discourage illegal immigration? It doesn't. How do these actions secure the border? They don't. We might as well start mailing every criminal, drug trafficker, and terrorist an open invitation to invade our country.

I have spoken numerous times on the floor to highlight stories of Americans dying at the hands of illegal aliens: 12-year-old Travis Wolfe of Missouri, 22-year-old Laken Riley of Georgia, Washington State Trooper Chris Gadd. The tragic deaths are a direct result of Secretary Mayorkas's inaction. How many more Americans have to die before the globalist Democratic Party takes meaningful action to secure the border? This madness must end. Americans deserve to be safe from the drug traffickers, terrorists, and murderers who are flooding into our country.

The number of people crossing into the United States who are on the Terrorist Watchlist is unprecedented.

Fentanyl flows freely across our borders and is killing more and more Americans every day. Law enforcement officers in Alabama tell me time and time again that their officers must wear heavy equipment and carry Narcan spray to protect themselves from the fentanyl that is pouring into our communities. Three years ago, they had never heard the word ''fentanyl,'' says our police chief in the city of Montgomery.

The cartels are trafficking professionals. They are managing the human and drug trafficking at our border. This is a billion-dollar industry that the Biden administration is turning its back on and allowing.

Secretary Mayorkas has completely—completely, 110 percent—refused to do his job. He swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States from all enemies, foreign and domestic. Can any one of us seriously say that Secretary Mayorkas has upheld his oath of office?

Progressive Democrats are wanting to try to table the Articles of Impeachment and sweep Biden's border bloodbath under the rug. Every House Democrat already voted. They have already voted to save Mayorkas's job. Globalist Democrats are lying to themselves and risking the lives of American citizens. Senator SCHUMER and the progressive Democrats can't say they want to fix our border while voting to save Secretary Mayorkas's job.

Despite the critical need to secure our borders and discourage illegal immigration, Secretary Mayorkas travels the world discussing national security with our strategic partners while his own country is being invaded. It is embarrassing.

Last month, Secretary Mayorkas was in Guatemala discussing migration flows from South America to the United States. Have these folks done anything to stop the border invasion from their countries? They have done absolutely nothing.

In February, Mayorkas traveled to Austria to speak with Chinese officials about counternarcotic efforts. Did he discuss with them the flood of Chinese illegal immigrants coming to the United States through the southwest border?

Madam President, 22,000 Chinese nationals have been arrested by Border Patrol agents at the southwest border since October and released into our country. Most of these individuals are single adult males of military age. Yet the media tries to act like all these people who cross the border are nice people, nice women and children. Some of them are, but most are not.

This invasion is more than a border crisis; it is a national security crisis. Yet I seriously doubt that Secretary Mayorkas even brought that up in his meeting with the Chinese officials a few months ago.

In February, Secretary Mayorkas was in Germany for the Munich Security Conference. The Munich Security Conference is the largest international security meeting in the world. Secretary Mayorkas was there giving speeches on strengthening global security and partnership. Americans are dying—dying—from our dangerous open borders, and he is talking about other borders across the world. The Secretary responsible for securing our borders is collecting passport stamps while lecturing other countries on their national security. Our allies must be laughing at us. The Secretary's priority should be here, securing our borders, not somebody else's, and protecting our citizens, not somebody else's.

President Biden has made the United States a joke on the world stage—an absolute joke. We need to get our house in order. We are in trouble.

So far, there has been only talk as far as border security is concerned for the last 3 years. Now is the time for every Senator to go on the record. If you are at all concerned about the drugs and criminals flooding into our country and moving to your State, you will vote for a full and fair trial. This is not a gray area.

Secretary Mayorkas has intentionally—intentionally—failed to do his job. It is time that the Senate take action. The families of Laken Riley, Travis Wolfe, Trooper Gadd, and countless others deserve—they deserve a fair trial.

I will be voting to hold Secretary Mayorkas accountable, and I ask my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, first, I would like to congratulate and commend the comments by the previous speaker, the Senator from Alabama, who makes important points that are important for the history as well as the future of this country.

I rise today, as he did, to speak about the impeachment of the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Secretary Mayorkas. I bring with me today to the floor ''The Federalist Papers'' written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay and refer to Federalist 65.

As I stand here and look at the pages in here and pages in the book and the

pages in the front of the Senate Chamber, I would recommend to them that they read ''The Federalist Papers.'' I recommend the same to my intern who is here on the floor today, Eve Hawkins, and to the students in the Galleries. There is a lot to learn about the country and a lot to learn about our history, our heritage, and the reason we have the Nation we have today.

Federalist 65 talks about impeachment. This is about the abuse and violation of public trust. Hamilton goes on to say that impeachment is an important power to remedy ''injuries done immediately to the society itself.'' This is the case we are here to talk about today and why I bring the book along.

The charges against Secretary Mayorkas are serious, are substantive. The facts in support of them are compelling. They deserve careful consideration by this body. Secretary Mayorkas must be held accountable. His duty as Secretary is to protect the homeland. That is not what has happened. Instead, he refuses to secure the border.

The House charges that Secretary Mayorkas has ''willfully and systematically refused,'' they say, ''to enforce border security laws.'' Secretary Mayorkas wants to open our borders so the entire world, from Beijing to Belize, can come in. He has turned a secure border into a welcome center.

Remember, in September of 2021, the Secretary issued a shocking priorities memorandum. Our country has been shaken as a result of that memorandum, and it has not been forgotten. The memo severely limited who ICE was allowed to arrest—that is Immigration and Customs Enforcement. He also revived the catch-and-release program and abused parole laws. In fact, the Secretary bragged on MSNBC that he had—Secretary Mayorkas—''rescinded so many Trump immigration policies, it would take so much time to list them.'' For people who prefer a secure border for our Nation and care about our Nation's security, this is an admission of willingness to ignore the law of the land. It also provided an open invitation for illegal immigrants or, as the Biden administration calls them, ''newcomers.''

After 3 years of open borders, the number of illegal crossings is up to at least 9.2 million people into this country illegally.

Crimes are up. Drug overdose deaths across America are up. What about the number of deportations of criminal illegal immigrants? Well, they are not being sent back. Deportations are down. Arrests are down. Illegal immigrants are not being detained. Murderers, rapists, other criminals—they are not being deported. That is a decision that is coming out of this administration and the Secretary of Homeland Security. Americans like Laken Riley and Ruby Garcia—they have been brutally murdered. America is less safe.

Secretary Mayorkas claims—he has come to the Senate and claimed; he has come to the House and claimed—that the border is secure. People laugh knowing how untrue it is. It is a lie to the Senate, a lie to the House. It is such a serious matter, though; it is hard to laugh.

Meanwhile, our country is losing control of our borders to the cartels and to the criminals. Every fairminded person knows that these are serious charges, and the Senate must hold a full and fair trial. It is our constitutional duty. The House has done its job. Yet Senate Democrats—each and every one of them—are refusing to do theirs.

It seems, this week, that the Democratic leader is scheming—scheming—to bury these charges against Mayorkas without a full and fair trial. The Constitution demands there be one. The Senate majority leader's actions would turn the Senate from the world's greatest deliberative body into the world's quickest dismissal body.

The Senate majority leader is not here on the floor today. He seems to be afraid of allowing the case against the lawless actions of the Secretary of Homeland Security to even be presented to the American people. His plan to bypass the trial breaks the rules, breaks the standards, and breaks the traditions of this body.

Let us set the record straight: The Senate has always done its constitutional duty. We know the history. The House has sent impeachment articles to the Senate 21 times in the history of this country, and the Senate has never dismissed those articles without the official first resigning. Seventeen of those cases went to trial right here in the Senate and ended in decisions of either guilty or not guilty. Three of the cases were dismissed during the trial. The reason why is that the official resigned or they were expelled before a verdict was reached. One of them never went to trial because the official resigned before the trial began.

The Democratic leader doesn't seem to care about any of this, not at all. He wants to ignore the charges against Mayorkas without a trial at all. This would be disastrous for the Senate and for our Nation.

So, within the next week, the Senate Democrats must make a choice: Will they provide the transparency that the American people demand, the accountability that American citizens deserve? Or will the Democrats—each and every one of them—vote to bury these serious charges before the Senate is allowed to hear a single piece of evidence?

The Senate Democrats have now established a history of coddling criminals, people who have come to this country illegally. All 100 Senators have a solemn responsibility to work to keep our Nation safe and secure. Without a full and fair trial, there will be no accountability.

Republicans want the Senate to do what it has always done—allow the House to present its case, allow the Senate to hold a full trial, and let the American people hear the truth. Holding a full and fair trial is a matter of transparency and accountability. Avoiding a trial would be an act of partisanship at the expense of public trust.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I did not intend to speak on Secretary Mayorkas, but I want to say a few words before I get to the content of my speech.

What I would say is that I respectfully disagree with my colleagues and my friends on the Republican side of the aisle and with the politics that are being played.

I was the Governor of the State of West Virginia, and I made an awful lot of appointments under what we call will and pleasure. I asked the State senate to confirm people I thought would work and do a great job for the people of West Virginia. It was my responsibility. If it went wrong or they did not basically fulfill their duties, that was my responsibility. If they had criminal charges brought against them, whether they were civil or criminal, then the courts would take it. They have a right to remove, and I would have been respectfully obligated to remove. And, if not, they had a right to impeach.

We are not there. Everyone seems to be upset that Secretary Mayorkas, whom I know to be a good man, is being ostracized for doing the job he has done, that he has been basically directed to do by his boss, the President of the United States. If you are unhappy, go to the polls. It is the boss, OK? That is where it is. I think it has been a disaster. The first 2 or 3 years, right now, have been a disaster.

I have asked—I have begged—the President to change: Secure our border. It has to be secured. It is the most dangerous thing we face.

And when I have said that, I have said: Declare a national emergency.

Well, the mistakes the President has made, basically, were tried to be corrected when he supported the piece of legislation we had before us, about 2 or 3 weeks ago, that was negotiated. The lead negotiator, I think, is one of the most honorable people we have in the Senate, Republican and our friend JAMES LANKFORD from Oklahoma—Senator LANKFORD. I think it was a tremendous piece of legislation that would have given us more security at the border, and it would have stopped all the illegal flow. But it was still politicized, and it didn't happen, and I think Ali Mayorkas is being blamed for that too.

I am sorry. It was not him. And for us to go through a trial with what precious time we have left and all the challenges we have—let's just vote on securing the border. Once and for all, secure the border. Let's vote on taking care of our responsibilities around the world and at home—securing our border and helping our allies defend their own. That is what we should be doing.

Everything is politicized to the point now that we can't get beyond whose fault it is rather than say: Hey, we are Americans. If I am a Democrat and you are a Republican and vice versa, you are not my enemy. You are my colleague whom I might have differences with, but we can work it out. No one wants to find that sensible middle anymore. It is a bad word—''compromise.'' You never hear it anymore.

But to blame Secretary Mayorkas for your thinking he didn't do the job or what he said was in violation of the Constitution is ridiculous. It is basically something that I can't wait to vote against and get out as soon as it comes here. Why did they wait until next week? We could have voted on it today or tomorrow. Why? Did they want to let it fester a little bit? It doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever.

With that being said, I would hope that we would come to our senses and get to the real problems we have in America, and let's try to help the people who are living through some very high pricing. As far as food, the basic necessities of life are very difficult for an awful lot of people in my State of West Virginia, and I am going to do all I can to help them. But, with that, this is not the way to get our job done—to waste more time on something that is so senseless and reckless.

S.J. RES. 61

Madam President, let me just say I am rising in support of my resolution with Senator CRAMER and my colleague Senator CAPITO that would overturn the Federal Highway Administration's greenhouse gas reduction rule.

We all have a responsibility to the climate—we all are here to do it better—but to be practical about what we are doing, to be sensible. And if it is not feasible, it is not reasonable to go down this path.

The rule is another example of the administration trying to implement laws or bills they wanted but bills they didn't pass.

We are saying: Stay within the confines of the laws we pass.

It is an unworkable, one-size-fits-all approach. It burdens States with setting and enforcing declining emissions standards for travel on highways. It makes absolutely no effort to consider the unique needs of rural States like West Virginia.

Let me explain to you—I and my colleague Senator CAPITO—where we live. It is the most beautiful State—we consider it to be—in the country, with the most beautiful, hard-working people in the country. We all feel that way or we wouldn't be here representing our States. My friend from North Dakota here, Senator CRAMER, feels the same about North Dakota. And I agree with everybody, but we are defending it.

I have a State where I don't have one city with over a 50,000 population. So I am very rural—1.7 million-plus. The bottom line is we don't have a high density of emissions. We don't have that. To make this into common sense, what they are trying to do is to say that you must—wherever you are now, you must reduce, reduce, reduce. The only way that we can get to where they want us to get to is to quit driving, to quit basically transporting, to quit delivering our food or all of our necessities of life. Don't go to work. Stay home.

That doesn't make any sense at all. For them to go down this one-size-fits-all makes no sense. It does not only undermine the very purpose for our highway system; it just isn't feasible in rural areas without other transportation options.

Our economy would grind to a halt. I have always said: If it is not feasible, it is not reasonable.

Even if the rule were reasonable, it wouldn't matter because the administration simply does not have the authority to do this. They do not have the authority. Transportation—DOT—does not have the authority to do what they are trying to do with this rule.

We know this because, when we were writing the bipartisan infrastructure law, we debated whether to give them that authority. That was part of the negotiations we were going through—Democrats and Republicans—saying together: Should they have that authority?

Guess what. Unanimously, we decided against it. It wasn't in their jurisdiction.

So nothing in any law that Congress has passed allows this administration or any administration to burden States with these measures in order to advance their radical climate agenda, and I say that because I think the President is being ill-advised, with his climate advisers taking him down the primrose path.

It is making a lot of people uncomfortable, with thinking: The government is trying to tell me how I am going to be transported, how I am going to use what vehicle, what I can buy; and they are trying to bribe me with $7,500. And, if that doesn't work, we will pass a piece of legislation that makes it law to not even manufacture gasoline engines.

It is crazy, just absolutely crazy. I have always believed in market-driven products. If you give me a good product in a market where I can make a free decision and decide whether I can afford it or not, whether it enhances my life, and it is something that I desire, I will make the decision. Don't force me with limiting my options. That is all. And, when it is changing and when you do something better and it is something that gives me a better quality of opportunities in my life, that will make the difference.

I can tell you the American public, the American consumer—and I say this for all women in my family: They were born with a certain gene. They know how to shop. They know how to compare. They know how to make a good deal. And they have something that men don't have, and they have more sense than we have when it comes to buying things and living within your means.

So with that, I can tell you: Let the market do its job.

So I introduced a resolution of disapproval with Senator CRAMER and Senator CAPITO because we know that this power grab is unreasonable, economically irresponsible, and, most importantly, unlawful. It will be devastating for the rural communities and transportation industries in West Virginia and North Dakota and across all of America.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be able to speak prior to the scheduled rollcall vote: Myself for up to 5 minutes, Senator CARPER for up to 10 minutes, and Senator CRAMER for up to 7 minutes.

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

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I come here and join my fellow colleagues from West Virginia and from North Dakota to offer my strong support of the resolution offered by Senator CRAMER of North Dakota.

Senator MANCHIN has covered a lot of this, but I think I want to re-cover it because I think it is very important.

The Federal Highway Administration issued the final rule, which we are challenging today, without having the necessary legal authority from Congress. The rule will force our State departments of transportation and metropolitan planning organizations to develop and set their own declining greenhouse gas emissions targets. State DOTs and MPOs are also going to be required to meet their own targets. If they fail to meet their targets or fail to make significant progress toward them, they are required to develop new plans to ensure that they do meet their targets.

Senator MANCHIN described how difficult it will be for a sparsely populated and, basically, rural area, such as West Virginia, to make a measurable difference in our greenhouse emissions in our transportation sector because, you know, we are in pretty good shape as it is right now.

The expected outcome of this requirement is that it will force State DOTs and MPOs to use their highway funding for ineffective emissions reduction projects rather than on projects that will improve the safety and efficiency of roads and bridges. This restriction on the ability of State DOTs to pick the projects that address their communities' unique transportation needs is unacceptable, and it runs counter to our agreement for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

When we were negotiating that legislation in our committee, we specifically considered giving the Federal Highway Administration the authority to impose a greenhouse gas performance measure and associated targets, but we ultimately rejected that idea. We make the law, and we rejected putting this into our established law for very good reasons.

My colleagues and I have also warned FHWA multiple times that it really lacks the authority for this rule.

In October 2022, in response to the publication of the proposed rule, Senator CRAMER and I, along with 25 of our Senate colleagues, sent a letter to FHWA stating that they did not have the authority to issue the proposed greenhouse gas rule.

We further reminded FHWA Administrator Bhatt of that lack of authority at an oversight hearing just last June.

Despite our clear communication with FHWA and the fact that this rule violates the carefully negotiated bipartisan agreement in the IIJA, Congress must once again address the Biden administration's regulatory overreach.

I would also note that it is not just Congress that has challenged the FHWA's authority to issue a greenhouse gas rule. In two separate legal actions—one in Texas and the other in Kentucky—a total of 22 States, with support from adversely impacted industries, successfully challenged this greenhouse gas rule.

While the States have prevailed over FHWA in Federal Court, I also believe that Congress has a duty to make clear when a Federal Agency has clearly—clearly—exceeded its authority.

Therefore, to ensure that there is no ambiguity whatsoever regarding FHWA's authority, I urge my colleagues to support Senator CRAMER's resolution.

I yield the floor to my friend from Delaware, Senator CARPER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I thank the Senator from West Virginia, my native State, for yielding to me. Out of the three Senators in the U.S. Senate from West Virginia, today we are all speaking on this proposal by Senator CRAMER.

I rise today in opposition to S.J. Res. 61, a Congressional Review Act resolution that would overturn the Federal Highway Administration's greenhouse gas performance rule. This rule is critical to helping the United States meet our climate goals, and I want to start off by laying out the scale of the challenges we face in addressing climate change and the climate crisis.

All of us know by now that we are confronted almost daily by signs that our planet is literally on fire, and as the days and weeks pass, the urgency to act only grows stronger. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the United States just experienced the warmest winter on record—not ''one'' of the warmest winters on record but ''the'' warmest winter on record. And last year, 2023, was the world's warmest year on record—not ''one'' of the warmest years on record but ''the.'' This is not a mere coincidence but an unabated body of evidence that shows our planet continues to grow warmer and warmer.

Extreme weather is affecting communities across our Nation, from hurricanes to drought, to flooding made worse by rising sea levels.

Last year, the Environment and Public Works Committee that I am privileged to lead, along with Senator SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO of West Virginia, held a hearing where we heard firsthand about the negative impacts of extreme heat on our transportation systems and the punishing effects—truly punishing effects—it could have on the health of our transportation workforce.

The science is clear that greenhouse gas emissions are having a substantial effect on our changing climate.

So where do those emissions come from? Where do they come from? Well, the transportation sector in America is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. Let me say that again. The transportation sector is the largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, accounting for nearly 30 percent of our emissions economywide. The transportation sector is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. After that, another 28 percent comes from our powerplants generating electricity, and yet another 25 percent comes from our manufacturing operations, like cement plants and like steel mills. This means that the cars, the trucks, the buses driven on our highways every day are a major source of the emissions that are warming this planet that we call home.

That is why the Federal Highway Administration's greenhouse gas performance rule is so important and must be upheld by Congress. It is simply not possible to meet our climate goals without addressing emissions from the transportation sector.

For my colleagues who might not be familiar with the Federal Highway Administration's performance measure, I would like to take a couple of minutes to talk about what the rule actually does as well as what it does not do.

First, the rule provides a framework for States and metropolitan planning organizations to measure the amount of greenhouse gas emissions generated by vehicles on our Nation's highways. This rule does so by using longstanding authorities under the National Highway Performance Program, which have existed in statutes since 2012.

Under the National Highway Performance Program, the Federal Highway Administration can enact measures to assess the performance of our Nation's highways, including for environmental sustainability.

The Federal Highway Administration has already enacted performance measures in other areas, including safety and congestion.

During negotiations on the bipartisan infrastructure law, some of us wanted to require the Federal Highway Administration to set a greenhouse gas performance measure. That is what we wanted to do. We couldn't get bipartisan agreement to require a greenhouse gas performance measure. The Federal Highway Administration used the discretionary authority it has had since 2012—for 12 years—to set performance measures relating to the environmental sustainability of our highways.

In addition to measuring emissions, States must also establish targets for reducing those emissions over time. However, the rule does not take a one-size-fits all approach. Instead, it gives each State—each State—the flexibility to set its own reduction target. Let me say that again. The rule does not take a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it gives each State the flexibility to set its own reduction target.

It is also important that our colleagues understand that the greenhouse gas rule does not impose any penalties on States that, for whatever reason, are unable to meet their targets that they have set—not that someone else has set; that they have set. The rule does not require States to transfer highway funding to other modes of transportation or to pay a financial cost if their emissions do not decline in accordance with that State's targets.

That means that under this rule, none of our colleagues' States will see a reduction in the highway funding or any change in the way that highway funds are administered in their States. That bears repeating. This means that under this rule, none of our colleagues' States will see a reduction in their highway funding or any change in the way that highway funds are administered in their States.

In fact, Congress specifically authorized funding the bipartisan infrastructure law to help States meet their emission targets. We established a new Carbon Reduction Formula Program that provides funding to every State for projects that reduce emissions from transportation.

We also provide $7.5 billion—billion with a ''b''—in the bipartisan infrastructure law to build out a national network of electric vehicle charging stations.

Our States are far from being punished. In fact, they have been provided with historic amounts of funding to address climate change.

In closing, let me just say that I believe we have an important choice to make here: Are we going to continue to ignore the significant impact that greenhouse gas emissions are having on our planet or are we going to take reasonable steps, as the Federal Highway Administration has done with this rulemaking, to address the problem head-on?

I hope that our colleagues will join me and others in opposing this Congressional Review Act resolution.

Let me just close with this for another minute, if I could. We have some young peopling sitting up here. They are pages. We call them pages. They are nominated by Senators from all over the country—Democratic Senators, Republican Senators. They come here to go to school. They haven't graduated from high school yet. They come here to pick up their schoolwork, usually in high school, and maybe stay for 1 year, 1 academic year, and eventually go back home, finish their education, and go on to do amazing things. They are just wonderful young people. I am very proud of them—the ones from Delaware and every other State as well.

They have a bright future. They have a bright future. There are also some incredibly scary threats to that future. One of those is that we live on a planet that is growing hotter, growing hotter, and growing hotter. The question is, Are we going to do anything about it? We are trying very hard to do that.

The good news is, we can do something about it, turn it around, and reverse it in ways that create jobs and economic opportunity. We have adopted those in legislation, in the Inflation Reduction Act, in the bipartisan transportation bill, and the treaty called the Kigali treaty. We have done a lot. The key is not just doing those things but continuing to do those things—continue to do those things.

With that, I hope that our colleagues will join me in opposing this Congressional Review Act resolution.

I say this as one who oftentimes works with folks—both my colleagues from West Virginia—on all kinds of issues. This is just one where we don't see eye to eye. My hope is that our colleagues from both sides of the aisle will vote no.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The junior Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, thank you for the recognition.

At the outset, let me say thank you to Senators MANCHIN and CAPITO for their passionate support and their words today in support of this joint resolution, this Congressional Review Act resolution. I also want to thank the chairman of the EPW, the distinguished Senator from Delaware and my friend. As he just said, we have worked closely together on lots of things. It is a great committee. It is fun to work on. And, again, we just don't see eye to eye on this one, but I just want to offer my respect for the good work that we all do together. I thank the Senator.

Madam President, few things are more frustrating in government than unelected bureaucrats asserting authority they don't have and foisting Federal mediocrity on the excellence of States. Shortly, the Senate will take up my bipartisan resolution that overturns the Biden administration's obviously illegal—regardless of how you might feel about the merits, an obviously illegal rule that requires State departments of transportation to measure CO_2 tailpipe emissions and then set declining targets for vehicles traveling on the highway systems of their respective States.

This rule is wrong on so many levels and has already been overturned by courts in Texas and Kentucky. Now we, the elected policymakers in our system, have the opportunity to correct course and spare the taxpayers the gross expense of litigating this demonstration of bureaucratic arrogance.

When the Environment and Public Works Committee negotiated the highway bill, we considered giving this authority to the Department of Transportation. But after the hearings and the deliberations, the committee chose not to grant such authority to the Agency, and we passed the bill out unanimously. And it became the foundation for the broader bipartisan bill known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

When the ''bipartisan gang'' put their proposal together, they, too, chose to leave this authority out of the bill. These decisions were not accidental; they were intentional.

When we pointed this out during the Department of Transportation's official comment period, the Federal Highway Administration provided a very novel rationale. Get this, now. They argued that since Congress was aware of their plans to promulgate this rule and did not explicitly bar it, ''Congress intended to leave such determinations to''—get this, now—''Agency expertise to be handled via regulatory authority.''

That is not just arrogance; that is arrogance on steroids.

Here is what the late great Winston Churchill had to say about expertise in government:

> Nothing would be more fatal than for the government of States to get into the hands of the experts. Expert knowledge is limited knowledge: and the unlimited ignorance of the plain man who knows only what hurts is a safer guide, than any vigorous direction of a specialised character.

Congress does not ''leave'' determinations to Agencies. Congress either grants such authority or it does not. And if it does not, the Agency does not possess that power.

In fact, let me read a couple of lines from the courts who have already ruled on this issue.

> If the people, through Congress, believe that the states should spend the time and money necessary to measure and report [greenhouse gas] emissions and set declining emission targets, they may do so by amending Section 150 or passing a new law. But an agency cannot make this decision for the people. An agency can only do what the people authorize it to do, and the plain language of Section 150(c)(3) and its related statutory provisions demonstrate the [Department of Transportation] was not authorized to enact the 2023 Rule.

That was Judge James Wesley Hendrix of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas.

Judge Benjamin Beaton of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Kentucky wrote:

> If the Administrator—

referring to the Federal highway administrator.

> If the Administrator were allowed to shove national greenhouse-gas policy into the mouths of uncooperative state Departments of Transportation, this would corrupt the separation of sovereigns central to our lasting and vibrant system of federalism. Neither the Constitution nor the Administrative Procedure Act authorizes administrative ventriloquism.

Colleagues, the absence of a prohibition is not a license for bureaucracy to do whatever it pleases. These court rulings underscore Agencies must abide by the law, not invent the authority they desire.

Several States have resoundingly rejected this illegal rule. Several State departments of transportation objected to it in writing. Several States joined this litigation, and 50 Senators have cosponsored this Congressional Review Act.

Let me just quote a couple of States. The Arizona Department of Transportation:

> Arizona Department of Transportation disagrees with the justification provided in the NPRM regarding the legal authority for Federal Highway Administration to establish a greenhouse gas emissions performance measure.

The Michigan Department of Transportation writes:

> MDOT is apprehensive about supporting new measures not explicitly authorized by Congress . . . Therefore, there is no provision in federal law requiring the Federal Highway Administration to establish a greenhouse gas measure.

Twenty attorneys general from Montana, Virginia, Georgia, Ohio, and a number of other States wrote:

> The proposed greenhouse gas measure would be a serious revision of what Congress has written, and Congress has not given the Federal Highway Administration such editorial power.

Madam President, the Biden administration should have never introduced this rule, but now we, the policymaking branch of government, must end it. I urge all of my colleagues to stand up for the Senate and vote for this restoration of article I powers. Vote yes on this Congressional Review Act resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, S.J. Res. 61 is considered read a third time.

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

VOTE ON S.J. RES. 61

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 121 Leg.]

YEAS—53

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

NAYS—47

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

The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 61) was passed, as follows:

S.J. RES. 61

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to ''National Performance Management Measures; Assessing Performance of the National Highway System, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Measure'' (88 Fed. Reg. 85364 (December 7, 2023)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RELATING TO ''STANDARD FOR DETERMINING JOINT EMPLOYER STATUS''

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.J. Res. 98, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 98) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to ''Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL COLLECTIVELY TO THE WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES WHO JOINED THE WORKFORCE DURING WORLD WAR II

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 85, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 85) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the women in the United States who joined the workforce during World War II, providing the aircraft, vehicles, weaponry, ammunition, and other material to win the war and who were referred to as ''Rosie the Riveter'', in recognition of their contributions to the United States and the inspiration they have provided to ensuing generations.

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

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and that the motion 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 concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 85) was agreed to.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RELATING TO ''STANDARD FOR DETERMINING JOINT EMPLOYER STATUS''—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 623

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I would like to talk for a few moments about and I am going to have a motion about the impeachment of Secretary Mayorkas.

As you know, Madam President, our government is one of laws, not people—laws, not people. As you also know, the U.S. Senate is built on precedent and custom and history and the law, not political expedience.

We in the Senate are supposed to listen to the American people, not ignore them. One of the ways we do that is by playing by the rules we have all agreed to—all of the rules, all of the time.

Now, my Senate Democratic colleagues today or at least very shortly, however, may be willing to jeopardize centuries of this stability—the stability that this body has wrought and lives by—for short-term political advantage.

We all know what is going on here. We all know exactly what is going on here. For the very first time in our Nation's history, my Senate Democratic colleagues are seeking to table—maybe even dismiss—an impeachment by the United States House of Representatives of a sitting Cabinet official without holding a full trial. If my Senate colleagues do that, they will be summoning spirits that they won't be able to control.

Let me say that again—the United States House of Representatives. We are not talking here about some ''snow bro'' who lives off Chicken McNuggets and weed and happens to have an opinion. The United States House of Representatives, elected by all of the American people, spent months investigating our border policy and Secretary Mayorkas's role in it, and then they thoughtfully crafted and they passed with a majority vote two Articles of Impeachment. Now my Senate Democratic colleagues want to toss them out in the trash like a week-old tuna salad sandwich without hearing from either side.

In the more than two centuries that this body has existed, we have never once tabled an impeachment—not once. The Senate has never dismissed impeachment articles under these circumstances either—neither tabled nor dismissed.

If the Senate dismisses these charges without a full trial, it will be the first time in the Senate's long history that it has dismissed impeachment charges against an official it has jurisdiction over without the official first resigning, and that is just a fact of history.

The Senate has the responsibility to hold this trial, and everybody in this body knows it. Yet my Senate Democratic colleagues seem willing to forfeit our constitutional authority in order to bury the evidence of how bad the border crisis is.

Now, I, for one, want to hear the House's evidence, and Senate Republicans are offering our colleagues across the aisle—all of whom I respect, by the way—a menu of options for how to hear that evidence and listen to Secretary Mayorkas's defense without eroding democratic institutions.

If Democrats set a new precedent by making an impeachment trial impossible, as I am afraid they are going to try to do, they will be silencing the voices of the Americans who elected them, and they will have to own the decisions they will be making and bear the consequences tomorrow, and tomorrow may come sooner than they can imagine.

Apparently, my Democratic colleagues are really leaning in on their double standards. Whenever protecting democracy—have you heard that expression?—or upholding ''the rule of law''—have you heard my Democratic colleagues talk about the rule of law? I

have. I agree with them. Whenever they use those expressions but it becomes politically challenging, they seem happy to ignore the rule of law and the will of the people, and their political expedience is in full view today. I regret to say that.

We will see what my Democratic colleagues do with respect to my resolution and Senator LEE's resolution.

Senate Democrats, I am afraid, are silencing the American people who want their country's secure border back. The truth is that the American people are tired of the drug trafficking. They are tired of the human trafficking. They are tired of the sexual abuse of women and children. They are tired of the widespread illnesses. They are tired of the death. They are tired of the behavior of President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas with respect to the border. They are tired of the chaos. They believe it is chaotic by design, and they believe it is undermining their national security. And they are right. Now, the American people may be poorer under President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas, but they are not stupid. They are not stupid.

In total, more than 9 million people, foreign nationals, have crossed the southern border under President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas—9 million. That is four Nebraskas. Secretary Mayorkas doesn't have any idea who they are. He doesn't have any idea where they are. Customs and Border Protection also seized 53,000 pounds of fentanyl from 2021 to 2023. That is enough to kill every man, woman, and child on this planet, for God's sake—not the United States, this planet.

The southern border is an open, bleeding wound. Now, the majority of the House of Representatives reached that conclusion. That is why they voted to impeach Secretary Mayorkas. They have sent us their evidence, and that evidence alleges that Secretary Mayorkas's policies have made our immigration system septic. If I were Secretary Mayorkas, I would want to answer those allegations. As a Senator, I want to hear the evidence, and I know the American people want to hear the evidence.

These are serious charges. By tabling or dismissing the Articles of Impeachment without so much as a trial, like it was just spam in their inbox, my Senate Democratic colleagues are endorsing the Biden administration's lawless approach to the southern border. They are setting a precedent that the next administration can ignore the laws of Congress and the will of the American people as long as it advances the majority party's agenda. That is what they are saying.

Now, my resolution will give the procedures we need to set up the procedures we need to conduct this trial fairly and efficiently.

My resolution is modeled on the procedures that this body used during the second impeachment trial of President Trump. When President Trump's first impeachment came to the U.S. Senate, Senate Republicans were in the majority. You didn't see us trying to table that impeachment. You didn't see us trying to dismiss that impeachment because we believe in the rule of law all the time, not just when it is politically expedient. We heard the evidence. We did our job. And that is what we ought to do right now.

The proceedings set forth in my resolution are efficient; they are fair; they are honest. They will not uproot the longstanding precedent that we have given to Articles of Impeachment in the past. It will give the Articles of Impeachment serious consideration, as we have always done.

Here is my final point. If my Senate Democratic colleagues—let me say it again, each and every one of whom I respect—if they choose to ignore this impeachment, they will have placed their seal of approval on the lawlessness at the border and the chaos it has brought to so many American communities, and they will have ignored 200 years of Senate precedent—200 years. A charitable interpretation based on policy does not exist for what my Democratic colleagues are going to try to do. It is all based on raw, gut politics and they know it and I know it and everybody in this room knows it. Please don't do it. Please, my friends, don't do it. Please don't allow the Senate to rot from within. The American people deserve better.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 623, my resolution that I just talked about; further, that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object, Madam President. The Senator from Louisiana is my friend. We throw that term around here in the Senate, but it is true. I think he would say the same. We both serve on the Senate Judiciary Committee. We have worked on issues together. We have been adversaries, but we have done it respectfully, and it will continue, I hope, to this day.

But the gentleman, the Senator from Louisiana, brings to the floor of the Senate and to this debate special qualities. He sounds many times like a homespun backwoods lawyer. Don't be fooled. He is a graduate from a famous university in England—I have forgotten which one—Oxford, Cambridge, one of those. They are not in the Big 10, I am sure of that, but I know they are in England. I congratulate him. I was never even considered for a university of that stature. He is a brilliant lawyer and Senator and raises important questions, not just for the moment but for history.

The question before us today that he is raising is about the purported impeachment—I should say actual impeachment—of a member of President Biden's Cabinet, Mr. Mayorkas, the Secretary of Homeland Security. That is now about to be reported to the Senate, and we have constitutional responsibilities when it is reported.

In this situation, we are waiting for the actual report to arrive. I think it will be momentarily, perhaps this week or next, and we will take up this matter as we are required to do.

The House Homeland Committee engaged in a yearlong investigation of Secretary Mayorkas and his alleged maladministration of the border of the United States. This committee in the House held 12 hearings, testimony from more than two dozen witnesses, producing nearly 400 pages of reports.

The Senate, when sitting as a Court of Impeachment, is not responsible for making the case on behalf of the impeachment managers. We are the jury. We are the ones who will decide the impeachment. Our duty is to make the determination based on the Articles of Impeachment and the facts at hand. We are not a factfinding operation.

My friend from Utah is also on the floor. During the first Trump impeachment, he said that ''the Senate—here sitting as a court of impeachment—has both the authority and the obligation to decline to hold a full trial where the material facts in the case are not in dispute.''

The facts are not in dispute here. This is the first time that the House has successfully impeached a sitting Cabinet-level official without providing any evidence of a high crime or misdemeanor. None. All those hearings, all those pages, all those witnesses—no evidence of high crimes or misdemeanors. And that is a requirement in the Constitution. The Articles of Impeachment that will be before us contain zero evidence that Secretary Mayorkas has committed high crimes and misdemeanors. Instead, it can be read as a summary of Republican grievances with this administration's approach to border policy, immigration, detention, and methods of removal and parole—all of which is conduct that falls squarely within the executive branch's constitutional prerogative. Fortunately, the Constitution was designed to prevent this type of partisan politics driving this effort from contaminating the extraordinary process of impeachment.

The delegates to the Constitutional Convention considered and rejected the concept of maladministration as an impeachable offense, in part, because they feared the misuse of impeachment for purely political retribution.

The Constitution empowers the Senate to have the sole power to try all impeachments and to determine the rules of its proceedings, but the Senate

only has the power to convict, remove, and disqualify officers whose conduct meets the constitutional standard. That standard is well known to all Members of Congress and to the Senate particularly.

Given that the Senate only has the power to convict, remove, and disqualify officers who have committed ''Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors,'' the appropriate Senate response to impeachment articles that do not articulate those charges is obvious.

If congressional Republicans were genuinely interested in addressing concerns about our border, they should be willing to work on a bipartisan basis to pass legislation fixing our broken immigration system and give this President and Secretary Mayorkas the tools they have asked for to address the situation at the southern border.

I want to make sure this is clear on the record. The border is broken. It needs to be fixed and what we should do and what we did do was to establish a bipartisan committee. The Republicans said: We insist that JAMES LANKFORD, a respected Senator from the State of Oklahoma, speak for us and negotiate for us when it comes to changing the rules at the border. We agreed with that.

Senators worked with Senator LANKFORD, whom I respect, and came up with a bipartisan proposal that gave new authority to the President and to the executive branch to deal with the crisis at the border. What happened on the Republican side of the aisle when JAMES LANKFORD, the Republican Senator from Oklahoma, came up with this proposal? All but seven of them—I believe that was the number—walked away and said they wouldn't even support it.

Why did they do it? You know why they did it—because Donald Trump announced he wanted no part of any agreement, any bipartisan effort to solve the problem. Then, former President Trump said: And blame me.

Well, I am blaming him. We had an opportunity to actually do something on the floor of the Senate when it came to the border. He stopped it. And so many of the Republican Senators who begged us to work with Senator LANKFORD turned their backs on him after the yeoman's effort he put into this undertaking. That is the reality.

We had our chance, on a bipartisan basis—and still do—to solve this problem rather than engage in any political stunt. Instead, the vast majority of Republicans, including the Senator from Utah and others on the floor, recently blocked the bipartisan border reform bill that was written by the Republicans' designated negotiator, Senator LANKFORD. They had their chance. It didn't work; neither will this. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I will respond, briefly.

The U.S. House of Representatives—the U.S. House of Representatives—has found, after lengthy investigation, that the chaos at the southern border is manmade, and the U.S. House of Representatives has alleged that that man's name is Secretary Mayorkas.

We need to hold a trial.

Now, Senator DURBIN is my good friend and, as usual, he is eloquent, and he sounds very confident that the evidence will exonerate Secretary Mayorkas.

How does he know? He hasn't heard the evidence, and he doesn't want to hear the evidence because he is scared that the American people might disagree.

That is what this is all about—raw, gut politics.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 624

Mr. LEE. Madam President, the House impeached Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. He is the second Cabinet official to be impeached in all American history. The last Cabinet member to be impeached was William W. Belknap in 1876.

The Senate held trials in virtually all previous impeachments, except for those in which the impeached officer no longer held office. However, Majority Leader CHUCK SCHUMER now wants to effectively pardon Secretary Mayorkas—pardon him from this impeachable offense, pardon him from the impeachment itself—without letting us even examine the evidence.

No, the facts are not in dispute in this case. They are not in dispute in the least. If they were, there wouldn't be a need for a full trial. There would however, still, at a minimum, be a need to reach a verdict of guilty or not guilty because in literally every other circumstance in the history of the Republic—unless circumstances have arisen that have rendered the case moot—the U.S. Senate, sitting as a Court of Impeachment, adjudicates the matter, whether through short proceedings or long ones, whether through a trial conducted on the Senate floor or by delegation to a select committee. It does, in fact, reach a verdict of guilty or not guilty, as is the Senate's constitutional obligation. But when the Articles of Impeachment arrive, we have to remember that we have a constitutional duty to hold a trial.

Again, what that trial consists of may depend on the circumstances, but we still have to hold a trial sufficient to get to the point, in the absence of the case being rendered moot or something of that nature, to reach a verdict of guilty or not guilty.

Now, I am so grateful to House Speaker MIKE JOHNSON for delaying delivery of these so that we can give our full consideration. Ignoring the evidence before us betrays the trust of those who sent us here.

In this spirit, I have introduced a resolution, a resolution to ensure that we are prepared to consider the impeachment articles in a manner befitting our responsibilities. You see, the Senate has three states of being. It is always either sitting in a legislative capacity, where we pass bills, we debate and amend and ultimately pass or decline to pass legislation; the Executive Calendar, where we consider Presidential nominations and consider ratification of treaties; or a third state of being, of course, consists of a Senate sitting as a Court of Impeachment. We are always in one of those three states.

We have a separate set of rules governing our impeachment proceedings, but those rules aren't so specific as to define the precise details of each and every impeachment proceeding. Those have to be negotiated independently through resolutions.

It is to that end that I offer this resolution to put meat on the bones of the Standing Rules of the Senate on impeachment trials.

This resolution mandates that the Senate begin deliberations on the impeachment articles no later than 7 session days after the House of Representatives transmits them to the Senate. This timeline is not just for the Senate but so that the American people can hear from Secretary Mayorkas himself. He is afforded up to 7 session days to respond to the charges that will be presented to us by the House.

Both parties in this debate would be permitted to submit trial briefs within specific deadlines, ensuring that all arguments are heard and considered with the gravity they deserve.

It requires the House to file its records, including materials from the Judiciary Committee and documents related to Secretary Mayorkas's impeachment. These records, which are subject to scrutiny and objection by Mayorkas, are crucial evidence in our proceedings.

My resolution lays out how motions and arguments will be carefully managed. Motions, except those to subpoena witnesses or documents, would be required to be filed before the proceedings start.

The structure of the presentations and questioning would be designed to allow Secretary Mayorkas to comprehensively present his case.

After the questioning period, we would proceed to final arguments and decide whether Secretary Mayorkas is guilty or not guilty.

With my resolution, we would be ready to conduct a fair and legitimate trial.

So, to my colleagues, if you are confident that the charges against Secretary Mayorkas are baseless, then why object to organizing a fair and legitimate trial? Why try to sweep this under the rug? Why pardon someone before they are even afforded the opportunity to prove their innocence?

If you trust that Secretary Mayorkas didn't authorize millions of individuals to enter illegally into our country for swift and precursory release into the interior, don't object to my resolution; just hold a trial.

If you are certain that Secretary Mayorkas hasn't, in fact, increased the pull factors incentivizing parents across the globe to send some 430,000 unaccompanied children into the United States—in many cases, to end up in the hands of traffickers—then, by all means, don't object; hold a trial.

If you are confident that Secretary Mayorkas hasn't created at least 13 illegal immigration parole programs designed to increase the flow of people into this country by the hundreds of thousands, in violation of the very law invoked to facilitate their admission, then don't object; hold a trial.

If you are so sure, so confident, so certain that, under Secretary Mayorkas, Customs and Border Protection hasn't dramatically decreased its vetting processes for allowing Chinese immigrants to cross our border with military-age Chinese males, don't object; hold a trial.

If you believe that we haven't seen a dramatic increase in the known terrorist encounters at our southern border, don't object; hold a trial.

If you are confident that Secretary Mayorkas hasn't allowed enough fentanyl to flow across the southern border to kill every man, woman, and child in the United States of America, don't object; hold a trial.

An invasion, Madam President, is taking place on American soil. At least 8 million people—that is at the low end—have illegally crossed our border since Mayorkas became the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the numbers just keep rising. This unprecedented influx includes gang members. It includes drug traffickers, human traffickers, dangerous individuals from every single country in the world, including the thousands of military-age males from China. In December alone, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security reported 302,000 encounters. That is in 1 month—the highest number ever recorded in a 1-month period. These are not the kinds of records he should try to break, but he has broken them again and again and again.

Now, to be clear, Secretary Mayorkas has the tools to stop this invasion—to halt it in its tracks—and he has the tools to do it today. Not only does he have the tools, but he has the obligation and the sworn responsibility under the laws of the United States to do so. He doesn't need legislative action from Congress.

These aren't victimless crimes. The tragic case of Laken Riley—a life cut short by an illegal alien, one of the millions whom Secretary Mayorkas has allowed to enter our country unchecked—is a reminder of the human cost of this prolonged, severe, and deliberate malicious abdication of duty. Laken isn't alone. Her case represents hundreds of thousands of families across the Nation whose lives have been upended by the invasion that our leaders willfully allowed to happen and, indeed, invited. In fact, they encouraged them to happen.

Should Secretary Mayorkas be found guilty, these are impeachable offenses of the highest order. Make no mistake, this is not mere maladministration. This is a deliberate, willful, malicious determination to break the law in order to bring in millions of people who do not belong here.

There is no doubt, at this point, that the invasion of our southern border has inflicted pain and suffering on countless Americans. So we are obligated to figure out who is responsible and to make sure that they are held responsible. That is exactly why we are here.

To that end, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 624; further, that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. It is, indeed, unfortunate that this has happened. We have followed the model of previous resolutions that have been used in order to set up impeachment debates. This one was based off of one of the impeachment trials of the 45th President of the United States. These terms were agreeable under previous impeachment proceedings, and now they are not.

This is not the kind of case in which the material facts are undisputed nor is this the kind of case in which the office held by the person impeached has been vacated either by death or resignation. And so, in order to comport with, comply with, to follow the precedents that we have consistently followed in this country that have been in place for some two and a half centuries—to say nothing of the constitutional obligation behind those precedents and those customs—we need to hold a trial.

It is not enough simply to stand up and say: We are choosing not to address these. We don't feel like addressing these. We are going to decline to address them without a finding of guilt or innocence.

This is not appropriate. So, if they don't like these particular terms, then perhaps we can find another resolution that will allow us to approach these proceedings with dignity and fairness as an institution, showing dignity and fairness to the accused and to the American people alike, including and especially those Americans who have been victimized by the acts of lawlessness carried out by this administration under the leadership of Secretary Mayorkas.

We have an obligation to do this. Absent one of the circumstances not present in this case, where the case becomes moot—this one is not. We have an obligation, regardless of what the precise procedures look like, to reach a verdict, to make findings, to convict or acquit, to reach a verdict of guilty or not guilty. It is wrong for us to ignore this duty, and it is also phenomenally dangerous.

This precedent having been set will suggest that, from this moment henceforth, insofar as the party of the President of the United States is the same party that controls a majority of the seats in the U.S. Senate, Articles of Impeachment passed by the House of Representatives will be essentially dead letter, to be dismissed without a verdict—without a finding of guilt or innocence, of guilty or not guilty. It would be a shame, and it would be a derogation of our constitutional responsibility.

My hope, my expectation is that we can find some other means. If this one is not acceptable to the body, to my friend and colleague from Illinois, then perhaps another will, but we must keep trying. We can't pretend that we can simply table these. That is not what we are required to do here, and it is a derogation of our responsibility.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 622

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, there are times when the eyes of history are upon the U.S. Senate. This is one of those times. We are facing today an existential crisis at our southern border. It is qualitatively different than anything we have ever faced at our southern border in the history of our Nation.

A few moments ago, the Senator from Illinois acknowledged the border was broken, although he acknowledged it in the classic Washington way of using the passive voice—''the border is broken''—that is designed to hide and obscure who broke the border.

He is correct that the border is broken, but it was broken deliberately by the President of the United States, Joe Biden; by the Vice President of the United States, KAMALA HARRIS; by the Secretary of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas; and by every single Senate Democrat who repeatedly has rubber-stamped and embraced this open border policy.

The Senator from Illinois said the border is broken. He is also the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, on which I serve, on which Senator LEE serves, and on which Senator KENNEDY serves. In the past 3 years, we have held precisely zero hearings on the crisis on our southern border. The Senate Judiciary Committee cannot be bothered to inquire as to the cause of this crisis.

Understand why Alejandro Mayorkas became the second Cabinet Secretary in the history of the United States to be impeached. The last one was in 1876—the Secretary of War—and now, 148 years later, Alejandro Mayorkas joins him. It is not because Alejandro Mayorkas is incompetent. It is not because he is negligent. It is not because he is bad at his job. Rather, unfortunately, Alejandro Mayorkas is very,

very good at his job. However, he does not view his job as securing the border. He does not view his job as protecting our homeland security.

Rather, he views his job as openly and directly violating—flouting—Federal law and aiding and abetting the criminal invasion of this United States. He is not trying to secure the border. He is trying to accelerate the invasion that is happening. He wants more illegal aliens and more criminal illegal aliens released into this country. Under the Biden administration, 10.4 million illegal immigrants have been released into this country.

Senate Democrats are desperate to avoid the misery and suffering and death that their radical policies have produced. At a hearing before the Judiciary Committee, I asked Secretary Mayorkas how many migrants died last year crossing illegally into this country.

He said: I don't know. I have no idea.

I said: Of course, you don't. The number is 853. That is a number from your own Department, but you don't care about the dead bodies that Texas farmers and ranchers are finding—nearly three a day.

When I brought 19 Senators down to the border to see firsthand what was happening, we went out on a boat on the Rio Grande River, and we saw a man floating dead in the river, who had drowned that day. By the way, those 19 Senators were only Republicans. I have invited my Democrat colleagues. I have invited the Senator from Illinois: Come to the southern border and see the people who are dying because of the policies you support. None of them have any interest in seeing firsthand the deaths they are producing.

I have looked in the eyes of children—of little boys and little girls—who have been brutalized by human traffickers day after day after day. None of the Senate Democrats want to take responsibility for the little girls and little boys to whom unspeakable evils are being done.

I have looked in the eyes of women who have been repeatedly and violently raped by human traffickers. None of the Senate Democrats want to take responsibility for the horrific violence and suffering their open border policies have produced.

When I asked Secretary Mayorkas about colored wristbands on a poster I displayed at the Senate Judiciary Committee, he responded by saying he had no idea what those wristbands are.

Those colored wristbands are worn by just about every illegal alien coming to this country. The colors correspond to how many thousands of dollars they owe the cartels. Understand, the cartels don't view them as human beings. They don't even view them as livestock. They are cargo. The colors show how many thousands of dollars they owe.

If you stand on the banks of the Rio Grande River, you will see hundreds or even thousands of those colored wristbands laying there in the grass. And what Alejandro Mayorkas was saying, as I told him—I said: Mr. Secretary, you have just told the American people you are utterly incompetent at your job, and you don't even give a damn enough to pretend to try.

When I invited my Democratic colleagues to come to the border and see the wristbands, the Democrats don't take us up on it.

Understand why those wristbands matter. Thousands upon thousands of teenage boys, they turn themselves in to the Biden administration. They say: Where do you want to go?

Some will say Chicago; some will say New York; some will say Los Angeles. And the Biden administration puts them on an airplane, puts them on a bus, and sends them to every city in America.

The mayor of Chicago, the hometown of the Senator from Illinois, has declared it a crisis, the illegal aliens pouring into his city. Yet Senate Democrats not only will do nothing about it, they continue the policies in place that make it worse and worse and worse.

Understand, those teenage boys, when they arrive in Chicago or L.A. or New York—and, by the way, the Democratic mayor of L.A. has also said it is a crisis. The Democratic mayor of New York has said it is a crisis. The Democratic mayor of Boston has said it is a crisis. The Democratic Mayor of Washington, DC, has said it is a crisis.

When they arrive, they owe the cartels thousands of dollars. If they don't pay the money back, the cartels will murder their families. And so they are working for the cartels.

There are crimes going on in your home State of California today by illegal immigrants the Biden administration has released that are working for the cartels. There are Californians who are being robbed right now, who are being carjacked, who are being assaulted. There are people in Chicago who are being robbed, who are being assaulted.

You want to understand the misery, take a look at Laken Riley. There has been a lot of discussion about Laken Riley; although, sadly, only on one side of this Chamber. If a Democratic Senator has said the words ''Laken Riley,'' I have not heard it come from their mouths.

Laken Riley was a beautiful 22-year-old woman who was murdered because of the Democrats' open border policies. How can I say that with such certainty? Because her murderer, an illegal immigrant from Venezuela, was apprehended in El Paso. We had him. We had him. He was arrested. All Joe Biden and all Alejandro Mayorkas had to do was follow the law, and we would have put the murderer on a plane and flew him back to Venezuela. And he never would have been in Georgia murdering Laken Riley.

But Joe Biden and Alejandro Mayorkas made the decision that politics matters more than protecting American citizens, and so they released this violent criminal.

He went from El Paso to New York City, where he was arrested again. We had him a second time, this time for endangering the safety of a child.

Unfortunately, New York City is a sanctuary city run by Democratic politicians, so what did they do? They let him go a second time, and he went down to Georgia. And Laken Riley, 22 years old, was out jogging, a nursing student. She is out jogging like millions of people do across America, and this murderer took a brick and beat her to death.

If either Joe Biden or Alejandro Mayorkas had followed the law or if New York had kept him in jail, she would still be alive.

Do you know what I also haven't heard from Senate Democrats? The name Jeremy Caceres. Jeremy Caceres is a beautiful 2-year-old boy, murdered in Prince George's County, MD, just miles from where we are right now, murdered by an illegal alien that Joe Biden and Alejandro Mayorkas released.

Just a few weeks ago, news broke of an illegal alien from Haiti that not only did Biden release but flew from Haiti to the United States. The Biden administration has had over 300,000 secret flights bringing illegal aliens to America. In this case, they brought the Haitian illegal immigrant to Boston, MA. And what happened just a couple of weeks ago, he was arrested for violently raping a 15-year-old girl who is seriously disabled.

These are the very real consequences of the Democrats' open border policies. Yet Democratic Senators don't want to confront the people who are dying, who are suffering because of them.

Alejandro Mayorkas was not impeached because he is negligent; he is impeached because he is actively defying the law. By the way, he has turned the Mexican drug cartels into decabillionaires.

According to the New York Times, in 2018, the revenue from human trafficking the cartels earned was roughly $500 million. Last year, it was $13 billion. Thanks to Joe Biden and Senate Democrats, the drug cartels' profits have gone up 2,600 percent. That is why the House has impeached Alejandro Mayorkas.

Now, what is the Senate to do when impeachment occurs? Well, fortunately, we have a document that tells us what to do. It is called the Constitution of the United States.

Under the Constitution, it is the sole power of the House to impeach and the sole power and responsibility of the Senate to try.

Twenty-one times in our Nation's history in more than 200 years, the House has impeached an individual and sent Articles of Impeachment over to the Senate. Here is what has happened in those 21 times:

In one time, the Senate concluded it had no jurisdiction because the individual impeached was a Senator, and

impeachment only attaches to members of the executive branch or the judicial branch. So they dismissed that one for lack of jurisdiction.

In three of them, the individuals impeached were no longer in office, and so the Senate didn't act because it was moot. It was no longer necessary to resolve because the individual impeached was out of office.

In the remaining 17 times, all of them—100 percent of the time—the Senate conducted a trial, the Senate heard evidence, and the Senate adjudicated guilt or innocence. Each Senator stood up and said ''guilty'' or ''not guilty.''

Well, next week, when the articles arrive, we are told that Senator SCHUMER intends not to proceed to a trial, not to follow the Senate rules of impeachment, not to allow any evidence but simply to move to table—to throw it out at the outset.

Why is Senator SCHUMER doing so? Three reasons:

No. 1, he desperately, desperately wants to stop the House managers from presenting their evidence.

The Senator from Illinois says: He knows there is no evidence. It is like an ostrich putting his head in the sand. One way to know there is no evidence is look at no evidence, hear no evidence, consider no evidence, and do everything you can to prevent the American people from hearing evidence.

No. 2, the Senate Democrats want to stop a trial. They don't want the American people to know the suffering and misery and dead bodies their policies are producing.

But No. 3, the Senate Democrats desperately want to prevent Democrats who are on the ballot right now from casting a vote of guilty or not guilty. They want to avoid an adjudication, because, do you know what? Senate Democrats are back in their home States saying: Gosh, I am really concerned about illegal immigration.

If they were really concerned, we can decide that next week by voting to fulfill our constitutional obligation to hold a trial.

Now, let me say something. I look and see the Senator from Illinois; I see the Senator from West Virginia. All three of us were on the Senate floor at another momentous time in 2013, when then-Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid exercised the nuclear option and blew up the filibuster for nominations. That did enormous damage to the institution of the Senate.

I remember standing in the well of the Senate, 10 feet from where I am now, and turning to Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR that day. I told her, I said: You are going to regret this day. This is a catastrophic mistake.

I told her then: The result of this decision from Harry Reid and the Democrats will be more judges and Justices on the Court in the mold of Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas.

If you want to know why Roe v. Wade has been overturned, it is because Harry Reid and the Democrats exercised the nuclear option in 2013. Had they not done so, there is no way this Senate would have confirmed all three of the nominees put forward. It was the direct consequence of the utter disregard for this institution Senate Democrats have.

I bring that up because we are at a second moment that is equally consequential, except instead of nuking the Senate rules as they did in 2013, Senate Democrats are preparing to nuke the Constitution of the United States itself, the impeachment clause, which every single time that the Senate has had jurisdiction and the person has been in office, the Senate has held a trial. If Senate Democrats proceed next week to table that, they will blow up that precedent.

I am here to make a prediction. Senate Democrats sometimes behave like small children with no ability to look to the future and anticipate the consequences of their actions. Everyone can recognize right now we have got a Presidential election coming up in November. None of us knows the outcome. I am going to posit to you right now: There is a significant chance Donald Trump will be reelected as President. I am also going to posit to you that is an outcome no one on the Democratic side wants to see happen.

There is also a significant chance Republicans will retake the Senate. But there is a possibility that Democrats will retake the House. That is a very likely scenario in this election.

If that happens—I turn to my friend from West Virginia because I want you to contemplate what will happen. If that happens, I am going to make a prediction: One year from today, we are going to be on the Senate floor, and if Democrats control the House, they will have impeached Donald Trump again, impeached him a third time and maybe a fourth time and maybe a fifth time. If they have the House, that is what they are going to do.

And if and when those impeachment articles come over to the Senate, if Senate Democrats next week dismiss this impeachment, I am telling you right now, Senate Republicans will do the same thing to any impeachment that comes over from the House. What Senate Democrats will have done is effectively eliminated the Senate's power of impeachment anytime the Senate is the same party as the President.

Many of us were here the last time this scenario happened. It was the first Trump impeachment. The first Trump impeachment, he had a Democratic House, a Republican Senate, and a Republican President. The Democrats in the House impeached Donald Trump. They sent Articles of Impeachment over. The Senate Republicans could have played these games and tried to table the impeachment and said: We are going to shirk our constitutional duty; we are not going to have a trial. But we didn't. We followed the Constitution.

My question for my colleagues here is: Is there even one Democrat who cares about the institution of the Senate, who cares about the Constitution, who cares about democracy?

Democrats love to pound their chest and say they are defending democracy while they are engaging in a relentless assault on democracy.

I have an organizing resolution that would follow the precedent and simply appoint an impeachment committee to hear the trial. The trial doesn't have to be on the Senate floor; that is typically done for Presidents. Instead, the impeachment committee could hear the evidence, which is what the Senate has done over and over and over again.

By the way, every Democrat who says we have got other things to focus on—FISA and other matters—the impeachment committee would proceed parallel with the Senate floor considering other business. So it would delay nothing on the Senate floor to follow our Constitution and have an impeachment committee. But it would avoid destroying the impeachment power of the Senate, destroying the Constitution. And it would also give the American people a chance to hear the evidence and to hear the presentation of the House managers.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 622; further, that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, the date was June 27, 2013, and on the floor of the U.S. Senate we had done something that no one believed could be achieved: We had, through the Gang of 8, established a comprehensive immigration reform bill.

I was part of that Gang of 8—eight Senators, four Democrats and four Republicans—who labored for months to create that legislation. It was comprehensive, as I noted. It covered every aspect, from border all the way through the immigration process.

We brought it to the floor in the hopes that, for the first time in decades, we would finally reach an agreement, a bipartisan agreement. The people who were involved in it—John McCain on the Republican side, Senator Flake from Arizona, Senator GRAHAM from South Carolina, and four Democrats—worked hard to bring this to the floor. It was an opportunity for us to finally do something together.

It got 68 votes. We needed 60, but we got 68 votes. There was a lot of celebration because business and labor and others were supporting us and so happy that we got it done.

We know what happened to that bill. It went over and died in the House of

Representatives. The Republican leadership over there refused to even call it for consideration. Of the Republican Senators currently on the floor, two of them were on the floor on June 27, 2013. They both voted no.

Listen to the speeches and ask yourself the question: If the border and immigration policy need to be fixed in America, why weren't you there when we had a chance for a bipartisan approach to comprehensive immigration reform?

And to make it even worse, there was an argument made that we would not provide defense supplemental spending, asked for by the administration, around the world, unless we came up with a border reform bill within the last several months. And the Republicans said: We have a leader on our side of the aisle whom we want to head up our effort to come up with a bipartisan bill to deal with the border. We do believe it needs to be fixed; it is in crisis.

They proffered JAMES LANKFORD, a conservative Republican Senator from Oklahoma, a highly respected Senator. I may disagree with him on many issues, but I respect him as a Member of the Senate. He was to be the lead negotiator, and we respected that request. Democrats had CHRIS MURPHY and KYRSTEN SINEMA joining in the effort and prepared to bring to the floor a major—it was a bipartisan approach to solve this problem.

Why is that necessary? Because in this body you need 60 votes. If you don't have 60 votes, you are wasting your time. We needed something bipartisan.

And so this measure was headed to the floor. And at the last minute, former President Donald Trump announced that he wanted to stop the process; he did not want to even attempt to solve the problem with bipartisan legislation. He said: You can blame me if you want to. And I blame him again. Yes, he did that.

And, unfortunately, the Republican Senators were complicit, most of them, in that effort instead of respecting what JAMES LANKFORD had achieved and what a bipartisan bill would have made.

So you can say what you want and make all the speeches about bodies and suffering, and I am sure most or some of that is true. But the bottom line is, when you had a chance to do something about it with the bipartisan Gang of 8 bill, you voted no, and when you had a chance to support JAMES LANKFORD's bipartisan approach to fixing the border, you were not there to be seen. You were loyal to Donald Trump and not loyal to the situation that we face in the Senate.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I have 2 minutes to respond to Senator DURBIN.

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

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, nowhere in Senator DURBIN's remarks did we hear any mention of the children being brutalized by traffickers. Nowhere did we hear of the women trapped in sex slavery. Nowhere did we hear the words ''Laken Riley.'' Nowhere did we hear ''Jeremy Caceres.'' Nowhere did we hear a word about the dead bodies—three a day, nearly—that are being found on Texas properties. Nowhere did we hear a word about the suffering.

Instead, what did he do? He pointed to the Democrats' longstanding objection that granted amnesty to as many people as possible so they get more Democrat voters.

The Gang of 8 bill was a terrible bill. And Senator DURBIN is unhappy that democracy operated and the House of Representatives made the decision not to pass it. That is the way our system works.

That is what led Senate Democrats and Joe Biden to decide to just open the border lawlessly because they couldn't actually get the votes to pass their bill.

The Schumer bill he is talking about would have made this situation worse. And understand what Senator DURBIN is saying. It is the policy of Senate Democrats to support these open borders. They don't have any arguments on the merits.

By the way, Joe Biden inherited the lowest rate of illegal immigration in 45 years. All he had to do was nothing because we had success in securing the border. And Joe Biden and Alejandro Mayorkas deliberately broke the border, and they continue the policies in place that ensure tomorrow more children will be brutalized and more women are going to be raped. They know that, and they are not willing to do anything to stop it.

That is, I believe, immoral and wrong, and the Senate should hold a trial as the Constitution requires. We owe that to the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators have up to 5 minutes each: myself, Senator MANCHIN, and Senator MARSHALL and Senator CASSIDY for up to 10 minutes before the rollcall vote.

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

H.J. RES. 98

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, we have had several times recently—and I am talking about since the Biden administration came into office—to where, when you can't legislate, all of a sudden you use Executive orders and rulings.

You have heard of the deep state. That is what happens when you can't get your way legislatively, which means you have got to get 60 Senators corralled here to do it, and you start doing things—in many cases, pushing legal limits administratively. That is when government has gone wild.

I want to take you back to about a little over a year and a half ago when COVID was in the rearview mirror. If you remember, there was the effort to try to force vaccinations on every individual in the country working for an employer with 100 employees or more. That would have been almost everyone. You had folks in Indiana that owned businesses wondering, now that this was all in the rearview mirror: Why would you do it? It is government gone wild.

It was our office that dusted off the Congressional Review Act that said enough is enough. Of course, Speaker of the House PELOSI wasn't going to take it up there. We did pass it in the Senate. And thank goodness the Supreme Court came in about 2 weeks later and said: Enough is enough; that is unconstitutional.

We had to do it another time on all your hard-earned money you put into your investment accounts. You heard of ESG—environment, social, and governance—that that should be of equal value as return on investment. You know it shouldn't be. That is when you are trying to weave in ideology along with investment returns. We had to dust it off again. And that passed in the Senate and the House and generated President Biden's first veto.

The number of times we have had to do it since then—too many to count. We are doing it again here this evening.

I have led bipartisan letters to the NLRB, National Labor Relations Board, raising concerns about its proposed rule regarding joint employer status over the past couple years to no avail.

And what they are wanting to do—again, this is getting into Main Street, into small business, and leveraging that Executive power to do something that would mess up what has worked well for a long time.

This rule replaced the 2020 joint employer rule that focused on ''direct and immediate control'' as the criterion and replaced it with an ''indirect, reserved'' control standard, which means it is subjective; you can do whatever you want because you don't want that particular rule that would have kept it where it has always been and where it has worked.

It has caused confusion for franchise owners for years; in fact, franchisees just as bad. Those are the Main Street business owners. It would have immediate and long-term negative effects on millions of workers in thousands of businesses when the economy is already reeling from the inflation and the sugar-high economy based upon borrowed money spent to help few parts of it. That is what they have given us, and then they want to do this. Franchisors and franchisees, Main Street America, gets impacted by it.

Moving forward with this misguided rule, the NLRB would hurt entrepreneurs. That is the backbone of our economy. They are the ones who start things that someday may become a larger business. Thirty-two percent of small business owners say they would not have a business if it were not for franchising. The NLRB should not move forward with this joint employer rule because it will have a negative economic impact. It is actually inconsistent with common law. The Board should maintain the 2020 rule. It wasn't broken. It was working. They seem to be doing everything to try to fix it when it is not broken.

I yield the floor to the Senator from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today, and I agree with my friend and my colleague from Indiana Senator BRAUN, my friend and my colleague from Louisiana Senator CASSIDY, and my friend and my colleague from Kansas Senator MARSHALL.

I rise today in support of the joint resolution of congressional disapproval to overturn the National Labor Relations Board's new joint employer rule.

This rule is just another example of Executive overreach and the partisan politics that we deal with all too often.

Small businesses are the heart of our economy, from the States like myself in West Virginia—small, rural States. This is the backbone of our business society. And especially, we have 98 percent of our businesses are small in West Virginia. I don't have one city in my State with a population greater than 50,000. So I am 1.7 million of small towns and cities. This is who we are.

The COVID–19 pandemic was hard on small businesses and franchises, with an estimated 32,700 franchise businesses closing during the first 6 months of the pandemic. The last thing they need is greater uncertainty caused by this rule.

And the joint employer rule has caused confusion for franchise owners for years—telling them they could be held liable for actions taken by businesses with their brand, potentially subjecting them to corporate control.

Franchising is a pathway to entrepreneurship for Americans across the country, and it helps build generational growth. By providing access to capital, training, managerial assistance, and a system of support, which is so needed in small rural areas, the franchise model helps many Americans overcome the numerous barriers to owning their own business—for the first time, the dream coming true of having your own business and controlling your destiny.

One out of every three franchise owners say they wouldn't own a small business without the franchise business model that they buy into. The unique model is used by over 5,000 independent businesses in my State of West Virginia, providing over 45,000 jobs.

This new rule has further confused the issue and put the franchise model at risk. Under this rule, businesses are liable for entities they do not control. I repeat: Under this rule, businesses will be liable for entities that they do not control. And it makes no sense.

Let me give you an example. If under this brand there are uniform standards for their products or they would require hair nets to be worn, they would then be found as a joint employer. It is as simple as that, if that is part of the model that you buy into, part of the franchise you bought has certain requirements to deliver products safely and healthfully.

This is despite the fact that they have no responsibility—no responsibility—or role in hiring, firing, or wage decisions for the employees in any way, shape, or form.

Does that make any sense? It just doesn't.

Franchisees, for years, have enjoyed the independence of running their own businesses and making their own decisions about their employees, working with their employees in joint relationships. If a franchisor is now held responsible for these decisions, the franchise model will essentially no longer exist. The guidelines won't be there because they are totally liable and responsible.

The bottom line is, this rule will shut the door on thousands of Americans who want to start—or maybe already have—a business and fulfill the American dream. That is why I introduced the Congressional Review Act with the Senators whom I just mentioned and our colleagues to make clear this rule does not work.

Businesses should not be liable for entities they do not control. The National Labor Relations Board moved forward on this rule without bipartisan support, and I can assure you they did not have my partisan support.

A member of the Board even found that this rule would be ''even more catastrophic'' than previous attempts to change the standard and potentially ''harmful to our economy.'' We know previous attempts to change the joint employer standard resulted in a 93-percent—I repeat again, 93-percent—increase in litigation, a loss of over 376,000 job opportunities, and were eventually struck down by the courts.

This doesn't work. The courts have already ruled it doesn't work. And it will happen again, but here we go. Here we go.

We should be focused on bolstering our economic growth and protecting Main Street businesses, not obstructing them.

I am standing here today for the thousands of small businesses not only in my State but across the country. There are hard-working employees in the surrounding communities who are going to be harmed by this rule.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, my friends on both sides, Democrat and Republican, basically to vote yes on this resolution and allow us to continue to work towards a bipartisan, commonsense solution instead of a more partisan, political position.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, the Senate will soon vote on the Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval, hoping to overturn the Biden administration's new joint employer rule. This policy threatens the viability of the American franchise model in favor of coerced unionization.

There are 800,000 franchise businesses operating in our communities. They employ over 9 million Americans. The franchise model has particularly empowered underrepresented groups in the business community, such as women and people of color. This allows them to become a successful business owner, to live the American dream, and to create an opportunity for their own family and for their employees.

President Biden's new joint employer rule threatens this critical business model. It forces legal liability onto franchisers for the labor decisions of individual franchise owners despite the franchiser having no operational authority over the business's employees.

Saddling franchisers with liability for thousands of franchise owners that operate as small businesses is a sure way to destroy the system of franchising. According to the International Franchise Association, when the Obama administration imposed a similar policy, small businesses lost $33 billion per year collectively due to increased liability costs.

The Biden administration's policy has strong opposition from Republicans and Democrats. It is also opposed by over 100 organizations, including those representing small businesses and workers who will be severely impacted.

It is not surprising that the joint employer rule is a major priority for large labor unions. It is easier for unions when they only have to negotiate with one major entity rather than with each individual small business. This allows the union to wield more influence in the collective bargaining process.

President Biden promised to have the most pro-union administration in history. This priority should not be making it easier to forcibly and coercively unionize workers while undermining the business model of the establishments they work for. It should be supporting workers and increasing economic opportunity. Unfortunately, this policy does the opposite. It threatens the jobs of the over 9 million American workers employed by and earning a living from the franchise business model.

I close by encouraging all my colleagues to pass this bipartisan CRA resolution and support those Americans who otherwise would not be able to own a business without the franchise model. Let's stop this harmful overreach that only hurts jobs and economic development in our communities and denies opportunities for Americans seeking a better life.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I want to thank also the Senator from the great State of Louisiana for his leadership on this very important issue.

The joint employer rule from the NLRB will crush the franchise model as we know it. It is going to crash the model of business that brought financial freedom to millions of Americans.

What I love about the franchise models everywhere I go, visiting with these owners—it has been so helpful for minorities, for veterans, for women. These franchises provide a model, the framework on how to be successful, but this new rule from the NLRB would destroy the model as we know it.

Now, I am not sure that Kansas had the first franchise, but in my mind, they did. I remember when Pizza Hut started. It was started by some students out of Wichita State University delivering pizzas to their fellow students. Not long after that came Rent-A-Center, Freddy's Frozen Custard, Goodcents subs, and many, many more. And that story has been repeated all across the country. These businesses started off small but through franchising were able to grow into national successes. Today, there are 7,500 franchises employing 75,000 employees across the State.

Now, again, everywhere I go across the State of Kansas, people want to talk about inflation, but what is becoming more prominent, especially to a business owner, is regulations, just this overburden of regulations that is keeping us all down and driving up the cost of doing business. More regulations means more money, more cost to that owner.

The question I get from folks is, Why does the White House want to fix something that is not broken? Listen, the system is working just fine right now. So why are we trying to fix it?

I remember President Reagan talking about the 10 words every American hates to hear: ''I'm from the government, and I'm here to help you.'' We need less regulations, not more regulations.

This definition is overly broad, and this rule threatens the success stories for all those happy endings, for all those American dreams that have become true. Instead of being independent business owners, franchisees will be reduced to middle managers—killing jobs, killing income as well. This rule attempts to trigger joint employer status if two employers share the essential terms and conditions of employment but then talks about indirect control as one of these terms and conditions. So instead of making overly broad and burdensome rules, we should pass bills like our own Save Local Business Act, which provides clear and consistent standards for treating joint employment status.

I ask my colleagues to join us in supporting this CRA. This rule from the Federal Government is a solution in search of a problem.

I yield the floor. The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

VOTE ON H. J. RES. 98

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) would have voted ''yea.''

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 122 Leg.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—48

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

NOT VOTING—2

Lee	Menendez

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 98) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from New Hampshire.

PROHIBITING THE USE OF FUNDS TO IMPLEMENT, ADMINISTER, OR ENFORCE CERTAIN RULES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY—MOTION TO PROCEED

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 350, S. 4072.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 350, S. 4072, a bill to prohibit the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce certain rules of the Environmental Protection Agency.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 634, S. Res. 635, and S. Res. 636.

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

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

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

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

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Amred Services, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 117–263, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the National Commission on the Future of the Navy: Harlan Kenneth Ullman of the District of Columbia.

MORNING BUSINESS

NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the contributions of economic development organizations and economic development professionals in Montana and across the Nation in honor of National Economic Development Week.

Every May, we recognize the valuable work these men and women do to create high-quality, good-paying jobs for folks across the country. Our economic developers are essential in building and strengthening many of the building blocks that our communities depend on and are critically important to achieving a thriving economy.

And it is not just about creating jobs. Our economic developers are a vital

piece of the puzzle for workforce development and talent attraction, small business development, infrastructure and broadband development, predisaster mitigation and postdisaster recovery, and much more.

This Economic Development Week, I want to thank all of our economic developers in Montana and across the country for the hard work you do to keep our communities strong, and I encourage all of my colleagues to celebrate alongside me.

Thank you, and happy Economic Development Week.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL WILLIAM J. CAVANAUGH

● Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise to honor COL William J. Cavanaugh, his contributions to the Air Force Research Lab at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH, and his distinguished 31-year service in the U.S. Army. Colonel Cavanaugh was instrumental in the design and architecture of the AFRL Bio Acoustics Lab anechoic chamber. Seventy years after its completion, the anechoic chamber is still used today and the research done works to save the lives of our servicemembers on the battlefield. The American Institute of Physics featured Colonel Cavanaugh in their oral history and highlighted Colonel Cavanaugh's far-reaching impacts on the scientific community.

In December of 2022, the Ohio Legislature's 134th Generally Assembly adopted HCR 32 to recognize ''Colonel William J. Cavanaugh for his contribution to the design and architecture of the United States Air Force Research Lab Bio Acoustics Laboratory, and for his outstanding and enduring service to our nation.''

It is fitting to honor Colonel Cavanaugh for his lasting contributions that have saved the lives of our men and women in uniform. Sites from the National Veterans Memorial and Museum to the National Museum of the United States Air Force have all commemorated Colonel Cavanaugh and his work. As we expand and support the vital work that Ohioans continue to do at Wright-Patt and the Air Force Research Lab, it is important to ensure that future generations learn about past leaders, including Colonel Cavanaugh, and the difference they made for our State and our country.

Today, I join a grateful State and a grateful nation in thanking Colonel Cavanaugh for his dedication and service to Ohio and our Nation.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:43 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, with amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S 2051. An act to reauthorize the Missing Children's Assistance Act, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1246. An act to authorize leases of up to 99 years for land held in trust for federally recognized Indian Tribes.

H.R. 1792. An act to amend the South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1829. An act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to convey the Pleasant Valley Ranger District Administrative Site to Gila County, Arizona.

H.R. 4389. An act to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to make improvements to that Act, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6233. An act to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to authorize partnerships between States and nongovernmental entities for the purpose of reclaiming and restoring land and water resources adversely affected by coal mining activities before August 3, 1977, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6443. An act to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California Tribe, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6492. An act to improve recreation opportunities on, and facilitate greater access to, Federal public land, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6655. An act to amend and reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1246. An act to authorize leases of up to 99 years for land held in trust for federally recognized Indian Tribes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

H.R. 1792. An act to amend the South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 4389. An act to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to make improvements to that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 6233. An act to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to authorize partnerships between States and nongovernmental entities for the purpose of reclaiming and restoring land and water resources adversely affected by coal mining activities before August 3, 1977, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 6443. An act to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California Tribe, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

H.R. 6655. An act to amend and reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 1829. An act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to convey the Pleasant Valley Ranger District Administrative Site to Gila County, Arizona.

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–3963. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Triclopyr; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 11763–01–OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–3964. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3965. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3966. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''DoD Freedom of Information Act Program; Amendment; Correction'' (RIN0790–AK54) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3967. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment'' (RIN0790–AL72) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3968. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Privacy Act of 1974; Implementation'' (RIN0790–AL69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3969. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Transfer and Adoption of Military Animals (DFARS Case 2020–D021)'' (RIN0750–AL07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3970. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Identification Cards for Members of the Uniformed Services, Their Dependents, and Other Eligible Individuals'' (RIN0790–AJ37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3971. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Legislative Affairs, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection,

transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2023 Office of Minority and Women Inclusion Annual Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3972. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of Investment Management, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Exemption for Certain Investment Advisers Operating Through the Internet'' (RIN3235–AN31) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3973. A communication from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Additions of Entities, Revisions of Entries, and Removal of an Entity from the Entity List'' (RIN0694–AJ53) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3974. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Community Reinvestment Act Supplemental Rule'' (RIN3064–AG03) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3975. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Council's 2023 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3976. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Share Repurchase Disclosure Modernization'' received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3977. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3978. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Administrator, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3979. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014, with respect to South Sudan; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3980. A communication from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Export Administration Regulations End-User Controls: Imposition of Restrictions on Certain Persons Identified on the List of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons (SDN List)'' (RIN0694–AI82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3981. A communication from the Chair and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's annual report on its operations for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3982. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Legislative Affairs, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2023 Consumer Response Annual Report''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3983. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of Financial Research, Department of Treasury received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3984. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary (Financial Institutions), Department of Treasury received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3985. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13224 with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3986. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13667 with respect to the Central African Republic; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3987. A communication from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementation of Additional Export Controls: Certain Advanced Computing Items; Supercomputer and Semiconductor End Use; Updates and Corrections; and Export Controls on Semiconductor Manufacturing Items; Corrections and Clarifications'' (RIN0694–AI94) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3988. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Consumer Clothes Dryers'' (RIN1904–AF59) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2024; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–3989. A communication from the Policy Advisor, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2023–2024 Station-specific Hunting and Sport Fishing Regulations'' (RIN1018–BG71) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3990. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Quality Implementation Plans; California; San Diego County; 2008 and 2015 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area Requirements'' (FRL No. 9538–01–R9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3991. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Request From States for Removal of Gasoline Volatility Waiver'' ((RIN2060–AV73) (FRL No. 9845–02–OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3992. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; CA; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District'' (FRL No. 10574–02–R9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3993. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Oklahoma; Updates to the State Implementation Plan Incorporation by Reference Provisions'' (FRL No. 10675–02–R6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3994. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Air Quality Plan for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; Arkansas; Negative Declaration for Existing Sulfuric Acid Plants; Plan Revision Kraft Pulp Mills'' (FRL No. 11401–02–R6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3995. A communication from the Manager of Delisting and Foreign Species, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removal of Chrysopsis floridana (Florida Golden Aster) From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Plants'' (RIN1018–BE00) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3996. A communication from the Attorney Advisor, Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp., Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Seaway Regulations and Rules: Periodic Update, Various Categories'' (RIN2135–AA55) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3997. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.253 Rev 0, Guidance for a Technology-Inclusive Content of Application Methodology to Inform the Licensing Basis and Content of Applications for Licenses, Certifications, and Approvals for Non-Light Water Reactors'' received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3998. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.234 Rev 1, 'Evaluating Deviations and Reporting Defects and Noncompliance Under 10 CFR Part 21'' received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 4, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3999. A communication from the Chair of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a summary of actions taken by the Commission in response to recommendations contained in various Government Accountability Office reports that address NRC activities; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4000. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant Program for Political Subdivisions of States and Territories''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4001. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grants for Tribes and Intertribal Consortia''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4002. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers Program''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4003. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Columbia River Basin Restoration Funding Assistance Program - Tribal Program Implementation''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4004. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Columbia River Basin Restoration Funding Assistance Program - Toxic Reduction Lead''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4005. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Second 10-Year Maintenance Plan for the 24-Hour PM10 Standards; Sacramento County Planning Area, California'' (FRL No. 10958–02–R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4006. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Revisions; California; Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 11615–02–R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE, from the Committee on the Budget:

Report to accompany 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 (Rept. No. 118–168).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BUDD (for himself, Ms. ERNST, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 4093. A bill to review and consider terminating the designation of the State of Qatar as a major non-NATO ally, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 4094. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of the Medicare Diabetes Prevention program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 4095. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to limit the authority of district courts to provide injunctive relief, to modify venue requirements relating to bankruptcy proceedings, and to ensure that venue in patents cases is fair and proper, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. REED, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WARNER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COONS, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 4096. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide for the random assignment of certain cases in the district courts of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HAGERTY (for himself and Mr. KAINE):

S. 4097. A bill to modernize the defense capabilities of the Philippines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 4098. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the treatment of foreign corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 4099. A bill to increase the capacity, resiliency, diversity, and security of the United States food supply chain by codifying and expanding the Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 4100. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the National Cemeteries Foundation to support the educational outreach activities of the Veterans Legacy Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 4101. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the continued designation of hospitals that met mountainous terrain or secondary roads distance requirement as critical access hospitals and to modify distance requirements for ambulance services furnished by critical access hospitals; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 4102. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to include training regarding financial protections under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act in certain financial literacy training programs for members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

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

S. 4103. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to implement the anti-fraud and abuse recommendations of the Comptroller General of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 4104. A bill to address gun violence, improve the availability of records to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, address mental illness in the criminal justice system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

S. 4105. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to accelerate the implementation of quantum information science technologies within the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BUDD, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 4106. A bill to affirm and protect the First Amendment rights of students and student organizations at public institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. Res. 631. A resolution supporting the designation of April 2024 as the ''Month of the Military Child''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LUJÁN:

S. Res. 632. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. Res. 633. A resolution reaffirming the United States' commitment to Taiwan and recognizing the 45th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. Res. 634. A resolution recognizing the cultural and educational contributions of the Youth America Grand Prix throughout its 25 years of service as the national youth dance competition of the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. Res. 635. A resolution designating the first week of April 2024 as ''National Asbestos Awareness Week''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. Res. 636. A resolution designating February 29, 2024, as ''Rare Disease Day''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 160

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 160, a bill to require U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to take into custody certain aliens who have been charged in the United States with a crime that resulted in the death or serious bodily injury of another person, and for other purposes.

S. 545

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 545, a bill to protect the rights of passengers with disabilities in air transportation, and for other purposes.

S. 677

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 677, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the deductibility of charitable contributions to certain organizations for members of the Armed Forces.

S. 704

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 704, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for interest-free deferment on student loans for borrowers serving in a medical or dental internship or residency program.

S. 815

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 815, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the female telephone operators of the Army Signal Corps, known as the ''Hello Girls''.

S. 928

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 928, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to prepare an annual report on suicide prevention, and for other purposes.

S. 949

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 949, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to transition the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and for other purposes.

S. 980

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 980, a bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to exempt industrial hemp from certain requirements under the hemp production program, and for other purposes.

S. 1409

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1409, a bill to protect the safety of children on the internet.

S. 1424

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1424, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to improve health care coverage under vision and dental plans, and for other purposes.

S. 1514

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1514, a bill to amend the National Housing Act to establish a mortgage insurance program for first responders, and for other purposes.

S. 1897

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1897, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to enhance capabilities for outbound inspections at the southern land border, and for other purposes.

S. 2004

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2004, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 relating to de minimis treatment under that Act.

S. 2221

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

S. 2256

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2256, a bill to authorize the Director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to establish an apprenticeship program and to establish a pilot program on cybersecurity training for veterans and members of the Armed Forces transitioning to civilian life, and for other purposes.

S. 2307

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2307, a bill to support and strengthen the fighter aircraft capabilities of the Air Force, and for other purposes.

S. 2397

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

S. 2501

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2501, a bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to promulgate an occupational safety and health standard to protect workers from heat-related injuries and illnesses.

S. 2861

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator

from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2861, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King, an American icon, in recognition of a remarkable life devoted to championing equal rights for all, in sports and in society.

S. 3369

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the names of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3369, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to restrict the possession of certain firearms, and for other purposes.

S. 3569

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3569, a bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report on the disclosure process for intellectual property created under a Federal grant, and for other purposes.

S. 3681

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3681, a bill to direct the Secretary of Education to carry out a grant program to support the recruitment and retention of paraprofessionals in public elementary schools, secondary schools, and preschool programs, and for other purposes.

S. 3697

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3697, a bill to establish the Space National Guard.

S. 3775

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 3775, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3778

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3778, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to modify eligibility for the State response to contaminants program, and for other purposes.

S. 3806

At the request of Mr. WELCH, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3806, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to improve the cost of living adjustment exclusion from income under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and for other purposes.

S. 3953

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3953, a bill to make demonstration grants to eligible local educational agencies or consortia of eligible local educational agencies for the purpose of increasing the numbers of school nurses in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

S. 3982

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3982, a bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to establish the Expanding Access to Local Foods Program, and for other purposes.

S. 4072

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 4072, a bill to prohibit the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce certain rules of the Environmental Protection Agency.

S. RES. 450

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 450, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that paraprofessionals and education support staff should have fair compensation, benefits, and working conditions.

S. RES. 559

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 559, a resolution recognizing the actions of the Rapid Support Forces and allied militia in the Darfur region of Sudan against non-Arab ethnic communities as acts of genocide.

S. RES. 599

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 599, a resolution protecting the Iranian political refugees, including female former political prisoners, in Ashraf-3 in Albania.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 4095. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to limit the authority of district courts to provide injunctive relief, to modify venue requirements relating to bankruptcy proceedings, and to ensure that venue in patents cases is fair and proper, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 4095

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLES.

This Act may be cited as the ''Stop Helping Outcome Preferences Act'' or the ''SHOP Act''.

SEC. 2. NATIONWIDE INJUNCTION ABUSE PREVENTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 85 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 1370. Limitation on authority to provide injunctive relief

''Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a district court may not issue any order providing injunctive relief unless such order is applicable only to—

''(1) the parties to the case before the court; or

''(2) similarly situated individuals in the judicial district in which the district court has jurisdiction.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The chapter analysis for chapter 84 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''1370. Limitation on authority to provide injunctive relief.''.

SEC. 3. PREVENTING JUDGE SHOPPING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 131 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2075 the following:

''§ 2076. Preventing judge shopping

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Rules promulgated under this chapter may not permit an attorney to be admitted to practice in any Federal court if a disciplinary body of judges properly constituted under the rules and procedures of a Federal court determines that such attorney has engaged in judge shopping.

''(b) DEFINED TERM.—In this section, the term 'judge shopping' means attempting to interfere with a court's case assignment process for the purpose of influencing the assignment of a particular judge to preside over a particular case by—

''(1) engaging in ex parte communications with a judge or a judge's chambers;

''(2) successive filing of materially identical suits within a State, district, or circuit without good cause;

''(3) successive filing of materially identical suits with different plaintiffs;

''(4) improperly marking a suit as a related case under existing court docketing practices; or

''(5) otherwise attempting to change the assignment of a case after its filing, excepting a motion to recuse.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The chapter analysis for chapter 131 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2075 the following:

''2076. Preventing judge shopping.''.

SEC. 4. BANKRUPTCY VENUE REFORM.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Bankruptcy Venue Reform Act of 2024''.

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Bankruptcy laws provide a number of venue options for filing bankruptcy under chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code, including, with respect to the entity filing bankruptcy—

(A) any district in which the place of incorporation of the entity is located;

(B) any district in which the principal place of business or principal assets of the entity are located; and

(C) any district in which an affiliate of the entity has filed a pending case under title 11, United States Code.

(2) The wide range of permissible bankruptcy venue options has led to an increase in companies filing for bankruptcy outside of the district in which the principal place of business or principal assets of the company is located, a practice that is commonly known as ''forum shopping''.

(3) Forum shopping—

(A) has resulted in a concentration of bankruptcy cases in a limited number of judicial districts;

(B) prevents small businesses, employees, retirees, creditors, and other important stakeholders from fully participating in bankruptcy cases that have tremendous impacts on their lives, communities, and local economies; and

(C) deprives district courts of the United States and courts of appeals of the United States of the opportunity to contribute to the development of bankruptcy law in the jurisdictions of those district courts.

(4) Reducing the incidence of forum shopping in the bankruptcy system will strengthen the integrity of, and build public confidence and ensure fairness in, the bankruptcy system.

(c) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to prevent the practice of forum shopping in bankruptcy cases filed under chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code.

(d) VENUE OF CASES UNDER TITLE 11.—Title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by amending 1408 to read as follows:

''§ 1408. Venue of cases under title 11

''(a) PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN ENTITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), for the purposes of this section, if any entity is subject to the reporting requirements under section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m and 78o(d)), the term 'principal place of business', with respect to such entity, means the address of the principal executive office of the entity, as stated in the last annual report filed under such Act before the commencement of a case under title 11 of which the entity is the subject.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—With respect to an entity described in paragraph (1), the definition of 'principal place of business' shall apply, for purposes of this section, unless another address is shown, by clear and convincing evidence, to be the principal place of business of such entity.

''(b) VENUE.—Except as provided in section 1410, a case under title 11 may be commenced only in the district court for the district—

''(1) in which the domicile, residence, or principal assets in the United States of an individual who is the subject of the case have been located—

''(A) during the 180-day period immediately preceding such commencement; or

''(B) for a longer portion of such 180-day period than the domicile, residence, or principal assets in the United States of the individual were located in any other district;

''(2) in which the principal place of business or principal assets in the United States of an entity, other than an individual, that is the subject of the case have been located—

''(A) during the 180-day period immediately preceding such commencement; or

''(B) for a longer portion of such 180-day period than the principal place of business or principal assets in the United States of the entity were located in any other district; or

''(3) in which there is pending a case under title 11 concerning an affiliate that directly or indirectly owns, controls, or holds 50 percent or more of the outstanding voting securities of, or is the general partner of, the entity that is the subject of the later filed case, but only if the pending case was properly filed in such district in accordance with this section.

''(c) LIMITATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b), no effect shall be given to a change in the ownership or control of an entity that is the subject of the case, or of an affiliate of such entity, or to a transfer of the principal place of business or principal assets in the United States, or to the merger, dissolution, spinoff, or divisive merger of an entity that is the subject of the case, or of an affiliate of such entity, to another district, if such event takes place—

''(A) during the 1-year period immediately preceding the date on which the case is commenced; or

''(B) for the purpose, in whole or in part, of establishing venue.

''(2) PRINCIPAL ASSETS.—

''(A) PRINCIPAL ASSETS OF AN ENTITY OTHER THAN AN INDIVIDUAL.—For purposes of subsection (b)(2) and paragraph (1) of this subsection—

''(i) the term 'principal assets' does not include cash or cash equivalents; and

''(ii) any equity interest in an affiliate is located in the district in which the holder of the equity interest has its principal place of business in the United States, as determined in accordance with subsection (b)(2).

''(B) EQUITY INTERESTS OF INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of subsection (b)(1), if the holder of any equity interest in an affiliate is an individual, the equity interest is located in the district in which the domicile or residence in the United States of the holder of the equity interest is located, as determined in accordance with subsection (b)(1).

''(d) BURDEN OF PROOF.—On any objection to, or request to change, venue under paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (b) of a case under title 11, the entity that commences the case shall bear the burden of establishing, by clear and convincing evidence, that venue is proper under this section.

''(e) OUT-OF-STATE ADMISSION FOR GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS.—The Supreme Court shall prescribe rules, in accordance with section 2075, for cases or proceedings arising under title 11, or arising in or related to cases under title 11, to allow any attorney representing a governmental unit to be permitted to appear on behalf of the governmental unit and intervene without charge, and without meeting any requirement under any local court rule relating to attorney appearances or the use of local counsel, before any bankruptcy court, district court, or bankruptcy appellate panel.''; and

(2) to amend section 1412 to read as follows:

''§ 1412. Change of venue

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding that a case or proceeding under title 11, or arising in or related to a case under title 11, is filed in the correct division or district, a district court may transfer the case or proceeding to a district court in another district or division—

''(1) in the interest of justice; or

''(2) for the convenience of the parties.

''(b) INCORRECTLY FILED CASES OR PROCEEDINGS.—If a case or proceeding under title 11, or arising in or related to a case under title 11, is filed in a division or district that is improper under section 1408(b), the district court shall—

''(1) immediately dismiss the case or proceeding; or

''(2) if it is in the interest of justice, immediately transfer the case or proceeding to any district court for any district or division in which the case or proceeding could have been brought under such section.

''(c) OBJECTIONS AND REQUESTS RELATING TO CHANGES IN VENUE.—Not later than 14 days after the filing of an objection to, or a request to change, venue of a case or proceeding under title 11, or arising in or related to a case under title 11, the court shall enter an order granting or denying such objection or request.''.

SEC. 5. VENUE EQUITY IN PATENT CASES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Venue Equity and Non-Uniformity Elimination Act of 2024''.

(b) AMENDMENT.—Section 1400(b) of title 28, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(b) Notwithstanding subsections (b) and (c) of section 1391, any civil action for patent infringement or any action for a declaratory judgment that a patent is invalid or not infringed may be brought only in a judicial district—

''(1) in which the defendant has its principal place of business or is incorporated;

''(2) in which the defendant has committed an act of infringement of a patent in suit and has a regular and established physical facility that gives rise to such act of infringement;

''(3) in which the defendant has agreed or consented to be sued in such action;

''(4) in which an inventor named on the patent in suit conducted research or development that led to the application for the patent in suit;

''(5) in which a party has a regular and established physical facility that such party controls and operates, not primarily for the purpose of creating venue, and has—

''(A) engaged in management of significant research and development of an invention claimed in a patent in suit before the effective filing date of the patent;

''(B) manufactured a tangible product that is alleged to embody an invention claimed in a patent in suit; or

''(C) implemented a manufacturing process for a tangible good in which the process is alleged to embody an invention claimed in a patent in suit; or

''(6) in the case of a foreign defendant that does not meet the requirements of paragraph (1) or (2), in accordance with section 1391(c)(3).''.

(c) MANDAMUS RELIEF.—For the purpose of determining whether relief may issue under section 1651 of title 28, United States Code, a clearly and indisputably erroneous denial of a motion under section 1406(a) of such title to dismiss or transfer a case on the basis of section 1400(b) of such title shall be deemed to cause irremediable interim harm.

(d) TELEWORKERS.—The dwelling or residence of an employee or contractor of a defendant who works at such dwelling or residence shall not constitute a regular and established physical facility of the defendant for purposes of section 1400(b)(2) of title 28, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr.

FETTERMAN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. REED, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WARNER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COONS, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. LUJAN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 4096. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide for the random assignment of certain cases in the district courts of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 4096

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''End Judge Shopping Act''.

SEC. 2. DIVISION OF BUSINESS AMONG DISTRICT JUDGES.

Section 137 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) RANDOM ASSIGNMENT OF OTHER CASES.—

''(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term 'law' includes, with respect to an executive branch or a State or Federal agency, a rule, a regulation, a policy, and an order.

''(2) RANDOM ASSIGNMENT.—Any civil action brought for declaratory, injunctive, or other equitable relief seeking (whether facially or as-applied) to challenge the constitutionality or lawfulness of, or to bar, restrain, vacate, set aside, or mandate the enforcement of, any provision of a Federal law on a nationwide basis, or any provision of a State law on a statewide basis in that State, shall be randomly assigned to a judge of the district court in which the civil action is filed.''.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 631—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF APRIL 2024 AS THE ''MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD''

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 631

Whereas millions of brave United States servicemembers and veterans have demonstrated their courage and commitment to freedom by serving the Armed Forces of the United States of America in active-duty posts around the world;

Whereas there are more than 1,560,000 children connected to the military across the United States;

Whereas it is only fitting that the people of the United States take time to recognize the contributions of servicemembers and veterans, celebrate their spirit, and let the men and women of the United States in uniform know that while they are taking care of us, the people of the United States are taking care of their children;

Whereas the recognition of a ''Month of the Military Child'' will allow the people of the United States to pay tribute to military children for their commitment, struggles, and unconditional support of United States troops;

Whereas, when a servicemember joins the military, it is a family commitment to the United States, and military children are heroes in their own way; and

Whereas a month-long salute to military children will encourage the United States to provide direct support to military children and families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of April 2024 as the ''Month of the Military Child''; and

(2) urges the people of the United States to observe the Month of the Military Child with appropriate ceremonies and activities that honor, support, and show appreciation for military children.

SENATE RESOLUTION 632—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

Mr. LUJÁN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 632

Whereas the week of April 1, 2024, is National Public Health Week;

Whereas the theme for National Public Health Week in 2024 is ''Protecting, Connecting and Thriving: We Are All Public Health'';

Whereas the goal of National Public Health Week in 2024 is to recognize the contributions of public health in—

(1) improving the health of the people of the United States; and

(2) achieving health equity;

Whereas, as of the date of introduction of this resolution, the United States and the global community are continuing to recover from the COVID–19 pandemic, which requires support for—

(1) a robust public health infrastructure and workforce;

(2) State, territorial, local, and Tribal health departments, health care workers, public health laboratories, and first responders;

(3) activities related to epidemiology and public health data;

(4) relieving financial burdens for individuals in the United States hurt by the COVID–19 pandemic, including through public health emergency leave;

(5) State Medicaid programs and community health centers to ensure care for vulnerable populations;

(6) collaboration among the Federal Government, State and local governments, Tribal health organizations, schools, businesses, and employers to support public health measures;

(7) investments in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which support infectious disease outbreak preparedness and critical public health infrastructure for State and local health departments and public health laboratories;

(8) a comprehensive effort to ensure successful vaccination campaigns that boost access to vaccines for vulnerable populations and trust in vaccine safety and effectiveness; and

(9) efforts to address racism as a public health crisis and reduce racial and ethnic health disparities related to COVID–19 deaths, vaccine access and testing, and important health outcomes outside of the pandemic such as maternal mortality;

Whereas many of the leading causes of death for individuals in the United States result from chronic conditions, which are among the most common, costly, and preventable of all health challenges;

Whereas there are significant differences in the health status of individuals living in the healthiest States and those living in the least healthy States, including differences in obesity rates, the prevalence of chronic diseases, and the prevalence of infectious diseases;

Whereas racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States continue to experience disparities in the burdens of illness and death, as compared to the entire population of the United States;

Whereas violence is a leading cause of premature death, and it is estimated that more than 7 individuals per hour die a violent death in the United States;

Whereas deaths from homicides cost the economy of the United States billions of dollars, and the violence of homicides can cause social and emotional distress, community trauma, injury, disability, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder;

Whereas 49,449 people died by suicide in 2022, with firearms being used in over 50 percent of suicides;

Whereas an estimated 1 in 7 children in the United States experienced child abuse and neglect in the past year, with 1,750 children dying of abuse and neglect in 2020;

Whereas significant progress has been made in reducing the infant mortality rate in the United States to a historic low of 5.6 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2022;

Whereas there are still stark disparities in infant mortality by race, ethnicity, geography, and income, as evidenced by the fact that Black infants experience infant mortality at a rate twice that of White infants;

Whereas women die from pregnancy-related complications in the United States at a higher rate than in many other developed countries, with the rate of maternal mortality being 32.9 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2021;

Whereas an estimated 84 percent of maternal deaths in the United States are preventable;

Whereas, from 2017 to 2019, American Indian or Alaskan Native mothers experienced maternal mortality at a rate twice that of White mothers, and Black mothers experienced maternal mortality at a rate almost 3 times that of White mothers;

Whereas there were an estimated 107,622 drug overdose deaths in 2021, an increase of nearly 15 percent from 2020;

Whereas cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, accounting for more than 480,000 deaths every year;

Whereas the percentage of adults in the United States who smoke cigarettes has decreased from 20.9 percent of the population in 2005, to 11.5 percent of the population in 2021;

Whereas e-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth since 2014, with 10.0 percent of high school students reporting e-cigarette use in 2023;

Whereas, in 2020, there were approximately 32,000 deaths in the United States due to exposure to particulate matter, 37 percent of which were directly related to fossil fuel burning;

Whereas heat-related mortality for people over 65 is estimated to have increased by approximately 74 percent from 2000 through 2004 compared to 2017 through 2021;

Whereas voting helps shape the conditions in which people can be healthy, and good health is consistently associated positively with higher likelihood of voter participation, but only 52.2 percent of eligible adults reported voting in the November 2022 elections;

Whereas public health organizations use National Public Health Week to educate public policymakers and public health professionals on issues that are important to improving the health of the people of the United States;

Whereas studies show that small strategic investments in disease prevention can result in significant savings in health care costs;

Whereas the vaccination of the public is one of the most significant public health achievements in history and has resulted in substantial decreases in—

(1) the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths associated with vaccine-preventable diseases; and

(2) health care costs associated with vaccine-preventable diseases;

Whereas each 10-percent increase in local public health spending contributes to a—

(1) 6.9-percent decrease in infant deaths;

(2) 3.2-percent decrease in deaths related to cardiovascular disease;

(3) 1.4-percent decrease in deaths due to diabetes; and

(4) 1.1-percent decrease in cancer-related deaths;

Whereas public health professionals help communities prevent, prepare for, mitigate, and recover from the impact of a full range of health threats, including—

(1) disease outbreaks, such as the COVID–19 pandemic;

(2) natural disasters, such as wildfires, flooding, and severe storms; and

(3) other disasters, including disasters caused by human activity and public health emergencies;

Whereas public health professionals collaborate with partners outside of the health sector, including city planners, transportation officials, education officials, and private sector businesses, recognizing that other sectors can influence health outcomes;

Whereas, in communities across the United States, individuals are changing the way they care for their health by avoiding tobacco use, eating healthier, increasing physical activity, and preventing unintentional injuries at home and in the workplace; and

Whereas efforts to adequately support public health and the prevention of disease and injury can continue to transform a health system focused on treating illness into a health system focused on preventing disease and injury and promoting wellness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week;

(2) recognizes the efforts of public health professionals, the Federal Government, States, Tribes, municipalities, local communities, and individuals in preventing disease and injury;

(3) recognizes the role of public health in—

(A) preventing and responding to infectious disease outbreaks, such as the COVID–19 pandemic;

(B) mitigating short-term and long-term impacts of infectious disease outbreaks on the health and wellness of individuals in the United States;

(C) addressing social and other determinants of health, including health disparities experienced by minority populations; and

(D) improving the overall health of individuals and communities in the United States;

(4) encourages increased efforts and resources to—

(A) improve the health of individuals in the United States; and

(B) make the United States, in 1 generation, the healthiest Nation in the world by—

(i) providing greater opportunities to improve community health and prevent disease and injury; and

(ii) strengthening the public health system and workforce in the United States; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to learn about the role of the public health system in improving health across the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 633—REAFFIRMING THE UNITED STATES' COMMITMENT TO TAIWAN AND RECOGNIZING THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 633

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96–8; 22 U.S.C. 3301 et. seq.; referred to in this preamble as the ''TRA''), which was enacted on April 10, 1979, has been a cornerstone in upholding peace, security, and stability in the Taiwan Strait for 45 years, reflecting the enduring political, international, and economic interests of the United States;

Whereas United States relations with Taiwan are carried out through the American Institute in Taiwan pursuant to the TRA;

Whereas in 1982, President Ronald Reagan further clarified the importance and resilience of the United States-Taiwan relationship with the issuance of the Six Assurances to Taiwan;

Whereas the TRA and the Six Assurances are cornerstones of United States policy with respect to Taiwan;

Whereas the TRA and the Six Assurances have been essential components in helping to maintain peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific, thereby furthering the political, security, and economic interests of the United States and Taiwan;

Whereas Taiwan is a key United States partner in the Indo-Pacific that shares similar values, deep commercial and economic links, and strong ties;

Whereas the TRA enshrines in law the United States' commitment to make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability;

Whereas the TRA states it is United States policy to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan;

Whereas the United States and Taiwan have forged ever closer economic and security relations over the last 45 years based on—

(1) their shared commitment to democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and free market principles; and

(2) their willingness to partner in efforts to promote democratic resilience, counter disinformation, and to address other global challenges, such as those related to the environment, public health, energy security, education, women's empowerment, digital economy, poverty, and natural disasters;

Whereas in 1971, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 2758 (XXVI), which does not address—

(1) Taiwan's political status; or

(2) the issue of Taiwan's representation in the United Nations;

Whereas the People's Republic of China continues to falsely assert that United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 (XXVI) ''resolved, politically, legally and procedurally, the issue of the representation of the whole of China, including Taiwan, in the United Nations and international institutions'';

Whereas Taiwan is the United States' eighth-largest trading partner and, in 2023, the United States and Taiwan signed the first agreement under a United States-Taiwan Initiative on 21st Century Trade;

Whereas the Taiwan Enhanced Resilience Act (Public Law 117–263), which was enacted in 2022, included important provisions—

(1) to expand United States-Taiwan security cooperation and mutually beneficial relationship through the Taiwan Fellowship Program; and

(2) to develop a strategy for Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations;

Whereas the Global Cooperation and Training Framework exemplifies the commitment of the United States and Taiwan to collaborate on global challenges, enhancing global capacity through cooperation and the sharing of best practices in areas such as public health, environmental protection, and cybersecurity;

Whereas the programs under the United States-Taiwan Education Initiative significantly contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations through educational exchanges, language learning, and professional development, facilitating mutual understanding and collaboration between the peoples of the United States and Taiwan;

Whereas the United States-Taiwan Science and Technology Agreement and the inaugural Science and Technology Cooperation Dialogue highlight the dedication of the United States and Taiwan—

(1) to advancing collaboration and understanding between their respective science and technology communities; and

(2) to fostering innovation and addressing shared challenges through joint research and development efforts; and

Whereas Taiwan's democracy has deepened with the 3 peaceful transfers of power from 1 political party to another over 8 direct Presidential and 10 direct legislative elections: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Taiwan Relations Act, which, together with the Six Assurances, are cornerstones of the United States' unofficial relationship with Taiwan;

(2) reiterates that the President should continue regular transfers of defense articles to Taiwan consistent with Taiwan's self-defense requirements;

(3) calls on the Secretary of State to actively engage internationally in support of Taiwan's membership or meaningful participation in international organizations;

(4) reaffirms the importance of cultivating close ties through initiatives such as the Fulbright Program and the Taiwan Fellowship Program; and

(5) acknowledges the important work done by the American Institute in Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in support of joint United States-Taiwan interests.

SENATE RESOLUTION 634—RECOGNIZING THE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE YOUTH AMERICA GRAND PRIX THROUGHOUT ITS 25 YEARS OF SERVICE AS THE NATIONAL YOUTH DANCE COMPETITION OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 634

Whereas the Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) is recognized as the largest in the world and the first in the United States student ballet scholarship competition;

Whereas YAGP is dedicated to bringing dance to the United States and dance of the United States to the world;

Whereas, over its 25-year history, YAGP has provided scholarship opportunities to ballet students in all 50 States and in more than 40 countries across 5 continents;

Whereas YAGP has provided young dancers from all 50 States the chance to perform professionally in the United States and abroad;

Whereas YAGP regularly conducts competitions, master classes, education events, and performances in over 15 countries;

Whereas YAGP has provided more than 250,000 dance students of all backgrounds with the life-changing opportunity of receiving top-quality dance education, allowing them to pursue a career in dance;

Whereas YAGP has awarded over $5,000,000 in scholarships to world-renowned dance schools;

Whereas, as a result of YAGP's work to provide a pathway into ballet for individuals from all communities, the representation of dancers of diverse backgrounds in the United States and in international dance schools and companies has increased by 30 percent;

Whereas over 450 YAGP alumni are dancing professionally in 80 companies worldwide, including 60 YAGP alumni currently dancing in American Ballet Theatre, recognized by the Congress as America's National Ballet Company; and

Whereas YAGP has been recognized for its contribution to international dance by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the Youth America Grand Prix for over 25 years of service as the national youth dance competition of the United States, during which it has provided world class instruction and performances in all 50 States;

(2) acknowledges that the Youth America Grand Prix also serves as a platform for cross cultural exchanges for ballet students from all 50 States of the United States and students from around the globe;

(3) recognizes that the Youth America Grand Prix's groundbreaking and innovative education, outreach, scholarship, and performance opportunities for talented young dancers help support and develop dance artists in the United States and abroad; and

(4) celebrates Youth America Grand Prix's critical role in ensuring the future of dance in the United States and worldwide by supporting the next generation of talented young dance artists and dance audiences.

SENATE RESOLUTION 635—DESIGNATING THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL 2024 AS ''NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK''

Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 635

Whereas dangerous asbestos fibers are invisible and cannot be smelled or tasted;

Whereas the inhalation of airborne asbestos fibers can cause significant damage;

Whereas asbestos fibers can cause cancer, such as mesothelioma, asbestosis, and other health problems;

Whereas symptoms of asbestos-related diseases can take between 10 and 50 years to present themselves;

Whereas the projected life expectancy for an individual diagnosed with mesothelioma is between 6 and 24 months;

Whereas little is known about late-stage treatment of asbestos-related diseases, and there is no cure for those diseases;

Whereas early detection of asbestos-related diseases might give some patients increased treatment options and might improve the prognoses of those patients;

Whereas, although the consumption of asbestos within the United States has been substantially reduced, the United States continues to consume tons of the fibrous mineral each year for use in certain products;

Whereas thousands of people in the United States have died from asbestos-related diseases, and thousands more die every year from those diseases;

Whereas, although individuals continue to be exposed to asbestos, safety measures relating to, and the prevention of, asbestos exposure have significantly reduced the incidence of asbestos-related diseases and can further reduce the incidence of those diseases;

Whereas thousands of workers in the United States face significant asbestos exposure, which has been a cause of occupational cancer;

Whereas a significant percentage of all victims of asbestos-related diseases were exposed to asbestos on naval ships and in shipyards;

Whereas asbestos was used in the construction of a significant number of office buildings and public facilities built before 1975;

Whereas people in the small community of Libby, Montana, suffer from asbestos-related diseases, including mesothelioma, at a significantly higher rate than people in the United States as a whole; and

Whereas the designation of a ''National Asbestos Awareness Week'' for the 19th year will continue to raise public awareness about the prevalence of asbestos-related diseases and the dangers of asbestos exposure: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the first week of April 2024 as ''National Asbestos Awareness Week'';

(2) urges the Surgeon General to warn and educate people about the public health issue of asbestos exposure, which may be hazardous to their health; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Office of the Surgeon General.

SENATE RESOLUTION 636—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 29, 2024, AS ''RARE DISEASE DAY''

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 636

Whereas a rare disease or disorder is a disease or disorder that affects a small number of patients;

Whereas, in the United States, a rare disease or disorder affects fewer than 200,000 individuals;

Whereas, as of the date of adoption of this resolution, more than 30,000,000 individuals in the United States are living with at least 1 of the more than 7,000 known rare diseases or disorders;

Whereas children with rare diseases or disorders account for a significant portion of the population affected by rare diseases or disorders in the United States;

Whereas many rare diseases and disorders are serious and life-threatening;

Whereas 2024 marks the 41st anniversary of the enactment of the Orphan Drug Act (Public Law 97–414; 96 Stat. 2049), a landmark law enabling tremendous advances in the research and treatment of rare diseases and disorders;

Whereas programs such as the Accelerating Rare disease Cures Program of the Food and Drug Administration (referred to in this preamble as the ''FDA'') aim to drive scientific and regulatory innovation and engagement to accelerate the availability of treatments for patients with rare diseases;

Whereas 28 of the 55 novel drugs approved by the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research of the FDA in 2023—

(1) were approved to prevent, diagnose, or treat a rare disease or condition; and

(2) received an orphan-drug designation;

Whereas, although the FDA has approved more than 1,100 drugs and biological products for an orphan indication for the treatment of a rare disease or disorder, approximately 90 percent of rare diseases do not have a treatment approved by the FDA for their condition;

Whereas financing life-altering and life-saving treatments can be challenging for individuals with a rare disease or disorder and their families;

Whereas individuals with rare diseases or disorders can experience difficulty in obtaining accurate diagnoses and finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in their rare disease or disorder;

Whereas the National Institutes of Health support innovative research on the treatment of rare diseases and disorders;

Whereas Rare Disease Day is observed each year on the last day of February; and

Whereas Rare Disease Day is a global event that was first observed in the United States on February 28, 2009, and was observed in more than 106 countries in 2023: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 29, 2024, as ''Rare Disease Day''; and

(2) recognizes the importance of, with respect to rare diseases and disorders—

(A) improving awareness;

(B) encouraging accurate and early diagnosis; and

(C) supporting national and global research efforts to develop effective treatments, diagnostics, and cures.

NOTICES OF INTENT TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I submit the following notice in writing: In accordance with Rule V of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby give notice in writing that it is my intention to move to suspend the following portion of paragraph 1 of Rule XXII: ''the motions relating to adjournment, to

take a recess, to proceed to the consideration of executive business, to lay on the table, shall be decided without debate'' for the purposes of allowing debate on any motion to table made in relation to the Articles of Impeachment against Alejandro Mayorkas whether or not a full trial takes place.

Mr. SCHMITT. Madam President, I submit the following notice in writing: In accordance with Rule V of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby give notice in writing that it is my intention to move to suspend the following portion of paragraph 1 of Rule XXII: ''to lay on the table'' for the purposes of preventing the disposition of the Articles of Impeachment against Alejandro Mayorkas without a complete and full trial.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I have 12 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC POLICY

The Subcommittee on Economic Policy of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND SPENDING OVERSIGHT

The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

The Subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following legislative fellows in my office be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress: Nancy Connolly, Nico Fairbairn, Will Poff-Webster, and Ashley Nagel.

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

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following interns from my office be granted floor privileges until April 11, 2024: Reese Clarke, Nathan Muilenburg, and Jack Smith.

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

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, as a reminder, Senators will gather tomorrow at 10:20 a.m. to proceed as a body to the Hall of the House of Representatives for an address by His Excellency Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan.

RECESS UNTIL 12:30 P.M. TOMORROW

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I move to recess until 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 11, 2024.

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

The motion was agreed to.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:43 p.m., recessed until Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 12:30 p.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 10, 2024:

THE JUDICIARY

ANN MARIE MCIFF ALLEN, OF UTAH, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF UTAH.