



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2024

No. 94

Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, before You, nations rise and fall. They grow strong or wither by Your design. Help our Nation to embrace righteousness and to strive for unity and renewal. May America set an example of right living that will inspire other nations to follow You. Teach all nations the way of peace so we may plow up battlefields and pound weapons into liberation tools. Teach us to talk across boundaries as brothers and sisters united by Your love.

Today, help our Senators to work with a renewed sense of their accountability to You.

We pray in your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 3, 2024.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. DUCKWORTH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

RIGHT TO CONTRACEPTION ACT— MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 400, S. 4381.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 400, S. 4381, a bill to protect an individual's ability to access contraceptives and to engage in contraception and to protect a health care provider's ability to provide contraceptives, contraception, and information related to contraception.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 400, S. 4381, a bill to protect an individual's ability to access contraceptives and to engage in contraception and to protect a health care provider's ability to provide contraceptives, contraception, and information related to contraception.

Charles E. Schumer, Edward J. Markey, Christopher Murphy, Chris Van Hollen, Richard Blumenthal, Jack Reed, Tammy Baldwin, Debbie Stabenow, Tina Smith, Tammy Duckworth, Alex Padilla, Margaret Wood Hassan, John W. Hickenlooper, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Jeanne Shaheen, Gary C. Peters.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRUMP TRIAL VERDICT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, last Thursday, a jury found former President Donald Trump guilty of 34 counts of falsifying business records as part of a hush money scheme. Former President Donald Trump is now a convicted felon.

The most important takeaway from this case is that nobody is above the law, including Donald Trump. The former President went through the same legal process that all Americans go through. He was tried according to the facts and the law and was found guilty—guilty—by a jury of his peers.

As Donald Trump considers his next steps, there should continue to be no outside political influence, intimidation, or interference in the case. I encourage Mr. Trump's supporters and critic alike to let the process move forward according to law.

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



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S3915

RIGHT TO CONTRACEPTION ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on reproductive care, this month, America marks a dark and somber anniversary—2 years since a radical MAGA majority on the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. The decision to overturn *Roe* will go down as one of the worst Supreme Court cases in modern times. It will be remembered as one of the most draconian reversals of individual liberty in American history.

There should be no question who brought our country to this crisis. It was Donald Trump and hard-right Republicans, who have made clear that they will not rest until freedom of choice is eliminated across the country.

Democrats will not stand for Republicans' relentless attacks on reproductive freedoms. This week, the Senate will begin our defense of freedom of choice with a vote to protect access to contraceptives.

Before the Memorial Day holiday, I began the process for the Senate to consider the Right to Contraception Act, led by Senators MARKEY and HIRONO. Today, I just filed cloture on the motion to proceed to that bill. Members should expect a vote moving forward on the Right to Contraception Act on Wednesday.

Federal protections for contraceptives are a critical piece of protecting American women's reproductive freedoms, and this legislation would codify the right to contraception into Federal law.

For those who think that Federal protections for birth control are unnecessary, just look at what is happening at the State level. Republican Governors in Virginia and Nevada have already vetoed bills to protect birth control, and the Arizona Legislature has blocked similar bills too. The Federal Government should absolutely have a say in ensuring every American has access to birth control if they need it.

There will be more action to come after that. Over the coming weeks, Senate Democrats will put reproductive freedoms front and center before this Chamber so that the American people can see for themselves who will stand up to defend their fundamental liberties.

The erosion of freedom of choice is perhaps the defining worry for tens of millions of Americans since the MAGA Court eliminated *Roe*.

Today, at least 20 States have near total bans or severe restrictions on abortion. Tens of millions of women lack access to reproductive care. Even services like IVF, which millions of Americans have relied on to have children, to start families, can no longer be assumed as totally safe.

None of this happened in a vacuum. This is all a direct result of Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans who made the repeal of *Roe* their North Star for decades, and Republicans aren't even hiding it. Donald Trump, in fact, said he was "proudly the person

responsible" for the disastrous *Roe* reversal.

Does anyone seriously think that if Donald Trump and Republicans get into power again that they won't try to restrict abortion and reproductive care even more? Of course they will. Of course they will. That is why it is more important now than ever that we pass legislation like the Right to Contraception Act to protect this vital life-line for millions of women across the country.

This week and in future weeks, Senate Republicans will have to answer for their anti-abortion, anti-women agenda, and my Republican colleagues should know that the American people are closely watching.

BIG OIL

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on Big Oil, well, we just finished celebrating the Memorial Day holiday. On one hand, it is a solemn holiday, a remembrance of all who died to protect our country. On the other hand, of course, Memorial Day weekend is an unofficial start to summer. Schools go out on break, families and friends get together, and millions of Americans go on road trips. So it is not hard to feel the frustration, the sheer exasperation felt by millions when America's biggest oil companies rake in record profits but still raise prices at the pump. It is deeply, deeply unfair. And now we have reason to believe that in some cases it may be unlawful.

Last week, I joined with my Democratic colleagues calling on the Department of Justice to investigate the oil industry after the Federal Trade Commission uncovered evidence of price fixing and of collusion.

According to the FTC, Pioneer Natural Resources—one of the most important producers in the country—may have colluded unlawfully with the foreign nations of OPEC to limit production and artificially boost prices during the early days of the pandemic.

Much of the evidence in the FTC's complaint is redacted, but even what is public is very, very troubling. According to the FTC, Pioneer's former CEO worked extensively with OPEC as early as 2020 to limit production, assuring them that American companies who normally competed against each other were "working to keep output artificially low." Artificially low output means higher prices for Americans.

Pioneer's former CEO reportedly told his competitors that they need to "stay in line" and that "if anybody goes back to growth, [shareholders] will punish those companies." A month ago, he went as far as saying, "Even if oil gets to \$200 a barrel, the independent producers are going to be disciplined."

This strong-arming seems to have worked, unfortunately. Today, growth in U.S. oil output is down 50 percent since the pandemic, but the average household is paying \$500 more a year

per car because of possible collusion—\$500 more a year per car for gasoline because of possible collusion.

That is what frustrates Americans so much about Big Oil: Even when they are making money hand over fist, they will keep raising prices on us; they will keep squeezing us for everything we have got. And now, they may—may—have crossed the line into unlawful behavior.

So the DOJ needs to step in and determine if any laws against collusion or price fixing have been broken. At minimum, the American people deserve to know if Big Oil executives are conspiring with each other or with OPEC behind our back to illegally raise prices at the pump.

TRUMP TAX CUTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, on the Trump tax cuts, we knew from day one that Trump tax cuts stunk to high heaven, and now CBO has shown us they are even worse than we thought. Last month, the CBO reported that an extension of the 2017 Trump tax cuts would add a whopping \$4.6 trillion to the deficit.

Hear that deficit hawks on the other side of the aisle who keep complaining that the deficit is getting higher? The Trump tax cuts would add a whopping \$4.6 trillion to the deficit. That is 50 percent higher than original estimates.

The latest CBO report is a harsh reality check for the self-proclaimed fiscal hawks on the right who complain about the deficit. They complain about spending \$50 million to help feed kids, but they seem to have no concern about a tax cut that mainly goes to the wealthy and big corporations that increases the deficit by \$4.6 trillion.

It is another reminder why, at the end of the day, the Trump tax cuts were a dud for the economy and a political loser for the Republican Party.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Christopher T. Hanson, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2029. (Reappointment).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The senior Senator from Illinois.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, when I went to college here in Washington, at Georgetown, I used to come into this Capitol Building and sit up there where the visitors are now sitting and watch what was going on on the Senate floor.

I can remember so many things, particularly the day that Bobby Kennedy gave a speech about Vietnam that was highly anticipated. He came walking through that door with his brother, Ted Kennedy—both of them Senators, one from New York, one from Massachusetts.

It was a historic moment, it was a magical moment. For a college student, it was just overwhelming to be a witness to that history and to realize what this Chamber has meant to this Nation, what this building has meant to this Nation throughout our history.

That is why I will never forget what happened in this Chamber on January 6, 2021. Violent extremists stormed the Capitol to prevent certification of the 2020 Presidential election. Donald Trump was engaged in the Big Lie.

For the first time really in the history of the United States, he questioned the legal outcome of an election.

Madam President, you and I both know that is fundamental to democracy—the belief that we can have the peaceful transition of the decision-makers guided by the people of this country without political interference.

As insurrectionists ransacked this building, many carried flags and banners to show their support for former President Trump in his effort to overturn the election—the Big Lie. Two of the more prominent symbols of the so-called “Stop the Steal” campaign on behalf of President Trump were on display that day. One was an American flag flown upside down and the other a so-called “Appeal to Heaven” flag.

While the events of January 6 were hard to imagine, reports that the same battle flags flew outside Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito’s home were nearly as shocking. In January of 2021, less than 2 weeks after the insurrection at the Capitol, an upside-down American flag flew over Justice Alito’s front lawn in suburban Virginia. In the summer of 2023, the “Appeal to Heaven” flag flew on the flagpole of the Alitos’ beach home in New Jersey. While these flags may have once held other meanings, in the year 2021, they were closely associated with election deniers and extreme rightwing politicians. They are, in fact, the battle flags of Trump’s MAGA movement.

The Supreme Court’s authority ultimately rests on its reputation and pub-

lic confidence. The Supreme Court doesn’t own the Army. It doesn’t have a vast Treasury. It depends on people trusting the Justices to make honest, professional decisions. This reputation and public confidence is the strength of the Supreme Court. That is why the Supreme Court’s recently adopted code of conduct requires Justices to avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all activities. Both the code of conduct and Federal law require Justices to recuse themselves when their impartiality might reasonably be questioned.

The flying of these flags marks a new, disturbing chapter in the Supreme Court’s ongoing ethical crisis. It suggests that Justice Alito has not only chosen sides in an ongoing political dispute but that he has also announced his allegiance in pending legal disputes.

As we speak, the Supreme Court is considering two critical cases relating to the 2020 Presidential election and the January 6 insurrection. In *Trump v. United States*, the Supreme Court will decide whether former President Trump is immune from criminal prosecution for his efforts to overturn the election. In *Fischer v. United States*, the Court—again, the Supreme Court—will determine whether the Federal felony obstruction statute applies to the January 6 rioters who tried to stop Congress from exercising its constitutional duty to certify the election. The Court’s rulings on these issues will be critical to ensuring that those responsible for one of the darkest chapters in our history are held accountable.

Displaying the upside-down American flag and “Appeal to Heaven” flag creates the appearance that Justice Alito has already aligned himself with the “Stop the Steal” campaign. He cannot credibly claim to be an umpire—calling balls and strikes—in these cases. He has donned the jersey of his favorite team. That is why I called on Justice Alito to recuse himself and why I urged Chief Justice Roberts to finally step up and take the steps necessary to ensure that Justice Alito does not sit on those cases and, rather, that he recuse himself. Last week, Justice Alito refused my request.

I am going to keep this letter—the original version that was sent to me and sent to the White House by Justice Alito—in which he makes an argument that these flags should not be taken seriously; that it was his wife’s decision. There were complications in her decision. It is hard to accept this. It is hard, first, to believe that this man we are asking to recuse himself from these Supreme Court cases has somehow stood in judgment of himself and decided that he did nothing unethical and should not recuse himself. He refused our request to recuse himself from these cases. In doing so, he claimed he bears no responsibility for the January 6-related flags flying over his homes. Instead, he placed the blame solely on his wife.

He went on to downplay the significance of the upside-down American flag display, claiming it was part of a dispute with his neighbors, and he denied knowing about the connection between the “Appeal to Heaven” flag and the January 6 insurrection on the Capitol.

Chief Justice Roberts, likewise, refused my request to take action and simply deferred to Justice Alito’s decision. But Justice Alito’s refusal to recuse begs the question: Why should he have the sole power to decide whether his recusal from the case is necessary?

Additional reporting has already called into question his version of events with text messages and even a recording of a call to police suggesting the neighborhood dispute occurred after the upside-down American flag flew over the Alito residence. Whether Justice Alito raised these flags himself or stood idly by while his wife did so, the fact remains the same: A reasonable person would question Justice Alito’s impartiality to the cases relating to the 2020 election and January 6. Recusal is, therefore, necessary.

But the consequences of Justice Alito’s actions go far beyond this. He needs to recuse himself from these cases. By displaying two symbols of the MAGA Republican movement, Justice Alito presented himself to the world as a political actor and an ally of the far right. His actions suggest that no matter what arguments are made or what evidence is presented at the Supreme Court, his decisions will align with his personal beliefs and policy preferences.

And no matter what excuses or explanations he provides now or in the future, it will be hard for anybody before the Court to believe that Justice Alito approaches that case without bias.

We cannot afford the further erosion of public confidence in our courts. Our faith in the impartiality of judges is essential to the functioning of our legal system and our form of government. For more than a year, story after story has broken about ethical misconduct by sitting Justices of the Supreme Court. We have learned that some Justices, including Justice Alito again, accepted gifts and travel from billionaires with interests before the Court. The Senate and the American people deserve to know the full extent of how immense wealth is used to buy private access to the Justices. That is why the Senate Judiciary Committee is exercising its constitutional authority to investigate what has been provided to the Justices.

I will continue to push for legislation—a bill sponsored primarily by SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, but many of us have joined as cosponsors—to establish a binding code of conduct and recusal standards for the Justices.

Why in the world should the highest Court in our land have the lowest standard of ethics? If every other Federal judge is held to a standard of ethics to make certain that their reputations are intact, why would that not

apply to the Justices sitting on the highest Court of the land?

We will continue to push for legislation to create a binding code of conduct and recusal standards that the American people can see. Last year, the Judiciary Committee reported to the floor the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act. Importantly, this legislation's ethical and recusal requirement would apply equally to every Justice of the Supreme Court regardless of the party or the President who appointed them. The Supreme Court has failed to act to address the ethical crisis that has engulfed it, and so the Senate must do so.

This is a simple fact: There is a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, John Roberts. It is within his power to resolve this ethical issue tonight—to have it done by the morning—to make it clear that the Supreme Court is taking a different course, one that is credible to the American people.

Justice Alito cannot stand in judgment of himself. The fact that we have to come to the floor of the Senate to plead this case makes it clear that there are no avenues to be followed for ethical consideration for the Court today. That can change. The bill that is pending on the calendar is a step in the right direction, and I totally support it.

Madam President, I close by asking unanimous consent that the letter sent to me by Justice Alito be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, May 29, 2024.

Hon. RICHARD J. DURBIN,
Hon. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS DURBIN AND WHITEHOUSE: This is in response to your letter of May 23 to the Chief Justice requesting that he take steps to ensure that I recuse in *Trump v. United States*, No. 23-939, and any other cases “related to the 2020 presidential election” or “the January 6th attack on the Capitol.” As the Court has pointed out, “[i]ndividual Justices, rather than the Court, decide recusal issues.” I am therefore responding directly to your letter. In it, you claim that two incidents involving the flying of flags created an appearance of impropriety that requires my recusal.

The applicable provision of our Code of Conduct states as follows:

“B. DISQUALIFICATION.

(1) A Justice is presumed impartial and has an obligation to sit unless disqualified.

(2) A Justice should disqualify himself or herself in a proceeding in which the Justice's impartiality might reasonably be questioned, that is, where an unbiased and reasonable person who is aware of all relevant circumstances would doubt that the Justice could fairly discharge his or her duties.” Code of Conduct for Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, Canon 3(B)(1)-(2).

The two incidents you cite do not meet the conditions for recusal set out in (B)(2), and I therefore have an obligation to sit under (B)(1).

The first incident cited in your letter concerns the flying of an upside-down American flag outside the house in Virginia where my

wife and I reside. In considering whether this event requires recusal, an unbiased and reasonable person would take into account the following facts. As I have stated publicly, I had nothing whatsoever to do with the flying of that flag. I was not even aware of the upside-down flag until it was called to my attention. As soon as I saw it, I asked my wife to take it down, but for several days, she refused.

My wife and I own our Virginia home jointly. She therefore has the legal right to use the property as she sees fit, and there were no additional steps that I could have taken to have the flag taken down more promptly.

My wife's reasons for flying the flag are not relevant for present purposes, but I note that she was greatly distressed at the time due, in large part, to a very nasty neighborhood dispute in which I had no involvement. A house on the street displayed a sign attacking her personally, and a man who was living in the house at the time trailed her all the way down the street and berated her in my presence using foul language, including what I regard as the vilest epithet that can be addressed to a woman.

My wife is a private citizen, and she possesses the same First Amendment rights as every other American. She makes her own decisions, and I have always respected her right to do so. She has made many sacrifices to accommodate my service on the Supreme Court, including the insult of having to endure numerous, loud, obscene, and personally insulting protests in front of our home that continue to this day and now threaten to escalate.

I am confident that a reasonable person who is not motivated by political or ideological considerations or a desire to affect the outcome of Supreme Court cases would conclude that the events recounted above do not meet the applicable standard for recusal. I am therefore required to reject your request.

The second incident concerns a flag bearing the legend “An Appeal to Heaven” that flew in the backyard of our vacation home in the summer of 2023. I recall that my wife did fly that flag for some period of time, but I do not remember how long it flew. And what is most relevant here, I had no involvement in the decision to fly that flag.

My wife is fond of flying flags. I am not. My wife was solely responsible for having flagpoles put up at our residence and our vacation home and has flown a wide variety of flags over the years. In addition to the American flag, she has flown other patriotic flags (including a favorite flag thanking veterans), college flags, flags supporting sports teams, state and local flags, flags of nations from which the ancestors of family members came, flags of places we have visited, seasonal flags, and religious flags. I was not familiar with the “Appeal to Heaven” flag when my wife flew it. She may have mentioned that it dates back to the American Revolution, and I assumed she was flying it to express a religious and patriotic message. I was not aware of any connection between this historic flag and the “Stop the Steal Movement,” and neither was my wife. She did not fly it to associate herself with that or any other group, and the use of an old historic flag by a new group does not necessarily drain that flag of all other meanings.

As I said in reference to the other flag event, my wife is an independently minded private citizen. She makes her own decisions, and I honor her right to do so. Our vacation home was purchased with money she inherited from her parents and is titled in her name. It is a place, away from Washington, where she should be able to relax.

A reasonable person who is not motivated by political or ideological considerations or

a desire to affect the outcome of Supreme Court cases would conclude that this event does not meet the applicable standard for recusal. I am therefore duty-bound to reject your recusal request.

Sincerely yours,

SAMUEL A. ALITO, Jr.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TEXAS STORMS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, here we are, back in the Nation's Capital, doing the people's work. But over the last couple of weeks, I have been traveling across the State of Texas, where our communities have been battered by extreme weather of one kind or another. From Houston up to the Metroplex and Valley View, and all the way over to Lubbock, storms have caused severe damage and widespread power outages.

A couple of weeks ago, 100-mile-per-hour winds ripped through Houston, toppling transmission lines, power lines, and trees, and ripping windows out of skyscrapers.

Last week's storms in West Texas brought hail so large that the National Weather Service issued a warning with a novel descriptor. They called the hail “DVD-sized.”

The Dallas area saw baseball-sized hail and 80-mile-an-hour winds, which led to several days without power for many of my constituents.

And five tornadoes touched down in North Texas during a 6-hour span last Saturday. One of those tornadoes, an EF3, traveled roughly 48 miles through three counties for over an hour, with speeds peaking at 140 miles an hour. Tragically, it led to 7 deaths and an estimated 100 injuries.

So far this year, the National Weather Service has recorded more than 1,300 heavy weather events in Texas, and more than 100 of those reports came on a single day last week.

Many of our communities are still clearing debris, restoring power, and assessing damage. I have spoken with leaders throughout these regions about the recovery process and offered a helping hand.

I appreciate everything that has been done and continues to be done to keep our communities safe and support those who have suffered the damage caused by this severe weather.

In many areas, the level of destruction far exceeds the capabilities of the city or county, and there is a need for Federal support. Governor Abbott has worked quickly to ensure Texas receives the resources and support it needs from the State, and he requested assistance from the Federal Government too. He has submitted major disaster declaration requests to President

Biden for the counties impacted by severe weather and flooding. Senator CRUZ and I have been in communication with the administration to emphasize how critical these resources are, and we have urged the President to grant the Governor's request for all of the affected counties. Many counties are still waiting for that critical declaration, and I urge the administration to move expeditiously to grant those requests as soon as possible to unlock critical assistance. I appreciate the Biden administration working with us to support these counties and these constituents who were impacted by the recent string of storms.

There is a lot of partisan disagreement here in Washington, DC, that underpins what we do day to day, but those divisions have never extended to critical emergency relief.

With the start of hurricane season officially upon us and experts predicting an active season, I know I join all Texans in hoping for an expeditious recovery for impacted communities.

MEMORIAL DAY

Madam President, as I was able to travel around the State and dodge the severe weather that seemed to pop up instantaneously, I was able to spend time with many of my constituents. For example, I kicked off the week in San Antonio at my favorite annual event. It is where all of the students who have been admitted to service academies gather with their parents and are sent off to their service academy with a rousing speech and best wishes by everyone there.

We had VADM Joe Maguire provide a speech—somebody who was 36 years in the Navy SEALs and now is the director of the Clements Center in Austin, TX, working with the Strauss Center and other University of Texas institutions to try to help educate the next generation of our Nation's leaders.

My office hosts this Memorial Day event to celebrate young Texans who will attend military service academies, and this year, we had the joy of hosting more than 100 students, plus their families and friends, along with several elected officials, community leaders, and representatives from various veterans groups. As I mentioned, our keynote speaker was VADM Joe Maguire.

As we honor the lives of those who died in service to our country, it is very powerful to celebrate the next generation of leaders who are committed to protecting their Nation. These are some of the smartest and most accomplished young people in the country, and they have chosen to pursue their education at our service academies, but they made the decision to take their talents to these service academies and pursue an honorable career that will be full of challenges and sacrifices. They could have gone to some elite school in the Northeast, with the hopes of making millions of dollars over their lifetime, but these students have made a different choice—a choice that puts service above self,

and I applaud all of them. It was great to meet with these young men and women because it gives me hope for the future of our country.

I am grateful to the families as well, who were there cheering their students on, who traveled from across Texas to help us celebrate in San Antonio.

I am incredibly proud of these young men and women for answering the call to serve. I wish them the best of luck.

Last week, I also had the chance to spend some time out in West Texas at the Goodfellow Air Force Base near San Angelo, TX. That is one of the principal training sites for our entering airmen, sailors, soldiers, and now the Space Force, called the guardians. All of these folks who are training to become intelligence specialists come to San Angelo for some of their most basic training.

I got a chance to see them in action and learn about how they are evolving their training missions to match the threat of an evolving landscape. I also had a chance to meet with some of the base's senior leaders and recognize some of the incredible servicemembers who were stationed there.

May, of course, was Military Appreciation Month, and it was great to spend some time celebrating some of our country's past, present, and future military leaders last week. These young men and women are the reason the United States continues to be the greatest, most powerful country on Earth, and they deserve our deepest gratitude for their enduring commitment.

Texas is the proud home to many servicemembers and veterans and their families, and it also serves as a home to the facilities that produce the equipment and the ammunition they use on the battlefield. From F-35 Joint Strike Fighters in Fort Worth to the Pantex Plant near Amarillo, which assembles, disassembles, and evaluates nuclear weapons, we have many of these sites located throughout the State.

Last week, I had a chance to visit the newest addition to Texas's defense industry. General Dynamics just opened its new heavy artillery manufacturing facility in Mesquite, just outside of Dallas. This facility will increase production of 155-millimeter shells, which are crucial to Ukraine's defense against Russia and our preparation for other conflicts around the world. This new factory will expand domestic manufacturing to produce more than 30,000 shells each month, which amounts to one-third of all U.S. production of 155-millimeter artillery shells.

One of the things that the war in Ukraine has exposed is our defense industrial base, which has not been prepared to meet the needs and demands not only of the United States but also of our friends and allies around the world. This is the first new ammunition plant since the start of the Ukraine war, and I am glad that investment was made in the Lone Star State.

Texas is critical to America's national security, and it was good to spend time with the Secretary of the Army, Christine Wormuth, seeing the incredible work being done to support our Nation's security as well as our friends and allies around the world.

My final stop last week on my across-the-State travels was the new Driscoll Children's Hospital in the Rio Grande Valley. Until recently, many families had to travel 150 miles just to receive the specialized care their children needed. With the opening of this new, state-of-the-art facility, that has finally changed. This hospital offers nearly 150 patient beds, 8 operating rooms, sophisticated technology, and even a therapy dog by the name of "Tesla." This is the type of facility that is life-changing for countless families in the region, and I was glad to join elected officials and community leaders to celebrate the newest addition to healthcare delivery in the Rio Grande Valley.

Madam President, it was a busy week in Texas. We have 254 counties. As I like to tell people, it is closer to the Pacific Ocean from El Paso than it is from El Paso, far west Texas, to the eastern tip of our State. Everybody knows Texas is a big place, and I can attest to that again after my travels this last week.

I am grateful to many of my constituents and friends who shared their ideas and feedback with me. It is amazing how different their agenda and their priorities are from what we hear emanating from Washington, DC.

It is the honor of a lifetime to serve 30 million Texans in the U.S. Senate, and I am ready to get back to work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

INDEPENDENT AND COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I am here on the Senate floor today to call attention to my colleagues. I want them to recognize—and, really, Americans to recognize—the significant crisis that is happening not only in my home State of Kansas but across the country. All of us face this in our home States. The independent and community pharmacies in our Nation have been struggling for years to survive, and their situation, unfortunately, is deteriorating rapidly.

Independent and community pharmacies play an invaluable role in the healthcare of our country and especially in rural communities, like those in my home State. For many Americans, the local pharmacist is not just a convenient healthcare provider, but it is also someone with whom they feel

most comfortable in receiving medical advice.

I remember my dad, into his nineties, declined to go see the doctor because he knew they would find something wrong with him. But when he had a cup of coffee at the drugstore, he talked with the pharmacist, who provided him with healthcare, occasionally putting a blood pressure cuff on his arm and suggesting to my dad: Ray, you need to go to the doctor.

They are really important people in our communities, and they are highly trusted; and their advice is invaluable as we try to make certain that all Americans are more healthy. Local pharmacists know their patients, their health situations, and even their families, as is the norm in tight-knit rural communities.

The service occurring at a local pharmacy is not simply one for physical medication but offers the relational aspect so often missing in today's healthcare system and, in fact, in today's world. Community pharmacies do not just dispense medications. They build relationships with their patients, and they offer a familiar face and trusted adviser, extending value far beyond their role as just a provider of medication and prescription drugs, although that is their profession.

But despite their irreplaceable role in America's rural communities, from 2003 to 2021, the number of independently owned retail pharmacies declined in rural areas by 16 percent. Through the COVID pandemic and in its aftermath, local pharmacies have been hit hard by the same difficulties our entire healthcare system and infrastructure are facing: high inflation, nonexistent workforce, and supply chain shortages.

However, in addition to these factors experienced by many, pharmacies face additional significant challenges that threaten their solvency and are forcing an increasing number of independent and community pharmacies to close. The growing challenges with the 340B Drug Pricing Program and actions of participating manufacturers are reducing the revenues for contract pharmacies. While 340B was created to ensure low-income and uninsured patients have access to discounted drugs, pharmacies have relied upon the program for revenue via contract pharmacy arrangements, a policy that Congress ought to codify within the 340B statute.

Another factor is the actions of pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs. We have three committees in the U.S. Senate, all which have passed legislation dealing with PBMs, but none of those pieces of legislation has come to the Senate floor—PBMs that, unlike any other sector of the healthcare industry, have operated without oversight and regulation for years.

The obscurity of their industry allows PBMs to argue that they are helping to keep prescription costs lower for patients while ensuring a higher reimbursement for pharmacies. Recent

studies, investigations, and real-life experiences of our independent and community pharmacies and their patients tell us the exact opposite is true.

I hear this from my pharmacists across Kansas. It used to be, early in my days in the U.S. Senate and even in Congress, that the gathering place in the community and a nice enjoyable place to visit was the community pharmacy, the community's drugstore. Today, if you enter the drugstore as an elected official, you will hear the difficulties those pharmacists are facing in their profession and in their business. Part of that is the story of PBMs and the PBMs' clawbacks from reimbursements already made to the pharmacists, rebates that did not reach patients and went instead to the PBMs. Vertical integration and unfavorable terms offered to 340B contract pharmacies have become increasingly frequent and the common practice of PBMs.

In addition to actions taken by the PBMs, local pharmacies also recently have been forced out of or are unable to serve TRICARE beneficiaries. Two years ago, TRICARE began a new contract with Express Scripts, the subsidiary owned by Cigna. The new Express Scripts contract offered to interested pharmacy participants offered reimbursement rates that were far too low for many of our pharmacies or pharmacists to accept. The pharmacists did not have the ability to negotiate the reimbursement rates with Express Scripts. It was a "take it or leave it."

Without negotiations and unable to afford the offered reimbursement rates, countless numbers of local pharmacies in Kansas could not participate in the new TRICARE network with Express Scripts. In addition to the community pharmacies' desire to serve veterans, Active-Duty military members, and their families, the costs associated with TRICARE prevented them from doing so.

When the costs of acquiring and dispensing a drug are higher than the reimbursement rates, a business—a pharmacy—simply cannot make that math work and stay solvent. Yet we continue to ask our community pharmacists across the Nation to do that each and every year, to make that situation work year after year.

While perhaps you can get by for a year or maybe two, you can't get by year after year after year. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Nation's independent and community pharmacies are facing a crisis, and if Congress does not act, a significant number of local pharmacies will be forced to close. We frequently discuss the high rate of rural hospital closures, but rarely do we ever discuss the parallel crisis of losing rural pharmacies at this increasingly alarming rate.

I am told by the Kansas Pharmacists Association that 32 percent of community pharmacies across the country are considering closing this year. Unfortu-

nately, I know that 32 percent includes a vast number of Kansas pharmacies. As of 2021, Kansas is one of four States with the most counties lacking sufficient access to a pharmacy.

What I am saying is that there is already a problem of access. But with the trend that now presents itself, more and more Kansans—more and more Americans—will have less access or no access to a pharmacy.

Today, many of our healthcare needs are met by prescription drugs, and yet that will not be an option for many Americans.

So often we take for granted the healthcare infrastructure we have in our Nation, from hospitals and community health centers to specialists and pediatricians and primary care practices. No matter where an individual is seeking care, one place that is a common denominator for the entire healthcare system is the pharmacy. Independent and community pharmacies in Kansas and across the Nation are the one place where a patient can go to fill their medication, see a friendly face, and know that local access to care is there for them when they need it.

We are asking for miracles from the community and independent pharmacies to remain solvent through a barrage of unfair situations, none of their own making. They deserve better than what we are asking from them. And just as they offer lifesaving services to Americans, Congress ought to heed the warnings from community pharmacists and offer lifesaving policies and legislation to them.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

TRUMP TRIAL VERDICT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, a Presidential campaign and a political party misreported payments to lawyers as legal expenses and, thus, violated the law.

Now, am I referring to Donald Trump and his trial? No. I am referring to the Democratic National Committee and the Hillary Clinton campaign.

In the 2016 Presidential election cycle, they improperly reported money used to fund the Steele dossier as legal expense, and in doing so, they hid its true purpose, which was opposition research against Trump.

Now, the Federal Election Commission held, 6 years later, that it found probable cause that the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton campaign violated Federal law. They were fined over \$100,000. Were they criminally prosecuted? Of course not.

The now-debunked Steele dossier threw our country into crisis and did it for years. In 2020, Senator JOHNSON of Wisconsin and I were able to get once-classified information declassified.

That declassified information showed that Christopher Steele's sources were, one, connected to the Russian Government; two, supported Hillary Clinton; and, three, that Russian intelligence

was aware of Steele's anti-Trump work even before the FBI started their investigation.

This is information that the Justice Department failed to tell the FISA Court. The Justice Department failed to even apprise the FISA Court that the FBI had a counterintelligence case on one of Steele's key sources. The Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee colluded with the Russians.

They used a former British spy, Fusion GPS, and a law firm to create a fake dossier and then tried to cover it up by misreporting it under the Federal election rules.

This case is referred to as "Crossfire Hurricane." It is a textbook example of government weaponization. It was to get Trump at all costs as they could.

And now that weaponization has moved to the judicial system, our last line of defense against partisan political cancer.

District Attorney Bragg manufactured a crime by reviving a time-barred, State-based misdemeanor for alleging falsifying business records. To revive the alleged crime and elevate it to a felony, he alleged it was done in furtherance of another crime, and he also alleged interference in the 2016 election by Donald Trump.

So what were these extra crimes? Violation of Federal election law, tax law, and other business records. The judge allowed District Attorney Bragg to essentially prosecute alleged Federal violations in State court, but because it was a State court, Bragg couldn't actually charge Trump for those further crimes, which were Federal in nature.

So what an absolute mess and scary precedent this partisan process has created that is going to be a sore on public policy, statutory law, and a precedent to be carried on by other prosecutors in the future.

This was a case that Bragg initially declined to prosecute, just as his predecessor declined to prosecute. And that was a case that Federal prosecutors in the Southern District of New York declined and so, too, and as well did the Federal Election Commission.

Now, that prosecutor in Manhattan that failed to prosecute the same things that Bragg prosecuted was well-respected Cyrus Vance, Jr.

Now, we have Bragg taking up what an outstanding prosecutor by the name of Vance would not do. Even liberal legal analysts have noted that this case wouldn't have been brought against anyone other than Donald Trump.

A State prosecutor has no jurisdiction over a Federal crime, whereas the Justice Department does. And here the Justice Department and the Federal Election Commission have exclusive jurisdiction over these kinds of matters.

The Biden Justice Department didn't do anything to assert its jurisdictional hook as it routinely does when, for ex-

ample, States file lawsuits involving Federal immigration law.

Biden's No. 3 official at the Justice Department, Matthew Colangelo, left that perch to work as a line prosecutor in the Bragg office for this specific prosecution.

Eventually, the "zombie" case against Trump, as it has been described by legal scholars, was revived just in time for the 2024 Presidential election cycle. In fact, the grand jury came out with a verdict less than 2 months after Trump announced for the election.

Then, the judge allowed the jury to pick from not one but three different secondary crimes that I mentioned earlier that Trump allegedly committed to impact the 2016 election. This means that jurors could disagree on the crime. Yet the judge would still consider the verdict unanimous to convict.

As Andrew McCarthy said in his June 1, 2024, article, "The jurors were told that they needn't agree on what unlawful conduct Trump had engaged in to conspire to corrupt the election (which remember was not charged in the indictment)."

This is a judge who repeatedly contributed to a group "dedicated to resisting the Republican Party and Donald Trump's radical right-wing legacy."

And McCarthy wrote in his article, "How can there be guilt beyond a reasonable doubt if the jury doesn't agree on whether prosecutors have proved a key element of the case?"

I could go on and on about the defects in this political persecution. What concerns me most is the damage that is done to our American institutions.

Federal law enforcement, the intelligence community, and now the judicial branch have contorted themselves in ways unimaginable just to try and, at the same time, destroy Trump. In the process, they have broken faith with the laws, with the rules, with ethics, with the truth, and with the American people.

The steel and concrete foundations of our law enforcement and the judicial institutions are breaking apart, piece by piece, bit by bit. It is not the American people who are doing it. It is those charged with running those institutions who are responsible for their shockingly quick decline.

That decline won't stop anytime soon so long as the left and their allies in the media continue to use the judicial system to destroy their enemies based upon make-believe cases.

The leftwing's lawfare crusade has given them what they wanted for a decade now: Donald Trump's conviction on something, anything, just a conviction.

But what the leftwing has failed to foresee is the aftermath of their injecting partisan political cancer into our once storied institutions; that is, they run the catastrophic risk of the American people not caring anymore. Did the Justice Department indict someone on major criminal charges? Well, many

people may react with doubt about the merits and the integrity of that indictment because of the Justice Department's past political decisions.

Did the FBI arrest a major criminal? Well, many people may begin to question whether the person arrested is now a part of a political persecution based on made-up information like what happened with the FISA Court and Crossfire Hurricane and everything involving Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election.

A Democratic judge and prosecution team tried and convicted a Republican in a district that is almost 90 percent Democratic voters. They asked for going to someplace else where they might get a more fair trial, and they got a quick no.

So I hope you get the picture. That is why millions of Americans refuse to take this sham conviction very seriously. Trust is easy to lose, and trust is hard to gain.

Andrew McCarthy stated in his excellent analysis:

What happened in Manhattan was monstrous. The fallout is the antithesis of a constitutional republic that presumes innocence, imposes the burden of proof on the state, venerates its due-process rules, and guarantees equal protection of the law. The antithesis is now the norm. Regardless of what happens to Donald Trump, all of us will live to regret it.

Ultimately, only "We the People" can solve the constitutional crisis that politicians, law enforcement, and judicial officers have disgracefully created.

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

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

The Senator from Rhode Island.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, as the presiding officer knows, I have come regularly to the floor to discuss multiple aspects of the scheme run by a bunch of rightwing billionaires to capture and control the Supreme Court and how that has come to affect so many Americans' lives.

Well, in case there were not enough ethics problems already at the Supreme Court after the billionaire gift program for certain Justices gave them luxurious, free, undisclosed travel gifts around the world, paid for homes for parents, education for dependents, and even an expensive motor coach that appears never to have had the principal repaid.

Now we know that MAGA battle flags were flown over the Alito residences. We don't know all the facts of what happened. We do know that Alito's version of events differs from corroborated statements of other witnesses to

those events, and for sure we know that people need to be able to trust that judges maintain the highest standards of impartiality, which includes avoiding even the appearance of bias.

And say what you will about the excuses and the reasons for flying MAGA battle flags over the house of a Supreme Court Justice, you cannot say that those flags did not appear. You cannot say that they did not create an appearance that, to a reasonable person, would raise serious questions about whether that Justice flying MAGA battle flags over his home had a bias, particularly with respect to cases arising out of the January 6 MAGA insurrection.

Whatever those fact differences are, they are important to try to get to the bottom of. And the problem is: It is hard to get those fact differences resolved because alone in the entire Federal Government—alone—Supreme Court Justices are subject to no fact-finding process. If the presiding officer or me or the minority leader or the majority leader were subject to ethics complaints here in the Senate, our Ethics Committee has the ability to investigate and to do factfinding, and even to take statements. It is true over in the House as well. Even the powerful Speaker of the House can be subject to sanction, can be subject to investigation, and to have to make statements. Heck, President Biden sat for an official interview about the documents in his garage. But the Justices—and only the nine Justices—are protected even from any factfinding, the most rudimentary foundation of legal process.

And it is ironic because, in theory, the Supreme Court is supposed to defend the integrity of legal process in this country, and what they do is they exempt themselves from its most rudimentary pillar.

Obviously, this is all part of a long string of problematic behavior that has come to the public's attention, none of which has received adequate factfinding over at the Court.

So, for sure, these far-right Justices have demonstrated they need to be subject to an enforceable ethics code. You remember the routine they have been on? First it was: Don't bother us. This is nobody's concern.

And then it was: Oh, all right. We have this ethics statements that we are going to put out about our ethics.

And that wasn't good enough. So it was then: OK. OK. We will do an ethics code.

But it is like: We will play by the rules of baseball, except for that part about umpires. So we will have an ethics code. We will play by the rules of baseball, but we will get to call our own balls and strikes, and we will get to call ourselves safe on base every time, and there will be no dispute because there is no factfinding to be done.

We also know that the Justices won't talk to us about their messes, about

this problem. Justice Roberts just declined a meeting with the chairs of the Judiciary Committee and the Court's Subcommittee.

Alito sent us a letter expanding on his challenged version of events, but his correspondence is not subject to the veracity discipline of any sanction for falsehoods and omissions.

Again, and making matters worse, Alito's story conflicts with the accounts of other people involved, and the Supreme Court, uniquely in all of government, has no mechanism for getting to the truth. So if the Court won't create one, then we need to. And my Supreme Court ethics bill would do just that.

Every investigator knows that you have to take a proper statement to get to the truth. The Supreme Court itself took statements from employees when it was investigating the Alito-Dobbs draft opinion leak.

But no matter what the circumstances, no matter how bad it gets, no factfinding process applies to the nine Justices—just them. Everybody else in the government is subject to some factfinding process—not them. That can be fixed.

Nowhere is the Supreme Court forbidden to have an inbox for ethics complaints. Nowhere is the Supreme Court forbidden to hire clerical staff to sort out nutty from legitimate ethics complaints. Nowhere is the Court forbidden to hire staff attorneys to look into the legitimate ethics complaints and do a little investigating. Nowhere is the Court forbidden to allow the staff attorneys to interview Justices to help determine what the facts are.

"I am sorry, sir. This should take less than an hour, but I need to go through the events in this complaint and get your statement of what the facts are here." That is not hard.

And nowhere is the Court forbidden from allowing, for instance, a panel of senior respected Federal chief judges who administer the ethics code in their own circuits to compare what the Justices did, what the factfinding investigation revealed, with what those chief judges would allow in their circuits and then make that comparison public.

None of that offends the separation of powers. It would be all run within the judicial branch. And even without any actual disciplinary punishment, the rebuke of a Supreme Court Justice being told that their conduct wouldn't fly in other Federal courts would be a powerful corrective and deterrent.

There is an old saying that the best way to show one stick is crooked is to lay a straight stick down next to it. A panel of senior and respected Chief Judges could provide that straight stick. Even on an advisory basis, the straight stick would be valuable.

And we are going to continue working both on the Judiciary and Finance Committees to get to the bottom of the mischief at the Court.

252ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE "GASPEE" RAID

Madam President, now, if I may, I would like to change the topic to my favorite annual presentation here in the Senate, and that is to commemorate the anniversary of the burning of the Gaspee.

The Gaspee was a revenue cutter of the Royal Navy that was operating in Rhode Island waters, annoying and harassing the shipowners and the crews who were engaged in maritime trade. And they got so fed up that, one day, a trading ship called the Hannah was working her way up Narragansett Bay, and the Gaspee came along and instructed the Hannah that it should pull up and allow itself to be inspected, boarded, and potentially seized by Her Majesty's government.

They were doing a lot of that, by the way. It might have come back to bite them.

There was a ship called the Fortune, which was owned by a Rhode Islander. It was seized, taken up to Boston, and sold. And, at the time, one of the owners was not all that involved in the activities that led to the Revolution, but he got a little bit motivated when his boat got seized and his cargo seized and all of his goods were taken and the value shipped back to the King. He was Nathanael Greene. He ended up becoming Washington's aide-de-camp. He ended up running the southern campaign for George Washington. And the British general who was trying to manage the American Revolution wrote back to his wife: That damn Greene is more dangerous than Washington.

So it can be provoking to have your ship seized.

Anyway, there is the Hannah sailing up the bay. Here comes the Gaspee in hot pursuit. The Hannah has a wily captain who knows the waters quite well and sails the Hannah over shallows, where a river comes into the bay and leaves a sandy trail along the bottom.

And so the Hannah shoots over the shallows, and along comes the rather bigger, more lumbering Gaspee and grinds into the sandbar. And it is stuck. And the tide is falling. So it is going to be there for a while.

So up goes the Hannah to Providence and reports on how they tricked the Gaspee into grounding itself on the sandbar. And, that night, drums are beat on the streets of Providence. Refreshments are served. And a gang of worthy Rhode Islanders decide to go down and fix the Gaspee, once and for all.

And six or seven longboats rowed down that night, under cover of darkness, with muffled oars, and they approached the Gaspee. They told its captain to surrender or they would board it and sack it. Captain Dudingston said he was not going to do that.

There was an exchange of gunfire, and the captain of the ship, whose actual rank was lieutenant—Lieutenant Dudingston—was shot in that exchange. He survived his wounds. He

was taken ashore by the Rhode Islanders, provided medical care, and ended up retiring back to his native Scotland, all well.

But that moment was probably the first blood drawn in the conflict that ultimately became the American Revolution.

So they did, in fact, take over the boat. They swarmed up the sides of it. They captured the crew. They took them all ashore. And then they went back out, and they lit the boat on fire.

Here is a rendition of what the Gaspee looked like burning, stuck on the sandbar. Of course, when the fire got to the powder magazine—boom. It went off like a bomb. We are still trying to find pieces of the Gaspee there, but it got blown to such smithereens that nobody has yet been able to find anything, despite some fairly diligent efforts.

We love the Gaspee in Rhode Island. Here is a new license plate commemorating “Gaspee Days,” showing the Gaspee all on fire, getting ready to blow up.

And here is what is interesting about it. I did an interview with the Washington Post.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the interview appended at the end of my remarks here.

This is from that article.

Pretty much everybody here—I suspect all of the pages who are here on the floor—know exactly what the Boston Tea Party is. Massachusetts has seen to it, over many, many years, that everybody knows what the Boston Tea Party was.

Well, as the story relates, 18 months before colonists dumped tea in Boston Harbor, Rhode Islanders attacked and destroyed a British Navy ship off the coast near Providence, furious with what they saw as the Crown’s overreach—18 months before.

You know, in Rhode Island, we sometimes have a little chip on our shoulder about being overlooked by our bigger northern neighbor—our northern suburbs, some might say. But, you know, when you actually blow up the damn boat and that is lost to history, but then up in Massachusetts, more than a year later, they push tea bags off the boat into the harbor and they get the credit for the great revolutionary activity, I want to come to the floor and do my very best to make that correction to history.

And one of the things that is nice is that people are starting to write more and more about this.

I will close by referencing “The Burning of His Majesty’s Schooner Gaspee,” a history of the event surrounding that incident, by Steven Park. And then in Nick Bunker’s book, “An Empire on the Edge,” he has an entire chapter inside, “The dark affair, the Gaspee incident,” that describes what was done.

And our Secretary of State’s office put together this presentation on the

Gaspee affair. It was titled “Gaspee: The Spark that Ignited the American Revolution.”

So I am here to commend the Rhode Islanders who struck that spark 18 months before those Massachusetts worthies drank their share of whatever they needed to do to actually get on a boat and push tea bags into the harbor—pretty brave. Nothing against them doing that, but—I mean, seriously—we captured the boat, we shot the captain, and then we blew the damn boat up. I think that merits mention in American history.

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

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 14, 2023]

BOSTON TEA PARTY? RHODE ISLAND SAYS ITS REBELLION WAS FIRST—AND JUST AS IMPORTANT

(By Dan Diamond)

You’d be forgiven for thinking you know this story.

American colonists, itching for independence, stormed a British vessel. A spark in New England helped ignite a national revolution.

But this was not the Boston Tea Party.

Eighteen months before colonists dumped tea in Boston Harbor—an event that marks its 250th anniversary this week—Rhode Islanders attacked and destroyed a British navy ship off the coast near Providence, furious with what they saw as the crown’s overreach.

The burning of the HMS Gaspee on June 10, 1772, was the first major armed act of rebellion by the American colonists, Rhode Island historians and officials maintain. And the resulting fallout—with King George III demanding that the perpetrators be held accountable in a showdown between the colonial legal system and the British courts—helped unify the colonies for the war to come.

“[T]his is a Matter in which the whole American Continent is deeply concerned and a Submission of the Colony of Rhode Island to this enormous Claim of power would be made a Precedent for all the rest,” founding father Samuel Adams wrote to Rhode Island’s deputy governor in January 1773.

But the Gaspee affair, which shook the colonies and rattled the crown, has been largely forgotten outside of Rhode Island. It’s been overlooked in U.S. history classes and remains little studied by historians of the American Revolution. The Washington Post reviewed six high school and college U.S. history textbooks and found no mention of the burning of the Gaspee, even as multiple pages were devoted to later—and, in the minds of many Rhode Islanders, lesser—events such as the Boston Tea Party.

“Nobody knows that well before anybody pushed a tea bag off a civilian ship in the Boston Harbor, Rhode Islanders blew up a military vessel,” Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) said in a recent interview in his office—sitting in front of a painting that depicts the burning of the Gaspee.

The senator from Rhode Island has repeatedly given speeches that celebrate the Gaspee raiders, and he’s denounced the attention paid to Massachusetts, saying that leaders of his neighboring state have spent centuries spinning their own history.

“They got drunk, painted themselves like Indians and pushed tea bags into the Boston Harbor, which we in Rhode Island think is pretty weak tea compared to blowing up the goddamn boat and shooting its captain,”

Whitehouse told The Post. “But you know, all those Massachusetts people went on to become president and run Harvard . . . so they told their story, and their story, and their story.”

Rhode Island-based historians agreed that the Gaspee affair is a case study in how important chapters in history become, well, history. The state’s own firsts—Rhode Island, for example, was the first colony to declare independence from Britain on May 4, 1776, two months before the other 12 colonies—tend to get relegated to footnotes in national stories about the revolution.

“So much focus is put into Massachusetts history, and Rhode Island gets overlooked,” said Kathy Abbass, the principal investigator of the Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project, which is working to locate the wreckage of the Gaspee off the shore of Warwick, R.I. “Partly that’s because the early histories were written by professors at Harvard and Yale, which set the tone for all the histories that came later.”

THE ATTACK ON THE GASPEE

There’s little dispute over the events leading up to the burning of the Gaspee—only how historically significant they were.

In Rhode Island, as across the colonies, residents were bristling at the taxes, fees and other burdens imposed by a British parliament, meanwhile, grew frustrated by what leaders saw as Americans’ efforts to evade the responsibilities of being part of the British Empire.

“The British were trying to raise money by capturing vessels that were sneaking stuff in and not paying duty,” Abbass said. “And yes, of course we were smugglers [in Rhode Island]—there’s no doubt about that.”

Commanded by Lieutenant William Dudingston, a Scottish naval officer, the Gaspee sailed into Narragansett Bay in early 1772, seeking to enforce trade laws that the American colonists were increasingly flouting. The British ship began to abruptly board colonial vessels off the coast of Rhode Island and seize their cargo, such as barrels of smuggled rum. Accusations soon proliferated that the Gaspee’s crew was stealing sheep and hogs from local farmers, and cutting down their fruit trees for firewood.

Rhode Islanders compared Dudingston to a pirate, sued him in a local court (which found against him) and even sought his arrest. But the British warned that anyone who attempted to interfere in the Gaspee’s work would be executed.

“Let them be cautious what they do; for as sure as they attempt it, and any of them are taken, I will hang them as pirates,” British Adm. John Montagu wrote to Rhode Island’s governor in April 1772.

Then came June 9.

A small ship called the Hannah, reportedly owned by Rhode Island entrepreneur John Brown, was headed toward Providence. It refused the Gaspee’s exhortations to stop—probably because the Hannah carried illegal cargo—and the British gave chase. But the Hannah’s captain, a local man named Benjamin Lindsey, knew the area better than Dudingston, and he led the Gaspee into waters that had receded because of the daily tides. The British ship ended up stuck on a sandbar, waiting for the tides to change again hours later.

The Hannah successfully slipped away to Providence, where Lindsey quickly recounted his tale to Brown, one of the city’s leading merchants, who was a member of the loose resistance movement known as the Sons of Liberty and part of the family that helped found Brown University, the Ivy League university that would later bear its name.

Brown was also a smuggler—one of Rhode Island's most notorious, Abbass said—and had been nursing a grudge against Dudingston and his ship.

Learning that the Gaspee was temporarily marooned, “Mr. Brown immediately resolved on her destruction,” Ephraim Bowen, a local man who was among the several dozen men who joined Brown, would recount decades later.

As many as 60 men gathered in the Providence harbor that evening, launching boats and muffling their oars to quietly row out to the Gaspee under cover of darkness. As they approached the ship, a confrontation began—with one of the Gaspee raiders asserting that Dudingston was a criminal who had evaded the local law, Bowen recounted—that led to Dudingston being shot in the groin and arm and all of the ship's crew being taken from the vessel.

The Rhode Islanders burned the Gaspee to the water line early on the morning of June 10. Then the gunpowder on board exploded, sending pieces of the ship flying.

As news of the attack made its way to London, British leaders seethed. In a royal proclamation, King George III offered a reward of up to 1,000 pounds sterling—more than \$150,000 in today's currency—to anyone who could help identify and convict the “outrageous and heinous Offenders” behind the ship's burning. He also established a commission to conduct a formal inquiry, and the British vowed to transport any colonists indicted in the attack to England for trial and, almost certainly, execution.

But no arrests were ever made. Rhode Islanders refused to volunteer information about the Gaspee raiders, and local officials found ways to slow or stymie the British investigation. Colonial leaders further argued that anyone involved in the Gaspee's burning should face a jury of their peers in America. A Rhode Island sheriff even arrested Dudingston as he recovered from his wounds, charging him for the Gaspee's previous seizures of cargo.

Meanwhile, the nation's founding fathers exchanged fervent messages about the Gaspee's burning and the British response, setting up the committees of correspondence that helped them coordinate strategies in the years to come.

Adams, particularly, warned that Britain's determination to pursue the Gaspee affair, and the discussion of the deployment of troops, could lead to a cascade of events that might spark “a most violent political Earthquake through the whole British Empire if not its total Destruction,” he wrote in January 1773 to Rhode Island's deputy governor, Darius Sessions.

“I have long feared that this unhappy Contest between Britain & America will end in Rivers of Blood,” Adams wrote.

AN ‘UNCELEBRATED BURNING’ IS FORGOTTEN

Most of the Rhode Islanders involved in the burning of the Gaspee successfully concealed their identities from the British and even other colonials, helping confound the crown's probe. In some ways, their effort to hide was too successful: Even today, about half the men who burned the Gaspee are unknown.

But as the American Revolution began to slip out of living memory, Rhode Islanders tried to lay a claim to the first shot fired.

“The first blood that was shed in the revolutionary contest, by that very act begun, stained her deck, and it was drawn by a Rhode Island hand,” William Hunter, a former U.S. senator from Rhode Island, said in an address on July 4, 1826—50 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. “Yes, the blood of Lieutenant Duddington was the first blood drawn in the American cause.”

Those efforts to highlight the Gaspee affair had limited success. In the fight over the American legacy, Rhode Island would end up largely nudged to the side—a casualty of a battle between larger states, chiefly Massachusetts and Virginia, that were disproportionately home to some of the era's most influential figures.

“There was a very busy group of Boston-based intellectuals who were eager to frame Boston as the driver of the revolution and Bostonians as the inheritors of the legacy of the revolution,” said Nat Sheidley, a historian who runs Revolutionary Spaces, a Boston-based organization that runs public programs about colonial America—including this week's anniversary of the tea party. He added that America's elite leaders initially downplayed a number of revolutionary events, such as the destruction of tea in Boston's harbor, fearing that it would undermine the sense of order in the young nation.

“But by the 1830s, it felt a little bit safer to go there,” Sheidley said. “And so that's the moment where . . . the name ‘Tea Party’ is invented, and it becomes popularized as a story of what led us to the revolution.”

A century later, a 1922 New York Times article detailed “the uncelebrated burning” of the Gaspee and asked why the Boston Tea Party had developed a “much stronger hold” upon Americans.

“[A]s an exhibition of daring the tea party was literally a tea party and nothing more compared with the Gaspee incident,” Jonathan A. Rawson Jr. wrote in the Times.

THE GASPEE AFFAIR'S PLACE IN HISTORY

Even today, some historians are largely unfamiliar with the Gaspee or suggest that its burning was a regional matter, The Post found. But in Rhode Island, lore about the Gaspee is thriving. For 57 years, local volunteers have held an annual celebration—known as Gaspee Days—featuring a parade to celebrate the burning of the ship, which is increasingly joined by government officials, reenactors and thousands of residents.

“Declare your independence from bank fees!” reads one ad from a local credit union in last year's 250th anniversary booklet.

Other efforts abound. Rhode Island's secretary of state offers free Gaspee posters on demand. A Brown University instructor created a virtual reality app that allows users to be immersed in a reenactment of the story. A license plate depicting the burning of the Gaspee became available to state drivers this fall—and it looks “wicked cool,” said John Concannon, a retired pediatrician who is Gaspee Days' historian.

It's all part of a larger state goal: to ensure that the burning of the Gaspee is never forgotten again. Historians who have studied the event said that it merits more mention, particularly in textbooks.

“The thing about the Gaspee that is important was that the king took notice,” said Abbass, who has written about other colonial attacks on British vessels that preceded the burning of the Gaspee but provoked negligible reaction from the crown.

The king's intervention also led to a British attempt to circumvent the colonial courts, causing alarm and ultimately backfiring on the crown, Concannon said. He argued that several articles in the Declaration of Independence, including the right to a jury of one's peers, stem from the Gaspee affair—a more significant contribution to that document than made by the Boston Tea Party, he said.

That's one reason this weekend's latest celebration of the events in Massachusetts continues to vex Rhode Islanders. When it comes to the founding of America, Concannon said, the burning of the Gaspee is “just as important.”

Philip Bump, Azi Paybarah and Dan Lamothe contributed to this report.

CORRECTION

Because of a transcription error, an earlier version of this story initially misquoted Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) as saying the Boston Tea Party participants “painted themselves like idiots.” In fact, he said they “painted themselves like Indians.” This version has been corrected.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. And with that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, hurricane season started on June 1; and although we, of course, feel that particularly in Louisiana, I will note that last year, a hurricane hit Southern California. So this is something which can happen all over our Nation, and people in Louisiana know what people in California have learned: When there is a hurricane, there can be flooding. Now, we—I say “we” as we in Louisiana but, hopefully, people all over—know how to prepare; but this year, unfortunately, fewer people in Louisiana and fewer people nationwide will be able to count on the National Flood Insurance Program to help them in case they do flood.

The National Flood Insurance Program, or the NFIP, was created as a safety net for the most vulnerable Americans. The stereotype is that this is only for rich people who build properties on coastal islands which are bound to flood. The reality is these are working families. These are folks who have no place else to move. These are folks who have spent decades in communities that have never flooded; yet, nonetheless, they are left without the protection of the National Flood Insurance Program. The NFIP covers 4.7 million American homes, but because of the new FEMA risk assessment system, called Risk Rating 2.0, there has been an unprecedented spike in insurance premiums, making them unaffordable and causing people to drop their coverage.

I speak to constituents constantly about flood insurance. I just want to, if I can, channel my constituents onto the floor of the U.S. Senate and, perhaps, through C-SPAN and, perhaps, through the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD speak to the Nation through folks who feel as if they are not being heard.

I recently heard from a constituent in Larose, LA, who switched from the NFIP to a private insurance carrier because he could not afford his national flood insurance plan. Now, the private insurance plan isn't cheap—it is \$2,200 a year—but he would have paid NFIP somewhere between \$4,500 and \$5,000 a

year, and that was 2 years ago. I note that the private plan is cheaper, although it is not cheap, which suggests that maybe the National Flood Insurance Program has things built into it that aren't required to be there.

By the way, his house is 6 feet above sea level, but the NFIP ignores that. The way the National Flood Insurance Program rates a home is not by how much you have elevated it above sea level but by the zone in which you live. So if you are surrounded by homes on slabs but you are elevated, you get rated just the same as they. According to his neighbors, the last time this area flooded was with Hurricane Juan in 1985, but his property did not flood.

Now, this story isn't unique or uncommon. Families across Louisiana and across the country are experiencing the same situation. You will love the names in Louisiana, but here is another one.

One retired couple living on Bayou Lafourche—meaning “the fork”—near Raceland, LA, dropped their National Flood Insurance policy because premiums rose from \$500 to \$2,500 annually. Some people might say: Oh, my gosh; \$2,500 is just not a lot of money. For a family living in Bayou Lafourche, \$2,500 is more than they can afford. Now, the premium increases are capped at 18 percent a year, but 18 percent compounded upon 18 percent compounded upon 18 percent quickly adds up.

Their son lives just down the road from them, and his flood insurance is going from \$500 to \$6,300. Obviously, this is not sustainable for your typical homeowner.

By the way, if you buy a new policy, then you are subject to the new rates right away—meaning, for example, you would be charged \$6,300 off the bat, and you wouldn't start off with the lower amount and work your way up.

This brings us to a family in Lockport, LA. They just bought a new home and chose not to have flood insurance because the premium would have been too unaffordable. Now, they had the option that other homeowners don't have. Most mortgages in Louisiana require home buyers to get flood insurance. So if you take a mortgage, you have got to buy it.

This leads us to a business owner. He invested \$1.2 million in a brandnew office building and warehouse in the town of Cut Off, LA. They are behind a levee system that has never failed, and they elevated the office 7 feet off the ground. He tells me that if he had taken a mortgage, he would have had to pay tens of thousands of dollars of combined insurance between the flood insurance and the property insurance, and it would have been more than his actual mortgage. He says: My gosh. Why would any business locate here if they could build somewhere else cheaper and with less red tape?

This tells us that not only is Risk Rating 2.0 charging pretty exorbitant rates for people who have never flood-

ed, but it is stifling communities; it is eliminating economic growth; it is making people who live there move and keeping people who would like to live there from moving to there.

There is a man in Boutte, LA, who told my office his premium will increase to over \$8,000 a year over the next 13 years. His flood insurance before Risk Rating 2.0 was \$570. At the current rate, he will be paying more for flood insurance than his mortgage in 2 years.

I have said this before on the Senate floor and will say it again: Someone who has never flooded should never be paying more for their flood insurance than they are for their mortgage.

There is a constituent in Montegut, LA, who might lose his home altogether because he can't afford to keep it. He is a Korean war veteran. He and his wife are both in their eighties, and they took out a reverse mortgage on their house several years ago to help pay medical bills. They live behind a 12-foot levee, but their reverse mortgage requires them to carry flood insurance. That now costs them \$6,500 a year; and that is on top of what he is paying for his homeowners insurance. If their flood insurance continues to rise, they will give up their home. And that is not right.

Now I speak to my fellow legislators.

We are elected to serve. If we are failing to address the issue of the National Flood Insurance Program and folks like this Korean war veteran and his wife, who are in their eighties, are driven out of their home because FEMA has decided they are going to develop a new system to assess, but that system has flaws and we don't address it, we are not doing our job. By this, by channeling these voices, I am asking that we in this body work to address these very human needs of fellow Americans.

Now, some of these stories are more dramatic than others, but they all have a common theme: They didn't flood, but they can't afford their insurance. Well, if you can't afford insurance and you don't flood anyway, then you are quite likely to drop your insurance. That is too bad because what that is going to do to the National Flood Insurance Program is create what is called an actuarial death spiral. If the low-risk people who don't flood are paying such high premiums that they drop their coverage, then all the remaining risk is put upon the remaining policyholders, which means they pay more, and there are going to be some of those who will drop out because they can't afford it. It will continue to concentrate the cost of the risk upon a smaller and smaller group of people until, ultimately, no one can afford this.

We are setting the program up—or at least FEMA is setting up the program—for collapse. FEMA itself forecasted that over 20 percent of policyholders will leave the program within 10 years.

Now is the time for Congress to act. But I want to be clear: This is not just a Louisiana or a gulf coast issue. I opened up by speaking about a hurricane hitting Southern California. This is an issue that affects the entire country. We are seeing, just by cost, the areas that are dark are those that have had over \$1 billion in claims—so the mid-Atlantic States, the Northeast, including New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, and if you go across the gulf coast, including Texas, Missouri, and all the way out to California. Now, if you went over \$50 million, then those are also these other tan States. This is a nationwide issue.

I am pleased to say we have a bipartisan solution. I urge my colleagues to come talk to me about the National Flood Insurance Program reauthorization and reform. These bipartisan Northeast-gulf coast, Democratic-Republican, liberal-conservative kind of perspectives that have been included in this have come up with a solution. This would make Risk Rating 2.0 transparent; it would make it affordable; and it would make it accountable.

We need a way forward, because if these stories just make one thing clear, it is that doing nothing is not an option. It is that doing nothing is a disservice to fellow Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

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

RIGHT TO CONTRACEPTION ACT

Mrs. BRITT. Madam President, this week, my colleagues across the aisle will start their summer of scare tactics. Unfortunately, this is continuing the campaign of fearmongering we have already seen.

Contraception is available in every State across the Nation. And, of course, I want to be absolutely, 100-percent clear that I support continued nationwide access to contraception, but that is not the purpose of the bill my colleagues across the aisle are bringing to the floor on Wednesday. Once again, the bill tramples on foundational religious liberty protections that have long been bipartisan and truly should remain bipartisan, and my colleagues across the aisle know that. The goal of my Democratic colleagues right now is to scare the American people—to scare women—across our great Nation. It is not that they believe that there is a problem they are truly trying to solve; they are prioritizing their own short-term, partisan, political interests. Sadly, this only does a disservice to the very families and the very women we should be trying to find common ground to help. We saw the false fearmongering with the MOMS Act. We have already seen it with issues like IVF.

Just like nationwide access to contraception, I want to make it clear

that Republicans support continued nationwide access to IVF.

I look forward to discussing this more next week, as, unfortunately, my Democratic colleagues will continue their summer of scare tactics.

The Republican Party is the party of families, and we are going to continue fighting to support the rights and freedoms of families across America.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 647, Christopher T. Hanson, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2029. (Reappointment.)

Charles E. Schumer, Thomas R. Carper, Laphonza R. Butler, Sheldon Whitehouse, Alex Padilla, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, John W. Hickenlooper, Patty Murray, Tina Smith, Tammy Baldwin, Tammy Duckworth, Christopher Murphy, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Angus S. King, Jr., Gary C. Peters.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Christopher T. Hanson, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2029 (Reappointment), shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. McCONNELL), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 74, nays 15, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 183 Ex.]

YEAS—74

Baldwin	Capito	Cotton
Barrasso	Cardin	Cramer
Bennet	Carper	Crapo
Booker	Casey	Daines
Boozman	Cassidy	Duckworth
Brown	Collins	Durbin
Budd	Coons	Fischer
Butler	Cornyn	Gillibrand
Cantwell	Cortez Masto	Graham

Grassley	Marshall	Shaheen
Hassan	Merkley	Sinema
Heinrich	Moran	Smith
Hickenlooper	Murkowski	Stabenow
Hirono	Murray	Tester
Hyde-Smith	Ossoff	Tillis
Kaine	Padilla	Van Hollen
Kelly	Peters	Warner
Kennedy	Reed	Warnock
King	Ricketts	Warren
Klobuchar	Romney	Welch
Lankford	Rosen	Whitehouse
Luján	Rounds	Wicker
Lummis	Sanders	Wyden
Manchin	Schatz	Young
Markey	Schumer	

NAYS—15

Britt	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cruz	Lee	Sullivan
Ernst	Paul	Thune
Hagerty	Schmitt	Tuberville
Hawley	Scott (FL)	Vance

NOT VOTING—11

Blackburn	Hoeven	Murphy
Blumenthal	McConnell	Risch
Braun	Menendez	Rubio
Fetterman	Mullin	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 74, the nays are 15, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

ISRAEL

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, yesterday, in an interview with FOX News, Speaker MIKE JOHNSON said that I “was parroting the talking points of Hamas” and that I and others “stand with Hamas and the Ayatollah.”

Well, that, of course, is an absolute lie. As I have said many times, I believe that Hamas is a terrorist organization that committed an atrocious act when it began this war by attacking Israel on October 7, killing 1,200 innocent men, women, and children, and taking more than 200 hostages, many of whom are still being held in captivity today.

Further, as I have said on numerous occasions, I think that the Hamas leader, Yahya Sinwar, is a war criminal and should be arrested.

Now, I am not quite sure those are the talking points that Hamas uses. But what the FOX interview did get right is that I believe it is a very sad day for our country that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has been invited by leaders from both political parties to address a joint session of the U.S. Congress.

Israel, of course, had the right to defend itself against the horrific Hamas terrorist attack of October 7, but it did not—and it does not—have the right to go to war against the entire Palestinian people.

Two days after the war began, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said:

I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed. We are fighting human animals and we are acting accordingly.

“We are fighting human animals”—that is his definition of the Palestinian people—“and we are acting accordingly.” That is what the Israeli Defense Minister said, and, tragically,

that is exactly what the rightwing, extremist Netanyahu government has done.

Now, let me put some detail into exactly what that means and whether anyone really believes that Prime Minister Netanyahu should be a guest of honor of the U.S. Congress and the American people.

Over the last 8 months—almost 8 months—Netanyahu and his extremist government have killed more than 36,000 Palestinians and wounded over 82,000. That is 5 percent of the population of Gaza. Sixty percent of those who have been killed or wounded are women, children, and elderly people.

Netanyahu’s war machine has driven 1.7 million people from their homes—75 percent of the population of Gaza. I would like the American people to think about that. Think about your community. Think about your State. Think about what it would mean if 75 percent—three-quarters—of your population was driven from their homes, and most of these people are poor, and they leave their homes not knowing where they are going, with nothing but what they could carry in their hands. Think about that incredible level of desperation—three-quarters of the population driven from their homes, carrying a few bundles of clothing or food or whatever it may be.

Further, Netanyahu’s government has damaged or destroyed over 60 percent of the housing in Gaza, leaving more than 1 million people permanently homeless.

You know, there is a lot of talk in the media and among the pundits about the day after the war ends, but let’s be clear: For over 1 million people, there is no day after in which they can return to their homes because their homes, their housing units, have been destroyed.

It is not just the housing stock of Gaza that has been destroyed. Netanyahu and his extremist government have destroyed the civilian infrastructure of Gaza, obliterated water and sewer systems and denied electricity to the people who live there.

Defense Minister Gallant, in his statement that I read a moment ago, said:

I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity.

Well, they have kept their word. Imagine living month after month with no electricity or clean water and seeing sewage run out onto the streets. That is life for the people of Gaza right now.

Mr. Netanyahu—the gentleman invited by Mr. JOHNSON and the Democratic leadership here—Mr. Netanyahu and his government have annihilated Gaza’s healthcare system. I have talked to doctors, American doctors, who have been there who talk about the systematic destruction of their healthcare system. Mr. President, 26 hospitals have been knocked out of service, and more than 400 healthcare workers have been killed—400 healthcare workers killed.

In other words, there are some 80,000 wounded people in Gaza and hundreds of thousands of people who are sick. According to the World Health Organization, as of May 5, there were hundreds of thousands of cases of acute respiratory illness and diarrhea, including 110,000 children. Yet, despite all of the injuries caused by the bombings, despite all of the sickness caused by the lack of clean water, there is virtually no healthcare available to these people because the healthcare system in Gaza has been almost totally destroyed.

You know, there are 12 universities in Gaza where kids are able to get an education. In fact, the people of Gaza and the Palestinian area take education very seriously. Every single one of these 12 universities has been bombed, as have 56 schools. Today, 625,000 children in Gaza have no access to education.

I would ask the American people just to think about what is going on psychologically to the children of Gaza. Imagine being in a place where drones are flying all over the place, maybe there with weapons, maybe not. Buildings have been destroyed. Your relatives have been killed. You don't have any water. You don't have any food. You are driven from one place to another. What kind of permanent damage will occur to virtually every one of these children? What a horrible experience it is.

Maybe—maybe most importantly—when we think about the wisdom of Mr. Netanyahu being invited to address both Houses of Congress—an honor to address both Houses of Congress and the American people—we should remember that his government, according to virtually every humanitarian organization functioning in Gaza, has intentionally blocked humanitarian aid—that is, food, water, medical supplies—from reaching the desperate people of Gaza, which has created, on top of everything else, the conditions for starvation and famine.

I would tell you, as you probably already know, that blocking humanitarian aid and creating the conditions for famine is not only an act of extreme cruelty—using starvation as an act of war—but it is a violation of both American and international law. It is a war crime. That is what it is.

Let me say a word about what is going on in Gaza right now in terms of malnutrition. According to the United Nations, since mid-January, at least 30 children—30 children—have starved to death. More than 93,000 children under 5 have been screened for malnutrition, and 7,280 were found to have acute malnutrition, including 5,600 with moderate acute malnutrition and 1,676 with severe acute malnutrition. But, importantly, that is just what we know. The full reality is likely much, much worse. But Israel has prevented journalists and the media from getting into the most desperate areas in Gaza.

Mr. President, you know we, as we all know, are in campaign season, and

I would say to Speaker JOHNSON that when you attend your fundraising dinners with your billionaire friends and you eat your fine steaks and your lobsters and your other wonderful food, please remember these pictures from Gaza.

This is a photograph of a child in Gaza taken by Getty.

This is a photograph of a child and his or her mother taken by Reuters, and one doubts very much whether that child is alive today.

This is a photograph taken by Al Jazeera.

This is another photograph taken by Getty of a child who I can't imagine is alive today.

These children and thousands more are the direct result of Netanyahu's policies, Netanyahu's demands. Speaker JOHNSON has invited him to address Congress.

No, Mr. President, I will not be in attendance for that speech.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL DENNIS WILLE

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to COL Dennis Wille, a devoted and accomplished member of the U.S. Army, who has dedicated nearly 29 years of exceptional service to our Nation. Colonel Wille is completing over 4 years of service on the U.S. Space Command staff, where he has served in the Pentagon as both the chief of the Washington Liaison Office and the chief of legislative affairs.

Colonel Wille's career began as an armor officer in 1995, serving in armored cavalry units at Fort Carson, CO, and Fort Stewart, GA. In 2005, he transitioned into the U.S. Army's cadre of space professionals, taking on roles as a space operations staff officer at various locations, including Fort Hood, TX; Fort Leavenworth, KS; Peterson Air Force Base, CO; and Wiesbaden, Germany.

Throughout his career, Colonel Wille demonstrated remarkable leadership and dedication, participating in deployments to Bosnia, Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In Iraq, he served as a space operations staff officer for the Multi-National Division—Baghdad, integrating space and technical capabilities into counterinsurgency operations.

His yearlong tour in Afghanistan at ISAF Joint Command focused on integrating nonmilitary applications into NATO's combat operations.

During his 2 years as the Army's senior space officer at U.S. Army Europe, Colonel Wille's expertise extended to supervising the integration of space, cyber, and electronic warfare capabilities into NATO and joint land operations and exercises. Notably, he also served as a military fellow at New America, a D.C.-based think tank, through the Chief of Staff of the Army's Senior Fellowship Program.

A lifelong learner, Colonel Wille earned several advanced degrees, including a master of science in space systems operations from the Naval Postgraduate School in 2006, a master of military art and science from the School for Advanced Military Studies in 2012, and an additional MMAS from the U.S. Army War College in 2016.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to COL Dennis Wille for his exceptional service and unwavering dedication to our Nation's security. His remarkable career and leadership in space operations have significantly contributed to our defense and global security efforts. We commend him for his achievements and wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

COL Dennis Wille's outstanding contributions and unwavering commitment have left an indelible mark on the U.S. Army and our Nation. His dedication to duty serves as an inspiration to all who follow in his footsteps. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him a happy retirement as we celebrate his legacy of selfless service to the Nation.

REMEMBERING SARAH "SALLY" SCHNAITER LUGAR

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I rise today to honor the life of Sally Lugar, who passed away peacefully amid the love of family and friends on May 2, 2024.

Sally was a proud, lifelong Hoosier. She was born in Martinsville, IN, on June 12, 1934. After graduating high school, she attended Purdue University and earned a degree in home economics. While at Purdue, she was a varsity cheerleader, president of her dorm, and spent 3 years on the Debris, the Purdue yearbook. After graduating, she taught English, health and science, and physical education at Muncie Central High School.

Sally married Thomas R. Lugar on April 12, 1958, and they were blessed with three children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. When Tom passed in 2018, they had been married for 60 years. Sally and Tom were avid travelers who loved experiencing new cultures and creating new lifelong friendships. She loved connecting with people and serving her fellow Hoosiers. In the last 60 years, Sally served more than 30 central Indiana nonprofit organizations. She did this while managing

a family farm in Morgan County and raising three children.

Her service included active engagement with the tennis community and extensive involvement with the greater Indianapolis community. In the tennis world, she served as the president of the Central Indiana Tennis Association; held leadership positions with the Western Tennis Association, WTA Junior Development Committee, National Junior Tennis League; and co-founded the Indianapolis Junior Development Fund.

Sally was a leader in central Indiana, holding positions with the Junior League of Indianapolis, Day Nursery Auxiliary, Methodist Hospital Task Core, WINS, Teachers' Treasures, Purdue Consumer and Family Sciences Alumni Association, Purdue President's Council, YWCA, Progressive Club, WFYI, Propylaeum Historic Foundation, Kappa Kappa Gamma Alumnae Association of Indianapolis, and Daughters of the American Revolution, and she was an active participant in many other civic and charitable organizations.

Sally loved her family and relished every family gathering. She loved Tom and her children deeply and was extremely proud of their accomplishments. She taught right and wrong, honesty, fairness, and respect. I know Sally will be missed dearly by her family, her community, and the whole State of Indiana, and we celebrate her remarkable life.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DANIELLE ALFORD

- Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Danielle Alford, the 2024 Armed Forces Insurance Air Force Spouse of the Year.

From an early age, Danielle was shown an example of helping others as she watched her mother care for her ailing grandmother and her involvement in the court appointed special advocates.

She brings this spirit of volunteerism into service alongside her husband Maj. Lionel Alford.

While stationed at Yokota Air Base, Japan she joined the Red Cross as a hospital chairman and logged nearly 900 hours placing other volunteers in positions within the hospital. She also served as an English teacher to the local Japanese community and helped military families adjust to their life in Japan as a member of the welcome committee. As a Key Spouse, Danielle developed a community by creating events that fostered unity and supportive relationships among the spouses and children.

This is a role she continued at Little Rock Air Force Base—LRAFB—supporting communication between unit leadership and families on base. She was quick to get involved in Arkansas. Danielle organized meal trains for

military families who recently welcomed new babies and led efforts to collect items for Afghan evacuees during relocation efforts at the 41st Airlift Squadron.

Danielle exemplifies what it means to serve. She is a remarkable military spouse, mother, and advocate for military families, as evidenced in her selection as a voice for military spouses in discussions with high-ranking administration officials, and continues to use her expertise and enthusiasm to support all who serve.

Her efforts have been recognized by her peers, and she has a long list of accolades for her public service including the President's Volunteer Service Award, the Joan Orr Spouse of the Year Award, in addition to honors from the Red Cross.

Danielle has been an Air Force spouse for more than 11 years, and she continues to pursue new opportunities and programs to assist fellow military families. I applaud her dedication to our country and willingness to go above and beyond to help other spouses navigate the life of service.

She is a role model for her daughters whom she aims to instill a passion for volunteering. Her husband is assuming a new role in Germany, and, while we will miss her leadership at LRAFB, I am confident military spouses will continue to be benefit from her wisdom and guidance no matter where her family is stationed.●

TRIBUTE TO FRED BUTLER, JR.

- Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I rise to pay tribute to retired Sergeant Fred Butler, Jr., who is celebrating his 85th birthday with his family in New Orleans, LA.

Mr. Butler was born on May 31, 1939, in Greensburg, LA. In 1960, Mr. Butler enlisted in the U.S. Army. During his 6 years of service, he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division and completed an astonishing 99 parachute jumps. He also received two field promotions from General Westmoreland who commanded the American forces in the Vietnam war.

Mr. Butler's legacy extends beyond his individual achievements. His service ignited a sense of duty in three of his brothers, who proudly joined the military and served alongside him during his tenure.

Mr. Butler's sacrifice, courage, and unwavering commitment to our Nation is nothing short of inspiring. On behalf of the people of Louisiana and all Americans, I extended my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Butler for his selfless service and dedication to our country. May his birthday celebration be filled with joy, love, and appreciation.

I ask that all of Louisiana join me to thank and honor Mr. Butler.●

RECOGNIZING MUSTARD SEED COMPANY

- Ms. ERNST. Madam President, as ranking member of the Senate Com-

mittee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize Mustard Seed Company of Albia, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 2017, Sarah Hopkins and her husband Curt transformed a former car dealership located on Albia's Main Street into a home decor, furnishings, and gift store. The store started as a 1,500-square-foot storeroom before expanding in 2020 with a 3,000-square-foot addition. In 2017, Sarah hired two employees and began selling rugs, throws, and pillows. Today, they have seven full- and part-time employees and have expanded into selling home decor essentials including mugs, vases, and furniture.

In addition to running Mustard Seed Company, in 2021, Sarah Hopkins opened a sister-store two doors down called The Seedling. The Seedling is a boutique offering stylish clothes for women and babies. They also offer gift cards, bridal registries, and wedding registries for customers.

Mustard Seed Company is an exemplary family business. Curt Hopkins handles the store's deliveries and routine maintenance. Sarah and Curt's children—Olivia, Sophia, Cameron, and Avery—have also spent time working at both stores, including running the store's social media and handling shifts when needed.

Sarah Hopkins is actively involved in the Albia community as well. Mustard Seed Company and The Seedling are proud members of Albia Chamber Main Street. Mustard Seed Company is a supporter of Circle of Freedom women's residential recovery home. Since 2022, Sarah Hopkins has been a member of the Albia Chamber Main Street's Promotions Committee. She is also involved in Albia's Restoration Days, a yearly community event to celebrate Albia's Historic Square.

Sarah and Curt Hopkins and the Mustard Seed Company team are well-recognized for their hard work. In February 2023, Curt and Sarah Hopkins won the 2022 Excellence in Design and Placemaking Award from the Albia Chamber Main Street for their continued community development work. In December 2024, Mustard Seed Company will celebrate its seventh business anniversary.

Mustard Seed Company's commitment to providing high-quality home decor in Albia is clear. I want to congratulate Sarah Hopkins, the Hopkins family, and the entire team at Mustard Seed Company for their continued dedication to the Albia community. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

RECOGNIZING THE TEDDY & FRIENDS INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND

- Mr. SCHMITT. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the new welcoming gathering place the Teddy &

Friends Inclusive Playground at Queeny Park has been for the community in St. Louis County.

Playgrounds should be fun places where children of all abilities can safely play and exercise their creativity and independence. A local nonprofit called Unlimited Play realized the need for inclusive and accessible playgrounds for children with a range of special needs. As a result, multiple families in the St. Louis area collaborated to design a playground that would accommodate children of all abilities. Some of the features of this new park include shorter steps for safety, accessible surfacing, wheelchair accessibility to the top of structures, fencing, zip lines, and more enclosed areas for safety.

This initiative has inspired other improvements throughout Queeny Park, such as updating outdated infrastructure, building more accessible bathrooms, and adding new walkways. It is important that playgrounds are accessible to all children, encourage play, and bring families and communities together. I hope the Teddy & Friends Inclusive Playground in Queeny Park will be a vibrant center that brings the people of St. Louis County together, as well as model for other parks nationwide.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 192. An act to prohibit individuals who are not citizens of the United States from voting in elections in the District of Columbia and to repeal the Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022.

H.R. 5403. An act to amend the Federal Reserve Act to prohibit the Federal reserve banks from offering certain products or services directly to an individual, to prohibit the use of central bank digital currency for monetary policy, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 5403. An act to amend the Federal Reserve Act to prohibit the Federal reserve banks from offering certain products or services directly to an individual, to prohibit the use of central bank digital currency for monetary policy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 192. An act to prohibit individuals who are not citizens of the United States from voting in elections in the District of Columbia and to repeal the Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022.

S. 4445. A bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization.

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-4812. A communication from the Principal Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4813. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4814. A communication from the Program Analyst, Office of Budget and Program Analysis, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fiscal Year 2024 Request for Applications - Behind the Tray - Food Science for School Meals; an Immersive Education Program Cooperative Agreement" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4815. A communication from the Program Analyst, Office of Budget and Program Analysis, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fiscal Year 2024 Request for Applications for Team Nutrition Training Grants for Meal Pattern Modernization and Retention and Mentorship Opportunities" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4816. A communication from the Assistant to the Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Class III Tribal State Gaming Compacts" (RIN1076-AF68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-4817. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Acquisition), transmitting, pursuant to law, an interim response to the requirement to establish a unified major force program for Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications programs to prioritize such programs in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Defense and national security; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4818. 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 vice admiral in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4819. 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 lieutenant general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4820. A communication from the Chief Operating Officer of the Armed Forces Retirement Home, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a real estate lease transaction; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4821. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting proposed leg-

islation entitled "To establish authority for the Administrator for the Nuclear Security Administration to permit the use of passenger carriers for transporting contractor staff between their place of employment and a mass transit facility, when appropriate to further mission activities"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4822. A communication from the 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: DoD Mentor-Protege Program (DFARS Case 2023-D011)" (RIN0750-AL84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4823. A communication from the 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: Trade Agreements Thresholds (DFARS Case 2023-D023)" (RIN0750-AL92) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4824. A communication from the 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: Use of Fixed-Price Contracts for Certain Major Defense Acquisition Programs (DFARS Case 2023-D009)" (RIN0750-AL82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4825. A communication from the 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: Replacement of Fluorinated Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (DFARS Case 2020-D011)" (RIN0750-AK98) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4826. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Department of Defense Defense Industrial Base Cybersecurity Activities" (RIN0790-AK86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4827. A communication from the 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 Service, Their Dependents, and Other Eligible Individuals; Correction" (RIN0790-AJ37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4828. A communication from the 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-AL64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4829. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4830. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of

Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4831. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Export Administration Regulations: Guidance on Penalty Determinations in the Settlement of Administrative Enforcement Cases Involving Antiboycott Matters" (RIN0694-AI91) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4832. 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 "Revisions of Temporary Denial Order Provisions to Allow for Extended Renewals in Certain Circumstances" (RIN0694-AJ36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 23, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4833. 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 "Adoption of Congressional Notification Requirement for Certain Semiautomatic Firearms Exports under the Export Administration Regulations" (RIN0694-AI89) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 22, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4834. A communication from the Principal Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4835. 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 13219 with respect to the Western Balkans; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4836. 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 13466 with respect to North Korea; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4837. 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 13851 with respect to Nicaragua; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4838. 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 12170 with respect to Iran; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4839. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to material violations or suspected material violations of regulations relating to Treasury auctions and other Treasury securities offerings for the period of January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. SCHATZ, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

H.R. 1240. An act to transfer administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands from the Army Corps of Engineers to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to take such lands into trust for the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118-180).

By Mr. CARPER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 4293. A bill to designate the United States courthouse annex located at 310 South Main Street in London, Kentucky, as the "Eugene E. Siler, Jr. United States Courthouse Annex".

By Mr. WARNER, from the Select Committee on Intelligence, without amendment:

S. 4443. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

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. PETERS (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 4436. A bill to improve the safety of infant formula through testing of infant formula for microorganisms and toxic elements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. 4437. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to coordinate, navigate, and manage care and benefits for veterans enrolled in both the Medicare program and the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 4438. A bill to expand the categories of forfeited property available to remediate harms to Ukraine from Russian aggression, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. HAGERTY:

S. 4439. A bill to require the Assistant Secretary of Financial Markets of the Department of the Treasury to brief certain Senate committees on the debt issuance of the Department; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 4440. A bill to authorize additional monies to the Public Housing Capital Fund of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. WELCH:

S. 4441. A bill to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to provide for a pilot program under which development loans and loan guarantees may be made to beginning farmers and ranchers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

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

S. 4442. A bill to amend the Crow Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2010 to make improvements to that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. WARNER:

S. 4443. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes; from the Select Committee on Intelligence; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. DAINES:

S. 4444. A bill to take certain mineral interests into trust for the benefit of the Crow Tribe of Montana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 4445. A bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 715. A resolution remembering the victims of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, and condemning the widespread repression against citizens, the transnational repression against activists and other individuals, and the systematic efforts to undermine human rights norms within and outside of the United Nations system by the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. REED, Mr. Kaine, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 716. A resolution expressing support for the designation of June 7, 2024, as "National Gun Violence Awareness Day" and June 2024 as "National Gun Violence Awareness Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRAPAO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. BUDD, and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. Res. 717. A resolution calling on the Biden Administration to pursue censure of Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), refer the issue to the United Nations Security Council, and reaffirm that all measures will be taken to prevent the regime in Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 91

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

S. 114

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 114, a bill to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 respecting the scoring of preventive health savings.

S. 401

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 401, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove silencers from the definition of firearms, and for other purposes.

S. 597

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 597, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 633

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 633, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in recognition of his service to the United States.

S. 1560

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1560, a bill to require the development of a comprehensive rural hospital cybersecurity workforce development strategy, and for other purposes.

S. 1688

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1688, a bill to require certain grantees under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1975 to submit a plan to track discriminatory land use policies, and for other purposes.

S. 1772

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1772, a bill to establish a national mercury monitoring program, and for other purposes.

S. 2340

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2340, a bill to establish the Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Program within the Farm Service Agency Office of Outreach and Education.

S. 2496

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to amend the National Housing Act to include information regarding VA home loans in the

Informed Consumer Choice Disclosure required to be provided to prospective FHA borrowers.

S. 2556

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2556, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure Medicaid coverage of mental health services and primary care services furnished on the same day.

S. 2581

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2581, a bill to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

S. 3075

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3075, a bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to strengthen adult education.

S. 3197

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3197, a bill to establish and authorize funding for an Iranian Sanctions Enforcement Fund to enforce United States sanctions with respect to Iran and its proxies and pay off the United States public debt and to codify the Export Enforcement Coordination Center.

S. 3294

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3294, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act with respect to reimbursements under the child and adult care food program, and for other purposes.

S. 3348

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

S. 3469

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3469, a bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a grocery, farm, and food worker stabilization grant program.

S. 3502

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3502, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prevent consumer reporting agencies from furnishing consumer reports under certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

S. 3519

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr.

WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3519, a bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue guidance on whether hospital emergency departments should implement fentanyl testing as a routine procedure for patients experiencing an overdose, and for other purposes.

S. 3530

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3530, a bill to retain Federal employees who are spouses of a member of the Armed Forces or the Foreign Service when relocating due to an involuntary transfer, and for other purposes.

S. 3818

At the request of Mr. RICKETTS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3818, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to include fuel for ocean-going vessels as additional renewable fuel for which credits may be generated under the renewable fuel program.

S. 3876

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3876, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to establish a national registry of Korean American divided families, and for other purposes.

S. 3884

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3884, a bill to establish a grant pilot program to provide child care services for the minor children of law enforcement officers to accommodate the shift work and abnormal work hours of such officers, and to enhance recruitment and retention of such officers.

S. 3897

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3897, a bill to require the Election Assistance Commission to develop voluntary guidelines for the administration of elections that address the use and risks of artificial intelligence technologies, and for other purposes.

S. 3967

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) were added as cosponsors of S. 3967, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent certain telehealth flexibilities under the Medicare program.

S. 3991

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3991, a bill to expand the scope of the Do Not Call rules under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act to include all telephone subscribers, and to expand the private right of action for calls in violation of those rules.

S. 4075

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 4075, a bill to prohibit payment card networks and covered entities from requiring the use of or assigning merchant category codes that distinguish a firearms retailer from a general merchandise retailer or sporting goods retailer, and for other purposes.

S. 4267

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4267, a bill to prohibit Big Cypress National Preserve from being designated as wilderness or as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes.

S. 4317

At the request of Mr. LUJÁN, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 4317, a bill to appropriate funds for the Federal Communications Commission's "rip and replace" program and Affordable Connectivity Program, to improve the Affordable Connectivity Program, to require a spectrum auction, and for other purposes.

S. 4322

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4322, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make improvements relating to the designation of rural emergency hospitals.

S. 4331

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4331, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group or individual health insurance that provide coverage for mental health services and substance use disorder services provide such services without the imposition of cost-sharing from the diagnosis of pregnancy through the 1-year period following such pregnancy, and for other purposes.

S. 4364

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4364, a bill to modify the Alternatives to Detention program, and for other purposes.

S. 4434

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr.

DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4434, a bill to improve retrospective reviews of Federal regulations, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 186

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 186, a resolution seeking justice for the Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea.

S. RES. 599

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) 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.

S. RES. 710

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 710, a resolution supporting the designation of May 29, 2024, as "Mental Health Awareness in Agriculture Day" to raise awareness around mental health in the agricultural industry and workforce and to continue to reduce stigma associated with mental illness.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 715—REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF THE 1989 TIANANMEN SQUARE MASSACRE, AND CONDEMNING THE WIDESPREAD REPRESSION AGAINST CITIZENS, THE TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION AGAINST ACTIVISTS AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS, AND THE SYSTEMATIC EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE HUMAN RIGHTS NORMS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM BY THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 715

Whereas, on June 4, 2024, the world will mark the 35th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, during which authorities of the People's Republic of China murdered thousands of peaceful pro-democracy protestors who were calling for an end to corruption, an expansion of economic opportunity, and a rights-respecting system of government;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China persists in efforts to erase the memory of the Tiananmen Square Massacre and to harass, intimidate, and arrest activists, scholars, and family members of the victims of the massacre, including the Tiananmen Mothers, who have had the courage to speak out, honor the dead, and call for accountability, and persecuted heroic army officers, such as Major General Xu Qinxian, who refused to lead his soldiers during the massacre and was stripped of his Chinese Communist Party membership and jailed for 4 years;

Whereas the people of Hong Kong had held an annual Tiananmen Square vigil in Victoria Park since 1990, which had been the only such mass gathering on Chinese territory;

Whereas the longstanding tradition of the Hong Kong vigils came to an end in 2020, when the Hong Kong police denied applications for assembly pretextually on COVID-19 related grounds and when key organizers of the annual event were jailed on politically motivated criminal charges, including unlawful assembly and posing a threat to national security;

Whereas, on the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre, the international community is reminded of the sacrifices made by the Chinese people for the ideals of democracy and human rights and remains deeply concerned by the ongoing human rights abuses and violations by the People's Republic of China against Chinese citizens and other individuals within the People's Republic of China and abroad;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to perpetrate systematic and egregious human rights abuses against Chinese citizens, including—

(1) a widespread crackdown on freedom of expression and the press;

(2) unrelenting surveillance, harassment, and imprisonment of human rights defenders, lawyers, scholars, journalists, and members from religious and ethnic minorities and groups; and

(3) an Orwellian system of technological and social control over Chinese citizens;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to commit atrocities against Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic and religious groups in Xinjiang, including—

(1) mass arbitrary detention in so-called "re-education camps";

(2) increased prosecutions and formal imprisonment for politically motivated charges;

(3) forced labor and forced abortions and sterilizations;

(4) involuntary political indoctrination;

(5) severe restrictions on religious freedom; and

(6) constant monitoring and surveillance;

Whereas the systematic repression against the Tibetan community by the Government of the People's Republic of China continues unabated and includes—

(1) a forced campaign of "Sinicization" that attempts to eliminate the unique religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of Tibet;

(2) indoctrination of Tibetan children through government-run boarding schools;

(3) efforts to co-opt Tibetan Buddhism through the control of Tibetan Buddhist religious practices, monastic communities, selection of Tibetan Buddhist lamas and efforts to interfere in the succession process of the Dalai Lama;

(4) environmental degradation of the Tibetan plateau; and

(5) forced relocation of Tibetan nomads under the false guise of conservation or economic development;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China abrogated international commitments under the terms of the Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong, done at Beijing December 19, 1984 (referred to in this preamble as the "Joint Declaration"), through an unprecedented crackdown on fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong, including—

(1) by passing and implementing the repressive and vague Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (referred to in this preamble as the "National Security Law"), which undermined the high degree of autonomy promised under the Joint Declaration;

(2) by harassing, intimidating, and arresting peaceful activists, lawyers, pro-democracy legislators, journalists, and others under the guise of the National Security Law; and

(3) by implementing Article 23 of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, which further and severely curtails the exercise of human rights in Hong Kong;

Whereas the ongoing and heroic efforts of the Chinese people to shine a light on the abuses of the Government of the People's Republic of China and to advocate for human rights, including through mass demonstrations in November 2022, known as the "White Paper Movement" to protest censorship and the harsh zero-COVID policy, have been met with brutal suppression and further efforts to monitor, control, and politically indoctrinate Chinese citizens;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China carries out a coordinated campaign of transnational repression to silence dissenting voices abroad, including through tactics, such as surveillance, harassment, abduction, coercion, and by imprisoning family members in the People's Republic of China;

Whereas transnational repression by the Government of the People's Republic of China not only violates the fundamental freedoms of individuals and the sovereignty of other nations, but also engenders a climate of fear and self-censorship among Chinese communities abroad, including journalists, activists, scholars, and researchers;

Whereas the rise of the People's Republic of China as a global power has been accompanied by concerted efforts by the Government of the People's Republic of China to reshape international institutions and norms, especially institutions and norms related to human rights;

Whereas, through pressure, intimidation, economic coercion, and other tactics used against organizational leadership and sovereign nations, the Government of the People's Republic of China seeks to dilute the focus on human rights within the multilateral system and other international fora, and to promote its model of non-interference inside and outside the United Nations system to prevent international scrutiny of domestic human rights abuses and use of transnational repression by the Government of People's Republic of China; and

Whereas the People's Republic of China, as Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said, is "the only country with both the intent to reshape the international order, and increasingly, the economic, military, and technological power to do it," and the systematic efforts of the Government of the People's Republic of China to redefine international institutions and the multilateral system according to its authoritarian worldview poses an unprecedented challenge to the post-World War II human rights consensus forged through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and threatens the very foundation of universal human rights norms: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) stands in solidarity with families of the individuals who lost their lives, underwent torture, or were imprisoned for their involvement in the pro-democracy demonstrations

during the spring of 1989, and the individuals in and outside of the People's Republic of China who continue to face harassment, intimidation, and imprisonment for their ongoing efforts to expose the truth regarding the massacre by the Government of the People's Republic of China against its own people on June 4, 1989;

(2) reaffirms its steadfast support for the courageous activists, lawyers, civil society representatives, members of ethnic and religious minority groups, journalists, and other individuals who continue to advocate for the rule of law, political and economic freedom, the preservation of the unique identities of the ethnic and religious minorities and groups of the People's Republic of China, and human rights;

(3) condemns the Government of the People's Republic of China for the egregious human rights abuses against Chinese citizens inside the border of the People's Republic of China, transnational repression against activists, and systematic efforts to undermine human rights within and outside of the United Nations system;

(4) calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(A) to cease censoring information and discussion within the People's Republic of China and globally about the Tiananmen Square Massacre;

(B) to allow for a full, independent, and transparent investigation into the events of June 4, 1989;

(C) to cease harassing, intimidating, and imprisoning individuals who attempt to expose the truth regarding the Tiananmen Square Massacre;

(D) to cease the systematic and egregious suppression of the human rights of the citizens of the People's Republic of China;

(E) to release unconditionally all human rights defenders, lawyers, scholars, journalists, members of religious and ethnic minorities and groups, and other individuals who have been unjustly detained or imprisoned on politically-motivated charges for exercising internationally recognized fundamental freedoms, including Ilham Tohti, Ekpar Asat, Go Sherab Gyatso, Xu Zhiyong, Li Yuhan and Ding Jiaxi, those who protested the zero-COVID lockdown and the rising repression in the People's Republic of China under Xi Jinping, such as Peng Lifa and Li Kangmeng, who were nominated by Members of Congress for the Nobel Peace Prize, those in Hong Kong, such as Jimmy Lai, Joshua Wong, and Chow Hang-tung, and family members of activists abroad who the Government of the People's Republic of China imprisoned to pressure their family members into silence, including Gulshan Abbas;

(F) to reverse policies and actions in Xinjiang that have led to widespread atrocities against Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic and religious groups in the region and that threaten the preservation of Uyghur identity, and to allow independent and unfettered access to the region by United Nations human rights mechanisms and other international observers to conduct a transparent investigation into the atrocities of the Government of the People's Republic of China in Xinjiang and seek accountability and justice for victims;

(G) to reverse policies and actions in Tibet that violate the human rights of Tibetans, threaten the survival of Tibetan identity, interfere in the ability of Tibetan Buddhists to select their religious leaders, including the Dalai Lama, and denigrate the environment and ecosystem of the Tibetan plateau and the traditional livelihoods of Tibetan nomads, and to allow independent and unfettered access to the region by United Nations

human rights mechanisms and other international observers to document abuses;

(H) to uphold international legal obligations to Hong Kong under the Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong, done at Beijing December 19, 1984 (referred to in this resolution as the "Joint Declaration"), restore independent democratic representation to the people of Hong Kong in line with the "One Country, Two Systems" arrangement set forth in the Joint Declaration;

(I) to cease undermining the high degree of autonomy promised to Hong Kong in the Joint Declaration;

(J) to end the coordinated campaign of transnational repression against Chinese citizens overseas; and

(K) to cease coercing, intimidating, and pressuring member states within the United Nations and other multilateral fora in service of the goal of the Government of the People's Republic of China to reshape the international order according to an authoritarian worldview and undermine the universality of human rights under international law; and

(5) calls on the United States Government—

(A) through high-level unilateral and joint statements with partners and allies, to honor the victims of the Tiananmen Square Massacre and urge the Government of the People's Republic of China to immediately initiate a full, independent, and transparent investigation into the events of June 4, 1989, lift censorship restrictions around discussion of the Tiananmen Square Massacre, and cease harassing, intimidating, and imprisoning individuals who attempt to expose the truth about June 4, 1989, and seek justice;

(B) to meet with participants of the Tiananmen Square protests and the families and friends of the victims of the Tiananmen Square Massacre based outside of the People's Republic of China, and publicize such meetings when appropriate;

(C) to seek the unconditional release of political prisoners in the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong;

(D) to use credible resources, such as the Political Prisoner Database maintained by the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, to enhance information regarding political prisoner cases in the People's Republic of China;

(E) to hold accountable officials of the Chinese Communist Party and of the Government of the People's Republic of China complicit in genocide, crimes against humanity, transnational repression, the undermining of the high degree of autonomy of Hong Kong, and other violations of human rights, including through sanctions, visa restrictions, and other tools;

(F) to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations to seek urgent discussions of the human rights record of the Government of the People's Republic of China, including on matters related to Hong Kong at the United Nations Security Council and at the United Nation's Human Rights Council; and

(G) to make clear that the people of the United States support the ability of the citizens of the People's Republic of China to exercise their human rights without fear, and that action by the United States Government to hold the persons complicit in human rights abuses accountable are undertaken in solidarity with the people of the People's Republic of China and their aspirations.

SENATE RESOLUTION 716—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF JUNE 7, 2024, AS “NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY” AND JUNE 2024 AS “NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. REED, Mr. Kaine, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 716

Whereas, each year in the United States, more than—

(1) 43,000 individuals are killed and 76,000 individuals are wounded by gunfire;

(2) 17,000 individuals are killed in homicides involving guns;

(3) 24,000 individuals die by suicide using a gun; and

(4) 500 individuals are killed in unintentional shootings;

Whereas, since 1968, more individuals have died from guns in the United States than have died on the battlefields of all the wars in the history of the United States;

Whereas 2023 was a deadly year for the United States, with an estimated 16,100 people killed in gun homicides or nonsuicide-related shootings;

Whereas, in 2023, unintentional shootings by children surpassed 400 incidents for the first time ever, resulting in nearly 160 deaths annually;

Whereas, by one count, in 2023 in the United States, there were 656 mass-shooting incidents in which not fewer than 4 people were killed or wounded by gunfire;

Whereas, nationwide, 87,000 military veterans died by gun suicide from 2002–2021;

Whereas, every year in the United States, nearly 4,000 children and teens are killed by gun violence and 15,000 children and teens are shot and wounded;

Whereas approximately 9,300 people in the United States under 25 years of age die because of gun violence annually, including Hadiya Pendleton, who, in 2013, was killed at 15 years of age in Chicago, Illinois, while standing in a park;

Whereas, on June 7, 2024, to recognize the 27th birthday of Hadiya Pendleton (born June 2, 1997), people across the United States will recognize National Gun Violence Awareness Day and wear orange in tribute to—

(1) Hadiya Pendleton and other victims of gun violence; and

(2) the loved ones of those victims; and

Whereas June 2024 is an appropriate month to designate as “National Gun Violence Awareness Month”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports—

(A) the designation of “National Gun Violence Awareness Month” and the goals and ideals of that month; and

(B) the designation of “National Gun Violence Awareness Day”, in remembrance of the victims of gun violence; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to—

(A) promote greater awareness of gun violence and gun safety;

(B) wear orange, the color that hunters wear to show that they are not targets, on National Gun Violence Awareness Day;

(C) concentrate heightened attention on gun violence during the summer months, when gun violence typically increases; and

(D) bring community members and leaders together to discuss ways to make communities safer.

SENATE RESOLUTION 717—CALLING ON THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION TO PURSUE CENSURE OF IRAN AT THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA), REFER THE ISSUE TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL, AND REAFFIRM THAT ALL MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN TO PREVENT THE REGIME IN IRAN FROM ACQUIRING NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. BUDD, and Mr. RICKETTS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 717

Whereas the Government of Iran is the leading state sponsor of terrorism, supporting proxies that undermine peace in the Middle East, seek the destruction of the State of Israel, target United States Armed Forces in the region, and threaten the freedom of navigation, including in the Red Sea;

Whereas Iran’s nuclear activities, including its enrichment of near weapons-grade uranium and installation of advanced centrifuges, and expanding missile and drone program pose a significant threat to international security;

Whereas the Government of Iran has amassed large stockpiles of enriched uranium, including uranium enriched to 60 percent purity, and has developed advanced centrifuge technology, significantly reducing the time required to produce weapons-grade uranium;

Whereas, according to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran’s nuclear enrichment activities have accelerated to the point where the regime can now produce enough weapons-grade uranium for multiple nuclear weapons within days;

Whereas missiles developed through the regime’s expanding missile program, including the development of long-range ballistic missiles, could serve as delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons, thereby increasing the threat posed by the nuclear capabilities of the regime;

Whereas the Government of Iran’s acquisition of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic consequences for regional and global security and undermine the integrity of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at Washington, London, and Moscow July 1, 1968 (commonly referred to as the “Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty” or the “NPT”);

Whereas the Government of Iran ratified the NPT in 1970 and continues to be a state party to the treaty;

Whereas Article III of the NPT states, “Each Non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes to accept safeguards, as set forth in an agreement to be negotiated and concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency.”;

Whereas the IAEA has repeatedly reported on the non-compliance of the Government of Iran with its NPT-required safeguards agreement, including the discovery of undeclared nuclear materials and activities at various sites and a recent violation of modified code

3.1 by beginning construction of a new reactor known as IR-360;

Whereas the regime in Iran has barred IAEA inspectors from fully monitoring its nuclear activities and continues to refuse to cooperate with investigations into its undeclared nuclear materials and activities; and

Whereas the United States has a responsibility to use its voice and vote at international fora to advance global efforts to hold the Government of Iran accountable for its violations of international non-proliferation agreements including the NPT; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms that the United States Government will take all necessary measures to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons;

(2) calls on the Biden Administration to pursue a resolution at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors, formally censuring the Government of Iran for its noncompliance with its Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement as required by the NPT, and to refer the issue to the United Nations Security Council;

(3) urges the Biden Administration to work with partners and allies of the United States to pursue punitive actions in response to violations by the Government of Iran, including but not limited to working with the coalition of France, the United Kingdom, and Germany (known as the “E3”) to prevent nuclear related restrictions under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015) from lapsing, to re-impose sanctions that remain lifted by such resolution, and other measures to enforce compliance with non-proliferation obligations;

(4) condemns Iran’s continued obstruction of basic monitoring and verification activities by the IAEA, as well as its refusal to provide technically credible explanations for the presence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities at sites across Iran;

(5) acknowledges the critical role of the IAEA in monitoring and verifying nuclear non-proliferation and calls for continued support for the IAEA to ensure robust oversight of Iran’s nuclear activities;

(6) acknowledges the important foundation the NPT provides for the global non-proliferation regime and that any effort to normalize violations of the NPT by the Government of Iran will only serve to further erode global non-proliferation standards;

(7) supports the imposition of robust sanctions on the Government of Iran for its nuclear and missile programs and on entities and individuals involved in these programs to deter further proliferation efforts; and

(8) emphasizes the need for a coordinated international response to address the threat posed by Iran’s nuclear program and calls on all nations to join the United States in taking decisive action to ensure Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons and to uphold nuclear non-proliferation standards in the Middle East and beyond.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 4445 AND H.R. 192

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4445) to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization.

A bill (H.R. 192) to prohibit individuals who are not citizens of the United States from voting in elections in the District of Columbia and to repeal the Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022.

Mr. SCHUMER. I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JUNE 4,
2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tues-

day, June 4; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Hanson nomination, postclosure; further, that all postclosure time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and following the cloture vote on the Bossier nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; further, that if cloture has been invoked on the Bosier nomination, all time be considered expired at 2:15 p.m.; finally,

that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:21 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at 10 a.m.