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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Sovereign God, our lawmakers face complex issues that challenge the best of human faults and actions. As You gave insights to King Solomon, impart wisdom to Your servants in the Senate. Lord, help them to believe that You are real and relevant and a ready help for all of their challenges. May they recognize their need for divine intervention and develop the necessary humility to seek it. Shower them with wisdom and strength far beyond their own to face these critical days. In their worries and cares, give them the joy of knowing You are with them.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 12, 2024.

To the Senate:

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

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David Rosner, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2027.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

RIGHT TO IVF ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, just a few years ago, it would have been unthinkable—unimaginable, even—that access to a safe and widely used reproductive service like IVF would be put at risk. But, sadly, after frightening decisions like the one from Alabama, not even IVF is safe in the aftermath of Roe.

Today, women and families across America are rightfully worried that this basic service could be jeopardized, leaving them without an avenue to start a family. So, this week, the Senate will act to put these worries to rest and to protect the reproductive freedoms of Americans through legislation.

Tomorrow, the Senate will vote on the Right to IVF Act, led by Senators DUCKWORTH, MURRAY, and BOOKER. This legislation is simple. It establishes a nationwide right to IVF and eliminates barriers for the millions of families looking to use IVF to start and grow a family.

Protecting IVF should be the definition of an easy vote for Senators on both sides of the aisle. Nearly everyone knows someone who used IVF to start a family.

I have seen it with my own family. One of my grandkids was conceived with the help of IVF, and we are grateful we have had access to this service to grow our family.

My family's story is not unique at all. Millions and millions of Americans across the country have the joy of children, thanks to IVF.

I will be meeting today with a few families and advocates from New York who have benefited from IVF. That is why the vast majority of Americans—86 percent—support IVF, and only 14 percent oppose it.

So despite some claims from my colleagues on the other side, protecting IVF is not a show vote at all; it is a ''show us who you are'' vote.

This will be a chance for Senators on both sides to show their support for strengthening treatments for people to start families. Surely—surely—the opportunity to start a family is something that all Senators can and should agree on.

REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORMS

Mr. President, now on the meeting with Speaker JOHNSON, later today, Senate Republicans will meet with Speaker MIKE JOHNSON to lay out, as has been described, the ''large-scale'' and ''far-reaching'' agenda Republicans

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

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plan for America, should they regain control of government. I will spoil the ending right now. If there is one thing Republicans absolutely love to do in Congress, it is passing tax giveaways for the very wealthy. That is what they plan on talking about today, using reconciliation to gut as much of the Democrats' middle-class agenda as possible, while passing another round of costly tax breaks that cater to wealthy elites.

I understand that, nowadays, it is tempting to think about elections just in terms of personalities, but that is a grave mistake. Look at the agendas. Look at what Republicans say they want to do. Republicans say their biggest priority, their North Star, is undoing all the things that President Biden and we Democrats have passed these past few years, while recycling the same Trump tax cuts that proved to be a dud 7 years ago.

Remember 2018? They couldn't even run on these things because Democrats had made a strong message that these weren't tax cuts for the middle class; these were tax cuts to help benefit the very, very wealthy.

So they are not going to be able to sustain this argument, but their right-wing ideologues pushed them in a direction that many of them probably know is wrong.

It also means, if they want to repeal everything the Democrats did, it means repealing $35-a-month insulin for people on Medicare. That is what Republicans want.

It means stopping Medicare from negotiating the price of prescription drugs. That is what Republicans want too. It is also, by the way, what Big Pharma wants.

It means cutting programs that feed kids during summer breaks; that feed seniors, like Meals on Wheels; that fight congestion on our streets and pollution in our air. To Republicans, these things are like their version of ''greatest hits.''

It means cutting all the clean energy investments we have passed that create good-paying jobs and protect our environments. Republicans are in the pocket of Big Oil, which will always oppose efforts to grow clean energy.

And remember what Donald Trump said to oil executives recently at Mara-Largo: If they back him, he will do as much as possible to repeal our climate agenda, starting on day one. So anyone who cares about the climate and sees the changing weather and the tornadoes and the hurricanes and all the bad weather—the cold waves and the heat waves—well, our Republican friends want to undo the great progress we have made in the IRA and will try to do it in reconciliation. That is a real threat.

Finally, it also means—as much as Republicans try to avoid saying it—putting vital programs like Social Security and Medicare on the chopping block and telling seniors that the Social Security retirement age is going to go up.

I know Republicans writhe in pain whenever people bring this up. But look at the platform released by the Republican Study Committee, which covers over 180 House members. And let's not forget, if they keep control of the House—which I think they won't, don't believe they won't—they are going to set the agenda, and then Senate Republicans, even those who know better, will just blindly follow. And they, in the Republican Study Committee—180 of the 220-some-odd Republicans—endorsed not only a national abortion ban but cuts for Social Security and Medicare. So that is what they are going to do.

And who here remembers the campaign platform that our colleague from Florida released back in 2022? He is now running for leader over here. He thought it was a good idea for Republicans to run on tax hikes for the middle class, while putting programs like Social Security and Medicare at risk.

What a shock that this message didn't work with the American people. I don't think they are working with the voters of Florida either.

And speaking of tax cuts, let me add this: According to the Washington Post, Republicans not only plan to do another round of Trump's tax cuts for the very rich, they want to go even further. They want even lower rates for corporations. They want even lower rates for those making over a billion dollars a year, while making it easier for tax cheats to get away without paying their fair share.

Donald Trump's message to donors has reportedly been pretty simple: Support me. I will get you a sweet tax deal in return.

Republicans love to claim that they are the party of fiscal responsibility, but that goes out the window whenever they start salivating over the thought of deep tax cuts for the high-end people in America.

The CBO has pointed out that extending the Trump tax cut alone would add a whopping $4½ trillion to the deficit.

So you want to cut spending when it comes to feeding kids or educating kids or helping kids pay for college? You want to cut the deficit, rather, and that is your way of cutting the deficit, by cutting money to feed kids or educate kids or to avoid the high cost of college? But the deficit doesn't matter when it means tax cuts for the very, very wealthy.

It is utterly callous. When it comes to funding things like nutrition or healthcare for kids, they scream and holler that we can't add to the deficit. But when it comes to sweeping tax cuts for the ultrarich, suddenly, the deficit doesn't matter.

The old cliche says that ''the more things change, the more they stay the same.'' Republicans today have been totally transformed by the cult personality of Donald Trump, but if they are given control of the government, they will continue to give middle-class Americans the same raw deal Republicans have pushed for years: tax giveaways for the ultrarich and crumbs for everyone else.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

INFLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, since President Biden took office, consumer prices have risen more than 20 percent. The Nation hasn't seen this sort of persistent drain on our economy since the Carter administration, and the Biden administration is desperate to avoid the obvious comparison to the stagflation back in the 1970s.

The White House recently asserted that ''President Biden's top priority is beating inflation, which is why he has taken historic action . . .''

Well, that begs the question: Which historic action are we talking about here? Is the administration referring to the time it invited historic inflation over the warnings of top liberal economists like Larry Summers but ignored that and went ahead with the so-called American Rescue Plan or the time they did the same thing again but called it the Inflation Reduction Act?

The Biden administration is still looking for a safe landing spot, and liberal commentators are literally tying themselves in knots. One liberal editorial board recently suggested that since employment and consumption levels are steady, ''people will . . . start to notice and the 'vibes' will also return to more normal levels''; that ''[i]t's possible that Americans are experiencing the economic equivalent of a hangover.''

But, Mr. President, that is just utter nonsense and is not fooling anyone who actually has to balance a family budget. A recent survey reported that nearly two-thirds of middle-class Americans say they are facing economic hardship.

Numbers don't lie; neither do consumers. The high prices they are facing aren't a matter of ''bad vibes.'' They are the predictable and avoidable consequences of Bidenomics.

GUANTANAMO BAY

Mr. President, on another matter, I have spoken before about the Biden administration's political obsession with closing the terrorist detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, even if it means letting terrorist butchers plead out of their just desserts and actually return to the fight.

Last month, new reports indicated just how close the President was to

shipping 11 more terrorists from Gitmo back to the Middle East to a country that is reportedly expelling former terrorist detainees into the wilds of Yemen; that is, until Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad launched their savage massacre of Jews on October 7. Apparently, the administration has bowed, at least temporarily, to the political inconvenience of releasing radical Islamic terrorists into the wild.

The American people don't need a barbaric attack on Israel's civilians to remind us that radical Islamic terrorists are targeting us, murdering our allies, and sowing chaos around the world. The growth of terrorist threats worldwide on President Biden's watch is an indisputable fact, and his administration's abject lack of a coherent counterterrorism strategy is a damning failure.

The President may have removed the Iran-backed Houthis from the terrorist list, but the Houthi terrorists didn't get the memo. The Shia Houthi terrorists and the al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula Sunni terrorists of Yemen are both—both of them—on the march, working to extend the chaos and violence Hamas is sowing in Israel and Gaza across the entire region.

The White House may have thought they could maintain shoestring partnerships and counter exploding terrorist threats in critical regions, but Russia's inroads to supplant U.S. influence in the Sahel and North Africa tell a different story. They may have bet the farm that over-the-horizon counterterrorism operations could replace an active coalition presence in Afghanistan, but the resurgence of groups like ISIS–K and al-Qaida suggest otherwise.

How many counterterrorism strikes has the U.S. military conducted in Afghanistan since the withdrawal? The current state of affairs benefits those who wish America and our allies harm. From the administration's paralyzing fear of escalation to its desperate pursuit of detente with the world's top terror sponsor, the status quo gives our enemies cover.

And had the Biden administration's plan to export another 11 terrorists from Gitmo actually gone ahead, it might very well have swelled their ranks. We don't have to imagine it. We saw what happened when the terrorists detained at Bagram Air Base in Kabul were sprung loose. We have seen repeated terrorist jailbreaks in Syria as well.

And in light of recent reporting, we know that 50,000 ISIS suspects and their families are detained by U.S.-funded nonstate actors in that country, at the epicenter—the epicenter—of terrorist unrest.

The Biden administration might genuinely believe that outsourcing its responsibility to hold and prosecute those who wish America harm would be more humane or that it would make America safer, but they would be dead wrong on both counts. Relying on proxies to detain tens of thousands of low-level suspects in alarming conditions risks inviting a whole new generation of terrorists to put America in their crosshairs.

Administration officials cannot credibly signal virtue by releasing hardcore terrorists from Gitmo while quietly relying on proxies to detain low-level terrorists in such conditions. The men who await justice at Gitmo are the worst of the worst. Recidivism is a serious concern. And the Democrats working breathlessly to close America's terrorist detention facility don't have a serious plan to address it. They make it harder to strike terrorists and harder to detain them at the same time. In fact, the administration is now trying to block any constraints on their ability to empty Gitmo from the coming year's NDAA.

If any of our colleagues are tempted to indulge the administration's obsessive quest, I would encourage them to request briefings on the nature of the threat before they do.

The President's dangerous weakness in the face of hardened killers is well documented, and his plan to let some of the masterminds of terrorist violence against Americans off the hook is only the most enduring example.

FARM BILL

Mr. President, now, on one final matter, it is no secret that American farmers face a lot of uncertainty: unstable markets, volatile weather, and a projected record drop in farm income. All these things make a job that is inherently difficult even more precarious.

As one producer in my State put it, ''Farming is risky and margins are tight.''

Certainty and stability oil the engine of American agriculture, which is why farm families in Kentucky and the rest of rural America look to the farm bill to provide support and safeguard our food supply. Unfortunately, with the farm bill's September expiration fast approaching, Senate Democrats don't seem to be in any rush to address farmers' immediate needs.

The Agriculture Committee's majority has yet to introduce a bill, set a markup, or secure a single minute of floor time with the Democratic leader. The committee has a long tradition of bipartisanship. There is no reason our colleagues can't show some good faith and start working to advance serious legislation. It is time to get to the table.

Yesterday, Ranking Member BOOZMAN put forward a Republican farm bill framework that would give our colleagues a good place to start. The ranking member's plan reflects the actual reality of owning and operating a farm today, and it addresses the biggest bone of contention among American producers: less fluff and more farm in the farm bill, from bolstering the farmer safety net, to expanding our competitiveness in world markets, to providing new producers with means to get off the ground.

I have served on the Agriculture Committee my entire time in the Senate. I know drafting this legislation is certainly not easy, and I am grateful to the ranking member for his work on this important issue. I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will look to this framework for guidance as we work to deliver certainty and stability to America's farmers.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and a resident of a State whose literal lifeblood is agriculture, the farm bills that Congress takes up every few years are one of my top priorities.

I have had the chance to help craft four, now, farm bills during my time in Congress, and my No. 1 goal is always to ensure that each bill accurately reflects the needs and priorities of the men and women on the ground, the ones who are doing the hard work of feeding our country.

As I travel around my State of South Dakota, I always take special note of my conversations with agriculture producers, and many of the bills that I introduce for inclusion in the farm bill are based on these conversations.

The current farm bill will expire later this year. With deadlines approaching and updates needed to a number of farm programs, Congress needs to focus on advancing the next farm bill.

This is all the more important given the headwinds farmers and ranchers are currently facing. With net farm income projected to decline by 25 percent this year and with input costs projected to hit a record high, it is especially important that we make sure farmers and ranchers have the support they need to carry on with their vital work.

Last month, the House Agriculture Committee marked up its draft of the next farm bill, and the bill passed the committee with the support of not just Republicans but several Democrats as well. Yesterday morning, Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member JOHN BOOZMAN released his farm bill framework to build off the House's work and hopefully move this process forward in the Senate.

Progress in the Senate has been hamstrung by Senate Democrats' insistence on prioritizing things like climate over the needs of farmers and ranchers. I am hoping that the recent efforts by the House, along with Senator BOOZMAN's framework, will move deliberations along and refocus our efforts on farmers and ranchers instead of Democrats' climate obsessions.

In preparation for this next farm bill, I introduced a number of pieces of legislation that I hope to get included in

the final bill. These bills are based on the conversations I have had with farmers and ranchers as I travel throughout South Dakota as well as events I have held to hear from ag producers about their priorities for the farm bill.

I am very pleased that the framework Senator BOOZMAN has put out contains measures from a number of the bills I introduced. That includes elements of my Conservation Reserve Program Improvement Act—legislation I introduced to make the Conservation Reserve Program a more effective option for producers—as well as my CRP Flexibility Act, which would provide additional drought flexibilities for CRP contract holders.

It also includes my Crop Insurance for Future Farmers Act, which I introduced with Senator KLOBUCHAR to help make crop insurance more affordable for young farmers, as well as measures from my Expediting Forest Restoration and Recovery Act and my Rural Internet Improvement Act.

It includes a section modeled off my bipartisan Strengthening Local Processing Act to increase the processing options available to livestock producers and expand small meatpackers' capacity.

Importantly, this framework would make improvements to the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs, which are essential elements of the farm safety net.

I am tremendously grateful to Senator BOOZMAN for his work on this framework and his efforts to move the farm bill process forward.

I hope that my Democratic colleagues will approach pursuing a bipartisan agreement on this legislation with a new seriousness. As I said earlier, their focus on nonfarm priorities has slowed progress on this farm bill. I hope the House's recent work and Senator BOOZMAN's efforts will encourage them to focus on what should be in the substance of any farm bill—namely, the farm.

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

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

The Senator from Oklahoma.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, if everyone here in this Chamber is watching the news of late, in the last 24 hours, the FBI scooped up eight citizens from Tajikistan that were in the United States and arrested them on immigration violations, but they were also suspected terrorists that were in the United States. They were in Philadelphia; they were in Los Angeles; they were in New York City; and they were individuals that had direct connections to terrorism. And they were here because they illegally crossed our southern border and were waved in.

This is an issue that I have been on this floor at this desk speaking about for 2 years now. The population that is crossing our southern border has dramatically changed in the last 2 years.

No longer it is just about everyone from the Western Hemisphere. Now we have very large numbers of people from places like Tajikistan, from West Africa, from China, from Russia, from Pakistan, from other specific places that are known areas of terrorism, and we have people in the thousands that are crossing our borders that we don't know who they are, from places that we typically don't have people illegally crossing.

This group of individuals are called special interest aliens; that is, they are not on our Terror Watchlist, but we don't know why they are here or how they got here or the process that they came to come to the United States across our southern border illegally is unusual, different, or is directed by a crime organization outside of Mexico—special interest aliens.

Last year, we had 70,000 people that fell into the category of special interest aliens. This year, so far, we have had 53,000 people that were special interest aliens. These eight individuals that were arrested yesterday were part of that group of special interest aliens: illegally present here, not vetted on our southern border but released on their own recognizance, and now, with an announcement yesterday from the FBI, a connection to terrorism, specifically ISIS terrorism.

In the past several months, the FBI has also picked up al-Shabaab terrorists in the United States that had crossed on our southern border, that were listed as special interest aliens, and that have now been picked up.

We are literally living on borrowed time. This is the issue that I have brought up over and over again to this body to say we need to pay attention to this issue of what is happening on our southern border.

Now, currently the administration has put in place a new Executive order to try to lower somewhat the number of people that are coming across, but the way they are doing it is by turning around people from the Western Hemisphere, but folks from other areas like Tajikistan, those folks are still coming through. Some are being detained, but a large number are actually being released on their own recognizance as special interest aliens. We don't have information on a direct tie to terrorism at the time they are at the border so they are being released.

The bill that I brought to this body would have changed the way we did screening dramatically, would have taken all of these issues about terrorism from the end of the process and moved it to the beginning so that we are not releasing people and then trying to figure out if we can chase them.

Right now, what is really happening day-to-day is that individuals that are crossing our border, we are hoping that the FBI can pick up any information on them after they are already released into the country.

Remember, there were 70,000 individuals like this last year, 53,000 so far this year, and we are hoping the FBI is able to discern they are a terror threat before they carry out an act of terrorism. That is exactly the wrong way to do this.

We need to enforce our southern border with more than just some action to be able to reduce what is happening. We should not be living on borrowed time every day awaiting the next terrorist attack in the United States because our border was open.

What have we done in the past? Well, last year we deported four Tajiks—last year, four. Now we are in the process of deporting another eight. We don't know what the numbers are here. And at the end of the day, that is a very bad spot for us to be in as a country.

I don't want the United States of America living on borrowed time, awaiting the next terrorist attack because we were not paying attention and enforcing our own southern border.

We need to be able to wake up on this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Arkansas.

FARM BILL

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, prior to breaking for the Memorial Day recess, the House Agriculture Committee did something few beltway pundits thought was possible. The committee approved, in a bipartisan manner, a farm bill that meets the needs of farmers, ranchers, foresters, rural communities, and consumers across America.

I commend Chairman GT THOMPSON for his stewardship of this bill through an open process that let every committee member have a say in the bill.

Likewise, I wanted to express my appreciation for each of the Members that voted to advance this legislation out of committee. Chairwoman STABENOW also recently released her farm bill framework, putting the Senate majority's priorities on paper and advancing the discussion forward.

Cumulatively, these efforts exhibit the first real progress toward passage of a new farm bill since the process began 2 years ago. This week, Republicans on the Agriculture Committee are building on that momentum by releasing our farm bill framework.

We believe that our framework reflects the Chamber's shared commitments across all 12 titles while putting more farm in the farm bill, something we have been calling for since the onset.

Let's talk about what that means. It means we direct additional resources to the tools that farmers rely on and they are calling for us to invest in, while ensuring we do no harm to our

nutrition programs which account for over 80 percent of the bill's baseline spending.

For example, we have doubled the funding for the farm bill's premier trade programs to help increase our competitiveness overseas. This is desperately needed considering we are projected to see a record $32 billion agricultural trade deficit this year. U.S. farmers have been able to point to their positive trade balance in agriculture as a source of pride for the better part of the last 50 years as they worked to feed, clothe, and fuel the world.

Unfortunately, this administration's refusal to engage on the issue has created an agricultural trade imbalance that is projected to reach record heights and is showing no signs of slowing. Our framework can help reverse this unsustainable trend.

Another area where we double funding is agricultural research. Our public sector investment in agricultural research lags other developed economies and has fallen by more than a third over the past two decades. This is another concerning trend that our framework can help reverse.

Agricultural research programs spur innovation and productivity, allowing farmers to produce more while using less and in an environmentally friendly manner, even as threats from pests and diseases and unpredictable weather become more common.

Not only do our farmers gain in the long term, but our land-grant institutions and colleges of agriculture that conduct groundbreaking research see immediate benefits. This truly is a win-win investment.

We also make a historic investment in the conservation title while ensuring programs remain locally led and flexible.

Farmers, ranchers, and foresters have diverse conservation needs, and our framework reflects that, providing equity across practices to address drought, water quality, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, soil erosion, and climate resiliency, while continuing to provide for carbon sequestrating and greenhouse gas reducing practices.

Our framework increases funding in the conservation title by more than 25 percent every single year moving forward, while making sure its programs continue to empower producers to make their best decisions to meet the resource concerns of their operation.

Our farmers, ranchers, and foresters also need investments in the communities they call home, and our framework makes those too. It is no secret that rural America has seen more than its share of difficulties over the last several years.

Recent census data shows that over half the Nation's rural counties have lost population in the last census. These communities must have the modern infrastructure necessary to attract and retain talent.

Our framework offers help by making significant investments in small business development, broadband expansion, water and energy infrastructure programs, as well as funds to increase access to rural healthcare, childcare, and public safety.

Most importantly, putting more farm in the farm bill requires a modernized farm safety net. We accomplish this by giving producers access to risk management tools that reflect the nature of the challenges under which they operate.

As I have stressed before, this isn't an either-or decision, meaning farmers won't be forced to choose between crop insurance and vital title I programs. Our framework makes crop insurance more accessible and affordable and makes meaningful increases to statutory reference prices for all producers of all commodities in all regions.

The safety net programs our farmers operate under right now are outdated. We cannot consider a farm bill that fails to recognize and protect farmers from the historic inflation and input costs they now face on the farm.

The world, and agriculture in particular, are in a much different place today than they were during the last farm bill. Farmers are already experiencing unprecedented challenges and economic uncertainty for the crops they are sowing into the ground right now as we speak.

This follows historic inflation, a record trade deficit, rising interest rates, devastating natural disasters, and geopolitical unrest that have shrunk the bottom line for farmers.

Under this President, U.S. farmers have seen the largest decline in farm income of all time. And like I said, that is only expected to get worse if we fail to put more farm in the farm bill.

In my home State of Arkansas, where agriculture accounts for about a quarter of the State's GDP, inflation-adjusted net farm income is expected to decline by more than 40 percent compared to 2 years ago.

This trend is playing out across the Nation, which is why reference prices have been the top ask from farmers at the over 20 farm bill roundtables that my colleagues and I have held around the country.

While each of these States have diverse agriculture economies, their refrain has been consistent. In fact, it was one of my earliest roundtables in North Dakota where the mantra of ''more farm in the farm bill'' was born. It wasn't a Republican Senator who first said that, it was a plea from a farmer. And that is what this is truly all about.

Our farmers, ranchers, foresters, consumers, lenders, and other stakeholders helped us fashion a farm bill that meets their varying needs.

It is a delicate balance made even more difficult this time around by the way actions taken outside of the farm bill have impacted our baseline. But on the Agriculture Committee, we have shown that we can come together to carry these heavy lifts across the finish line.

I have been proud to partner with Chairwoman STABENOW to shepherd significant reforms into law on priority issues, particularly in the climate and nutrition spaces.

Together, we worked to enact the Growing Climate Solutions Act, which makes it easier for producers to participate in emerging voluntary carbon credit markets. And we passed that bill with the support of over 90 of our colleagues.

In the nutrition space, we worked to pass the Keep Kids Fed Act, which extended needed flexibilities to schools and meal providers for an additional year at a time when supply chain breakdowns persisted and food costs soared because of inflation.

Perhaps the thing that I am most proud of was our successful effort, working with Senator STABENOW under her leadership, to modernize the outdated summer meals program to reach more food-insecure children in both rural and urban communities, filling the gap children faced during the months when classes are out of session.

Marking the first substantial reform to the summer meals program in over 60 years, this investment of over $20 billion ensures that children will never again face hunger in the summer months.

That is what our work here is all about, identifying a problem and coming together to solve it. We have proven we can do that in the past. I believe with all of my heart that we can do it again by passing a bipartisan farm bill.

I look forward to taking our two frameworks, forging a bipartisan farm bill, and passing it into law before the 118th session of Congress comes to a close.

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

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

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators HOEVEN, BARRASSO, and MANCHIN be permitted to speak for 5 minutes each prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

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

FERC NOMINATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to support the three individuals nominated to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission: David Rosner, Lindsay See, and Judy Chang.

The Commission, or the FERC, is often called the most important Agency that people have never heard of. FERC regulates the interstate transmission of electricity and the interstate transportation of oil and natural gas. It ensures that the rates for electric power in the wholesale market are

''just and reasonable.'' It oversees electric reliability. It licenses interstate natural gas pipelines, liquefied natural gas terminals, and hydropower projects.

By one estimate, the Commission regulates activities that account for 7 percent of our Nation's economy. For that reason, we must fulfill our responsibility to maintain a quorum on the Commission.

In 2015 and 2016, President Obama refused to fill the vacancies left by two Republican Commissioners. Then in January of 2017, the outgoing Chairman of FERC resigned as well. The departure left the Commission without a quorum.

It then took 7 full months to restore the quorum at FERC. During that time, too many projects that help keep the lights on, help heat our homes, and aid our allies abroad were reluctantly put on hold.

We can't let that happen again. Too much is at stake for American workers, for our energy security, and for our Nation's economy. That is why I am glad the Senate is acting on these three nominations this very week. While I may not agree with each of the nominees on all of the items all of the time, all of them are well qualified.

I am especially supportive of Ms. Lindsay See. From a young age, she has distinguished herself as a person of exemplary discipline, drive, and determination. She graduated summa cum laude from Patrick Henry College. She then graduated magna cum laude from Harvard Law School, where she served as the executive editor of the Harvard Law Review. After law school, she clerked for Judge Thomas Griffith of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit.

Ms. See is an outstanding appellate lawyer. She has spent the last 7 years as solicitor general of West Virginia. During that time, she has overseen civil and criminal appeals in both State and Federal courts. Ms. See has fought tirelessly for affordable and reliable energy for American families. She has argued two cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. In one of those cases, she not only advocated on behalf of West Virginia, she also advocated on behalf of other States, including my home State of Wyoming. And she won.

Ms. See has a long track record of giving a voice to people who are impacted by Federal actions. In fact, my concern for farmers and other landowners is a principal reason why I do support Ms. See.

During the Energy and Natural Resource Committee's hearing on the nomination, Ms. See was asked if she would ''exercise extreme care'' when considering applications for electric transmission lines. Of course she said yes. She went on to explain that she would faithfully adhere to and apply the law.

When she received written questions, she again committed to follow the law. Ms. See wrote:

> My time as West Virginia's Solicitor General has given me a profound respect for the ways federal policies affect people across the country.

She added:

> I've seen how federal rules and permitting actions can threaten people's livelihoods and local economies.

Ms. See went on to say:

> Sensitivity to how federal actions affect States and local communities is essential when making policy decisions.

She said:

> I would consider a proposal's consequences for local landowners . . . important to the public interest analysis.

If confirmed, Ms. See will bring an impressive experience list, working with complex statutes, to the Commission. She will also help the Commission understand how its decisions impact farmers and other landowners.

I firmly believe that if we fail to confirm Ms. See, farmers and landowners will be worse off. For that reason, I encourage all Senators to vote in favor of Ms. See.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

FARM BILL

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, just a few minutes ago, the ranking member of our Ag Committee, the senior Senator from Arkansas, Senator BOOZMAN, put forth a statement of principles that he has developed with his outstanding staff that really identify and describe a framework that we absolutely need in the farm bill.

As you know, we have a 1-year extension in place on the farm bill. You know, it is something that is just incredibly important, and it has to get done on a bipartisan basis, and so we need to get it done. If we can't get it done before the end of this year, we are going to have to put another 1-year extension on the farm program in place.

You know, when we talk about our farmers and ranchers and we talk about the farm bill and we talk about farm policy, you know, we think we are kind of just focused on agriculture, and that is really not the case. I mean, good farm policy in this country gives us the highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the world. Well, who does that impact on a daily basis? Everybody. Every single person in this country every single day, multiple times a day. Highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the world. More choice. Higher quality. Better food than anywhere else in the world. And—and—Americans spend less of their budget on their food than any other developed country. I would say that is something we should not take for granted.

It is amazing—you know, I mean, I think nowadays so many people don't come from the farm anymore. You know, obviously we are a huge ag State, and we still have a lot of nexus with farming, but a lot of places don't. They think, wow, food comes from the grocery stores. Well, it doesn't. It is produced by our farmers and ranchers every single day.

So, you know, that is one of those things that are just incredibly important. Until we don't have it, until we don't have this network of family farms and ranches across this country that gives us something that is better than anywhere else in the world, you know, we take it for granted. We can't do that.

So we need to get a farm bill done, and we need to get it right. That is why I am here, is because if we follow the framework that Senator BOOZMAN just laid out, we will get it right, and so we need to do it. That is the simple point I want to make, that that is the framework we need to embrace on a bipartisan basis, on a bicameral basis, get it passed, get it to the President, and get it in place, and I would say for our farmers and ranchers but really what I am saying: for every single American every single day.

I want to start out by thanking Senator BOOZMAN; but most of all, I want to thank our hard-working farmers and ranchers who face incredible challenges whether it is weather, whether it is trade policy. You know, I mean, it is all the things that they don't control; but year in and year out, they go out and they plant a crop and they raise livestock and they feed the world. And those challenges are what they face, like I say, every single year.

Now, this year, they are looking at lower farm net income. They are looking at record-high input costs. Obviously, inflation and high interest rates have put a real squeeze on their operations. You know, it is often said that farm bills are written for bad times, not good times; and that is what we have got to keep in mind. The whole concept of this farm bill is that it is countercyclical. It makes sure that it provides help to farmers and ranchers when they need it, and, you know, obviously, when they don't need it, then it is not there. Of course, that is the way it should be. That is not only what affects farmers and ranchers, that is what is most beneficial in terms of the hard-working taxpayers of this country.

Of course, Senator BOOZMAN's framework does just exactly that. It makes the investments we need in the farm safety net, and that is, ultimately, the bedrock and the foundation of what the farm bill is all about. He emphasizes that in a lot of different ways, whether it is strengthening crop insurance, which we, obviously, have to have as it is very important; improving the access to credit for our farmers and ranchers; and also making sure that our livestock producers—our ranchers as well as our farmers—are able to operate year in and year out and that, for the next generation, we are doing every single thing we can to bring that next generation into farming and ranching.

Remember, there are about 16 million people across the country who are either directly or indirectly involved in agriculture. The average age now for these family farms and ranches—the

average age of the principal—is about 60 years old. We also have to make sure that we are bringing this next generation into farming and that we are keeping that family farm, that family ranch, that network of millions of small businesses across this country that feed and fuel the world—we need to make sure that we do everything we can to sustain it, and Senator BOOZMAN's framework does that.

Let's come together in a bipartisan way—in a bipartisan way on our Ag Committee and in a bicameral way—and get this thing done for our farmers, for our ranchers, and for all Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the See cloture motion be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

FERC NOMINATIONS

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I spoke at some length about the important work of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission yesterday. I spoke also about the statutory requirement that the Commission members be able ''to assess fairly the needs and concerns of all interest affected by Federal energy policy.''

I believe that is why an earlier Congress, when it created the Department of Energy in 1977 and concentrated most energy functions in the hands of the Secretary of Energy, insisted on maintaining a separate, independent, five-member collegial body for electric and natural gas regulation.

When it comes to fairly assessing all interests, five heads are better than one. Bringing together five different people with five different life experiences and perspectives helps ensure that all affected interests will be heard and fairly considered and assessed.

David Rosner, Lindsay See, and Judy Chang are very different people from very different backgrounds. What matters most is their willingness to work with one another, to consider and assess fairly different interests and points of view, and to put partisan passions aside in favor of the public interest.

After meeting all three and listening to them testify and watching them respond to Senators' questions, I am convinced that all three are willing and able to work with each other and with Chairman PHILLIPS and Commissioner Christie on the Commission to ensure energy reliability and affordability for American consumers.

Lindsay See is currently the solicitor general of West Virginia, a post she has held for the past 6 years. In that role, she represents my State's legal interests in both State and Federal courts, including before the U.S. Supreme Court.

As Lindsay explained in her testimony before our committee, ''energy-adjacent matters are front-and-center'' for West Virginia's solicitor general, and she has worked on ''dozens of cases and rulemakings'' which demonstrated ''that grid reliability, regulatory certainty, and affordable energy are essentials.''

Prior to her appointment as solicitor general, she served as a special assistant in the West Virginia Attorney General's Office for 2 years. Before that, she practiced appellate and administrative law for 5 years at a law firm here in Washington, DC. After graduating from Harvard Law School, she clerked for Judge Thomas Griffith on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

She is plainly a very capable and experienced lawyer and well qualified to serve on the Commission.

Judy Chang is an energy economics and policy expert with more than 20 years of experience working with energy companies, trade associations, and governments on regulatory and financial issues as they relate to investment decisions in energy generation, transmission, and storage.

She served as the under secretary of Energy and Climate Solutions, under Governor Charles Baker from Massachusetts, where she helped develop Massachusetts' Clean Energy and Climate Plan.

I can think of no better preparation for serving on a bipartisan commission than working for a Republican administration in a very, very blue State.

Judy also has been an adjunct lecturer in public policy at the Harvard Kennedy School and a senior fellow at the Kennedy School's center for business and government.

She holds a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering and computer science from the University of California at Davis and a master of public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Energy reliability and affordability is perhaps more personal to Judy than most of us. In her testimony before our committee, Judy explained that when she was growing up in Taiwan, power outages were a daily event. She said that ''from a young age, my parents instilled in me the principle that no resource should ever be wasted, working hard to save every penny . . . ''

We will all be served well by having that perspective on the Commission.

We have three extremely qualified, capable, honorable people who are willing to serve our great country. That makes up a five-member FERC. I can tell you, as they have said and as I have said, five heads—good heads—are better than one. So I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting both Lindsay See's and Judy Chang's nominations today.

VOTE ON ROSNER NOMINATION

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 192 Ex.]

YEAS—67

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Barrasso	Grassley	Reed
Bennet	Hassan	Ricketts
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Risch
Booker	Hickenlooper	Romney
Brown	Hirono	Rosen
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Cardin	Kelly	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Smith
Cassidy	Luján	Stabenow
Collins	Lummis	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Van Hollen
Cornyn	McConnell	Warner
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warnock
Cramer	Moran	Welch
Crapo	Mullin	Whitehouse
Daines	Murkowski	Wicker
Duckworth	Murphy	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	Young
Fetterman	Ossoff	
Fischer	Padilla	

NAYS—27

Blackburn	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Johnson	Sanders
Braun	Kaine	Schmitt
Britt	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Budd	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Markey	Tuberville
Ernst	Marshall	Vance
Hagerty	Paul	Warren

NOT VOTING—6

Butler	Menendez	Sullivan
Graham	Sinema	Tillis

The nomination was confirmed.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, on rollcall vote 192, I voted yea. It was my intention to vote nay. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote, because it will not affect the outcome.

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

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask consent to speak for 3 minutes.

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

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I come to the floor this morning sick to my stomach and profoundly disturbed

by pictures that were shared with me this morning of yet another anti-Semitic act in New York.

A few hours ago, the director of the Brooklyn Museum and several members of the board of directors had their homes vandalized with revolting anti-Semitic images, with images of fake blood, symbolism used by Hamas. I have a picture of some of the vandalism right here outside the home of one of the directors.

This is not New York. This is not America. And we must confront this bigotry and vicious intolerance with courage, with perseverance.

Every single American needs to see this. This is the home of a woman on the board of directors. It has her name. It says ''Brooklyn Museum,'' and then it says ''White Supremacist Zionist.'' And her home is smeared with blood.

Every single American needs to see these pictures. This is the face of hatred—Jewish Americans made to feel unsafe in their own home just because they are Jewish.

This is not even close to free speech. It is intimidation. It is scapegoating. It is dehumanization—invasive attacks loaded with the threat of looming violence. It is vile. It is nasty. It is un-American.

And, sadly, this kind of evil is something every Jew on Earth can recognize in an instant. Images like this remind us of evils our families endured for generations, evils that paved the way for unimaginable violence.

I cannot believe we are seeing this here in America, here in New York. Targeting someone for simply being Jewish, smearing their front door with fake blood, and calling them White supremacist is beyond the pale. Vandalism like this is a crime and should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

And it sickens me that, of all the targets these anti-Semites could have chosen, it was the leadership of the Brooklyn Museum. The Brooklyn Museum is deeply concerned with issues of social justice—I would say, more than most museums. Its doors are always open to all.

I have visited the Brooklyn Museum many times with my children and my grandchildren. I have spoken at their great ''First Saturday'' events. I have even voted there.

The best antidote for the poison of ignorance is, of course, knowledge, and that is precisely what we find in our museums—knowledge.

These images break my heart. They fill me with both deep grief and profound anger. I condemn the actions of those who smeared these hateful images of the leadership of the Brooklyn Museum. The perpetrators must be held accountable for this hateful vandalism. These hateful actions—make no mistake about it—do nothing, nothing at all, to advance the cause these individuals profess to care about.

Again, this is not New York. This is not America. And we must confront this intolerance and bigotry with courage, with perseverance, and with common cause with all those who wish to promote tolerance and acceptance here in 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 670, Lindsay S. See, of West Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2028.

Charles E. Schumer, Joe Manchin III, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jeanne Shaheen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Alex Padilla, Mazie K. Hirono, Ben Ray Luján, Maria Cantwell, Patty Murray, Peter Welch, Jack Reed, Benjamin L. Cardin, Angus S. King, Jr., Richard Blumenthal, Mark Kelly, John W. Hickenlooper.

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 Lindsay S. See, of West Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2028, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 86, nays 9, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 193 Ex.]

YEAS—86

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

NAYS—9

Hawley	Merkley	Schmitt
Kaine	Reed	Warren
Markey	Sanders	Whitehouse

NOT VOTING—5

Butler	Menendez	Sullivan
Graham	Sinema	

CHANGE OF VOTE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, on rollcall vote 193, I voted yea. It was my intention to vote nay. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote because it will not affect the outcome.

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

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 9.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Lindsay S. See, of West Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2028.

RECESS

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

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

VOTE ON SEE NOMINATION

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

Ms. SMITH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

The result was announced—yeas 83, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 194 Ex.]

YEAS—83

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

NAYS—12

Hawley	Merkley	Van Hollen
Hirono	Reed	Warren
Kaine	Sanders	Welch
Markey	Schmitt	Whitehouse

NOT VOTING—5

Brown	Menendez	Sullivan
Butler	Sinema	

The nomination was confirmed.

(Mr. FETTERMAN assumed the Chair.)

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Delaware.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I ask that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 668, Judy W. Chang, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2029.

Charles E. Schumer, Joe Manchin III, Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Jeanne Shaheen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Alex Padilla, Mazie K. Hirono, Ben Ray Luján, Maria Cantwell, Peter Welch, Jack Reed, Benjamin L. Cardin, Angus S. King, Jr., Richard Blumenthal, Mark Kelly, John W. Hickenlooper.

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 Judy W. Chang, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2029, 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 Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 63, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 195 Ex.]

YEAS—63

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Barrasso	Heinrich	Risch
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Cardin	Kelly	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Smith
Cassidy	Luján	Stabenow
Collins	Lummis	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Cramer	McConnell	Warner
Crapo	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Welch
Fetterman	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Wicker
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Peters	Young

NAYS—31

Blackburn	Fischer	Paul
Boozman	Hagerty	Ricketts
Braun	Hawley	Rubio
Britt	Hoeven	Schmitt
Budd	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Vance
Daines	Moran	
Ernst	Mullin	

NOT VOTING—6

Brown	Menendez	Sinema
Butler	Sanders	Sullivan

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). On this vote, the yeas are 63, the nays are 31, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Judy W. Chang, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a term expiring June 30, 2029.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4368

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, today I rise to speak on an issue that is incredibly personal and vital to millions of Americans—the protection of in vitro fertilization.

IVF is a medical miracle that has brought the joy of parenthood to millions of families who might otherwise have never experienced it. I am a strong supporter of IVF, and I am incredibly grateful for the technology that has enabled parents, moms and dads desperate to bring into the world little boys and little girls, to finally hold a child in their arms.

It is astounding to note that over 2 percent of all births in America each and every year come from IVF. That translates to millions of parents who have been given the chance to bring new life into the world. To date, more than 8 million babies have been born through IVF.

However, recent developments have caused some confusion and concern among parents and among those who wish to be parents. The Alabama Supreme Court's decision to recognize embryos created through IVF as children under the law has left many prospective parents worried—understandably worried—about the future legality of IVF.

Now, the Alabama Legislature acted quickly to make clear that IVF is fully protected in the State of Alabama, but nonetheless confusion persists.

To the best of my knowledge, all 100 Senators in this body support IVF. Seeing this confusion—confusion that, unfortunately, has been fueled by Democrat partisans—I reached out to Senator KATIE BRITT from Alabama, and I asked Senator BRITT if she would join together in drafting legislation, Federal legislation, that would be a clear, straightforward, ironclad protection for IVF.

I believe we should put into Federal law a clear and unambiguous protection to make clear that no State in the Union can ban IVF, that no local government in this country can ban IVF.

Senator BRITT and I drafted this together. This bill is simple. It is straightforward. It is clear.

IVF is profoundly pro-family. It is an avenue of hope for millions struggling with infertility.

To every mom and every dad at home and to every woman and man desperately hoping to be a parent, know that our bill will ensure that IVF remains 100 percent protected by law. And this should not just be a policy or a general affirmation; this should be a clear and unmistakable Federal law.

We invite our colleagues in the Senate from both sides of the aisle to join together in supporting this crucial legislation. This should be a measure that transcends political divides.

A recent poll showed that 86 percent of Americans believe IVF should be legal and protected. This is an opportunity for us to put partisan divisions aside and to come together and unite on a shared commitment to protecting IVF.

That is why in just a moment I am going to ask unanimous consent to pass this legislation, but before I do so, I want to yield to the Senator from Alabama, Senator BRITT.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I was proud to join my colleague from Texas in introducing the IVF Protection Act. I am grateful for his leadership on this important topic.

As a mom, I know firsthand that there is no greater joy in this life than that of being a mother. IVF helps aspiring parents across our Nation experience the miracle of life and start and grow a family. That is why I strongly support continued nationwide IVF access. IVF access is fundamentally profamily. For the millions of Americans who face infertility every year, IVF provides the hope of a pathway to parenthood.

We all have loved ones, whether they are family members or friends, who have become parents or grandparents through IVF. Across America, about 2 percent of babies born are born because of IVF; that is about 200 babies per day. So think about the magnitude of that number and the faces and the stories and the dreams it represents. In recent decades, millions of people have been born with the help of IVF. Along with my colleague Senator CRUZ, I was honored to lead Senate Republican colleagues in a joint statement emphasizing our shared support in continued nationwide access to IVF.

IVF is legal and available in every single State across America. That includes my home State, where Governor Ivey and the Alabama Legislature acted quickly and overwhelmingly earlier this year to protect IVF access for our State's families.

Today, the Senate has an opportunity to act quickly and overwhelmingly to protect IVF access for our Nation's families. That is what the IVF Protection Act would do. It is straightforward, just as Senator CRUZ has said. The bill would give aspiring parents nationwide the certainty and peace of mind that IVF will remain legal and available in every single State.

Now, I want to break this down as directly as possible. First, there is only one bill that would protect IVF access and not stray outside those parameters; that is our IVF Protection Act. There is only one bill that would protect IVF access while safeguarding religious liberties; that is our IVF Protection Act. And there is only one bill to protect IVF access that could get 60 votes in the Senate, and once again that is our IVF Protection Act.

However, that is not the bill that Democrats are going to be putting on the floor this week. Sadly, they aren't interested in a bill to actually protect IVF access and figuring out how we could get that to become law. That wouldn't advance their true goal, which is about partisan electoral politics. If Democrats allowed the IVF Protection Act to pass today, they would lose a key scare tactic they believe helps them in November, and that, ultimately, is what this is all about.

They are in week two of their summer of scare tactics, and eventually they are going to transition to a fall of fearmongering.

At the end of the day, the American people want secure borders; they support safe streets; they want stable prices; and they want strong families. My colleagues across the aisle know that they can't sell the Biden administration's record on any of these topics. It has been failure after failure yet again.

So instead, they have to rely on distorting and misrepresenting Republicans' positions on issues, including our support for IVF access. The bottom line is, the American people deserve better, and there is no better path out there than our bill, the path of common-ground solutions, not show votes or scare tactics.

Again, I want to applaud the leadership of my colleague from Texas. Senator CRUZ has been a champion as we work to make sure that the world knows that we are going to protect access to IVF. While Democrats prioritize scaring families, Republicans will continue to fight.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, sometimes the folks at home can find what happens in parliamentary procedure on this floor confusing, so I want to explain what is about to happen. In just a moment, I am going to ask unanimous consent to pass the IVF protection bill into law. One of two things will happen in response: One, the Democrats in this Chamber can decide that IVF should be protected by Federal law, in which case this bill will pass the Senate 100 to nothing; the other thing that might happen is Senate Democrats will utter two words, ''I object.''

So I want you to listen very carefully to the Senate Democrats. And whatever else is included in the speech, understand if the remarks end with the words ''I object,'' then Senate Democrats will have made the cynical political decision that Democrats don't want IVF protected in Federal law. They don't want to provide reassurance and comfort to millions of parents in America because, instead, they want to spend millions of dollars running campaign ads suggesting the big bad Republicans want to take away IVF. I get why that could be good politics, but I hope Senate Democrats are not that cynical.

Understand, again, if you hear the words ''I object,'' Senate Democrats are saying: No, we will not protect IVF in Federal law because we want to play politics.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 4368 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I am not going to mince words here. It is ridiculous to claim that this bill protects IVF when it does nothing of the sort. In fact, it explicitly allows States to restrict IVF in all sorts of ways. It is literally in the bill text.

Remember, it did not take State lawmakers in Alabama passing a ban on IVF for clinics in the State to suspend services.

Under this bill, there are a million ways Republican-led States could enact burdensome and unnecessary requirements and create the kind of legal uncertainty and risk that would force clinics to once again close their doors.

Also, even though it is an inherent part of the IVF process that families will make more embryos than they need, this bill does absolutely nothing—not a single thing—to ensure families who use IVF can have their clinics dispose of unused embryos without facing legal threats for a standard medical procedure. Instead, this bill completely ignores the matter of what happens to frozen embryos in order to appease Republicans' extreme anti-abortion allies.

This was intentional, and it leaves the door open to a lot of chaos. So this Republican bill really is a PR tool, plain and simple. It is just another way for Republicans to pretend they are not the extremists that they keep proving they are.

Meanwhile, there are bills some Republicans are pushing for right now that would enshrine, as a matter of law, that life begins at conception and that discarding unused embryos is essentially murder.

Senator CRUZ himself supported a personhood amendment to the U.S. Constitution. No way around that. The junior Senator from Texas wanted to change the U.S. Constitution to give embryos the same rights as living, breathing human beings. Look, the stone-cold reality is that you cannot protect IVF and champion fetal personhood.

So I would like to ask my colleagues who are offering this enormously inadequate bill—and I hope they do answer it directly—do you support letting parents have clinics dispose of unused embryos, which is a typical part of the IVF process, or do you support fetal personhood, which by its very nature will throw IVF access into chaos? Because until they clearly answer that question—and it is a couple simple ones—all the claims of supporting IVF will fall obviously short, just like this bill does. That is why I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, the Senator from Washington suggested that this bill does not protect IVF. Let me

read you the clear statutory language that unambiguously protects IVF:

A State shall not prohibit in vitro fertilization as defined in section 4(B) of the IVF Protection Act services and shall ensure that no unit of local government in the State prohibits such services.

That is clear. That is unambiguous. That is explicit. And that is ironclad.

Had the Democrats not cynically said ''I object,'' that language would have just passed the U.S. Senate 100 to nothing, a strong Federal protection of IVF.

Now, Democrats know that out of 50 States, not a single State is seeking to ban IVF. They know that the threat that they plan to spend millions of dollars trying to convince the voters is real, no State is currently pursuing. They know that Alabama—whose Supreme Court started this issue—the legislature promptly came into session and acted to make clear that IVF is protected.

And the Senator from Washington asked a question. I do find it interesting. She asked a question and wanted me to answer it, but she is no longer on the Senate floor to hear my answer to the question, but I will answer it anyway. The Senator from Washington suggests that those States that pursue personhood amendments, that that is somehow inconsistent with IVF. The one problem she has is facts and reality because there are three States—Alabama, Georgia, and Missouri—all of which have adopted personhood amendments, and all of which protect IVF. So IVF is legal in Alabama. It is legal in Georgia. It is legal in Missouri.

So the Democrats maintain that IVF is in jeopardy, and yet the facts are precisely contrary. Understand why the Democrats just did what they did. Every Democrat on the ballot is going to tell the voters: If you don't vote for me, a Democrat, mean Republicans are going to come take away IVF. And I will tell you the reason they are going to say that is because the Democrats' record on abortion is extreme and out of the mainstream. Every Democrat Senator in this body has voted for legislation that would legalize abortion literally up until the moment of birth, up to and including the 39th and 40th week of pregnancy. That is radical. Only 9 percent of Americans support the extreme policy position of Senate Democrats on abortion. Ninety-one percent of Americans look at that and say: That goes too far.

Even among those Americans who call themselves pro-choice, a majority of pro-choice Americans look at the position of the Democrats, and they say: Wow. Abortion up until the moment of delivery in the ninth month of pregnancy, that is too much.

So what is the Democrats' political strategy? Don't talk about their actual record on abortion; instead, try to change the topic to, last week, contraception and this week IVF.

And they know that no State in the Union is trying to ban contraception and that no State in the Union is trying to ban IVF. Every single Senator in this body supports the right to contraception. Every single Senator in this body supports IVF being protected.

But the Democrats are counting on docile media to pick up their message and carry their message. They know that the bills we are voting on tomorrow will fail. That is not a bug; it is a feature. They want the bills tomorrow to fail. Why? Because this is all about running TV ads claiming Republicans are opposed to IVF. They know it is false.

And, by the way, one of the reasons the bills will fail tomorrow is they deliberately trample on religious liberty. You know there used be a time when there was a bipartisan commitment to religious liberty but no longer. The Democrats have decided that the First Amendment to the Constitution no longer matters.

And so the Democrats' bill would, among other things, force a Catholic hospital to provide IVF procedures, even if it was contrary to the faith of Catholic doctors performing the procedure. Now, our bill does not seek to force anyone to do anything. We all have a right to live according to our faith. So if your faith teaches you not to use IVF, as a doctor, you should have the right not to say: I am not going to participate in that.

But understand the Cruz-Britt legislation that the Democrats just cynically objected to would protect IVF for every parent in the country, and it would become Federal law, except for one thing: The Democrats do not want it to because if we pass clear, strong Federal protections for IVF, the issue that they are planning to campaign on would go away.

What we have just seen is one of the most cynical displays of partisan politics to ever occur on the Senate floor. It is designed deliberately to deceive the American voters. It is unfortunate that Democrats put politics above protecting parents and above protecting IVF.

But just remember the next time you hear a Democrat saying—and they are going to spend millions of dollars saying it—we are the ones who want to protect IVF, understand we could have passed strong Federal legislation today, but Senate Democrats don't want a protection of IVF. They want a campaign issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I thank the leadership of the Senators from Texas and Alabama on this issue that is important to literally millions of Americans, as the Senators talked about.

First of all, let the record show that, today, the Democrats objected to the Republican-led IVF Protection Act. The Democrats objected to protecting IVF.

This is personal to so many people up here, and it is personal to many Republican Senators. I would suppose a half a dozen of us so far have a family member—maybe a child or a grandchild—because of IVF or staff, thanks to IVF. Maybe it is as personal to me as to anybody up here. For some 30 years of my life, I had the opportunity and the privilege of delivering a baby most every day. Certainly, I have just nothing but fond, fond memories in each one of those opportunities to give a baby to a new mom and dad and just see the smiles on their faces and see their lives change forever.

But not everybody was that fortunate, and not everybody is that fortunate, as 10 to 15 percent of Americans have an infertility problem. There are 10 to 15 percent of married couples who struggle to have children, and that is why I worked so hard to have an infertility clinic—a place where people could travel from hundreds of miles to get help with their infertility treatments. Certainly, there were many basic things we could do. We helped thousands of women and have helped them have a baby, but if we weren't successful, the next step was in vitro fertilization. Personally, I am proud that I participated in hundreds of IVF cycles—successful cycles—and delivered many, many, many babies from in vitro fertilization.

The country needs to know that Republicans believe in IVF, that we support it. I have never heard one Republican Senator up here say anything else. I have not heard anyone try to take this down. So I am proud to stand up here today and support Senator BRITT's and Senator CRUZ's bill to protect in vitro fertilization.

We are going to have an opportunity tomorrow on a show bill—we will have a show vote on a show bill. Senator DUCKWORTH's bill on IVF has poison pills that not many Republicans can tolerate.

The first poison pill is it denies freedom of religion, as Senator CRUZ talked about—freedom of religion. The bill we will be voting on tomorrow, as far as I am concerned, is unconstitutional. As a physician—as a Christian physician, as a God-fearing Christian—there are certain things that I will not participate in, but I happen to believe that in vitro fertilization is a gift from God, that God has given us this technology to do good with. And I want to make sure that we apply that. There will be certain hospitals and physicians who don't want to participate in IVF, but the Democrats' bill tomorrow forces that physician and that hospital to participate against their consciences. I think that is a violation of religious freedom.

The second poison pill in that legislation is that the bill's definitions are too broad. They create an unlimited, unfettered right to all reproductive technologies. You would have to assume that that includes cloning and gene editing. Are we ready to go out there and force hospitals and doctors

to participate in cloning and gene editing? I just don't think America is ready for that.

And here is the third issue, the third poison pill that is being ignored: This legislation by Senator DUCKWORTH requires infertility clinics to go right to IVF; that they skip—they can skip all the other easier steps, if you will. I won't bore the rest of the Senate with some of those easier things we could do, but there are many things that you could do for infertility before jumping to IVF. I just don't think that that is good legislation to overregulate that patient-physician relationship.

It is a great honor to come here today. Today, 200 babies were born from in vitro fertilization—200. Let's celebrate those babies. We are the party of pro-family and pro-life. We support protecting in vitro fertilization. I ask this Chamber to come together and celebrate the blessings of in vitro fertilization as opposed to mounting political disinformation campaigns that are disingenuous to the beliefs of so many in our conference.

As I said before, the Republican Party stands as the pro-family party, and nothing embodies this more than welcoming a new baby into loving arms. Standing with these families means offering them encouragement and support in their journeys toward safe and secure in vitro fertilization treatment. Our commitment to protecting life ensures that every family has the chance to experience that joy of parenthood through in vitro fertilization.

Our priority is always to make it easier for families to have babies, not harder. We must understand that there are over 8 million families now for whom IVF has answered their prayers. That is why I am, again, so honored to stand here beside Senators CRUZ and BRITT to champion this pro-family legislation and guarantee access to in vitro fertilization to all Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, here we go again. I rise today in this Chamber as President Biden and his administration enter yet another summer of executive overreach as the administration adds layer after layer of bureaucracy that spells negative consequences for nearly every aspect of American life. Actually, I just had the homebuilders in my office today making this very point—the West Virginia Home Builders Association.

Throughout the President's time in the White House, we haven't really seen much consistency except when it comes to his desire to grow the influence of unelected government bureaucrats or to defy congressional intent or to impose unnecessary rules, regulations, and redtape. These things will forever define his administration, and as of June 7 of this year, the 946 final rules imposed by President Biden have cost the American taxpayer over $1.6 trillion.

So, for President Biden and his administration, I would recommend a brief refresher on the history of the United States and the intent that inspired the Framers of our Constitution.

Our Founding Fathers were quick to recognize that power and authority vested in one body would create devastating costs for the future of our Nation. That was the motivation behind establishing separated powers, of creating a system of checks and balances across three equal branches of government. However, President Biden's advocacy for the growth of the administrative state has put this separation into question. It kind of goes against article I of the Constitution, which states:

> All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States.

Let's just take a few examples that we have seen recently of what I would consider to be outrageous overreach.

No. 1, first—something I have been very vocal about—is the EPA's Clean Power Plan 2.0, which will eliminate coal-powered generation completely, but it will also block new natural gas plants from coming online in the future. Don't ask me how we are going to power the Nation.

This rule from the EPA is meant to put coal and natural gas employees out of work and shutter those baseload power plants once and for all.

Next, we have the final rule from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that imposes burdensome Federal staffing mandates on long-term care facilities.

This is something that could be incredibly harmful to rural States like mine. Now, safety is first in a long-term care facility, but unattainable employee requirements like this one would force many of our rural nursing homes to shut their doors, especially as rural health facilities are facing staffing challenges all across the country.

Then there is the Biden HHS rule that endangers the safety and well-being of unaccompanied migrant children.

Currently, migrant children who enter into the country illegally without an adult are detained and placed in the Unaccompanied Children Program. The HHS rule that I am referring to includes many harmful practices like optional sponsor-vetting. That is the refusal to consider a sponsor's criminal record. So we are going to put children into the care and sponsorship of people, and we are refusing to see if they have criminal records. Think about somebody who has a history of abuse or neglect or somebody who has a drug problem. We wouldn't know. And there are weak standards for post-release home studies to determine a child's status or safety once the child is in the custody of that sponsor.

There are many heartbreaking stories we see with the border crisis, but this exploitation of children is one of the most devastating. I would add we have seen article after article about child labor and child trafficking that is occurring, and the administration is changing a rule to make it less protective of those children.

Over at the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security, they have an interim final rule that targets U.S. businesses that support America's use of their Second Amendment rights. Specifically, it restricts the ability of American firearm—ammunition—and related component manufacturers to obtain a license to export their products for sale.

Aside from the fact that it is unlawful, the interim rule will have a negative impact again on these American manufacturers, their suppliers, and the jobs that they support.

Additionally at the EPA, we saw the coal combustion residuals final rule, also known as coal ash, that imposes retroactive and costly regulations on coal ash management at inactive coal-fired powerplants.

This highlights, yet again, another anti-energy rule from the Biden administration that would throw our power grid into even more uncertainty. The volume of these efforts truly goes to show the broken rulemaking process of this administration. It underscores the President's bureaucratic blunders and his administration's ineffective style of governing.

While each rule may seem unrelated to one another, they strike a common cord. President Biden's administrative state is out of control. They would rather impose harmful regulations—remember, I said 900 of them—that would restrict America's rights and make life more difficult for our families than work with this Congress on pragmatic solutions, and they further escalate the hidden tax generated by these regulations—a tax that often receives too little attention.

The growth of the administrative state has distorted the way that policy and policymaking and lawmaking works right here in Washington, DC. This shifts away from letting Congress legislate; it openly defies the basis on which our country was built; and it takes the power away from the people. When you take the power away from the Representatives, you are taking power away from the people. Remember, the Constitution starts with ''We the People.'' It does not start with ''We the Administration'' or ''Me the President.''

I encourage President Biden and my colleagues in Congress to recognize that.

So, if we look at the summer bucket list, you will see—I talked about all of these—eliminate coal power, check; block new natural gas plants, check; add burdensome Federal staffing mandates on long-term care facilities, check; restrict Second Amendment rights, check.

The President's summer bucket list has been fulfilled already, and we don't even have summer officially here yet.

So while President Biden and his bloated bureaucracy attempt to put major restrictions on American energy, decimate the healthcare workforce for our seniors, tax and spend their way to higher prices, cast our southern border into chaos, and put restrictions on Americans' constitutional rights, Senate Republicans will continue to fight and hold the administration accountable and return authority to the American people on the issues that impact them every single day. That is why we were sent here. That is what we were sent to do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNACCOMPANIED MINOR RULE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am here to inform my colleagues what is wrong with our immigration enforcement involving children.

In April, the Biden administration finalized a rule governing its Unaccompanied Minors Program. They did this over the objections of this Senator and 38 others when we informed the administration in a letter. And we didn't object lightly.

For nearly a decade, my oversight has shown that the Office of Refugee Resettlement—that is ORR for short—has failed to protect unaccompanied minors. Biden's new rule cements ORR's dangerous policies.

Here is just one example of ORR's many failures. This is taken straight from a Justice Department court filing. A sexual predator smuggled a 10-year-old girl. I will call her Mary. That is not her real name. Mary was from Guatemala, smuggled to the United States on false promises of an education.

When she reached the border, ORR officials promised Mary they would find a safe sponsor for her. Then they simply trusted everything to Mary's predator and what that predator said.

Mary's predator lied about being her father. He gave ORR phony documents and phony forms approving Mary's release to his sister, who he claimed was Mary's aunt.

Under Biden's rule, ORR doesn't have to verify a sponsor's proof of identity or even guardianship. It doesn't even fully background-check the sponsor. The ORR rule takes a sponsor's representations at near face value and then puts employees on a 10- or 14-day clock to get kids into the hands of the sponsors as fast as possible.

Then, without even batting an eye, the ORR escorted Mary to her fake aunt in Chicago. There, this 10-year-old girl was stabbed with a kitchen knife, scalded with cooking oil, and repeatedly sexually assaulted by four men.

Mary, you know, thought she was coming to America to have a better life and pursue the American dream. Instead, she was enduring a nightmare. I imagine Mary prayed every night for help. I reckon she spent every day asking God how this happened to her.

It happened because the United States turned a blind eye, and by finalizing this rule, the administration of President Biden is refusing to remove the blindfold.

ORR knows it has a problem. The Justice Department told ORR what happened to Mary.

Last December, I led 38 other Senators in demanding ORR change its policies, but our warning fell on deaf ears. Biden's ORR just finalized a rule with policies that are even worse than those that placed Mary with her abusers. Under these policies, in 2021, ORR sent another little girl to a sexual predator in the State of Kentucky who falsely claimed to be her uncle. ORR accepted fake paperwork and unverified claims. It moves kids to sponsors as if they were nothing more than products on an assembly line. We ought to protect kids from predators.

There is a process that Congress can object to these rules. It is called the Congressional Review Act. It is something that can be done in the U.S Senate with just a majority vote. You don't have to have 60 votes to stop debate because it is limited to 10 hours of debate, and then you vote whatever the majority wants to do.

We have this whole thing of child abuse in the immigration system because we are not adequately vetting the people who bring these kids in or where they are assigned. It is very clear that child abuse of this type is not a Democrat or a Republican issue. Under the Congressional Review Act process, I am glad to have the support of Senator MANCHIN and 43 other Senators on my resolution to overturn the Biden administration's awful ORR rule. I hope to see more of my colleagues support this effort. I hope to get it to a vote and ask for their support.

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

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

TAILPIPE EMISSIONS AND EV MANDATE

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, I rise today to join my colleagues in condemning the Biden administration's continuous overreach. Specifically, today we are talking about the EPA's delusional tailpipe emissions regulations. They are effectively an EV mandate.

This delusional rule would require up to two-thirds of all new cars being sold in 2032 to be electric vehicles. I don't have anything against electric vehicles—they are cool to drive—but the Federal Government shouldn't be picking winners and losers in the marketplace. The free market and consumers should drive American innovation, not mandates from the Biden administration. That is why I have introduced Congressional Review Act legislation, along with Senator SULLIVAN, to overturn Biden's EV mandate.

There are a lot of reasons an EV mandate just isn't feasible. My first concern is the cost to consumers.

At an event I held last year bringing experts from across the country to Nebraska to talk about what these mandates would mean, one of our experts from Harvard and the Breakthrough Institute told us that auto ownership is the most critical tool for people getting out of poverty. Certainly in a State like Nebraska, that is true. It is the ticket to being able to get to a job. Yet buying and maintaining an electric vehicle is unaffordable to our low-income families.

The average low-income family spends $12,000 on a vehicle. An EV costs $53,000. A $7,500 tax credit is not going to get you anywhere. It is an unacceptable burden and barrier to our low-income families to be able to get that car so they can get to work.

The second problem is that Biden administration officials have admitted they have no idea how they are going to be able to accomplish their goal. One person I talked to said they are going to run into two big problems: math and physics. They have no idea how they are going to be able to generate and transmit the power needed to be able to charge all these cars.

In fact, on the one hand, while they are trying to get us to use more electric vehicles and have those be charged, on the other hand, the Biden administration is passing rules that are attacking American energy. They are passing regulations for our power-generating plants that, for example, would require 78 percent of coal-generation plants to shut down between 2028 and 2040.

They are blocking the mining of critical minerals as well that we need to build the batteries—so Ambler Road, for example, in Alaska, where there is one of our major copper mine deposits, or think about all the lithium mine resources we have in this country. They are blocking our ability to get the resources and therefore are going to make us dependent on China, which processes between 60 to 80 percent of all these critical and rare earth elements that we need to be able to build these batteries.

There are also limitations on the technology that goes along with electric vehicles. It just doesn't make it feasible in States like Nebraska. For example, EVs are not reliable in cold weather. According to the AAA, when

the temperature drops below 20 degrees, EVs' driving range can be reduced by as much as 41 percent.

Nebraskans tell me they feel like Washington, DC, bureaucrats have no idea how their policies will affect them in the middle part of the country. Of our 147 communities in Nebraska, designated cities, 99 do not have chargers. In fact, if you are in places like Valentine or Bloomfield or Alliance, you are 45 minutes away from the nearest charging station. If we are going to set national standards, those standards need to work in every State.

I promised my constituents I would fight these delusional mandates with every tool I have. My Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval would overturn Biden's EV mandate. It is a bipartisan effort that has the support of 48 of my colleagues. In the coming months, every Member of this body will have the opportunity to join in this commonsense effort.

Anyone who votes against these will have to explain to their constituents why they don't want our low-income families to be able to get a job by buying a car or why they don't want folks in rural areas to be able to get to work.

I am confident that our CRA will earn bipartisan majorities in the House and Senate so we can send it to President Biden's desk. I want to thank all of my colleagues who have joined in this effort.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

ENERGY REGULATION

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I join my colleagues today to discuss the Biden administration's onslaught of energy regulations that will make electricity more expensive and less reliable for homes and businesses across the country.

In April, the Environmental Protection Agency finalized four new regulations specifically targeting our coal-fired electric powerplants—certainly the coal-fired powerplants in my State of North Dakota—including an expensive, unachievable new mercury and air toxics standards, or MATS, rule, despite the EPA's own regulatory analysis—their own regulatory analysis—stating that the previous rule was adequately protecting public health; the Clean Power Plan 2.0—so-called Clean Power Plan 2.0—requiring existing coal-fired and new gas-fired plants to reduce CO_2 emissions by 90 percent when the technology is not yet commercially viable. They can't do it. That just puts them out of business, meaning less baseload electricity.

And also they put forth a new coal ash management rule and water discharge rule, imposing costly, unachievable requirements on power generators, all at a time when we need more electricity.

Now, the Biden administration's regulatory blizzard comes at a time when the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, or NERC, continues to raise concerns about elevated risks of blackouts and brownouts.

The Presiding Officer comes from a State where you know how important it is, in these really hot days—100-plus degrees—that we have power to power people's air-conditioning. It can be a life-threatening situation if we don't.

Further, multiple independent grid operators are warning that EPA's power sector rules will further threaten reliability. We need this baseload for reliability of the grid nationwide. That includes the Southwest Power Pool, which covers part of my State of North Dakota, which stated that it, meaning the Southwest Power Pool, ''remains concerned . . . about the impact the Final Rule''—the findings of these final rules—''may have on the region's ability to maintain resource adequacy and ensure reliability.''

Again, this is about that baseload electricity that we need for stability and reliability of the entire grid nationwide.

The PJM Interconnection, which serves 65 million Americans, noted that ''the Final Rule may work to drive premature retirement of coal units that provide essential reliability services and dissuade new gas resources from coming online.'' Again, less power when we need more.

ERCOT, covering Texas, stated that EPA's rule poses an unacceptable risk to the reliability of the ERCOT system.

So, in all cases, these are examples where, across the country, the very institutions required to make sure that that grid is stable, the baseload power is there on the hottest day or the coldest day for reliability, they are sounding the warnings—very clear. They are sounding the warnings.

These regulations will drive up the cost of operations and force powerplants to prematurely close. This approach is in direct conflict with our Nation's energy reality. We need more energy, not less. Multiple forecasts show that electricity demand is projected to rise in the coming years as much as 27 percent in some parts of the country. Fast-growing areas, again, like the Presiding Officer's State, probably are going to see that 27 percent and maybe more as a function not only of growth but the fact that we are using more electricity in so many ways.

Much of the demand is coming from things like data centers, for example, that support cloud computing and artificial intelligence. Dispatchable resources like coal, gas, and nuclear powerplants remain critically important to meet demand, precisely because of their ability to operate regardless of weather conditions.

That is why, in North Dakota, we have been working for over a decade to crack the code on carbon capture technologies, allowing us to continue leveraging over 700 years of fuel supply in the form of coal supplies with the best environmental stewardship. We have worked to bring regulatory certainty, and, as a result, our State became the first one to be granted regulatory primacy for class VI wells to ensure that CO_2 is safely and securely stored below the surface. Wyoming and Louisiana are the only other States in the Nation that also have this authority.

We also recently secured $350 million in a demonstration grant from the Department of Energy to advance Project Tundra, which will enable the coal-fired Milton R. Young facility to capture and store 4 million metric tons of CO_2 per year.

We also have proven that we can lead the way in preducing SO_X, NO_X—sulfur oxides, nitrous oxides—and mercury emissions, and now we are working to lead the way forward on CO_2.

However, the Biden administration's regulations are adding these costly regulatory burdens at the very time we are working to deploy these new technologies. So think about it. Think about it. We are deploying these new technologies to produce more energy more reliably, baseload electricity that will stabilize the grid; and we are putting new technologies on that will enhance our ability to reduce emissions—not only SO_X, NO_X, and mercury, but CO_2 as well. But the regulations the administration is bringing forward are going to impede our ability to do exactly that: produce more energy more cost-effectively, more dependably—right—with better environmental standards.

And that means not only deploying those technologies here, but then other places around the world will follow our lead on this. I mean, that is the solution, and it is being impeded by these regulations that go so far that they prevent the industry from deploying the new technology. That makes no sense. That is not common sense. That is not the way to solve a problem.

So, again, Congress needs to push back against the EPA's regulations that go too far, undermining the reliability and affordability of the grid.

I am working with 12 of my Senate colleagues on a congressional review resolution of disapproval to overturn the MATS rules, and we will have CRAs to overturn other of these rules as well. For example, Senator CAPITO is leading the effort to overturn the Clean Power Plan 2.0 rule, and Senator MULLIN has also got a CRA to overturn the EPA's coal ash rule.

Our Nation is a global energy powerhouse. We have vast resources with its coal, oil, natural gas—many different sources, many different types of energy. We need to use them all. And we have the best environmental standards in the world. We lead in terms of those technologies and, again, environmental standards. It only makes sense, for all those reasons as well as national security reasons, to produce that energy here at home rather than forfeit that energy production to other parts of the world that pose either a security threat to us or, at the same time,

produce energy with vastly inferior environmental standards. Again, common sense.

Blackouts and brownouts are simply unacceptable in an energy-rich nation such as ours. And, again, it is about global competitiveness. Almost everything we do requires energy. If we are going to compete in a global economy, we need low-cost, dependable energy so that we can outcompete the rest of the world.

Instead of overregulation and Green New Deal-style mandates, we need to take the handcuffs off our energy producers, and we need to allow American ingenuity to continue to do what they can do better than anyone else in the world: produce more energy more cost-effectively, more dependably, with the best environmental standards. That is the right approach—not an approach of overregulation that handcuffs our energy producers.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

REMEMBERING PATRICK GOTTSCH

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of a great Nebraskan and great American, Patrick Gottsch.

Growing up on his family farm in Elkhorn, NE, Patrick learned to love rural America and the Western lifestyle. His father grew corn and had a cattle feedlot. After college, he worked as a commodities broker for 5 years in Chicago and in Omaha.

On the day his daughter was born, Patrick came down the hill from the hospital and saw a guy trying to put a satellite dish together. He decided to help. After 6 hours of work, the dish was installed, and Patrick was hooked on satellite television.

Patrick then started E.T. Installations, which was a pioneer in the home satellite industry. During this time, Patrick first began exploring the idea of a TV channel devoted to the issues and interests of rural America, but at that moment, it was only a dream. Patrick worked hard making that dream a reality.

In 1991, Patrick moved to Texas. He worked as the director of sales for Superior Livestock Auction, which pioneered satellite marketing in the livestock industry. Because of Patrick's innovations, Superior Livestock became the largest livestock auction enterprise in the country.

In 2000, Patrick decided to take a leap of faith. He committed full time to the task of creating a 24-hour TV network for rural America. He called his company Rural Media Group.

Patrick Gottsch's dream was becoming a reality. Rural Free Delivery Television, RFD-TV, launched with DISH Network in September of 2000. Distribution quickly increased. Today, RFD-TV is available in more than 50 million homes nationwide.

Patrick's Rural Media Group continued to expand, adding RFD The Magazine, RFD HD, Rural TV, Rural Radio, and the RFD-TV Now app.

In 2017, Patrick launched the Cowboy Channel, the first 24-hour network devoted entirely to Western sports like rodeo. The Cowboy Channel is now the official network of ProRodeo, bringing the talents of world-class cowboys and cowgirls to people all over the world.

In addition, Patrick last year launched the Cowgirl Channel, dedicated exclusively to women in Western sports and the modern-day cowgirl.

Patrick Gottsch loved rural America. He loved its people, its values, and its lifestyle. His visionary leadership brought the best of rural America to tens of millions of homes around the world. He reconnected the city and the country. His contributions to broadcasting, ranching, rodeo, and business will long be remembered.

My wife Susanne and I send our condolences to Patrick's beloved wife Angie; his three daughters, Raquel, Gatsby, and Rose; and his grandchildren.

I am grateful to Senator HYDE-SMITH for leading the resolution to honor Patrick Gottsch's life and legacy.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, I also rise today to honor the life and legacy of my friend Patrick Gottsch, the founder and president of Rural Media Group, who passed away May 18.

Mr. Gottsch was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and friend who dedicated his life to supporting and promoting rural America through television.

Patrick was born on June 3, 1953, in Elkhorn, NE, and raised on his family's farm and cattle operation. From a young age, he learned the value of hard work, perseverance, and the unique value that rural communities bring to our Nation.

Having worked as a commodity broker on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, in home satellite sales, and as director of sales for the Superior Livestock Auction, he founded Rural Free Delivery Television, RFD-TV, in 2000. And it is on my TV every day.

Rural Media Group grew to additionally consist of many other things, including the Cowboy Channel—one of our very favorite—giving rural America the visibility it lacked through traditional media outlets.

Rural America owes much to Patrick's innovation and his tenacity. Not many people have the ability to articulate and describe the true essence of how special life in rural America is like Patrick did. Rural communities are the heartbeat of our Nation, often overlooked but essential to our Nation's survival and prosperity.

Patrick gave rural America a voice. In an increasingly urbanized world, Patrick reminded us of the value of rural America. He advocated for the 2 percent of Americans who feed the other 98 percent. He reminded Americans that our clothes and food don't magically grow on shelves at the store.

We honor Patrick Gottsch for his unprecedented work to promote the American rural way of life that my family and I get to enjoy every single day. He was truly a great ambassador for rural America, and I know he would want us to continue to tell the story to the entire world.

I offer my deepest condolences to the Gottsch family during this time, and I will strive to honor Patrick's legacy by stressing the continued need for access for rural and agricultural media and programming for all Americans. May Patrick's determination, love for rural America, and persistence in telling the great story of rural America never be forgotten.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3696

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise today in the Senate to pass the DEFIANCE Act, a bipartisan bill that provides a remedy for victims of nonconsensual sexual exploitation deepfakes.

I want to thank the Senate cosponsors of this legislation. They include my ranking Republican Member, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, as well as Senators KLOBUCHAR, HAWLEY, KING, and LEE. This bill is truly bipartisan.

I have been proud to partner with New York Congresswoman ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, who introduced this legislation in the House of Representatives with four Republican and four Democratic cosponsors. As you can see, in both the Senate and the House, this is a bipartisan measure. When I describe it, you will understand.

Sadly, Congresswoman OCASIO-CORTEZ, herself, is a victim of what is known as explicit deepfakes. I commend her for her work and courage to create tools for victims in the fight against this despicable conduct.

The spread of these deplorable deepfakes is like a fire burning out of control. What used to take extraordinary technological expertise and a lot of time can now be done with the push of a button. Countless apps can swap someone's face onto another person's body or can digitally remove someone's clothing. These apps are often advertised as harmless entertainment. But when explicit images are produced and shared without the consent of the person depicted, the harm is very real. The exploitation of young children, the exploitation of women is really the price that is being paid for this.

Imagine losing control over your own likeness and identity. Imagine how powerless victims feel when they cannot remove the illicit content, cannot prevent it from being reproduced, cannot prevent new images from being created. The negative consequences to the victims can be profound. Victims may draw into silence themselves by withdrawing from online spaces and public

discourse as a protective measure. They may endure threats to their employment, education, or reputation; or suffer additional criminal activity, such as extortion and stalking. Some experience depression, anxiety, and fear of being in public. And in the worst-case scenario, victims are driven to suicide.

Representative OCASIO-CORTEZ recently described her own reaction to being depicted in sexual deepfakes without her consent. She said: ''There's a shock to seeing images of yourself that someone could think are real.'' She described how it resurfaced trauma and haunts her thoughts. Once deepfakes are seen, they cannot be unseen. As she put it, ''deepfakes are . . . a way of digitizing violent humiliation against other people.''

Prominent women are often the target of nonconsensual sexually explicit deepfakes—singers, actors, politicians alike. You cannot escape the conclusion that these images are intended to diminish and shame women.

But, sadly, the victims can be anyone. There are many distressing reports this year of middle schools and high schools struggling to respond to the spread of sexually explicit deepfakes of students.

In March of this year, at least 22 students at the Richmond-Burton High School, in McHenry County, in my home State of Illinois, learned they were depicted in deepfakes circulating online. One of the images was a doctored version of a photo of two female students taken at the school prom. The perpetrator digitally removed their clothes to make it appear they were unclothed. The prom is supposed to be a joyous rite of passage for teenagers, a happy memory they keep for the rest of their lives. Now that memory has been stolen from these two young women.

Sadly, we are seeing an explosion of images like these. One researcher found that the number of nonconsensual pornographic deepfake videos available online has increased ninefold in the last 5 years. Such videos have been viewed almost 4 billion times—4 billion times.

Monthly traffic to the top 20 deepfake sites increased by 285 percent from July 2020 to July 2023, and search engines directed 25.2 million visits to the top five most popular deepfake sites in July 2023 alone.

Tragically, under the law now, the victims have no legal remedy. Time and again, victims are told nothing can be done to help them because existing laws simply do not apply to deepfakes. This is not just a gap in the law. It is an omission that shows a blatant disregard for the trauma to children, women, and girls who are victimized by this crime.

But this DEFIANCE Act will change that. It will give the victims a day in court. Once this bill is signed into law, victims finally will have the ability to hold civilly liable those who produce, disclose, solicit, or possess sexually explicit deepfakes while knowingly or recklessly disregarding that the person depicted did not consent to the conduct.

I am proud to have collaborated with survivor advocates on this bill. Their lived experience and leadership have shaped this bill. This bill was carefully crafted to comply with the First Amendment.

As the Center for Democracy and Technology wrote in their letter endorsing the bill, it is constitutional because it addresses ''a uniquely compelling problem with a narrowly-tailored solution.''

In addition to the CDT, the DEFIANCE Act is supported by the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, the Sexual Violence Prevention Association, the National Women's Law Center, My Image My Choice, PACT, Rights4Girls, and many others.

Congress has waited too long to act. Can you imagine, in your own family, if it was your wife, your daughter, your niece, or some young woman that you love who was exploited this way, who had to see these images and try to erase them from their minds, who realize that they have no power now under the law, no power to protect themselves? They are helplessly exploited and their lives have been changed for the worse.

We waited far too long to act. This is a bipartisan measure in both the House and the Senate. It is past time to give victims of nonconsensual sexual exploitation and explicit deepfakes the tools they need to fight back.

Madam President, notwithstanding rule XXII, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 3696, the Disrupt Explicit Forged Images And Non-Consensual Edits Act of 2024, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask consent that the Durbin-Grassley substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Ms. LUMMIS. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I strongly support the intent behind this legislation. We must combat the deeply harmful practice of nonconsensual deepfake pornography. It is as serious as the gentleman from Illinois just described.

But I am troubled that this bill, as currently drafted, is overly broad in scope. The expansive definitions and wide net of liability in this bill could lead to unintended consequences that stifle American technological innovation and development.

By extending liability to third-party platforms that may unknowingly host this illicit content, I worry this bill places an untenable burden on online services to constantly police user-generated posts. Even platforms making good-faith efforts to remove illegal deepfakes could become inundated with frivolous litigation.

A more prudent approach would be to tailor legislation to focus on publishers and knowing distributors. And such legislation exists. It is the Cruz-Klobuchar bill. We must ensure that, in our noble efforts to prevent abuse, we do not inadvertently impose overbroad restrictions and spur excessive lawsuits that would chill the development of American emerging technologies.

I stand ready to work with my colleagues to find this crucial balance.

For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I am disappointed, seriously disappointed. When we talk about these young women and young children being exploited and have bipartisan legislation before both the House and Senate to deal with it, it is important that it be characterized properly.

First, there is no liability under this proposed law for tech platforms, despite what the Senator from Wyoming said.

And, secondly, the idea that the people would suffer with civil liability here, when they didn't know what was going on—listen to the language of this bill: The victims have the ability to hold civilly liable those who produce, disclose, solicit, possess sexually explicit deepfakes while knowingly—while knowingly—or recklessly disregarding that the person depicted did not consent to the conduct.

The two major issues raised by the Senator from Wyoming are both addressed in this bipartisan measure.

There are people who will shake their heads and say: Can't the Senate even address this issue of the sexual exploitation of children and young girls and attempts to ruin their lives? Can't they even agree on a bipartisan basis to come up with an answer?

We did. We have a bill that does it, and it has been stopped.

We are not going to stop our efforts, Madam President. This is a cause worth fighting for, and we are going to really appeal to those across America who believe as we do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 359

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, for more than a year, the Supreme Court has been embroiled in an ethical crisis of its own design. Story after story about ethical misconduct by sitting Supreme Court Justices has led the news for months.

For decades, however, Justice Clarence Thomas has accepted lavish gifts and luxury trips from a gaggle of fawning billionaires. The total dollar value of these gifts is in the millions—one

Supreme Court Justice, millions of dollars' worth of gifts.

Justice Alito, as well, went on a luxury fishing trip that should have cost him over $100,000, but it didn't cost him a dime because the trip was funded by a billionaire and organized by right-wing kingpin Leonard Leo.

Well, Justice Thomas and Justice Alito failed to disclose gifts they accepted in clear violation of financial disclosure requirements under Federal law.

But it isn't only the shameless conduct that cast a dark shadow over the Court. Time and again, these Justices' actions have cast doubt on their impartiality on cases before the Court.

Last summer, Justice Alito sat for an interview conducted in part by an attorney with a case before the Court. In that interview, Justice Alito went so far as to publicly state that Congress has no authority to regulate the Supreme Court. By doing so, he made it clear that he had already reached a conclusion about the constitutionality of legislation that Congress was considering on the issue—legislation that is before this body today and that could someday come before the Court.

More recently, we learned that flags that were associated with the January 6 insurrection and the far right were displayed outside Justice Alito's home. This happened even as the Court considered cases related to the 2020 Presidential election and the insurrectionist attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Justice Thomas also continues to hear cases related to the January 6 attacks despite his wife's involvement with efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

For years, Justice Thomas served as a fundraising draw at the Koch political network's annual summits. This is the same network that bankrolled another case currently before the Court.

Federal law requires the disqualification of a Supreme Court Justice in any proceeding in which the Justice's impartiality might reasonably be questioned, and the Supreme Court's own code of conduct reiterates that Justices should disqualify themselves in cases where there is reasonable doubt about their impartiality. But despite serious questions about the impartiality of Justice Alito and Justice Thomas in numerous cases, they have refused to recuse themselves from these cases.

The ethics crisis at the Supreme Court, the highest Court in the land, is unacceptable, it is unsustainable, and it is unworthy of the highest Court in the land.

Our faith in the character and impartiality of our judges is essential to the functioning of our legal system and our constitutional form of government, but that faith requires judges—especially Supreme Court Justices—to conduct themselves in a way that inspires public confidence. The Justices should serve as models for every other judge in America. Instead, they are serving as prime examples for why a binding code of conduct is desperately needed for the Supreme Court.

The ethics crisis at the Court stems in large part from the fact that the nine Justices on the Court are the only Federal officials not bound by an enforceable code of conduct—the only Federal officials not bound by an enforceable code of conduct.

More than 12 years ago, I first asked Chief Justice Roberts to adopt a binding code of conduct for all Supreme Court Justices. In November of last year, for the first time in its 235-year history, the Supreme Court adopted an ineffective code of conduct for its Justices. The new code does not reform the Court's ethics rules in any meaningful way, and it does not include an enforcement mechanism to address violations of the code.

As the Court conceded in a statement accompanying the code of conduct's release, the code ''largely represents a codification of principles that we have long regarded as governing our conduct.'' In other words, this so-called new code did not raise the ethical standards to which the Justices would be held; it simply tried to paper over the failed practices of the past.

The Court can address these issues itself. The Court could have issued a stronger code of conduct in the first place. It could revise its own code of conduct today. But Chief Justice Roberts repeatedly refuses to use his authority and power to implement a binding code of conduct for the Supreme Court, and until he does, Congress will continue our legislative efforts.

Last year, the Judiciary Committee, which I chair, reported to the Senate floor the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act. The bill, which was led by Senator WHITEHOUSE, who is on the floor, and which I am cosponsoring, would require the Supreme Court to adopt an enforceable code of conduct and add new recusal and transparency requirements that would be binding on the Justices. It would be a real code of conduct. Importantly, this legislation's ethical and recusal requirements would apply equally to every Justice on the Supreme Court regardless of the party of the President who appointed them.

This should not be a partisan issue. An enforceable code of conduct would be a good thing for the Court and for our country. It is essential to ensuring that the American people have confidence in the ethical conduct of the Supreme Court, and it is essential to restoring the Court's reputation.

The highest Court in the land should not and cannot have the lowest ethical standards. That is why I support this legislation and why I urge my colleagues to join me.

Madam President, notwithstanding rule XXII and as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 199, S. 359, the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act of 2023. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, reserving the right to object, let's be clear—this is not about improving the Court; this is about undermining the Court.

We have three branches of government here. We have the legislative, executive, and judicial branch. This would be an unconstitutional overreach. This would undermine the Court's ability to operate effectively. And it has been a continued effort by our friends on the Democratic side to undermine a Court they don't like.

Here is what the Supreme Court has done: In April of 2023, all nine Justices signed a statement on ethics, principles, and practices specifying the ethics, principles, and practices they follow. In March of 2023, the Committee on Financial Disclosures formally amended the personal hospitality regulations in a manner that now requires more complete disclosure. In November of 2023, all nine Justices promulgated a code of conduct.

The Court is taking these problems seriously. The question is, What are we up to here? We are trying not to empower the Court or reform the Court; we are trying to attack it right at the end of the term.

I remember very well when the majority leader, Senator SCHUMER, went to the Court and said, right in front of the Court itself:

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

This is really about the way the Court decides cases that our colleagues on the other side really don't like.

So all I would say is that there are provisions in this bill that should bother anybody that cares about an independent judiciary.

Judicial investigative panels in section 2 of this bill are made up of lower court judges who would actually preside over their bosses. There is one Supreme Court here. It is unnerving to have a group of lower court judges basically handing an investigative panel the ability to investigate the Supreme Court—the constitutionally designated Supreme Court.

Recusal—that has been up to the individual Justices since the Court's founding. This bill would create a panel of judges to decide when a Supreme Court Justice should be recused. Again, that just puts the Court in, I think, disarray and fundamentally assaults the one Supreme Court we have.

All I can say is that section 7, where you have to have disclosures of amicus

briefs, would make it very hard for certain people to register their opinions about a particular matter before the Court because they could get destroyed by the media, they could get destroyed by special interest groups, and I think that chills out the ability of people to petition the Court apart from politics.

So my hope is that not only will we stop this exercise now, we will stop it forever.

With that said, I withhold my objection at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, reserving the right to object and with all the respect I can muster for Senator DURBIN—and I mean that, DICK—I do not believe that most of my colleagues think this bill is about ethics. This bill is about abortion.

In June of 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the Dobbs case. It returned the issue of abortion to the American people through their States.

While the Supreme Court was deliberating that case, my colleague and my friend Senator SCHUMER went over to the Supreme Court and on the steps of the Supreme Court building—I was there; I remember it like it was yesterday—this is what Senator SCHUMER said:

I want to tell you, Gorsuch; I want to tell you, Kavanaugh—

Not ''Justice Gorsuch.'' Not ''Justice Kavanaugh.''

I want to tell you, Gorsuch; I want to tell you, Kavanaugh: You have released the whirlwind, and you will pay the price. You won't know what hit you—

Senator SCHUMER said—

if you go forward with these awful decisions.

What we are seeing today with this legislation, in my opinion but most Senators agree with me, is part of the promised whirlwind. And I do not believe that we should try to undermine the integrity of the institution of the Supreme Court of the United States because we are unhappy with one of its opinions.

I will withhold my objection at this time to allow my friend Senator LEE to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, the United States of America has benefited for nearly 2½ centuries from having one of the world's best, most objective judicial systems in the entire world. While no system run by fallible, mortal human beings can be described as perfect, ours is as good a system as has ever existed in the world and certainly as good as any that exists in the world today. But the capstone of that is an entity that exists by virtue, by operation of the Constitution—the Supreme Court of the United States.

This solution—a solution that is being rammed through today—this is a solution in search of a problem that would itself create another problem for which there would be no solution. That problem would, in turn, turn one of our greatest strengths—an independent, functioning judicial system, one that has preserved the rule of law in this country for nearly 2½ centuries—into something, a more political animal. It is not what we wanted. It is not what the Constitution contemplates. It is not what we benefited from.

And why? We must ask the question why. Is there any great moral offense that has been committed? No. Is there any grave violation of law that has been committed? No. Is there any violation of law that has been committed at all? No, there is not.

What we have here is something very, very cynical, and what we have is that people on the left have a couple of cases currently pending before the Supreme Court of the United States—cases that they are worried about the outcome, cases in which they are worried that certain Justices might rule against them. And they have some Justices they don't like. They have some Justices that they worry are going to reject the bad arguments that they have made in those cases. So rather than double down on making sure that their arguments are good and that they are persuasive and recognizing that they are not going to win all cases, they are threatening, they are intimidating the Justices.

They are making—it is not just a mountain out of a molehill; they are making a mountain out of nothing. They are doing this specifically to harass, threaten, and intimidate certain members of the Supreme Court in order to influence the outcome of pending litigation. Make no mistake, that is what is going on here. They are trying to trigger more recusals—recusals of those Justices they don't like.

The legislation they are offering would create more problems in this, would make it easier for them to trigger more recusals.

This is not a good outcome. This is a political effort to influence the resolution of pending litigation before the Supreme Court of the United States and to threaten Justices that don't toe the woke line.

I withhold my objection at this moment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I just want to briefly summarize the arguments that my able colleagues on this side of the aisle have made.

An independent judiciary is the crown jewels of our democracy. What do I mean by that? We have the political branches of government.

We have got the White House, popularly elected President through the electoral college. We have got individual Senators elected by various States. And then we have got the House of Representatives. Those are all political bodies.

The judiciary, created by the Constitution—the Supreme Court specifically—was designed to be a check on the abuses of power by the political branches of government and to hold up the Constitution as a supreme law of the land. That was Marbury versus Madison by Chief Justice Marshall in 1804, I believe.

So the Constitution is the supreme law of the land. It is not the political branches. And I think in recent years, we have seen every institution in Washington, DC, corrupted in one way or the other by the politicalization of previously revered institutions. And I am talking specifically about the FBI and the use of an opposition research by a Presidential candidate against a successful Presidential candidate, President Trump, and then the FBI director saying his mission in life was to see a special counsel appointed, which it was for 2 years—Robert Mueller, who found no basis upon which to bring any charges.

Unfortunately, the American people feel like there is a two-tiered system of justice in this country. And that justice system, which has been the crown jewel of our system, has been corrupted by politics. And now our colleagues want to use that same corruption by politics of the independent judiciary and the Supreme Court of the United States.

That may not be their intention. Maybe it is. They want the Supreme Court to become subservient to the Congress, which is anathema to the constitutional order created by the Framers.

This effort lays bare an effort by our Democratic colleagues to control an entire branch of government. There have been bills filed by the Senator from Massachusetts and others to pack the Supreme Court. Fortunately, they haven't gone anywhere. But as our colleague knows and admitted yesterday, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, this is nothing but a political exercise, and it needs to end now.

For these reasons, I would oppose this legislation and withhold my objection so the distinguished ranking member from the Judiciary Committee can speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mr. GRAHAM. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, before yielding to the Senator from Rhode Island, one of the critics of this proposal said it was a solution in search of a problem. The Republican side of the aisle believes, obviously, that for one Supreme Court Justice to accept lavish gifts and luxury trips from billionaires to the tune of millions of dollars and for another Supreme Court Justice to take an undisclosed fishing trip at the cost of

$100,000 is business as usual in the Supreme Court. The American people, I am sure, would disagree.

I yield the floor.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

One last thing, I ask unanimous consent that the confirmation vote on the Chang nomination be at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, June 13; further, that following disposition of the Chang nomination, the Senate resume legislative session; that the cloture motion with respect to the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 413, S. 4445, ripen at 1:45 p.m.; and that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 359—CONTINUED

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, first, let me thank the chairman of our committee for attempting to bring this bill to the floor and to get us on it. Even though the Republicans have objected to Supreme Court ethics, it is important for us to continue to make the effort because the American people understand that there is something gone very wrong at the Supreme Court.

The objections that we just heard amounted to a long excursion through a great variety of topics: through abortion; through past FBI investigations; through allegations about a two-tiered system of justice; through wokeness; through things we all agree on, like separation of powers and an independent judiciary. I think it would be helpful to actually come into focus on what we are actually talking about here because most of what was said in opposition to this bill is completely irrelevant to what we are seeking to achieve.

We all accept the doctrine of separation of powers. Senator BLUMENTHAL, who is here, is an expert in the subject. He has argued more cases in the Supreme Court than any other Senator. To be clear, our bill does not make the Supreme Court subservient to Congress in any respect. The bill obliges the judicial branch of government to create its own ethics enforcement mechanism that will be run within the judicial branch of government by the judicial branch of government. There simply is not a separation of powers concern when the judicial branch of government runs an ethics program for the judicial branch of government that is administered within the judicial branch of government. It just ain't so.

The existing state of affairs is that the ethics requirements that apply to the Justices of the Supreme Court, first, related to recusal and, second, related to disclosure of gifts are laws passed by Congress.

And the enforcement, particularly of the disclosure requirements, is done by the Judicial Conference. The Judicial Conference is a body established by Congress.

When Harlan Crow first started giving free yacht and jet travel secretly to Clarence Thomas, that question was taken up by the Judicial Conference a decade ago.

Did the Justices complain that the Judicial Conference was investigating Justice Thomas and his disclosures? No, of course not, because the argument would make no sense. So to hear it here on the Senate floor is a bit disappointing. Right now, the Judicial Conference investigates and can sanction or refer for further investigation Justices of the Supreme Court.

We are trying to fix three really simple problems: One is factfinding. Factfinding ought not to be an issue in dispute. Every member of government in the United States who is subject to any kind of supervision or ethics requirement—which is everybody—had a process whereby the actual facts are found of what went wrong. Hell, even the President of the United States had to sit for a factfinding interview about the documents in his garage. It is only nine people in the entirety of the U.S. Government who think that they have no obligation to do any factfinding. And that is pretty dangerous because we just saw Justice Alito offer facts, a description, about what went on behind his family flying MAGA battle flags over their houses that has been proven false by information that is incontestable. Police reports with dates show that he got the order of things wrong. COVID showed that it couldn't possibly have been a schoolbus stop.

So you have erroneous facts offered by Supreme Court Justices with no method to review them. Or they completely ignore the facts. Justice Thomas has refused to ever say a word about what he knew about his wife's engagement in the insurrection while he was adjudicating the rights of those investigating the insurrection.

There is nobody else in the world where somebody doesn't come in and say: Sir, we have a complaint about your conduct, and we are going to need to take a statement from you. This won't take long. I am going to ask you some questions. You will give your answers. At the end, we will ask you to review and sign your statement.

Nothing difficult about that. Nothing against the separation of powers about that. Nothing that Chief Justice Roberts couldn't require right now about that. He could have Supreme Court staff attorneys conduct exactly that kind of work right now, as the chairman has repeatedly pointed out.

Factfinding is a really basic elemental proposition of our American judicial process, and it applies everywhere. It makes no sense for the body ultimately responsible for policing proper judicial process in the United States to not allow itself to participate in that most elemental and fundamental task of there being actual factfinding.

The second is a principle so old it is in Latin, for Pete's sake: ''Nemo iudex in causa sua''; no one should judge their own case. That is pretty easy to understand. And yet we let these Justices alone in the United States—nobody else—get to be the judges of their own ethics. And, obviously, they have failed to measure up.

And the third issue is transparency, disclosure. We know perfectly well that the Justices have failed at their disclosure obligations, and they can't keep their stories straight about meeting their disclosure obligations.

We just had Justice Thomas go back into his previous disclosures to correct them and tell the world and the Judicial Conference, which was reviewing this, that his failure to file was an accidental error. It was ''inadvertent.'' But earlier he had said about the same gift from the same billionaire: Oh, those don't have to be reported. That was personal hospitality from a dear friend.

Well, which is it? Is it personal hospitality that doesn't have to be reported? Or is it something that you knew perfectly well you should have reported, and now you are going back and cleaning up an error that you are claiming is inadvertent?

The disclosure mistakes are inexcusable on their face. Federal officials who commit far less in the way of disclosure mistakes have actually been prosecuted as felons, as misdemeanants, under the criminal law for those similar disclosure violations.

So we need to get this right. All it requires is factfinding and an independent voice so it is not nemo iudex. You are not judging your own cause. Those are really basic principles. That is all we are trying to do.

It would be done by judges within the judiciary. There is no separation of powers issue. That is a complete canard.

And I will close by saying that the Judicial Conference has been helping us in all of this. The Judicial Conference has just blown up Justice Scalia's trick, which was to solicit through intermediaries free vacations from resort owners, and then when the resort owner invited him with a personal invitation, he would pretend that that was personal hospitality because it was a personal invitation, even if he had never met the resort owner. That is a preposterous reading of the personal hospitality exemption. And it is not just me saying that. The judges of the Judicial Conference said: You are right. That is preposterous. That is ridiculous. We are clarifying the rule that that is not acceptable.

And he had done it 60 times. He was a vacation-taking fiend. My Lord.

So the idea that you can trust a Supreme Court Justice, with no independent review, no factfinding, each the judge in his own cause, to follow the rules has been blown to smithereens by the conduct of the Supreme Court Justices themselves. As our chairman is fond of saying: This is a crisis in ethics at the Supreme Court

that the Supreme Court itself has created. It is a crisis in ethics of the Supreme Court that Justice Roberts himself at the Judicial Conference can solve.

But if they are not going to do it, we are going to do what we did before when we set up the Judicial Conference, when we set up the recusal laws, when we set up the disclosure laws. Set up the system, and let the judiciary enforce it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues Senator DURBIN and Senator WHITEHOUSE. I have been proud to be part of their team in working for the most minimal kind of ethical standards for the highest Court in the land. Right now, that Court has no enforceable code of conduct, unlike any other court in the Federal system, unlike any other branch of government. It is so elemental as a matter of simple ethical conduct and appearance.

The Supreme Court has squandered its almost mystical authority, its unique power in the Federal Government. In a sense, that power was not envisioned by the Founders. The idea of judicial review came after the Constitution was written. We can thank Justice Marshall for the idea that the Supreme Court can literally strike down what we do here. It is the most powerful branch of government—not the least dangerous but the most powerful.

Think of it for a moment. In a democratic republic, it is unelected; it has life tenure. Nobody can tell a Justice: You are too old to do this stuff anymore. It is the most anti-democratic or undemocratic institution in a democratic system of government that you could possibly imagine. So its power is really dependent on its adherence to standards of integrity to gain respect and credibility. It has no army. It has no police force. People follow those orders that it issues because its wisdom and integrity have gained respect.

This Supreme Court is different than any other we have seen, and it is not just two Members of the Supreme Court; it is the institution as a whole that is responsible, and it is the Chief Justice of the Court that is most responsible.

So I ask Chief Justice Roberts: Please endorse this legislation not just for the sake of your legacy—we know Chief Justice Roberts cares about his legacy—but for the sake of the Court.

This Court is doing things and its Justices are committing errors of extraordinary misjudgment—not to mention the corrupt taking of gifts and trips and all the rest—that are, to use my colleague's words, blowing to smithereens the credibility and trust that this Court needs. It needs it for its decisions to be followed and respected.

What we are doing here is very simply saying to the Court: You must have a code of conduct that is enforceable.

We are not telling them what to do. We are not telling them to decide a case in one way or another. We are not interfering with their docket. We are not in any way affecting the substantive decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court. It is simply telling them to conduct themselves as public officials—whether they take gifts, whether they go on trips paid by somebody else, whether they accept tuition grants. It is common sense. You don't need to be a law school graduate to understand it.

In fact, this idea is more comprehensible and more impactful to the folks who go to work every day. Nobody gives them college tuition. Nobody takes them on private jets to islands that cost thousands of dollars to reach. To the ordinary American, the everyday American, this legislation not only makes sense, I think most people assume there already is legislation like the one we are debating today.

I am not going to belabor the specific provisions of this bill, but I believe that we are going to have to go further. I think there ought to be an inspector general for the courts as a part of the Judicial Conference, just like there is in other government entities. I think there has to be Court reform that casts light on the shadow docket. There are a series of reforms, and some are a lot more draconian in their scope, but this act is simple in requiring disclosure rules for gifts, travel, and income that are at least as strict as those we comply with here in Congress; a code of ethics; recusal—and Alito and Thomas should have recused themselves long ago from decisions involving Donald Trump.

This comprehensive judicial ethics legislation is long overdue, and my biggest regret as I stand on the floor of the Senate today is that it is not bipartisan, because it should be.

I have argued four cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. I have been a law clerk there. I have immense respect, unshakable respect, for the institution—the institution. I have reverence for what it reflects in America. Sadly, the Court has inflicted wounds on itself that will be difficult—and my fear is, impossible—to repair, but this measure will at least begin that process.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, my colleagues on the Republican side have made the assertion that this legislation would interfere with the independence of the judiciary. That is a serious assertion, and it deserves to be respected and responded to.

The judiciary is an absolutely vital branch of government that is independent. It is independent in the process by which it makes decisions that come before it for its decision. That is where it is independent. As much as I disagree with many of the decisions of the Supreme Court, that Court has the right, without interference from Congress, to make the decisions it makes.

There is absolutely nothing in this legislation that interferes with the judicial power that the Court alone exercises in considering cases and making decisions—there is absolutely nothing—and to have our colleagues suggest that this legislation would do that is flat-out wrong.

What this legislation responds to is the conduct of individual Justices that is, you know, frankly, pretty shocking. You get a call: Hey, there is a yacht that needs you on board. Hey, don't worry about how to get there; we have a private plane. Hey, don't worry—if you didn't come, that seat would be unoccupied.

The Justice actually does it. They get on that plane and go, and they get on that yacht.

Hey, by the way, we are having a fishing trip. It is in Alaska. It is really cool. Let's go. There is an empty seat. Why don't you come. It is worth $100,000, but it doesn't have to be reported.

You know, when we talk about a code of ethics for the Supreme Court—and these are some of the examples of why it is needed—my constituents from Vermont say: Peter, what are you talking about—a code of ethics? They can get away with that? They can do that? They can take this free trip?

It is really, really shocking.

You know, my colleague from Connecticut said it right: The Chief Justice has not only the authority but the responsibility to deal with the problems of behavior on his own Court, and he is not doing it. He is not doing it.

Another point that my colleagues make that I am in 100 percent agreement with is that we need a Supreme Court that has the credibility and confidence of this country. We face very difficult decisions that are quite contentious and that divide America, and when those are contested and they go to the Court and the Court renders a decision that all of us have to abide by whether we were on the winning side or the losing side, we absolutely must have a Court that has credibility. The credibility has to be, if it is going to be enhanced by the Court, by following codes of conduct and by giving the American people confidence that they are on the level. They are not doing it.

These free trips, these private planes, the private yachts—that is just self-serving and, frankly, gross. Who has the opportunity to take those trips in the jobs they do?

By the way, this is an important job they have, but it is a job. You know, you do your job. You get your paycheck. You show up for work. You treat the people you work with decently. But you don't have some expectation because of the particular job you have of getting free special trips just because you are ''important.'' That is not part of the deal here. That is not constitutionally protected. That

is not anything to do with the independence of the judiciary. That is just about venal, self-serving conduct by people who happen to have a lifetime appointment.

The other point here that is really, truly shocking and astonishing is that we have got over 800 judges—circuit court, appellate court, bankruptcy judges—and they have a code of conduct. They can't do this. There are only nine folks who can do it, and they are on the Supreme Court. They should have the highest standards that apply to them, self-imposed. They have no standards.

This is the Supreme Court eroding the confidence the public—all of us, whichever side of the decision we are on—is entitled to have from the people who have that lifetime appointment, and they are squandering it. They are turning a blind eye to the needs of the people they serve.

This ethics legislation is unfortunately necessary because the Supreme Court will not do what it has the responsibility to do. The Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court will not face down colleagues on that Court who are just disregarding normal rules of decency.

So I say to the Presiding Officer and my colleagues and I say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: All of us should be doing everything we can to restore confidence in the judiciary. This is step one.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, this last weekend, I held six townhalls in six rural counties, and in townhall after townhall, people asked me: What happened to the Supreme Court? How did it become so corrupt? Why hasn't the Chief Justice reined it in?

Well, these six townhalls were not an anomaly. I have held 25 townhalls previous to this weekend this year, and again, in community after community, people want to know how has it occurred that the Supreme Court has squandered its integrity. They are alarmed about the members of the Court taking special favors, gifts worth millions of dollars.

Wait, did I say millions of dollars? Surely thousands, not millions. Yes, the Justices have taken gifts worth millions of dollars. The Fix the Court group has documented gifts since—let's see, over the last 20 years—2004 valued at $6,592,657 to 18 current and former Justices of the Court, with 1 Justice alone, Justice Thomas, taking 193 gifts valued at over $4 million and with Justice Alito accepting gifts valued at over $170,000.

How is it possible that the highest Court in the land has sunk to such a low level? Those gifts—$300,000 luxury RVs, fishing trips to Alaska, superyacht trips to Russia and the Greek isles and Indonesia.

Well, the Court did respond. They responded early this year by releasing their own code of ethics—a publicity stunt. It is a code of ethics with no teeth, a code of ethics with no enforcement, a code of ethics that completely fails to address the obvious conflicts of interest and breaches of public trust. Justice may be blind, but we cannot turn a blind eye to these injustices.

Congress and the Court are separate but equal branches of power, and it is our job to check and balance one another. The Supreme Court certainly should have issued for itself a compelling code of ethics, but it has not, and so the balance is for us to do it for them. It is our responsibility to do it, to protect them from their own common instincts of taking gifts that they should never touch.

The Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act will require a strong and enforceable code of ethics for the Supreme Court so that all Americans can trust that cases before the Court are being decided impartially, based on the facts of the case, the letter of the law, and the principles of our ''we the people'' Constitution, not based on relationships forged on superyachts and fishing trips and gifts of $300,000 RVs.

Who here, if you were called to defend yourself at a suit in court, would feel like you are getting a fair hearing if the party who brought the suit against you has been giving thousands or millions of dollars to the judge hearing the case? Who here would think that you are getting a fair hearing? No one.

We all understand that this is corruption. We all understand that this is a horrific conflict of interest. And we all understand it is unacceptable, and the Court has failed in its responsibility to the American people.

The Supreme Court has to stand for the interests of the people, not the powerful. Think of these life-altering cases being decided by the Court on reproductive rights, on worker rights, on voting rights, on environmental rights, and on LGBTQ rights. So we need—the American people need—transparency. They need legitimacy. They need accountability. We, the American people, need justice unpolluted by gifts from parties having issues before the Court.

So I urge my colleagues: Let's all stand together—all 100 of us stand up—for the integrity of the Court and pass the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act.

It is my pleasure to yield to my colleague from the State of Delaware, Senator COONS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise to urge this body to reconsider the objection that was just made by my colleagues.

The rule of law, the system of ordered liberty for which so many Americans have served and sacrificed at home and abroad, is a fragile thing. It is, at times, a mere tissue, and it is held together by the confidence of our people in the ethics and integrity of those whom they elect or who are appointed, nominated, and confirmed to serve them.

We have seen a number of challenging chapters around ethics and integrity in public service recently, but, tonight, we are on this floor to speak about our Supreme Court and a simply shocking series of revelations about ways in which Justices have accepted, over years, huge amounts of gifts.

The suggestion has been made by a number of my colleagues that this is just Democrats, that this is just a partisan attack on a few Justices to try and roll back or undermine decisions they have made that we dislike or their legitimacy. Well, I can give you a compelling counterpoint.

My friend and colleague Senator CORNYN and I have seen a whole series of stories in the Wall Street Journal in 2021 that revealed that there were dozens of Federal judges who had stock holdings in companies where issues before them implicated the value of that company. It moved us to introduce the bipartisan Courthouse Ethics and Transparency Act.

Your typical bill takes 6, 7, 8 years to become law here in the Senate. This one moved faster than almost any other. On the Senate Judiciary Committee and here on the floor of the Senate, nobody argued that the Supreme Court needed to be above it all. Nobody argued that the Justices of the Supreme Court shouldn't be required to disclose their stock holdings and be accountable for their failures to recuse or disclose. In fact, that bill passed unanimously. Why, then, is this one not similarly situated?

Every Federal judge is subject to a binding code of ethics. Every Senator and virtually every Federal employee in a senior decision-making role is bound by a code of ethics. That is how the American people know that, if there is some sleight or false, some self-dealing or some action that creates the appearance of impropriety, action will be taken.

After months and months and months of reports of misconduct, failure to disclose, questionable conduct by a Justice or two of the Supreme Court, a recent poll by Marquette shows that a majority of the American people have lost faith in this institution and no longer have confidence in the political independence and the ethics of our Supreme Court.

Mr. Chief Justice, I hope you listen or watch. We believe you to be concerned about the legitimacy of this important institution.

The Supreme Court is the only Federal Court not bound by a code of conduct that is enforceable and where these disclosures and their consequences cannot be acted upon.

The highest Court in our land should not have the lowest ethical standards, and we should take a vote on this bill, the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act. It should not be

controversial or partisan. This isn't about attacking one Justice or another.

As someone who clerked for a Federal judge, as someone whose chief counsel clerked for a Federal judge—many of us are lawyers in this body and clerked for Federal judges. We know the importance of having an independent judiciary, of having a nonpartisan judiciary.

The most powerful court in the land is the Supreme Court. When it issued landmark decisions unanimously, it moved the arc of history. Today, it issues decisions after decisions that are 5–4 and that are producing challenging secondary waves in our body politic.

If the Supreme Court is to hold the role that our Framers intended, it must do so above reproach. That is not where we are today.

Our Supreme Court must make itself accountable to the American people. We shouldn't read disclosure after disclosure in the press to learn about the conduct of the Justices.

Just a few moments ago, earlier this evening, along with the rest of the Delaware delegation, I had the honor of meeting with the newest nominees to our Nation's service academies—young men and women who are raising their right hand and volunteering to serve our Nation, who will be granted the opportunity of a free education, in exchange for which they sign on the dotted line and agree to go serve our Nation at home and abroad and to defend our Nation and our Constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic.

I have just completed a trip to the South Pacific, where I visited Manila. There, there is a World War II cemetery. It includes crosses marking the graves of 17,000 Americans who served and sacrificed in the convulsion that was the Second World War.

Those crosses do not have marked on them ''Democrat'' or ''Republican.'' The freedom for which they fought, the system of justice, the rule of law, the Constitution for which they took up arms against Imperial Japan, and worked so tirelessly alongside our allies to free a world under assault from fascism and imperialism—they did not do so based on a sense of partisan principles but out of a commitment to our Nation. We should honor those who served and sacrificed in a generation or two ago and those who are willing to serve and sacrifice today going forward by restoring ethics and transparency to the U.S. Supreme Court.

They have cast a shameful shadow, not just the appearance of impropriety but a genuine conflict. It can be resolved. We must help them take the action they should take and resolve it. We should pass this bill.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

INFLATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want to talk just for a few minutes this evening about my people in Louisiana. They are hurting. Inflation is gutting them like a fish. This inflation, like all inflation, is manmade, and that man's name is President Joe Biden.

President Biden has proven to be an inflation machine. He has spent trillions and trillions of dollars that we do not have. He has injected so much money into this economy that we are practically drowning in liquidity.

Unless you were in the quad playing frisbee during Econ 101, you know that, inevitably, that is going to cause inflation. And, indeed, it did.

I realize there is a yawning disconnect between what President Biden says and what my people in Louisiana are experiencing. There is. President Biden says that the economy is just fine. He says the economy is just wonderful.

I will tell you what my people say. My people say, with respect, Mr. President: You need to put down the bong because, in our State, we are paying more to live worse. And we are not going to be able to retire because of you, Mr. President, until 4 years after we are dead.

Louisiana is not a wealthy State. Our median household income is about $58,000. That is mom and dad both working, two children—$58,000. It is about $4,800 a month. President Biden's inflation is costing my people an extra $900 a month. That is not a year—$900 a month; $11,000 a year. My average family is making, once again, $58,000 a year. They have got to find, all of a sudden, an extra $11,000 a year.

Since President Biden has been President, his inflation has cost the average family in Louisiana an extra $22,000. You don't have to take my word for it. You can see this chart. You don't have to be a senior at Caltech to see that the direction is up, and these extra costs were caused by inflation.

The prices of consumer goods in my State, on average, are up 20 percent since President Biden took office. Some are up a lot more; some are up a little less. But the average is 20 percent.

Credit card debt is up 46 percent. The average credit card balance in Louisiana is now $5,800. When you are making $58,000 a year for a family of four, $5,800 is a lot. Delinquent credit card debt is up 11 percent, the highest in 12 years. We have had a record number of people who have had to take early withdrawals from their retirement accounts.

The average electricity bill in Louisiana is up 28 percent since President Biden took office; gasoline in Louisiana, up 53 percent; eggs, 69 percent; bread, 28 percent; coffee, 28 percent; rice, 29 percent; flour, 30 percent; milk, 15 percent; ice cream, 22 percent; chicken per pound, 27 percent.

If you are a mom and dad and you are both working and you have maybe two car notes—certainly one car note—and a mortgage and two children, how can you afford this? You can't.

When you group these necessities that I have just talked about by category, what you see is that, on average, for my people in Louisiana—again, we are not a wealthy State—food is up 21 percent on average; housing is up 290 percent; clothing is up 11 percent; used cars and trucks are up 21 percent; new cars and trucks are up 19 percent; and mortgage rates are up a breathtaking 156 percent.

Now, President Biden has said, truthfully—and I agree with him on this, and I am very happy that it happened—that inflation is coming down, and it is. But let me tell you the difference between inflation and prices. When inflation starts to go down, we call that disinflation. That doesn't mean prices are falling; that just means that prices are going up less quickly.

At one point, we were experiencing 9 percent inflation. Prices were going up an average of 9 percent a year. Now, it is somewhere in the 2 to 3.5 percent range. That means that prices are only going up 2 to 3 percent a year. Again, that doesn't mean prices are falling; that just means they are going up less quickly.

That is a long-winded way of saying that disinflation, which I just described, is very different from deflation. Deflation is when prices fall. And these prices—the President leaves this part out. These prices, I am sad to say, are permanent. They may not go up any more if we can get inflation down to roughly 1 to 2 percent, but the higher prices are still permanent.

And don't take my word for it. I can refer you to the testimony of both Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Federal Reserve Chairman Jay Powell, who both testified in the Banking Committee on which I sit. These prices are permanent.

Mr. President, my people are really getting good—they are really getting good at barely getting by. And it hurts; it hurts deeply. President Biden's inflation, in my State, is a cancer on the American dream. And it didn't have to be this way. We tried to tell him. We tried to tell him. When I say ''we,'' not only many of my Republican colleagues, but many of my Democratic friends did as well. Jason Furman, economic adviser to President Obama—I remember clearly Dr. Furman, now at Harvard, said: With all due respect, Mr. President, if you spend this kind of money, you are going to have inflation. And we did.

And the worst part of this is that President Biden has no plan to get it down—none. And I regret to say, but I think the only place that we are going to find economic sanity in our country again is in the voting booth.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I neglected to introduce one of my colleagues to the Senate, Ms. Jess Andrews, who was just here. She is my communications director, and she helped me research my remarks, and I wanted to thank her.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is still available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications that have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such an annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 24–40, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Denmark for defense articles and services estimated to cost $215.5 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MIKE MILLER
(For James A. Hursch, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 24–40

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Denmark.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment * $190.6 million.
Other $24.9 million.
Total $215.5 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:
Major Defense Equipment (MDE):
Eighty-four (84) AIM–120C–8 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM).
Three (3) AIM–120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) guidance sections.

Non-MDE: Also included is the following non-MDE: spare AMRAAM control sections; containers and support equipment; munitions support and support equipment; spare parts, consumables, accessories, and repair and return support; weapons software and support equipment; classified software delivery and support; transportation support; classified publications and technical documentation; studies and surveys; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (DE–D–YAB, DE–D–YAC).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: DE–D–YAO.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None known at this time.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(Vlll) Date Report Delivered to Congress: June 7, 2024.

* As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Denmark—AIM–120C–8 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles

The Government of Denmark has requested to buy eighty-four (84) AIM–120C–8 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM) and three (3) AIM–120 AMRAAM guidance sections. Also included is the following non-MDE: spare AMRAAM control sections; containers and support equipment; munitions support and support equipment; spare parts, consumables, accessories, and repair and return support; weapons software and support equipment; classified software delivery and support; transportation support; classified publications and technical documentation; studies and surveys; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is $215.5 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy goals and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Ally that is a force for political stability and economic progress in Europe.

The proposed sale will improve Denmark's capability to meet current and future threats by ensuring it has modern, capable air-to-air munitions. The sale will further advance the already high level of Danish Air Force interoperability with U.S. Joint Forces and other regional and NATO forces. Denmark already has AMRAAM in its inventory and will have no difficulty absorbing these articles into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be RTX Corporation, located in Tucson, AZ. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Denmark.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 24–40

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AIM–120C–8 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) is a supersonic, air-launched, aerial intercept guided missile featuring digital technology and microminiature solid-state electronics. AMRAAM capabilities include look-down/shoot-down, multiple launches against multiple targets, resistance to electronic countermeasures, and interception of high and low-flying and maneuvering targets. This potential sale will include AMRAAM guidance sections, control sections, warhead spares, and containers.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that Denmark can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Denmark.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING DETAILS FLOWERS

• Ms. ERNST. Madam President, as ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee 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 Details Flowers of Sac City, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week

Since 2000, Cheryl Gerry has shared her passion for floristry and design with the Sac City community through her small business, Details Flowers, which provides in-home visits for floral design, wedding services, and home decor to customers.

Cheryl studied horticulture with a focus on floriculture at Iowa Lakes Community College and dedicated 21 years to working at Marjo's Flowers in Sac City before launching her own business 24 years ago with just two employees and a delivery driver.

In 2005, Details Flowers moved to a larger location on Main Street in Sac City. Cheryl and her team brought their creative vision to life and fully displayed their work by transforming the store into a stunning showroom. All their products are customizable and tailored to meet the needs of each client, creating a personal relationship between Details Flowers and their customers.

The business is constantly adapting to incorporate current trends, seasons, and, most importantly, Cheryl's creative spirit. Details Flowers won the Business of the Year Award from the Sac City Chamber for several years. In November 2023, Cheryl and her team were also honored as the Sac City Chamber Business of the Month.

For more than 20 years, Details Flowers has been actively involved in the Sac City community. In 2020, the business sponsored the Sac City Scoop the Loop food pantry donation drive. Details Flowers is also a proud member of the Sac City Chamber of Commerce and partners with the chamber to visit nursing and assisted living homes on Mother's and Father's Day, spreading joy and ensuring no one is left without a beautiful flower arrangement.

Details Flowers' commitment to providing quality floristry, decor, and long-lasting memories is clear. I want to congratulate Cheryl Gerry and the entire team at Details Flowers for their continued dedication to the Sac City community. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success.●

REMEMBERING RASHEED A. MALIK

● Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise today to honor the life of Rasheed A. Malik. He was a champion in the field of childcare and a devoted community leader.

Rasheed was an accomplished policy researcher and the senior director of Early Childhood Policy at the Center for American Progress. His work focused on childcare infrastructure and supply, the economic benefits of childcare, and bias and discrimination in early childhood policy. His landmark analysis identifying ''childcare deserts'' across the country advanced the Nation's understanding of the childcare crisis and drove policy action at the national, State, and local levels.

He testified before Congress several times to advance knowledge and understanding of the impact of the COVID–19 pandemic on the childcare sector, the importance of increased investments in early childhood education, and the merits of comprehensive legislation to address the childcare crisis. Malik's research has been featured in the New York Times, Vox, the Washington Post, NPR, Slate, CNN Business, and CNBC, among others.

Before joining the Center for American Progress, Malik was a government affairs and communications associate for the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, which aims to make the New York Harbor a shared, resilient, and accessible resource for all New Yorkers. He received his master's degree in public policy from the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan and a bachelor's degree in public affairs from Baruch College.

Above all, Rasheed was a beloved husband, father, friend, and colleague. He was known for his warmth, generosity, and willingness to support others. I am grateful for his service. He will be dearly missed, and I wish the best to his family.●

TRIBUTE TO STELLA WHITNEY-WEST

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise to pay tribute to Stella Whitney-West, a mother, grandmother, public health champion, mentor, and leader in Minneapolis. Ms. Whitney-West is retiring from her role as chief executive officer of NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center which, under her leadership, has become a strong and financially stable primary care institution that has improved the lives of thousands of Minneapolis families.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota with a degree in biology and earning her MBA at the University of Saint Thomas, Ms. Whitney-West began her career as a public health specialist serving organizations in the Twin Cities before becoming director at the Minneapolis Urban League.

In 2004, Ms. Whitney-West joined NorthPoint as chief operating officer of Human Services and was named CEO three years later. With her at the helm, NorthPoint transformed from a struggling health center losing $2 million a year to North Minneapolis' foremost provider of health and wellness services for underserved families. Her leadership has been honored with several awards, including a Bush Leadership Fellowship, the International Black Women's Congress Community Service Award, and the 2021 Minneapolis Saint Paul Business Journal Women in Business Award.

NorthPoint has been a pillar of North Minneapolis since 1968 and today serves over 30,000 residents, guided by its mission of ''Partnering to Create a Healthier Community.'' The Center improves the whole health of North Minneapolis residents. As a Federally Qualified Health Center, NorthPoint is also a certified Health Care Home and Ryan White HIV/AIDS clinic. NorthPoint is administered through a partnership between Hennepin County and a community board of directors composed of patients and professionals who live and work in the community NorthPoint serves. The center provides comprehensive medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, laboratory, lactation consultant, and radiology care as well as numerous human service programs. These programs include a community food shelf with culturally-relevant food, the African-American Men's Project, and a partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health to reduce Black maternal health disparities. The Northpoint Whole Family Systems Initiative focuses on providing culturally responsive perinatal care.

Under Ms. Whitney-West's leadership over the last two decades, NorthPoint has made lasting strides in public health. During her tenure, vaccination and cancer screening rates for Black, Latino, and Asian Americans in North Minneapolis have more than doubled to nearly 80 percent. Today, all patients—regardless of what brings them into the clinic—receive complimentary depression and dental screenings. And Ms. Whitney-West's work has touched lives beyond those the clinic treats; thanks to her advocacy, lead paint was safely removed from neighborhood homes.

Recently, I was able to attend the grand opening ceremony for NorthPoint's new 135,000-square-foot facility. With this expansion, NorthPoint will add new space for patients and clients while employing over 400 people and providing new economic opportunities through public-private partnerships. The expansion will include a new child wellness center, an exercise studio for city residents, an expanded food shelf, and access to new dental specialty services. The success of this project is a testament to Ms. Whitney-West's leadership.

Ms. Whitney-West exemplifies servant leadership, both through her work at NorthPoint and for organizations across Minneapolis. She is an active volunteer with Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, where she is devoted to mentoring the next generation of Black women leaders. In addition, she serves on the boards of organizations including the Twin Cities LISC advisory board, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Ninth District Advisory Council, Penn-Plymouth Partnership, Love Minneapolis board, Community Resiliency and Recovery Advisors, and the Minneapolis Inclusive Economic Recovery Work Group. She has previously held positions for the MNsure Advisory Task Force, Minnesota Tobacco Control Advisory Committee, One Minnesota Transition Advisory Board, and Stratis Health Board of Advisors.

I thank Ms. Whitney-West for her decades of leadership and service to Minnesota and wish her all the best in her much-deserved retirement.●

TRIBUTE TO STELLA WHITNEY-WEST

● Ms. SMITH. Madam President, I wish to congratulate Ms. Stella Whitney-West on her illustrious career and much-deserved retirement from NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center in Minneapolis, MN. Ms. Whitney-West will retire from NorthPoint on June 30 after 20 years with the organization, having served as CEO since 2007. Under her leadership, NorthPoint has evolved

and expanded their impact exponentially. Ms. Whitney-West has been a lifelong champion of equitable health outcomes for all and has promoted health equity while expanding NorthPoint's footprint and offerings. She shepherded the center to become a certified Health Care Home, provide expanded interpreter services, transition to an electronic health record system, and much more. Most importantly and impactfully, during her tenure Ms. Whitney-West oversaw a historic $100 million campus expansion project, doubling the size of NorthPoint's main campus facility and opening several satellite clinic locations throughout North Minneapolis. As a result of her leadership and commitment to these historic changes, NorthPoint is now able to serve over 30,000 residents of North Minneapolis and provides a wide range of health and human services. As a lifelong member of the community, Ms. Whitney-West has surely made a meaningful impact at NorthPoint and in our community, creating standards for health and wellness across Hennepin County and the entire State of Minnesota. I wish you the best in your retirement.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:46 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 537. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

H.R. 2964. An act to require certain products to be labeled with 'Do Not Flush' labeling, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6543. An act to prohibit unfair and deceptive advertising of prices for hotel rooms and other places of short-term lodging, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7984. An act to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to improve access to disaster assistance for individuals located in rural areas, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7988. An act to amend the Small Business Act to include requirements relating to new small business entrants in the scorecard program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7989. An act to provide for a memorandum of understanding between the Small Business Administration and the National Council on Disability to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes.

H.R. 8014. An act to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to issue rules for cancelled covered solicitations, to amend the Small Business Act to provide assistance to small business concerns relating to certain cancelled solicitations, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 27. Concurrent resolution condemning Russia's unjust and arbitrary detention of Russian opposition leader Vladimir Kara-Murza who has stood up in defense of democracy, the rule of law, and free and fair elections in Russia.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY) announced that on today, June 12, 2024, she had signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

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

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 537. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 2964. An act to require certain products to be labeled with 'Do Not Flush' labeling, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 6543. An act to prohibit unfair and deceptive advertising of prices for hotel rooms and other places of short-term lodging, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 7984. An act to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to improve access to disaster assistance for individuals located in rural areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

H.R. 7988. An act to amend the Small Business Act to include requirements relating to new small business entrants in the scorecard program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

H.R. 7989. An act to provide for a memorandum of understanding between the Small Business Administration and the National Council on Disability to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

H.R. 8014. An act to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to issue rules for cancelled covered solicitations, to amend the Small Business Act to provide assistance to small business concerns relating to certain cancelled solicitations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 27. Concurrent resolution condemning Russia's unjust and arbitrary detention of Russian opposition leader Vladimir Kara-Murza who has stood up in defense of democracy, the rule of law, and free and fair elections in Russia; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, June 12, 2024, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

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

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC–4992. A communication from the General Counsel, Justice Management Division, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementation of HAVANA Act of 2021'' (RIN1105–AB71) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 14, 2024; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4993. A communication from the Chief of the Immigration Law Division, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Efficient Case and Docket Management in Immigration Proceedings'' (RIN1125–AA81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 4, 2024; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4994. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the report entitled ''2023 Report of Statistics Required by the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4995. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting legislative proposals that support the President's fiscal year 2025 budget request for the Department of Homeland Security; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4996. A communication from the Agency Representative, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard for Presentation of Nucleotide and Amino Acid Sequence Listings Using eXtensible Markup Language in Patent Applications to Implement WIPO Standard ST.26; Incorporation by Reference'' (RIN0651–AD53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 22, 2024; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–120. A joint memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Washington requesting that the United States Congress pass, and the President of the United States sign measures addressing actions taken by financial institutions in terminating or restricting business relationships with certain customers to avoid regulatory concerns, or similar legislation; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 8005

To the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, and to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress Assembled:

We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent and petition as follows:

Whereas, The State of Washington welcomes refugees and immigrants who bravely leave behind everything familiar to seek safety, build a better life, and provide resources for loved ones in their country of origin; and

Whereas, Approximately one in every seven Washington residents is an immigrant and another one in every seven Washington residents is a native-born United States citizen with at least one immigrant parent;

Whereas, Many immigrants to Washington transfer money to loved ones in their country of origin in the form of remittances, and money remitted by migrants competes with international aid as one of the largest financial inflows to developing countries; and

Whereas, Many immigrants have continued to try to send money to their families despite uncertain and changing employment and circumstances following the COVID–19 pandemic and recovery; and

Whereas, The federal government has national security interests that have resulted in measures by federal agencies to block remittances that present significant security risks, and the federal Bank Secrecy Act and related Anti-Money Laundering rules (BSA/AML) impose due diligence, recordkeeping, reporting, and compliance program requirements on financial institutions with respect to remittances to foreign countries; and

Whereas, Some of the countries to which immigrants to Washington want to remit money have little or no central banking infrastructure, which makes compliance with BSA/AML rules difficult or impossible, and prevents immigrants from being able to remit money in a safe, reliable manner; and

Whereas, Financial institutions such as banks and credit unions play a pivotal role in facilitating commerce and enabling individuals to build financial prosperity; and

Whereas, Many of the local or community-based money transmitters that service underserved diverse communities in Washington have been excluded from obtaining or maintaining accounts from traditional financial institutions and have seen their accounts closed without explanation or justification, leaving underserved communities without banking options; and

Whereas, Many financial institutions appear to be engaging in de-risking, whereby they terminate or restrict business relationships with clients or categories of clients in order to avoid, rather than manage, risk; and

Whereas, De-risking has detrimentally impacted the ability of smaller, Washington-based money transmitters to serve underserved diverse communities, to the benefit of larger money transmitters that operate on a nationwide basis; and

Whereas, De-risking also presents a threat to public safety, as unbanked businesses often must store and transport large sums of cash at great risk to owners and their employees; and

Whereas, The state of Washington has an interest in promoting financial inclusion and in ensuring that every individual or business operating in compliance with the law can access regulated financial systems; and

Whereas, The federal National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year 2021 expresses Congress's sense that ''anti-money laundering, countering the financing of terrorism, and sanctions policies must ensure that the policies do not unduly hinder or delay legitimate access to the international financial systems for underserved individuals, entities, and geographic areas;'' and

Whereas, The NDAA directed the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) to analyze financial services de-risking and report to Congress, and directed the United States Department of Treasury and others to review reporting requirements now in effect and propose changes to reduce unnecessarily burdensome regulation and to develop a strategy to reduce de-risking and related adverse consequences; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Treasury issued their report on April 25, 2023, ''The Department of the Treasury's De-Risking Strategy'' with key findings and recommendations that include promoting consistent supervisory expectations that consider the impacts of de-risking; proposing regulations that require financial institutions to have reasonably designed and risk-based AML/CFT programs supervised on a risk basis, taking into consideration the effects of financial inclusion; and building on Treasury's work to modernize the United States sanctions regime and its recognition of the need to specifically calibrate sanctions to mitigate unintended economic, political, and humanitarian impacts, as outlined in *The Treasury 2021 Sanctions Review*; and

Whereas, The Washington state department of financial institutions has worked with representatives of local and community-based money transmitters, banks, and credit unions in Washington to develop enhanced regulatory guidance and a model account agreement to clarify expectations for financial institutions that might offer account services to affected money transmitters; and

Whereas, The Washington state department of financial institutions has forwarded that guidance to federal bank and credit union regulators for their review and comment in 2022; and

Whereas, Collaboration between federal bank and credit union regulators, the Washington state department of financial institutions, and industry stakeholders could lead to significant progress towards rolling back blanket de-risking by depository institutions with respect to local and community-based money transmitters;

Now, therefore, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that:

(1) Congress pass and the President sign legislation implementing strategies and recommendations that result from:

(a) Reports by the GAO and the Treasury Department in response to the NDAA; and

(b) Review of the Washington state department of financial institutions' regulatory guidance for depository institutions;

(2) Such legislation also include:

(a) Directives to federal financial regulatory agencies to develop regulations that clearly and specifically require financial institutions to have reasonably designed and risk-based AML programs supervised on a risk basis, taking into consideration the effects of financial inclusion;

(b) Provisions giving federal banking regulators clarity on how to improve examiners' ability to evaluate banks' BSA/AML compliance as applied to money transmitter accounts;

(c) A requirement that financial institutions disclose a specific reason when denying or closing an account; and

(d) Provisions to help financial institutions mitigate the cost of due diligence required to comply with BSA/AML provisions impacting money transmitters; and

(3) The President direct federal bank and credit union regulators to work with the Washington state department of financial institutions and industry stakeholders to support efforts to develop new and creative solutions to improve banking access for local or community-based money transmitters; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

POM–121. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan affirming the Chamber's commitment to supporting an extension of the Affordable Connectivity Program, recognizing that this program provides Michigan citizens statewide with access to affordable broadband services; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 90

Whereas, Congress has directed the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to administer the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which is a successor program to the Emergency Broadband Benefit, a program that helped almost nine million households nationwide afford internet access during the COVID–19 pandemic. Under the provisions of the ACP, eligible households may receive up to thirty dollars per month toward internet service. For households on qualifying tribal lands, this benefit may increase to seventy-five dollars per month. The ACP also provides that eligible households may receive a one-time discount of up to one hundred dollars to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers; and

Whereas, Where broadband internet access is available, the ACP allows subscribers to afford internet speeds and devices sufficient for key online activities, such as at-home learning, health care, banking, and public services. Where broadband access is not available, the ACP incentivizes the deployment of new broadband infrastructure; and

Whereas, The FCC recently announced that, due to a lack of additional funding provided for the ACP, it would begin the process of terminating the program. Over 900,000 households within the State of Michigan are currently enrolled in the ACP and are at risk of losing affordable access to internet services in 2024 if Congress does not fund an extension of the program. The ACP is a critical program for Michigan citizens and, along with other sources of state funding, is a vital means to build and improve broadband infrastructure, provide internet devices to those who lack them, and promote the adoption of modern technology among our least-connected citizens. All these factors demonstrate that the ACP is an essential catalyst for Michigan's economic growth, workforce development, and innovation. Allowing this program to end would be a great disservice to Michiganians who rely on the program to access vital online services and resources; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we affirm this chamber's commitment to supporting an extension of the Affordable Connectivity Program, recognizing that this program provides Michigan citizens statewide with access to affordable broadband services; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM–122. A joint memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Washington requesting that the United States Congress pass, and the President of the United States sign legislation reforming the Harbor Maintenance Tax; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 8009

To the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, and to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress Assembled:

We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of

Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent and petition as follows:

Whereas, The United States created the harbor maintenance tax under the Water Resource Development Act of 1986; and

Whereas, The harbor maintenance tax is an ad valorem tax on goods imported into the United States through a United States port; and

Whereas, The North American Free Trade Agreement was established in 1994 to create a broad North American marketplace where goods could move freely between the United States, Canada, and Mexico; and

Whereas, The North American Free Trade Agreement and now its successor agreement the United States, Mexico, and Canada Agreement has failed to consider the impact of the harbor maintenance tax on United States ports; and

Whereas, The North American Free Trade Agreement and United States, Mexico, and Canada Agreement have created an incentive for importers of foreign goods to land cargo in Canada or Mexico and then use rail or trucks to move that cargo to the United States to avoid the harbor maintenance tax; and

Whereas, The harbor maintenance tax is not collected on transpacific and transatlantic cargo shipped to the United States via rail or roads from ports in Mexico and Canada; and

Whereas, The ability to move transpacific and transatlantic cargo through Canadian ports and avoid paying the harbor maintenance tax incentivizes diversion of cargo away from United States ports; and

Whereas, The federal maritime commission inquiry into the harbor maintenance tax found that up to half of United States bound containers coming into Canada's west coast ports could revert to using United States west coast ports if United States importers were relieved from paying the tax; and

Whereas, Current United States law does not require the revenues raised through the harbor maintenance tax to be fully spent on harbor maintenance-related investments, collections have far exceeded fund appropriation and surplus collections, resulting in a surplus of billions of dollars in the harbor maintenance trust fund; and

Whereas, Revenue raised through the harbor maintenance tax pays for dredging and other maintenance costs, with significant amounts being spent for dredging at east coast, gulf coast, and Columbia river ports; and

Whereas, Certain deep water ports on the west coast that require no or little dredging, including the Northwest Seaport Alliance consisting of the ports of Seattle and Tacoma, receive just over a penny on every dollar of harbor maintenance tax paid by shippers who use their ports; and

Whereas, The Columbia river channel is critical to maintain global trade and the port of Vancouver USA serves as the largest wheat export gateway in the nation; and

Whereas, With the recent widening of the Panama Canal, Washington ports face increasing competition for maritime goods bound for the United States; and

Whereas, Washington ports are ready to compete on a level playing field to efficiently move goods to market; and

Whereas, Congress passed substantial harbor maintenance tax reform legislation in 2020, the implementation of which requires additional actions by congressional appropriators and the US Army Corps of Engineers;

Now, therefore, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that:

(1) Congress direct the use of country-of-origin rules to be applied to the harbor maintenance tax so that United States bound goods that currently still pay customs in the United States would also continue to pay the harbor maintenance tax in order to eliminate the current incentive that is leading to significant cargo diversion from United States ports to Canadian ports in violation of the spirit of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

(2) Congress appropriate the full amount of annual harbor maintenance tax revenues and unspent tax collections from the harbor maintenance trust fund consistent with the budget cap adjustments enacted in the CARES Act and the Water Resources Development Act of 2020.

(3) Congress direct the US Army Corps of Engineers to allocate the specified amounts for donor and energy transfer ports consistent with the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 and appropriate the amounts specified in section 101 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 to carry out subsection (c) of section 2106 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014,

(4) The US Army Corps of Engineers allocate in its annual work plan 12 percent of annual harbor maintenance trust fund appropriations directly to eligible donor and energy transfer ports, as well as additional amounts to carry out subsection (c) of section 2106 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014.

(5) The US Army Corps of Engineers shall collect appropriate data and reinstate publication of annual reports, which were terminated in FY 2006, on the status of the harbor maintenance trust fund. This report should also include an analysis of the impact of the harbor maintenance tax in disincentivizing shippers from using US ports and diverting freight to foreign ports, thereby avoiding the tax; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

POM–123. A joint memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of Washington requesting that the United States Congress pass, and the President of the United States sign legislation to fully fund 40 percent of the costs of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 8007

To the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, and to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress Assembled, and to Miguel Cardona, Secretary of the United States Department of Education:

We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent and petition as follows:

Whereas, We have witnessed a revolution in promoting, protecting, and advancing the education rights of students with disabilities since Congress originally enacted Public Law 94–142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, later to be known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA; and

Whereas, IDEA has helped millions of children with special needs receive a quality education, with approximately 7 million children between the ages of 3 and 21, representing approximately 14 percent of all public school students, receiving services in the 2017–2018 school year alone; and

Whereas, When Congress enacted the predecessor legislation to IDEA in 1975, the federal government was to pay up to 40 percent of each state's ''excess cost'' of educating children with disabilities; and

Whereas, Appropriations for IDEA have increased over the last decade, however, federal funding for IDEA has averaged approximately 13 percent of the states' cost; and

Whereas, Underfunding results in districts being unable to offer competitive wages that support the recruitment and retention of personnel who are essential to delivering services promised by IDEA; and

Whereas, Consistently low wages for personnel, such as paraeducators cause those positions to go unfilled and turnover frequently, resulting in decreased services to IDEA students; and

Whereas, The inability of districts to provide required services and programming due to inadequate funding is causing increasing lawsuits from families, which further increases districts' expenses; and

Whereas, The COVID–19 pandemic harmed the ability of districts and states to adequately identify students with special needs, which has led to a significant increase in students needing referrals, which is exceeding capacity of current evaluative staffing in districts and requiring districts to seek more expensive, outside service providers; and

Whereas, The COVID–19 pandemic has also resulted in a growing number of students who require supplementary services whose learning was impacted by the pandemic; and

Whereas, The COVID–19 pandemic has put further strain on school budgets that are thus significantly reduced; and

Whereas, States and districts have begun to implement inclusive practices for students with IEPs to increase their access to general education learning opportunities and this shift is widely acknowledged to require additional training and resources for school staff rather than more traditional and restrictive special education programs; and

Whereas, The chronic underfunding of IDEA by the federal government places an additional funding burden on states, local school districts, and taxpayers to pay for needed services. This compounds the existing pressure already placed on local budget dollars to cover the federal shortfall and will further shortchange other school programs that are also beneficial to students with disabilities; and

Whereas, Funding programs that serve students with disabilities is one of the best measures of Congress' desire to offer a quality education to every single student; and

Whereas, To fully achieve the goal of providing a free appropriate public education for all students, Congress must provide sufficient funding to support early intervention services, transition services, professional preparation and development, and other critical components within IDEA; and

Whereas, It is time for the federal government to pay its fair share of the costs of IDEA and fulfill its commitment to students with disabilities, their families, and the states and school districts that provide students with a free and appropriate public education; Now, therefore,

Your Memorialists respectfully request that Congress pass and the President sign federal legislation to fully fund 40 percent of the costs of IDEA, recognizing that some types of disabilities are much more expensive to address than others and that the distribution of children with severe and more expensive disabilities may cluster in some areas that have outstanding medical facilities or exemplary programs for specific disabilities. Be it

Resolved, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Honorable

Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, Miguel Cardona, Secretary of the United States Department of Education, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

POM–124. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan vehemently opposing the transfer of mail processing operations from the Iron Mountain Processing and Distribution Center to the Green Bay Processing and Distribution Center in Wisconsin; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 184

Whereas, The United States Postal Service has a long and venerable tradition of serving as a great equalizer between the people of our nation. Both the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution of the United States gave Congress the power to establish a system of post offices, and a Post Office Department was first established by the Second Continental Congress in 1775, with Benjamin Franklin appointed to serve as the Postmaster General. Throughout its 250-year history, the Post Office has chosen time and time again to prioritize service over profit, from President Washington's support for the subsidization of stagecoach in the 1780s, to the construction of money-losing postal routes to encourage settlement in the west during the mid-19th century, to the creation of the Pony Express to deliver the mail through extreme environments in 1860, to the elimination of price differences based on the distance a letter was to travel in 1863. While free home delivery began in cities in 1863, it was not initially offered in rural areas, though they paid the same rate. After initial experiments showed how happy rural customers were to be given the same attention as city-dwellers, rural free delivery became a permanent service in 1902. It is the mission of the United States Postal Service ''to bind the Nation together through the personal, educational, literary, and business correspondence of the people''; and

Whereas, The Post Office is a service that we, as a society, have chosen to provide to our people. There is no constitutional mandate that the Post Office be run as a profitable business enterprise; to the contrary, our history shows that we have repeatedly used the Post Office to ensure that every American, no matter where they live, is connected through the post. The people can choose the level of postal service that they want the United States Postal Service to provide, and they can decide what costs they are willing to bear to provide that service; and

Whereas, Contrary to the desires of many that the United States Postal Service put service first, there are those who insist that it must be run like a business. The ''Delivering for America'' plan, published in March 2021, emphasizes the financial viability of the Postal Service, with a focus on raising enough revenue to cover their operating costs and fund investments. The plan proudly proclaims that it will enable the United States Postal Service to operate with a positive net income, and the most recent report boasts that it has reduced projected ten-year losses from 160 billion dollars to 70 billion dollars. Those publications read like a corporate marketing pitch, establishing goals such as a ''more rational pricing approach,'' a ''stable and empowered workforce'' and a ''bold approach to growth, innovation and continued relevance.'' What those profit-minded advocates seemingly fail to recognize is that lower-quality service and higher prices drive customers away, decreasing use of the postal service and thus decreasing revenue, while simultaneously undermining the Postal Service's mission of binding the nation together; and

Whereas, The United States Postal Service's focus on financial optimization has already had negative impacts on those living in rural area, such as Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Local post offices have changed the time when mail is gathered for delivery from the afternoon to the early morning, meaning that a piece of mail dropped off during the day will remain at the post office for far longer before the shipping process begins. In practical effect, this adds one day to shipping times even while allowing the Postal Service to deny having done so for accounting purposes. Additionally, one-day Priority Mail Express shipping, which was available as early as early January 2024, is no longer available from the UP to anywhere in Michigan; instead, citizens are being charged the same rate for two-day shipping. Combined with the change in collection time above, next-day shipping has essentially been transformed into three-day shipping. This is extremely problematic for businesses and health departments that need to collect samples of drinking water and have them delivered to a laboratory for bacterial testing within 24 hours of sampling. Delays in shipping also have negative consequences for patients who receive medications through the mail, for people who need to ensure their bills are paid on time, and for businesses delivering frozen foods such as the UP's beloved pasties. Focusing too much on the postal network as a whole while ignoring the importance of timely local shipping is not modernization: it is regression. The people of the Upper Peninsula want what's best for their communities, not what's best for the pocketbooks of those in Washington; and

Whereas, In January 2024, the United States Postal Service announced plans to transfer some mail processing services, including outgoing mail operations, from the Iron Mountain Processing and Distribution Center in Kingsford, Michigan, to the Green Bay Processing and Distribution Center in Wisconsin. The Postal Service has justified this plan based on the fact that a majority of the mail and packages sent from the Iron Mountain area are destined for locations outside the local area. While this might make sense from the standpoint of the Postal Service as a nationwide business, it does not make sense for the people of the Upper Peninsula, for whom timely local delivery is essential. The notices that have been published about this plan assure that, while five craft employee positions will be eliminated, no management positions will be eliminated. But the notices also indicate that there will be reassignments, which means that some employees could be left without a job if they are unwilling to be reassigned to a post office far away. Furthermore, recent changes to the Iron Mountain facility may have led to inaccurate conclusions about the need for it, stacking the deck so that the evidence would support the conclusion the government was looking for. The capacity of the Green Bay facility to handle the mail from the Iron Mountain area is curiously left out of the government's preliminary findings. When similar notices across the country all use identical, buzzword-riddled language about efficiency, cost-effectiveness, modern strategies, and ''rightsizing'' the postal workforce, it becomes difficult to trust that they have made a careful, informed decision about the proper level of services to provide at the Iron Mountain facility; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we vehemently appose the transfer of mail processing operations from the Iron Mountain Processing and Distribution Center to the Green Bay Processing and Distribution Center in Wisconsin; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of Michigan, the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the United States Postmaster General.

POM–125. A resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota urging the United States Congress to resolve that the requirements have been met to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment and that it shall now be known as the Twenty-Eighth Amendment to the Constitution; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE FILE NO. 197

Whereas, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was first passed by Congress in 1972 and was sent to the states for ratification; and

Whereas, the ERA guarantees ''[e]quality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.''; and

Whereas, the adoption of the ERA will help to advance gender justice for women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals; and

Whereas, the ERA authorizes Congress to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of the ERA; and

Whereas, the ERA states that the amendment will take effect two years after the last constitutionally necessary state ratification occurs; and

Whereas, on January 27, 2020, Virginia became the 38th and final state needed to ratify the ERA, which has been ratified by the necessary three-fourths of states; and

Whereas, the Archivist of the United States performs a statutory and ministerial role with respect to certifying the ratification of amendments to the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, as of this date, the Archivist has not certified the amendment; and

Whereas, women, girls, and gender-expansive people across the country are experiencing declining access to health, wealth, and opportunity, and increasing incidences of poverty and violence; and

Whereas, the ERA was first written by Alice Paul, the head of the National Woman's Party, in order to guarantee that the rights affirmed by the United States Constitution are held equally by all citizens without regard to sex; and

Whereas, the ERA would clarify the legal status of sex discrimination for the courts, where decisions still deal inconsistently with such claims; and

Whereas, Minnesota ratified the ERA in 1973; and

Whereas, the first, and still the only, right that the United States Constitution specifically affirms to be equal for women and men is the right to vote under the 19th Amendment, which was ratified by the states in 1920; and

Whereas, the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States has never been interpreted to protect against sex discrimination in the same way that the ERA would; and

Whereas, in September 2010, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia said he did not believe that the United States Constitution, specifically the 14th Amendment, protects against sex discrimination; and

Whereas, in 1868, the 14th Amendment was added to the Constitution despite two states purporting to rescind their ratification; and

Whereas, without the addition of the ERA to the United States Constitution, legislation and case law that has resulted in extraordinary progress for women has the potential to be ignored, weakened, or reversed.

Congress can amend or repeal legislation advancing equality with a simple majority vote, the presidential administration can weakly enforce these laws, and the United States Supreme Court can continue to use intermediate scrutiny when reviewing cases concerning gender; and

Whereas, it is vital that the constitutional gender equality rights be upheld now that the ERA has been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States; and

Whereas, Section 3 of the Equal Rights Amendment states that the amendment shall take effect two years after the last constitutionally necessary state ratification occurs, which was January 27, 2020; Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the Legislature of the State of Minnesota that it urges the Congress of the United States to pass House Resolution 25 and Senate Resolution 4, resolving that the requirements have been met to ratify the ERA and that it shall now be known as the Twenty-Eighth Amendment to the Constitution; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State of the State of Minnesota is directed to prepare copies of this memorial and transmit them to the President of the United States, the President and the Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and the Members of the United States Congress.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. WARNER, from the Select Committee on Intelligence:

Report to accompany 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 (Rept. No. 118–181).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. REED for the Committee on Armed Services.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Luke A. Frost, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Dennis E. Collins, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Gregory K. Emery, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nominations beginning with Rear Adm. (lh) Bradley D. Dunham and ending with Rear Adm. (lh) Douglas W. Sasse III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 27, 2024.

Navy nomination of Capt. Troy S. Pugh, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Michael L. Freidberg and ending with Capt. Ryan K. Mahelona, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 27, 2024.

Navy nomination of Capt. Shawn G. Denihan, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nomination of Capt. Benjamin E. Baran, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. David N. Barnes and ending with Capt. Katie F. Sheldon, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 27, 2024.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. Michael E. Conley, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. David H. Tabor, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Thomas K. Hensley, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Lt. Gen. Tony D. Bauernfeind, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Sean C. Bernabe, to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Christopher C. French, to be Vice Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Scott W. Pappano, to be Vice Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Jeffrey T. Anderson, to be Vice Admiral.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Nancy S. Lacore, to be Vice Admiral.

Army nomination of Col. Jorge M. Fonseca, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Nicole M. Balliet, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Col. Cindy M. Saladin-Muhammed, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Thomas C. Friloux, to be Major General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Gordon R. Meyer, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Carrie L. Perez, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Col. Adam K. Ake and ending with Col. John M. Dunn, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Joseph B. Berger III, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Robert A. Borcherding, to be Major General.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Melvin G. Carter, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nomination of Maj. Gen. Benjamin T. Watson, to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nomination of Christopher J. Rollins, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Nyree Y. Watts, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Anthony B. Abraham and ending with Brian K. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 9, 2024. (minus 1 nominee: Peter I. Belk)

Army nominations beginning with Kristin E. Agresta and ending with Emilee C. Venn, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 18, 2024.

Army nominations beginning with Barbara K. Bujak and ending with Joshua D. Walters, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 18, 2024.

Army nominations beginning with Lovie L. Abraham and ending with Michael T. Walkingstick, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 18, 2024.

Army nominations beginning with Marlene Ariasreynoso and ending with 0002516194, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 18, 2024.

Army nominations beginning with Michael J. Browning and ending with 0002686492, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Army nominations beginning with Todd M. Anton and ending with 0002951212, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Army nominations beginning with Ryan H. Allred and ending with Brandon J. Wolf, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Army nominations beginning with Chad C. Adams and ending with 0002374957, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Army nomination of Edward Y. Park, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Bridgette R. Bell, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Jamal D. Snell, to be Major.

Army nomination of Terence W. Phillips II, to be Major.

Army nomination of Zachary T. Goehler, to be Major.

Army nomination of Keith M. Sanders, to be Major.

Army nomination of Chelsea M. Truax, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of Taylor B. Evans, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of Jacob C. Pipping, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of Shawn R. Loughman, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Navy nominations beginning with Albert E. Arnold IV and ending with Justin R. Wiesen, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Gina M. D. Becker and ending with Anne L. Zack, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Allen M. Agor and ending with Steven Zielechowski, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Brian C. Earp and ending with Chad A. Redmer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Travis J. Anderson and ending with Jeremy R. Woody, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Kitan Bae and ending with David T. Spalding, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Matthew S. Cushanick and ending with Jeffrey R. Portell, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Matthew P. Allan and ending with Christina J. Wong, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Anthony J. Falvo IV and ending with Hayley C. Sims, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael A. Freas and ending with Nicholas T. Walker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Frank T. Borrego and ending with Gregory L. Tiner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Kent L. Davis and ending with Travis L. Scott, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Zachary D. Harry and ending with Gregory B. Price, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Adam G. Borsman and ending with Dennis L. Richardson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nomination of Nathaniel D. Rightsell, to be Captain.

Navy nominations beginning with Justin K. Conroy and ending with Emmanuel M. Thomann, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Jonathan R. Alston and ending with Jonathan D. Tighe, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 30, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Scott F. Aldridge and ending with Michael P. Smith, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Kyle L. Anderson and ending with Craig A. Zecchin, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Daniel W. Berger and ending with Jared M. Stimson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael R. Basso and ending with Aaron D. Pickett, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nomination of Catherine E. Williams, to be Captain.

Navy nominations beginning with Sunghwan T. Choe and ending with Melanie A. Driver, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with William L. Adkins and ending with David J. Willard, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Robert A. Bogan and ending with Robert D. Woodward, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Ronald L. James and ending with Daniel J. Woodard, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael A. Chinn and ending with Shane D. Uhlir, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nomination of Ryan T. Bangham, to be Captain.

Navy nominations beginning with Aaron J. Bedy and ending with Nicolas A. Melendez, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Vincent Deusanio, Jr. and ending with Stefan C. Yesko, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Robert J. Fleming and ending with Joseph J. Stewart, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Noreen P. Kirby and ending with Patrick D. Tackitt, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 7, 2024.

Navy nomination of Bryon M. Lee, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Hana Lee, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Timothy P. Fletcher, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Mark K. Anderson and ending with Gerald V. Weers, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 20, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Anastasia S. Abid and ending with Ashley L. Ward, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 20, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Adam D. Ahlstrom and ending with Jeremiah J. Zamora, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 20, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Warren K. Blackburn and ending with James L. Venckus, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with John D. Ault and ending with Timothy A. Springer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Aaron T. Allison and ending with Kristin B. Whitehouse, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Colleen C. Blosser and ending with Damian M. Storz, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael W. Bloomrose and ending with Matthew J. Wooten, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Garth W. Aldrich and ending with Emily L. Zywicke, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Ricardo M. Abakah and ending with Yu Zheng, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Thomas B. Ableman and ending with Jerry Yuan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 23, 2024.

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

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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. VANCE (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. LEE):

S. 4516. A bill to ensure equal protection of the law, to prevent racism in the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MERKLEY:

S. 4517. A bill to authorize the establishment of a Negotiations Support Unit in the Department of State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 4518. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements with respect to the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARSHALL:

S. 4519. A bill to require implementation of primary indicators of performance for certain programs of workforce investment activities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 4520. A bill to require the Director of National Intelligence to prepare and make available a report on the wealth and corrupt activities of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, and for other purposes; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Mr. HAGERTY (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. LUMMIS, Mrs. BRITT, and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 4521. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to subject the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. WARNOCK (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 4522. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a public awareness campaign to increase awareness of the importance of father inclusion and engagement in improving overall health outcomes during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FETTERMAN (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 4523. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to expand community eligibility, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MORAN, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. LUMMIS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH):

S. 4524. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit discrimination against health care entities that do not participate in abortion, and to strengthen implementation and enforcement of Federal conscience laws; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. FETTERMAN):

S. 4525. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve program requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. BUDD (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 4526. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to expand the types of one-stop centers used to provide services; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHMITT:

S. 4527. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, with respect to the judicial review of agency interpretations of statutory and regulatory provisions; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. 4528. A bill to award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal posthumously to Marshall Walter ''Major'' Taylor in recognition of his significance to the nation as an athlete, trailblazer, role model, and equal rights advocate; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. HYDE–SMITH (for herself, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. LUMMIS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. BRITT, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. LEE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BUDD, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. VANCE):

S.J. Res. 96. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to ''Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 729. A resolution recognizing the contributions of African Americans to the musical heritage of the United States and the need for greater access to music education for African-American students and designating June 2024 as ''African-American Music Appreciation Month''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. Res. 730. A resolution designating June 23, 2024, as ''Social Media Harms Victim Remembrance Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 731. A resolution honoring the memory of the victims of the heinous attack at the Pulse nightclub on June 12, 2016; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 91

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

S. 234

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 234, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 633

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) 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. 711

At the request of Mr. BUDD, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 711, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the invaluable service that working dogs provide to society.

S. 1024

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1024, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement a comprehensive program to promote student access to defibrillation in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

S. 1318

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1318, a bill to provide enhanced protections for election workers.

S. 1424

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1424, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to improve health care coverage under vision and dental plans, and for other purposes.

S. 1558

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1558, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the brave women who served in World War II as members of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and U.S. Navy Nurse Corps.

S. 1573

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1573, a bill to reauthorize the Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who deliver Infants Early Act.

S. 1631

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1631, a bill to enhance the authority granted to the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice with respect to unmanned aircraft systems and unmanned aircraft, and for other purposes.

S. 1661

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1661, a bill to establish the Strength in Diversity Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1762

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1762, a bill to prohibit the use of corporal punishment in schools, and for other purposes.

S. 1800

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1800, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize and extend the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Prevention and Services program, and for other purposes.

S. 2539

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2539, a bill to clarify that, in awarding funding under title X of the Public Health Service Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services may not discriminate against eligible States, individuals, or other entities for refusing to counsel or refer for abortions.

S. 2805

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2805, a bill to amend chapter 111 of title 28, United States Code, to increase transparency and oversight of third-party funding by foreign persons, to prohibit third-party funding by foreign states and sovereign wealth funds, and for other purposes.

S. 2809

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2809, a bill to ensure references to opioid overdose reversal agents in certain grant programs of the Department of Health and Human Services are not limited to naloxone.

S. 2993

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2993, a bill to amend the Social Security Act and the Public

Health Service Act to permanently authorize certified community behavioral health clinics, and for other purposes.

S. 3308

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

S. 3352

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3352, a bill to provide for outreach to build awareness among former members of the Armed Forces of the process established pursuant to section 527 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 for the review of discharge characterizations, and for other purposes.

S. 3502

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) 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. 3548

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3548, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for hospital and insurer price transparency.

S. 3696

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3696, a bill to improve rights to relief for individuals affected by non-consensual activities involving intimate digital forgeries, and for other purposes.

S. 3869

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3869, a bill to require vehicles to comply with the rules of origin of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement in order to qualify for certain Federal programs.

S. 4075

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 4091

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4091, a bill to strengthen Federal efforts to counter antisemitism in the United States.

S. 4110

At the request of Mr. COONS, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 4110, a bill to reauthorize the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

S. 4142

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4142, a bill to increase the penalty for prohibited possession of a phone in a correctional facility.

S. 4158

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4158, a bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to take certain actions to increase diversity of ownership in the broadcasting industry, and for other purposes.

S. 4322

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) 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. 4330

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4330, a bill to amend Title XVIII of the Social Security Act to create a Radiation Oncology Case Rate Value Based Payment Program exempt from budget neutrality adjustment requirements, and to amend section 1128A of title XI of the Social Security Act to create a new statutory exception for the provision of free or discounted transportation for radiation oncology patients to receive radiation therapy services.

S. 4445

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) were added as cosponsors of S. 4445, a bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization.

S. 4447

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4447, a bill to allow women greater access to safe and effective oral contraceptive drugs intended for routine use, and to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on Federal funding of contraceptive methods.

S. 4484

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4484, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons of the International Criminal Court engaged in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person of the United States and its allies, and for other purposes.

S. 4506

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4506, a bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to clarify reporting requirements for information relating to providers of training services.

S.J. RES. 33

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 33, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to prohibit the use of slavery and involuntary servitude as a punishment for a crime.

S.J. RES. 91

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 91, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services relating to ''Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Minimum Staffing Standards for Long-Term Care Facilities and Medicaid Institutional Payment Transparency Reporting''.

S.J. RES. 93

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 93, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Commerce relating to ''Revision of Firearms License Requirements''.

S. RES. 574

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 574, a resolution expressing support for starting and growing a family through in vitro fertilization.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 729—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS TO THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE NEED FOR GREATER ACCESS TO MUSIC EDUCATION FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS AND DESIGNATING JUNE 2024 AS ''AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSIC APPRECIATION MONTH''

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. BROWN) submitted

the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 729

Whereas spirituals, ragtime, blues, jazz, gospel, classical composition, and countless other categories of music have been created or enhanced by African Americans and are etched into the history and culture of the United States;

Whereas the first Africans transported to the United States came from a variety of ethnic groups with a long history of distinct and cultivated musical traditions, brought musical instruments with them, and built new musical instruments in the United States;

Whereas spirituals were a distinct response to the conditions of African slavery in the United States and expressed the longing of slaves for spiritual and bodily freedom, for safety from harm and evil, and for relief from the hardships of slavery;

Whereas jazz, arguably the most creative and complex music that the United States has produced, combines the musical traditions of African Americans in New Orleans with the creative flexibility of blues music;

Whereas masterful trumpeters Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis achieved national and international recognition with the success of ''West End Blues'' by Louis Armstrong in the 1920s and ''So What'' by Miles Davis in the late 1950s;

Whereas Thomas Dorsey, the father of gospel music, used his composing talents to merge sacred and secular styles that created a revolution in music;

Whereas talented jazz pianist and vocalist Nathaniel Adams Coles recorded more than 150 singles and sold more than 50,000,000 records;

Whereas the talent of Ella Fitzgerald, a winner of 13 Grammy Awards, is epitomized by a rendition of ''Summertime'', a bluesy record accompanied by melodic vocals;

Whereas Natalie Cole, the daughter of Nathaniel Adams Coles, achieved musical success in the mid-1970s as a rhythm and blues artist with the hits ''This Will Be'' and ''Unforgettable'';

Whereas, in the 1940s, bebop evolved through jam sessions, which included trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and the alto saxophonist Charlie Parker, that were held at clubs in Harlem, New York, such as Minton's Playhouse;

Whereas earlier classical singers such as Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield, one of the first widely known African-American vocalists, and other early African-American singing pioneers, including Nellie Mitchell Brown, Marie Selika Williams, Rachel Walker Turner, Marian Anderson, and Flora Batson Bergen, paved the way for the female African-American concert singers who have achieved great popularity during the last 50 years;

Whereas the term ''rhythm and blues'' originated in the late 1940s as a way to describe recordings marketed to African Americans and replaced the term ''race music'';

Whereas lyrical themes in rhythm and blues often encapsulate the African-American experience of pain, the quest for freedom, joy, triumphs and failures, relationships, economics, and aspiration and were popularized by artists such as Ray Charles, Ruth Brown, Etta James, and Otis Redding;

Whereas soul music originated in the African-American community in the late 1950s and early 1960s, combines elements of African-American gospel music, rhythm and blues, and jazz, and was popularized by artists such as Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Ray Charles, Sam Cooke, Bill Withers, and Jackie Wilson;

Whereas Motown, founded as a record label in 1959, evolved into a distinctive style known for the ''Motown Sound'', a blend of pop and soul musical stylings made popular by prominent Black artists such as Marvin Gaye, James Mason, and Mary Wells;

Whereas Go-Go, developed by African-American musicians in the mid-1960s, combines funk, soul, and Latin music, was popularized by artists such as Chuck Brown and Rare Essence, and is the ''official music of Washington, DC'';

Whereas Harry Belafonte, a singer, actor, and activist, and a supporter and confidant of Martin Luther King, Jr., throughout the civil rights movement, influenced by his Caribbean roots, popularized Calypso music in the United States;

Whereas, in the early 1970s, the musical style of disco emerged and was popularized by programs such as Soul Train and by artists such as Donna Summer;

Whereas reggae is a genre of music that originated in Jamaica in the late 1960s and incorporates some of the musical elements of rhythm and blues, jazz, mento, calypso, and African music, and was popularized by artists such as Bob Marley;

Whereas rock and roll was developed from African-American musical styles such as gospel and rhythm and blues and was popularized by artists such as Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Little Richard, and Jimi Hendrix;

Whereas rap, arguably the most complex and influential form of hip-hop culture, combines blues, jazz, and soul and elements of the African-American musical tradition with Caribbean calypso, dub, and dance hall reggae;

Whereas the development and popularity of old-style rap combined confident beats with wordplay and storytelling, highlighting the struggle of African-American youth growing up in underresourced neighborhoods;

Whereas Dayton, Ohio, known as the ''Land of Funk'', helped give rise to the genre of funk as a mixture of soul, jazz, and rhythm and blues and popularized bands such as the Ohio Players, Heatwave, Roger and Zapp, and Lakeside;

Whereas contemporary rhythm and blues, which originated in the late 1970s and combines elements of pop, rhythm and blues, soul, funk, hip hop, gospel, and electronic dance music, was popularized by artists such as Whitney Houston and Aaliyah;

Whereas Prince Rogers Nelson, who was known for electric performances and a wide vocal range, pioneered music that integrated a wide variety of styles, including funk, rock, contemporary rhythm and blues, new wave, soul, psychedelia, and pop;

Whereas the incredible Billie Holiday created a cultural reset by recording ''Strange Fruit'', originally a poem that depicted lynching in the southern United States, which became the first protest song of the civil rights era;

Whereas the talented jazz artist Duke Ellington pushed boundaries with his hits ''It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing'' and ''Sophisticated Lady'' and received 13 Grammy Awards and the Presidential Gold Medal;

Whereas Sister Rosetta Tharpe, known as the ''Godmother of Rock 'n' Roll'', combined her distinctive guitar style with melodic blues and traditional gospel music that influenced the likes of Aretha Franklin and Chuck Berry;

Whereas Tina Turner, known as the ''Queen of Rock 'n' Roll'', stunned audiences with her powerful vocals, was the first woman or African-American musician to be featured on the cover of Rolling Stone, and received 12 Grammy Awards during her lifetime;

Whereas trailblazer Florence Price was the first noted African-American female composer to gain national status and the first African-American woman to have her composed work performed by a major national symphony orchestra;

Whereas the classical singer Marian Anderson broke down racial barriers by performing at the Lincoln Memorial in 1939 after being denied the opportunity to sing in front of an integrated audience at the Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall in Washington, DC;

Whereas country music singer Charley Pride was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2000 and has had more than 40 hits reach number 1 on the country charts;

Whereas Nina Simone, one of the most prominent and extraordinary soul singers, has music spanning more than 4 decades that impacted generations with detailed storytelling;

Whereas musician Bobby McFerrin brought joy to audiences everywhere with his smash hit ''Don't Worry Be Happy'';

Whereas famous saxophone player John Coltrane made his impact on genres like bebop, jazz, and rhythm and blues through his work such as ''A Love Supreme'';

Whereas David Jolicoeur, also known as Trugoy the Dove, was a founding member of hip-hop groups De La Soul and Native Tongues and used his passion for rap music to spread positive messages within his community;

Whereas musical force Marvin Gaye used his versatility as an artist to produce hits like ''I Heard It Through the Grapevine'' and ''Ain't No Mountain High Enough'';

Whereas, a recent study by the National Arts Education Data Project found that 49 percent of all students attending schools with a predominately African-American student population do not participate in school music programs;

Whereas African-American students scored the lowest of all ethnicities in the most recent National Assessment for Educational Progress arts assessment;

Whereas African-American students often receive a music education that does not reflect their own culture;

Whereas students who are eligible for the school lunch program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) have significantly lower scores on the music portion of the National Assessment for Educational Progress arts assessment than students who are ineligible for that program, which suggests that students in low-income families are disadvantaged in the subject of music;

Whereas a study found that—

(1) nearly ⅔ of music ensemble students were White and middle class, and only 15 percent of those students were African American; and

(2) only 7 percent of music teacher licensure candidates were African American; and

Whereas students of color face many barriers to accessing music education and training, especially students in large urban public schools: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes—

(A) the contributions of African Americans to the musical heritage of the United States;

(B) the wide array of talented and popular African-American musical artists, composers, songwriters, and musicians who are underrecognized for contributions to music;

(C) the achievements, talent, and hard work of African-American pioneer artists and the obstacles that those artists overcame to gain recognition;

(D) the need for African-American students to have greater access to, and participation

in, culturally relevant music programs in schools across the United States; and

(E) Black History Month and African-American Music Appreciation Month as an important time—

(i) to celebrate the impact of the African-American musical heritage on the musical heritage of the United States; and

(ii) to encourage greater access to music education so that the next generation may continue to greatly contribute to the musical heritage of the United States; and

(2) designates June 2024 as ''African-American Music Appreciation Month''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 730—DESIGNATING JUNE 23, 2024, AS ''SOCIAL MEDIA HARMS VICTIM REMEMBRANCE DAY''

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mrs. BLACKBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 730

Whereas the internet has revolutionized the ability to exchange information, improved the accessibility of education, reduced the costs of healthcare through telehealth, and stimulated the national economy by providing millions of jobs and trillions of dollars in gross product each year;

Whereas social media has become central to modern communication, bringing together people from across the globe;

Whereas teenagers spend at least 8 hours on screens per day, on average;

Whereas 93 percent of teenagers use social media;

Whereas 51 percent of teenagers spend nearly 5 hours on social media each day;

Whereas social media presents significant risks, especially to adolescents, including the perpetuation and promotion of harmful and dangerous behaviors and connections;

Whereas countless individuals and families have suffered harms, including death, because of experiences on social media platforms, including cyberbullying, harassment, exposure to sex trafficking, and exploitation;

Whereas social media has been linked to an increase in illicit drug poisoning and overdose related deaths;

Whereas social media use has been linked to self-harming behavior and suicidal ideation in youth;

Whereas suicide has become one of the leading causes of death in children aged 15 to 19;

Whereas it is vital to recognize and honor the experiences of those who have been harmed by social media, including the victims, survivors, and their families;

Whereas commemorating Social Media Harms Victim Remembrance Day provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of social media and to advocate for measures to effectively mitigate these harms; and

Whereas establishing a designated day of remembrance fosters empathy, solidarity, and support for those who have endured social media-related trauma and encourages efforts to promote digital well-being and online safety: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates June 23, 2024, as ''Social Media Harms Victim Remembrance Day'' to honor the individuals who have lost their lives and have suffered harm because of social media;

(2) reaffirms its commitment to protecting individuals from harm in digital spaces and promoting a culture of respect, empathy, and responsibility online by acknowledging the significance of Social Media Harms Victim Remembrance Day;

(3) urges individuals, communities, organizations, and social media platforms to observe Social Media Harms Victim Remembrance Day through activities such as remembrance ceremonies, educational events, and advocacy efforts aimed at raising awareness about social media harms and supporting victims and survivors;

(4) calls upon relevant government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and stakeholders to collaborate in developing and implementing initiatives to address social media harms effectively, including enhancing digital literacy, promoting online safety measures, and supporting victims' rights; and

(5) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit enrolled copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Chair of the Federal Trade Commission, and the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to promote awareness of Social Media Harms Victim Remembrance Day and encourage actions to prevent social media-related harm.

SENATE RESOLUTION 731—HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HEINOUS ATTACK AT THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB ON JUNE 12, 2016

Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 731

Whereas, on June 12, 2016, a gunman inspired by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria targeted the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, where he killed 49 innocent victims and wounded dozens more in a despicable attack;

Whereas the attack at the Pulse nightclub was an attack on the LGBTQ community, the Hispanic community, the City of Orlando, the State of Florida, and the United States;

Whereas the Orlando community continues to mourn the tragic loss of life but has demonstrated remarkable strength, unity, and resilience in the aftermath of the horrendous event;

Whereas June 12 is designated as ''Pulse Remembrance Day'' in the State of Florida to honor the victims and survivors of the senseless attack;

Whereas the people of the United States continue to pray for those affected by the tragedy; and

Whereas June 12, 2024, marks 8 years since the lives of the 49 innocent victims were tragically cut short by this senseless act of terrorism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the 49 innocent victims killed in the attack at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, on June 12, 2016, and offers heartfelt condolences to the families, loved ones, and friends of the victims;

(2) honors the dozens of survivors of the attack and pledges continued resolve to stand against terrorism and hate; and

(3) expresses gratitude to the brave law enforcement and emergency medical personnel who responded to the attack.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I have 16 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in closed session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 2:30 p.m.

COMMTTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 9:45 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet in closed session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting and a briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY

The Subcommittee on Cybersecurity of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in closed session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 11:15 a.m.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in closed session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 10:15 a.m.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

The Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet in closed session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 10 a.m.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

The Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 10:45 a.m.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the following detailee from my committee be granted floor privileges until the end of the 118th Congress: It is James Bartholomew.

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, let me ask permission, if there is no objection, that Amanda Padgett—Senator MERKLEY's intern—be granted privileges of the floor for the balance of the day.

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

COUNTERING THREATS AND ATTACKS ON OUR JUDGES ACT

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 3984 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3984) to amend the State Justice Institute Act of 1984 to authorize the State Justice Institute to provide awards to certain organizations to establish a State judicial threat intelligence and resource center.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. OSSOFF. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 3984) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 3984

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Countering Threats and Attacks on Our Judges Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Section 202 of the State Justice Institute Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10701) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (7), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (8), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(9) 'eligible organization' means a national nonprofit organization that—

''(A) provides technical assistance and training on, and has expertise and national-level experience in, judicial security and safety at the State and local levels;

''(B) has experience in courthouse design and courthouse security design standards;

''(C) has an understanding of State judicial operations and public access to judicial services; and

''(D) has experience working with a wide array of different judges and court systems, including an understanding of the challenges facing trial courts, appellate courts, rural courts, and limited-jurisdiction courts at the State and local levels.''.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE JUDICIAL THREAT INTELLIGENCE AND RESOURCE CENTER.

Section 206(c) of the State Justice Institute Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10705(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (14), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (15) as paragraph (16); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following:

''(15) to provide financial and technical support to eligible organizations to establish, implement, and operate a State judicial threat and intelligence resource center to—

''(A) provide technical assistance and training around judicial security, including—

''(i) providing judicial officer safety education and training for judicial officers, courts, and local law enforcement;

''(ii) creating resources and guides around judicial security; and

''(iii) providing physical security assessments for courts, homes, and other facilities where judicial officers and staff conduct court-related business;

''(B) proactively monitor threats to the safety of State and local judges and court staff;

''(C) coordinate with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies to mitigate threats to the safety of State and local judges and court staff;

''(D) develop standardized incident reporting and threat evaluation practices for State and local courts in coordination with State and local law enforcement and fusion centers;

''(E) develop a national database for reporting, tracking, and sharing information about threats and incidents towards judicial officers and court staff at local and State levels with entities working in the interest of judicial security, including State and local law enforcement and fusion centers; and

''(F) coordinate research to identify, examine, and advance best practices around judicial security.''.

SEC. 4. REPORTS.

Not later than 1 year after the date on which a State judicial threat intelligence and resource center is established under paragraph (15) of section 206(c) of the State Justice Institute Act of 1984, as added by section 3 of this Act, the State Justice Institute shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives an annual report on the number of threats to State and local judiciary members and court staff, with breakdown of types of threats and level of seriousness.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HEINOUS ATTACK AT THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB ON JUNE 12, 2016

Mr. OSSOFF. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 731, which is at the desk.

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

The senior assistant clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 731) honoring the memory of the victims of the heinous attack at the Pulse nightclub on June 12, 2016.

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 731) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2024

Mr. OSSOFF. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, June 13; 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 Chang nomination postcloture.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. OSSOFF. 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 6:54 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, June 13, 2024, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate June 12, 2024:

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

DAVID ROSNER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2027.

LINDSAY S. SEE, OF WEST VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2028.