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Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, our Father, how excellent is Your Name in all the Earth. From dawn to sunset, Your mercies sustain us.

Today, inspire our Senators to embrace Your promises. May they remember Your promises to supply their needs, to never forsake them, and to prevent anything from separating them from Your love.

Lord, bestow Your blessings upon our lawmakers, making them wiser, stronger, and better, glorifying You in their work. Use them to advance Your Kingdom in our Nation and world as they attune their will to Your purposes. Create in them a life of purity, honesty, and altruism that contributes to solving the problems we face.

We pray in Your blessed Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 6, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 4, S. 6, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask consent to speak for 3 minutes as in morning business.

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

NATIONAL TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, January is National Trafficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month, so today, Senator CORTEZ MASTO and I are introducing a resolution to honor victims and to raise very needed awareness.

As I speak, victims are being trafficked across our southern border. We each have a role to play in protecting the most vulnerable among us, especially women and children, from becoming victims of trafficking.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am committed to making human trafficking prevention a priority in this Congress, and I thank the Senator from Nevada for leading this effort.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, on his watch, President Biden wiped away student debt for more than 5 million borrowers, stiffing taxpayers with a heavier burden. That is on top of trillions of dollars in par-

tisan deficit spending that fueled the fires of inflation to 20 percent during his administration.

His failed border policies allowed more than 10 million people to come into the country illegally.

I remember, during his inaugural address, President Biden pledged to unite Americans. At that time, I welcomed that very much. Unfortunately, his administration's actions did not match those lofty words of uniting Americans.

During his 4 years in the Oval Office, the 46th President adopted the divisive policies of leftwing ideologues and the more radical candidates that he beat in the Presidential primary. It was a notable departure from my 28 years serving together with him here in the U.S. Senate.

Even on his way out the door, President Biden doubled down on the dark and divisive rhetoric that failed his party in this most recent election. He put illegal immigrants before the security of Americans. He doubled down on class warfare, hammering, as you so often hear, the same nail that the "wealthy" need to pay their "fair share" when our Tax Code is among the most progressive in the world.

Many Iowans question the fairness of pardoning the President's son, including for tax evasion and crimes not even specified, especially when President Biden promised that he would not pardon his son. Iowans also tell me that wiping away student debt isn't fair to those who saved and sacrificed to pay their fair share.

In this Congress, I will work with President Trump to put America first and strengthen the economy so hard-working families, farmers, and small businesses can get ahead and, of course, stay ahead. That includes renewing the Trump tax cuts, securing our border, and securing peace through strength.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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



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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

CABINET NOMINATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in his inaugural address yesterday, President Trump spoke of his confidence in America. He spoke of the country's future: prosperity, security, strength. And I share the President's confidence and his optimism about what we can accomplish in the coming years.

President Trump has brought a new direction to Washington, and yesterday marked the beginning of a new era.

Here in the Senate, we have begun the process of confirming the President's Cabinet. Within hours of President Trump taking office, we confirmed the first of his Cabinet nominees—Marco Rubio to be Secretary of State—in a unanimous vote.

Secretary Rubio demonstrated his command of foreign policy last week at his confirmation hearing. He made it clear that under his leadership, the State Department will be focused on its core mission.

In his own words, that mission is “to promote peace abroad, and security and prosperity here at home.”

Gone are the days of a foreign policy exporting progressive ideologies, appeasing our adversaries, and demonstrating weakness on the world stage. The State Department is back in the business of advancing America's interests.

This is a welcome change in direction to our foreign policy, and Secretary Rubio is ready to hit the ground running. During his time in the Senate, he was a leading voice, articulating America's role in the world, and he has a clear command of the issues facing the world today.

As a Senator, he was vocal about the threat the Chinese Communist Party poses and the stakes of the competition between the United States and China. He recognizes the need for American leadership in Latin America to promote democracy and justice.

And he is clear-eyed about the threats that America faces from other countries as well as from nonstate actors.

I look forward to working with Secretary Rubio and the Trump administration to restore American strength abroad and promote peace and prosperity here at home.

In the coming days, the Senate will hold additional votes on the President's national security team. We expect a vote on the nomination of John Ratcliffe to be Director of the CIA later today. Mr. Ratcliffe, like Secretary Rubio, earned bipartisan support after his confirmation hearing last week.

He was reported out of the Intelligence Committee with a bipartisan vote yesterday, and he will bring valuable knowledge and experience to his new post, including from his time on the House Intelligence Committee and as Director of National Intelligence in the first Trump administration.

Under the Biden administration, the intelligence community made some notable misses. In 2021, the intelligence community failed to anticipate the swift collapse of Afghanistan in response to President Biden's decision to go ahead with the withdrawal, a withdrawal that cost the lives of 13 American servicemembers.

In 2022, the intelligence community warned that Ukraine would fall in days in the face of a Russian attack. Yet Kyiv is still firmly in Ukrainian hands almost 3 years later.

And in 2023, Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel took place with little or no warning from the intelligence community. And unfortunately, the list goes on. We need a return to fundamentals.

Last week, in his confirmation hearing, Mr. Ratcliffe promised to return to the CIA's core mission. That means recruiting spies to collect intelligence and providing objective intelligence analysis without bias.

Mr. Ratcliffe brings the right experience and the right approach to the CIA, and I look forward to working with him in this position.

REPUBLICAN SENATORS-ELECT

Mr. President, before I close, I want to say a word about two new Senators who will take office later today. I am very pleased to welcome Ashley Moody of Florida and John Husted of Ohio to the U.S. Senate. Ashley Moody began her career as a lawyer in private practice, and in all the spare time that a young lawyer has, she volunteered to help domestic violence victims seeking protection in court.

At the age of 31, after already practicing at a law firm and as a Federal prosecutor, she became the youngest judge in the State of Florida. During her time as a judge, she recruited volunteer attorneys to stand with children whose parents did not appear in court with them and developed a mentoring program for at-risk youth.

In 2018, she was elected attorney general in Florida, a post from which she held the Biden administration accountable and defended Florida law. And now, she is bringing her energy and experience here to the U.S. Senate.

Being sworn in alongside Ashley Moody today will be Jon Husted, Ohio's new Senator. “Senator” is just the latest title that Ohioans have called Jon Husted. He has been a State representative, speaker of the statehouse, a State senator, secretary of state for Ohio, Lieutenant Governor, and now U.S. Senator.

No matter his title, Ohioans know that they can depend on Jon Husted to fight for a smaller and more efficient government that genuinely serves its

citizens. And I am very pleased to welcome him here to the Senate.

Both our new Senators bring valuable experience, expertise, and perspective to the Senate Republican majority. And the whole Senate will benefit from their joining our ranks. I look forward to working with them.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

RYAN CORBETT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this morning I have some amazingly great news. After more than 2 years of being unjustly detained by the Taliban, Ryan Corbett from Dansville, NY, is finally free and on his way home. In just a few hours—praise God—Ryan will be back on American soil and will be able to hug his wife Anna and his beautiful children, Miriam and Caleb and Ketsie. They represent the very best of Upstate New York—hard-working, God-fearing, persistent, and humble. Soon, Ryan will be back home in Western New York in the community he loved so much and that waited so desperately for his return.

I met with the Corbett family repeatedly. Every time I met with them, his wonderful wife Anna—strong but quiet—never gave up; and his beautiful children who so miss their dad, you could just feel it. And every time I met with them, just my heart went out, and I said “I have to do more and more and more.” It is a moment we have all prayed for and hoped for. And thank God this day has finally come. What a blessing. What an amazing day.

When I heard Ryan's story from his family and listened to them as they pushed and pushed for his release, I saw that even in the darkest moment, even when hope seemed lost, the Corbett family never, never gave up, and they never got angry. They never pointed fingers or called names. They just kept persisting and persisting and persisting. And their beautiful, hard, unrelenting, patient persistence has paid off.

I worked very closely with the Corbett family to build bipartisan support for Ryan's release. We brought attention to his imprisonment and made dozens of calls to elevate his case to the very highest levels of government. I want to thank President Biden and his administration's negotiating team as well as my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for helping bring Ryan back.

We can finally, finally say these five amazing words: Ryan Corbett is coming home. He is coming home to New York. He is coming home to Dansville.

I can't wait to see him and welcome him back very, very soon.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. President, now on the first day of President Trump's presidency, moments after taking the oath of office, President Trump declared that it was the dawning of a golden age here in America. But on day one into his presidency, it is clear that Donald Trump's golden age is not for the working and middle class. His golden age, rather, is for the special interests, the wealthy elite, and the corporate insiders he promised to take on as President. Just look at his first day in the White House, which shows exactly what I am saying.

On day one, President Trump, in his Executive orders, made it harder for Americans to save on prescription drug costs. President Trump cleared the way for Big Oil and polluters and halted leasing of offshore wind farms. He took steps to make it harder to enroll in the ACA and made Medicaid less generous. He removed the United States from the Paris Climate Accords.

Nothing the President did on day one lowered grocery prices. Nothing helped Americans achieve their dream of owning a home. Nothing will help working families earn more and save more. Their drug costs will go up. The cost of buying and maintaining a home will go up. The cost of healthcare will go up. The cost of energy will go up.

So who is exactly Donald Trump's golden age for? Not for working Americans; that is for sure. President Trump's golden age is one for America's biggest drug companies, who can now worry less about lowering their prices. It is a golden age for America's richest oil executives, who want nothing more than to kill clean jobs and deepen America's dependence on fossil fuels. It is a golden age for America's top 1 percent, who want another trillion-dollar tax break, paid for on the backs of workers in the middle class.

And, sadly, it is a golden age for lawlessness and lawbreakers who were pardoned yesterday by President Trump. There is no other way to describe President Trump's pardon of January 6 offenders than un-American. Let's be clear. President Trump didn't just pardon protesters; he pardoned some people convicted of assaulting police officers and seditious conspiracy. It is a betrayal of the highest order of our Capitol police officers who risked their lives to keep us safe.

When President Trump talks about a golden age, he is talking about a golden age for drug companies, powerful oil executives, and rioters who attack our police and attack our democracy. That is not the golden age Americans want.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, nominations, this week the Senate will continue exercising its constitutional duty to offer advice and consent on the President's nominees.

Last night, the Senate unanimously confirmed our former colleague, Sen-

ator Rubio, as Secretary of State. Even though Senator Rubio and Democrats differ on many issues, it was clear he was very well-qualified for the job and deserved confirmation.

Now, if every one of President Trump's nominees were as qualified and experienced as Senator Rubio, they would sail through the Senate with bipartisan support. But, sadly, too many of the President's nominees do not match Senator Rubio's caliber, too many have troubling backgrounds, too many seem unprepared for the job and proved so during testimony, too many nominees have been rushed through before their paperwork has been submitted.

Senator Rubio was thorough and quick with his background checks and documentation. He did it the right way. But too many other nominees have delayed and dragged their feet. So it is wrong to try and rush them through.

And too many of the President's nominees seem more interested in pushing the ultraright's extremist agenda than in fighting for working- and middle-class families.

Later today, I will meet with President Trump's nominee for OMB Director, Russell Vought. Mr. Vought is one of the most troubling nominees that President Trump has selected. He is about as ultraright as they come. So during our meeting, I hope to get a clarity on a simple question: Who will Mr. Vought fight for if confirmed? Is it the American people, or is it Project 2025, which Americans have already rejected?

I look forward to our conversation because I believe it is important both sides hear directly and candidly from the President's nominees before we are asked to vote on their nomination. After all, the debate over President Trump's nominees is not just about senior-level positions in the administration; the debate on nominees is a debate about the President's very agenda and about who will benefit. Whose side are these nominees on?

President Trump promised an agenda that will fight for the working and middle class. He promised a golden age for the country, but actions speak louder than words. And so far, the President's nominees suggest that if there is any golden age coming, it is only one for the very, very elite.

So Democrats will continue to get the President's nominees on the record on very important questions. Will Donald Trump's nominees focus on cutting costs, or will they be more interested in cutting sweetheart deals for big businesses? Will they protect our communities, or will they focus more on protecting special interests? Will they serve middle-class and working families, or will they serve the swamp? That is what the American people want to know.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are certain things we all agree on, I believe. No. 1, our border must be secure, and, No. 2, we should deport any dangerous individuals who are here illegally, period. But the Executive order signed by President Trump last night did not target criminals or even those who entered our country without authorization.

For example, the President suspended the task force on the reunification families created in the aftermath of his disastrous family separation policy of his first Presidency. Over 1,000 families remain separated today—in other words, children who don't know where their parents are. This task force was created to reunite them—simply that—and, now, it has been suspended. Stopping this task force does not make us a safer Nation and certainly doesn't help these children.

The President also suspended the Refugee Admissions Program, which provides a safe haven for those fleeing oppressive regimes around the world. They include Afghans, Afghan women, Uighurs, and Rohingya. Many refugee applicants wait decades to come to the United States lawfully, and every single one of them must undergo a rigorous vetting, more than any other group of immigrants coming into the United States. I have worked in and with these refugee camps. They literally stay in tents and temporary shelters for months and years, going through background checks before they are even considered eligible for coming to the United States. Yet the Trump administration has already canceled flights for over 1,600 Afghan refugees scheduled to come here.

Who are these people? Many of them are families of Active-Duty U.S. military personnel and those who are at risk because they fought on our side, defending our troops in the Afghan theater. Stopping these flights of friendly refugees coming to America, after having helped us and risked their lives to help us, doesn't make America safe. It sends a message, sadly, to allies supporting our troops around the world that we may not be there to support them when they need us.

The President also announced his plan to attempt to deny citizenship to children born in the United States if their parents are not citizens or lawful permanent residents. I ask anyone who is interested in this issue to do something very basic: Read the first sentence of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. It is in clear violation of our Constitution to eliminate birthright citizenship. It does nothing to make our country safer—nothing.

We need to secure our border. That is why I worked for years to pass bipartisan legislation that fixes our broken immigration system.

Mr. President, before you came to the Senate, we considered comprehensive immigration reform on a bipartisan basis. I was part of an eight Senators task force—Democrats and Republicans, equal numbers. We wrote a bill, brought it to the floor, and got over 60 votes for the bill. Unfortunately, the House, under Republican control at the time, wouldn't take up the issue. We had an approach that still ought to be considered when it comes to changing our immigration system to make it safer for America.

But we also need to protect millions of noncitizens who Americans rely on each day. All across America this morning, many parents headed off to work and stopped to drop their kid off at daycare. They handed their child over to an undocumented person who works during the course of the day to keep your child safe and to make sure they are there at night when you return to pick them up.

The same thing is true about nursing homes and a lot of care facilities. Parents and grandparents are being carefully watched every minute of every day by undocumented people who are working there, whose wages aren't the greatest, but these people are willing to take on this job. For most people, it is a critically important job for their family. They want their mom to not only go to breakfast with a smile but to be escorted back to her room safely. They need undocumented people for that to happen. A high percentage of those who work in these facilities qualify as undocumented.

Immigrants have been a key part of America. I know that, and I say that as a son of an immigrant to this country. Our Nation has always needed immigrants. It still does. They put food on our tables, they care for our kids, and they help care for our parents and grandparents. What would we do without them? They don't deserve to live in fear every single day that they are going to be part of a mass deportation.

Any real solution to our immigration challenge must give them stability. Americans deserve a real fix to our broken immigration system that protects America, protects American workers, and treats immigrants fairly.

Mr. President, 13 years ago, in response to a bipartisan request from myself and the late Republican Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana, President Obama established the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or the DACA Program. DACA has protected from deportation over 800,000 young people, all of whom arrived in our country as children, some as young as a few months old.

These young kids are known as Dreamers. I know a little bit about that. I was the sponsor of the original DREAM Act, over 20 years ago. They grew up alongside our kids, with the

same hopes and ambitions. They stood up in a classroom every morning and pledged allegiance to that flag, believing it was their flag too. Many have gone on to serve our Nation as service-members, doctors, and first responders. They believe in the American dream just as much as we do.

Without permanent legal protection, these young people have been forced to live in uncertainty. They have to renew their DACA status every 2 years, go through a background check, and pay a filing fee.

In December, President Trump committed to work with Congress on a plan to protect Dreamers. I am looking forward to that. I worked with the President in his first term, and I am ready to work with him again. Let's get this done as part of immigration reform.

But, last Friday, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals declared the DACA Program illegal again. The decision left in place protections for current DACA recipients, while the appeal is pending, but left other Dreamers in limbo. The time to act is now.

I urge the President to come to the table to negotiate a solution for Dreamers as part of immigration reform.

JANUARY 6 PARDONS

Mr. President, on another matter, on January 6, 2021, I was seated in the chair right here on the floor of the Senate. A solemn constitutional proceeding was disrupted when a mob of thugs attacked and trashed the U.S. Capitol in an attempt to overturn a free and fair election.

I remember it well.

Vice President Pence was sitting in the chair that you are occupying now. The Secret Service came in and, literally, physically removed him, out that door of the Chamber.

They then announced to us to sit tight. This was going to be a safe room in the Capitol. There was a mob that was descending on the Capitol at the moment. We are going to keep everybody safe. They warned us that there were a lot of people coming into this Chamber to line the walls because they wanted to be kept safe from this mob that was coming into the Capitol.

Ten minutes later, a Capitol Hill policeman stood up and said: New plans. We are all leaving immediately. Get out of your chairs and go out that door. We will lead you to another safe room.

That was the circumstance of January 6, 2021. I remember it well. I saw the mob as we went outside. It was growing in size, thousands of people descending on the Capitol. That was the grim reality of that day.

At the end of the day, the mob confronted the Capitol Hill police and the DC police who were here, trying to keep this building and keep us safe as Members of Congress who were doing our constitutional duty.

The subsequent deaths of five of our law enforcement officers because of that mob and the injuries to approximately 140 others are a matter of fact,

many of whom still pay a price day for what happened on January 6, 2021.

And now the attackers have been pardoned by President Trump, who literally sent them from a rally to come up here, and what happened happened.

Consider the following individuals who received their pardon yesterday from President Trump:

David Dempsey was one of them. He was convicted of assaulting police officers by using "his hands, feet, flagpoles, crutches, pepper spray, broken pieces of furniture, and anything else he could get his hands on" as weapons.

Shane Jenkins was another one, convicted of using two tomahawk axes to break into the Capitol and assaulting police officers by throwing a wooden desk drawer and flagpole at them.

Kyle Fitzsimons was convicted for five separate assaults against law enforcement, including one that caused career-ending and life-altering injuries to U.S. Capitol Police Sergeant Aquilino Gonell.

And Kenneth Bonawitz, a member of the so-called Proud Boys, assaulted at least six officers, including placing one officer in a chokehold and lifting him up by the neck. Bonawitz injured one officer so severely that the officer has been forced to retire.

All of these people were among the roughly 1,500 January 6 insurrectionists who President Trump pardoned last night.

What happened to claims by a party of being in favor of law and order?

Even President Trump's own Vice President said last week—the Senator from the State of Ohio:

If you committed violence on [January 6], obviously you shouldn't be pardoned.

That didn't apply last night. All the people I just described were pardoned by President Trump for their actions in harming law enforcement in the Capitol on January 6.

Last week, I asked President Trump's Attorney General nominee, Pam Bondi, about pardoning January 6 rioters who assaulted police officers. She said: "I condemn any violence on a law enforcement officer."

Don't we all?

One of my Judiciary Committee Republican colleagues actually criticized me last week for even asking that question. Here is what he said:

I find it hard to believe that the President of the United States . . . would look at facts that were used to convict the violent people on January 6th and say it was just an intemperate moment. . . . it's an absurd and unfair hypothetical.

The action by President Trump is unfair, but, unfortunately, it is no longer hypothetical. These law enforcement officers risk their lives for us—literally, all of us, not just the elected officials but the thousands of visitors who come to this Capitol. They stand quietly by, watching to make sure that nothing goes wrong, but they are literally risking their lives for us every single day.

What was the message last night of pardoning the people who assaulted them on January 6, 2021?

Some people died as a result of that attack. Every American should be appalled.

I am very unhappy that these men and women who give us so much every single day are taken for granted so much that the President pardoned those who attacked them. That was wrong. We should stand by those who stand by us, and we should be willing to say to them: Thank you. Thank you for risking your lives for our visitors, for Members of Congress. And those who assaulted you were not just on a pleasant Capitol tour; they had a goal in mind. That goal, unfortunately, was at the expense of these men and women in uniform.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). The Senator from Texas.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as the world knows by now, yesterday, President Trump was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States. I think he is only the second President who has been sworn in on two different occasions. He is both the 45th and the 47th President of the United States.

It was an honor to see him take the oath of office yesterday in the Capitol Rotunda. I only regret, because of the weather, that more people weren't able to see that in person. I was with a number of my Texas constituents this morning. They are not accustomed to the cold temperatures, but they were prepared to dress warmly and to deal with it. They all seemed to be in good spirits because of the outcome of the election, and they were happy to see the President sworn in, as was I.

I want to express my personal congratulations, along with that of millions of people across the country, to President Trump and our former colleague J.D. VANCE.

I have told people, when J.D. VANCE came to the Senate, I actually had met him before because when he went to Yale Law School, he actually was an intern on the Judiciary Committee that I serve on, and he worked in my office for a very brief period of time. I didn't know him then. As I told him, I knew him before he was famous, before he wrote "Hillbilly Elegy" and his career took off like a rocket ship. I am proud of what Vice President VANCE has been able to accomplish.

If you think about it, here is a guy who at 40 years old is Vice President of the United States, and if you read or listen to "Hillbilly Elegy"—about the circumstances under which J.D. VANCE was raised—you can see that he has overcome a lot of obstacles in life. He served as a U.S. marine, and I know he was celebrating last night with the Ohio State championship win, being a graduate of that school. It was great to see him get sworn in yesterday as well. Again, only in America—only in America—can something like that happen.

IMMIGRATION

It is no secret either that in the last 4 years, the Biden administration's

policies have been nothing but a disaster for the Nation, and no State has been more negatively affected than my State, the State of Texas. We have 1,200 miles of common border with Mexico, and the open border policies of the Biden administration have been an unmitigated disaster from a public health standpoint and a public safety standpoint. Many of our border communities have simply been overwhelmed and overrun just by the sheer volume of people coming from all around the world.

This is not the sort of immigration that you have seen in the past where poor people have come to the United States across the border to work and send money home. You literally have seen, with the Biden open border policies, people from all around the world show up and claim asylum or be paroled into the interior of the United States, which is like a blinking green light to anybody and everybody who wants to come to America, knowing they would be released under the Biden administration's policies.

We have seen millions. Nobody really knows for sure how many millions of people come and basically move into the United States outside of our legal immigration program, which I think is very important, but there are also the roughly 2 million, we think, "got-aways"—people evading law enforcement—and you can only imagine what they are up to. We know that there was no reason to evade law enforcement under the Biden administration if you didn't have a criminal record or if you weren't up to no good, because you knew you would be released. So it only was logical—it only made sense—that these were people who were either carrying drugs or had criminal records or were otherwise engaged in antisocial activities. Like I said, we think maybe about 2 million of those people made their way into the interior of the United States.

One of the most important ways that President Trump began with his signature on these Executive orders, beginning yesterday, was to reverse the policies of the Biden administration and to get our country back on track in securing our southern border. This border crisis, as I indicated, is one that President Biden himself practically invited—invited—during his first campaign when he encouraged migrants to "immediately surge the border." I mean, this is crazy talk if you think about it, but that is what he said. Of course, this is perhaps the one campaign promise President Biden actually kept.

In the early months of 2021, President Biden appointed Vice President Harris—we all remember this—as his border czar. Well, he tasked her with the role of managing this growing surge of migrants. Even back then, in the early stages of what was to become a historic humanitarian disaster, some expressed concerns that Ms. Harris might not be up to the task, but when she was made

aware of and made to answer for her lack of qualifications, she hadn't actually been to the border.

Specifically, as to the fact she hadn't been there, Kamala Harris made light of the question with a famous quip.

She said:

And I haven't been to Europe. . . . I don't understand the point you're making.

Somebody pointed out that she hadn't been to the border. She said, "I haven't been to Europe," and she didn't understand the point. Well, everybody else got it even if she didn't. She was singularly unqualified, and she bore this out, I think, by her service as the border czar. She was singularly unqualified to be the border czar, and it took another 3 months for her to accomplish her one and only visit to the Texas-Mexico border.

I can tell you that, as I said, Texas has a 1,200-mile common border, and the United States has a 2,000-mile common border, and not every piece of the border is the same. If you go to Arizona or California or New Mexico, many of those places are very different from the border with Texas and Mexico. But on this one visit to the border in Texas, Vice President Harris steered clear of ground zero of the surge of illegal immigration, which is the Rio Grande Valley. That was the epicenter of the border crisis, yet she was a no-show. Instead, she traveled to El Paso—which is another border town but very, very different—for a sanitized, made-for-TV visit.

To add insult to injury, the Vice President visited Texas multiple times last summer to fundraise and to campaign for President, but she didn't take the time to go to the border at all. But this should come as no surprise because she seemed completely disinterested in performing any function as the border czar. Under her negligent watch, the surge at the beginning of President Biden's Presidency only went from bad to worse.

The Biden-Harris administration presided over daily, weekly, and monthly records of illegal crossings across the border. Customs and Border Protection, the Federal Agency responsible, has tracked more than 10 million encounters across the Nation under President Biden's leadership, including 8.7 million at the southern border. More than 400,000 unaccompanied children—to me, this is one of the scandals that really hasn't gotten adequate attention—400,000 unaccompanied children have been encountered at the border and placed with sponsors in the United States.

Now, the Biden administration resisted any sort of background checks on the sponsors. As a matter of fact, they placed these children with other illegal immigrants in the country and in homes where we didn't know whether there were either gang members or people with records as sex offenders, for example. And the sad truth is that these children, like the 10 million or so other migrants that came across the

border, ended up in the United States courtesy of the cartels, criminal organizations that get rich smuggling people into the United States. But they don't just smuggle people; they smuggle drugs and other contraband too.

But these children in particular, once they arrive in the United States, many of them are exploited, treated as indentured servants until they pay back the debt they owe their traffickers. And those are the lucky ones. Others are trafficked for sex, recruited into gangs, neglected. We don't know.

The Biden administration couldn't tell you whether these children were going to school or getting the healthcare they need or the like. As a matter of fact, they said: We have no responsibility. That is the responsibility of the State child welfare organizations.

We know they are overwhelmed, and here are 400,000 more children that are dumped into their hands. As a result of the shelter facilities becoming increasingly crowded, the Biden administration rushed the placement process of these children and now has completely lost track of at least 85,000 of those unaccompanied minors. That is according to a New York Times investigative story where they actually followed up calling the sponsors, only to get no answer. Knocking on the door, nobody would come to the door. So we don't know—they don't know—what happened to these children.

We also know the cartels are getting richer trafficking in drugs, as I mentioned, including fentanyl, a synthetic opioid which is very different from heroin and cocaine, which require a lengthy process of growing a plant and then processing the drug. Cartels are selling fentanyl, which uses chemical precursors that come from China that then go to Mexico and are mixed up and then pressed to look like a pharmaceutical drug. But they are counterfeit drugs, and they killed more than 70,000 people last year alone.

This drug that comes across the southern border with very little—well, we just don't know how much of it actually makes its way across. We know how much is interdicted, but it could be just a fraction of the number that actually makes its way across the border. And here is the tragic statistic. This is the leading cause of death for young people between the age of 18 and 45 in America.

I have been to numerous high schools in Texas where grieving parents said: Well, our child ate dinner at the dinner table; then, the next morning, we went and found him or her dead in her room—having taken something they thought was a relatively innocuous drug, only to find out the hard way that it was laced with fentanyl, which took their life.

Well, our Border Patrol has simply been overwhelmed by the volume of people coming across the border because there is no such thing as deterrence. One of the things about law en-

forcement you learn is, by enforcing the law, you can discourage other people from violating the law. And by actually enforcing border security, you can deter people from coming in the first place.

But without deterrence, under the Biden administration, the Border Patrol has simply been overwhelmed. With historic numbers of people attempting to cross and successfully crossing, they have not gotten the support they need to handle the magnitude of challenges they face every day.

The men and women who serve in the Border Patrol are my heroes. They are loyal, patriotic Americans who put on the uniform and do what their government has asked them to do, until they are told that you have to tie one hand behind your back and you can't actually do your job because you just have to welcome people into the country, and you can't keep people out who are violating the law.

So I am going to extend my gratitude to the men and women who serve in the Border Patrol, as well as the National Border Patrol Council, which has been enormously helpful as a credible source of what actual conditions have been along the border so that the American people can know how bad it has gotten to be. The National Border Patrol Council has been our partner and friend and helped as Senator CRUZ and I have welcomed many of our colleagues to the border so that they can see firsthand what we have learned as a result of our many times visiting there.

And I particularly want to express my gratitude to Jason Owens, who is the outgoing Border Patrol Chief. Even when the administration did not provide adequate support to handle this historic crisis, Jason had the backs of the men and women of the Border Patrol.

But the good news is that, under President Trump, all of our Border Patrol agents will start receiving the support that they need and that they deserve from the Federal Government.

President Trump used his first day in office to make a number of actions addressing this crisis. He declared that this historic, ongoing crisis is a national emergency, which it is. He designated the cartels that smuggle the people and the drugs into the country as foreign terrorist organizations. He directed the Departments of State and Homeland Security to resume the migrant protection protocols, otherwise known as the "Remain in Mexico" program.

So people who want to come to the United States legally through the asylum system, they can't come to the interior of the United States and simply be released; they have to remain in Mexico and await the processing of their claim for asylum. This will, of course, deter economic migrants from making this dangerous journey by having them await their asylum hearings in Mexico.

At the same time, the President directed the Department of Homeland Security to stop catch-and-release. If you ask the Border Patrol: How do you explain all of this, this huge mass of humanity, this tsunami of people coming across the border, they say: There are no consequences for coming illegally under the Biden administration. And one of those incentives for people to continue to come is employing a catch-and-release policy because, without detention, you are never going to stop the flow. And this was a primary pull factor of migrants under the Biden administration.

President Trump also terminated the Biden administration's unlawful Cuban-Haitian-Nicaraguan-Venezuelan parole program. So "parole" is a word that people may be familiar with in a criminal context, where people can be paroled out of prison. This is a little different. In the immigration context, this means that individuals who meet certain select criteria can be released into the interior of the United States, but it is supposed to be done on a hardship, case-by-case basis.

The Biden administration completely transformed parole by doing it categorically. In other words, they said 30,000 migrants per month are allowed to be released in the United States if you come from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, or Venezuela. That is 360,000 a year just released into the interior of the United States and not done on a case-by-case basis. It violated the law Congress put in place, but the Biden administration didn't really seem to care about what the law was; they were going to do what they wanted to do.

I am pleased that President Trump has directed the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice to completely fulfill the requirements of the DNA Fingerprint Act of 2005, a bill that the former Senator from Arizona, Senator Jon Kyl, and I worked to enact. Under that law, the Department of Homeland Security will protect Americans from dangerous criminal illegal immigrants by collecting DNA samples from migrants apprehended at the border. In many instances, it can just be a cheek swab, but that DNA allows you to positively identify people who may be criminal aliens.

President Trump's order that the Department of Homeland Security verify the relationships claimed by family units apprehended at the border will help put an end to the cartels' child trafficking that the Biden administration policies enabled. Because the cartels are smart and they knew what the policies were, if a family unit—that is, an adult and a child—came together, they were treated a little bit differently. But we found out the hard way that the cartels would simply hire out these children so that the adults could get into the country claiming to be a family unit. Again, more child trafficking—child abuse, if you will. President Trump's order that the Department of Homeland Security verify

these relationships will help put an end to the cartels' child trafficking which the Biden administration enabled.

I am pleased that President Trump has also ended the use of the Customs and Border Protection One app. This was an app that you could download on your phone that allowed migrants to more quickly and efficiently cross the open border.

Under the Biden administration, you could simply make an appointment using this app on your phone, meaning the Federal Government would facilitate your entry into the United States on a quicker basis. It is really bizarre if you think about it. But it gave the cartels other ways to make money by selling appointments that they had made on the app. It was obviously hijacked by the cartels, who are not dumb—they are smart—and they are driven by a profit motive.

I am glad that President Trump made border security a day one priority of his administration. I look forward to continuing to work with him to help improve the safety for communities all across Texas and all across the Nation.

But I am also thrilled that President Trump has chosen a new U.S. Border Patrol Chief, a Texan, Mike Banks. People may have heard of Mike Banks before because he was Governor Abbott's border chief.

Mike brings incredible credentials to this job. While the Vice President made only one trip to the Texas-Mexico border during her entire tenure, Mike is a former Border Patrol agent. He has got vast experience at the border.

He understands firsthand the impact on our border communities and what our Border Patrol agents have been through. He spent two-thirds of his more than three decades of Federal law enforcement at the United States-Mexico border. As I indicated, Governor Abbott had selected him to serve as the Texas border czar, and Mike has also served in the U.S. Navy military police.

So I have had the privilege of getting to know Mike, and I know his qualifications, his experience and his competence and his firsthand experience dealing with the challenges at our border, and I have no doubt that he will make an outstanding 27th head of the U.S. Border Patrol.

I look forward to working with him and President Trump to secure our borders and to make our community safe again.

This is one of the main reasons that President Trump was elected, along with sky-high inflation, and the very dangerous world that seems to have grown up in the face of the weakness projected by the Biden administration around the world. But job No. 1 is to secure our borders and protect the American people. And I am proud of the fact that President Trump has, on day one, taken such important steps to begin that process.

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:33 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BRITT).

BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

NOMINATION OF JOHN RATCLIFFE

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, at some point, the Senate will vote on the nomination of John Ratcliffe to be the Director of the CIA. I am here to outline for just a few moments why I oppose this nomination.

Let me begin by saying I often vote for nominees who have different policy views than I do. However, my concerns with Mr. Ratcliffe are much deeper than that.

In 2020, I opposed his confirmation to be Director of National Intelligence because I believe his partisanship and willingness essentially went to the proposition of doing what would please Donald Trump. Unfortunately, his actions as head of National Intelligence only confirmed my concerns. Today, I want to focus on John Ratcliffe's commitment to the law and his truthfulness with Congress. I will give a couple of examples to illustrate my concerns.

In 2019, the Congress passed a law requiring the Director of National Intelligence to submit an unclassified report on who was responsible for the brutal murder of Washington Post reporter and U.S. resident Jamal Khashoggi. In 2020, after John Ratcliffe was nominated to be the head of National Intelligence, I asked him at his confirmation hearing whether he intended to follow that law. He responded that he needed to take a look at the underlying intelligence to see what could be released, and that is not the same as saying he would do as the law required.

After Director Ratcliffe was confirmed as DNI, he decided that nothing more could be declassified about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. The effect of that decision was to cover up the fact that Saudi Prince Mohammed bin Salman approved the operation to capture or kill Khashoggi. The public only has the facts today because after the 2020 election, then-head of National Intelligence Avril Haines abided by the law and released the report.

But while John Ratcliffe was Director of National Intelligence, the Saudi leadership was protected from public accountability. While he was Director of National Intelligence, Director Ratcliffe wrote to multiple Members of Congress saying that he had completed his review of the intelligence and determined that nothing more could be

released. Despite the fact that the Congress passed a law, Director Ratcliffe insisted that there was only marginal public interest in declassification. He said this in three letters to me, to Acting Chairman Rubio and Vice Chairman WARNER, and to the chair of the House Intelligence Committee. To me, this raises questions about John Ratcliffe's commitment to the law.

Basically, I have concerns about his truthfulness with the Congress. As part of this nomination process, I submitted a written question asking him why he didn't obey the law. He responded that a review had been necessary to determine what could be declassified and I quote here:

This review was not completed until after I left office.

Madam President, that statement by Mr. Ratcliffe just wasn't true. Mr. Ratcliffe wrote three letters to the Congress saying that the review had been completed. That fact was even included in the ODNI's representations to a court in a FOIA case.

So here is why I am opposing the Ratcliffe nomination. If John Ratcliffe is willing to make representations to the Congress that are contradicted by what is in the public record, imagine how easy it would be for him to misrepresent classified matters behind a veil of secrecy.

There are other aspects of John Ratcliffe's record as DNI that are troubling. He said during his confirmation hearing he would tell truth to power. The record suggests otherwise. For example, at the end of September 2020, he released intelligence about Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign. That was even though the intelligence community didn't know if it was accurate or the extent to which it was fabricated or exaggerated by Russian intelligence. Needless to say, this was a major break from standard practice, and it is hard to escape the conclusion that it was done for partisan political purposes, particularly given the timing.

I asked Mr. Ratcliffe whether he had ever taken any actions that were actually in conflict with the positions of the President. His response was simply to offer nothing.

Madam President, my concerns in 2020 that John Ratcliffe was too partisan to be confirmed as the head of an intelligence Agency have been validated by these specific examples I have cited today. As I said, he also now has a record of ignoring a law passed by the U.S. Congress and then misrepresenting basic facts about that decision.

So when the Senate does vote on the Ratcliffe nomination, I want the record to show that I strongly oppose the nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

HAMAS

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, on October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists shocked the human conscience when they carried out an attack on Israel

that killed innocent men, women, and children and took hundreds of hostages, including Americans.

I still remember waking up that day to horrific reports coming out of Israel—the heart-wrenching stories of people brutalized, of women raped, the mass murder of more than 1,200 people, and the abduction of so many men and women and babies and the elderly.

These hostages, they are more than just names; they are more than just statistics. They are mothers. They are fathers. They are sons. They are daughters. They are friends. They are community.

Since that horrific day more than a year ago, Hamas has kept them captive, enduring inhumane conditions that no one—I repeat no one—should be subjected to. And in doing so, Hamas has inflicted an unimaginable amount of pain and suffering on the families of the hostages as well; families who have been living a nightmare—a nightmare. They don't know the fate of their loved ones, and they are tormented by every video that Hamas releases.

For others, it meant the heartbreak of knowing their loved one was murdered by Hamas, but their body has remained captive. Families have been unable to properly bury and grieve their loved one.

In the days, weeks, and months since that terrible day, I met with many of the hostage families repeatedly, both in Israel and the United States. Their resilience and their strength—I don't know how they do it. They wake up every day and they stand tall and they are resilient and they are strong and they speak out in the face of such pain and suffering. It is remarkable and unimaginable that they have to do this all at the same time.

Each time I met with these families, I made it clear, I will continue to do everything I can to make sure that they are reunited with their loved ones.

That is why the agreement between Israel and Hamas—which has paused the conflict and commits to bringing the remaining hostages home—is welcome relief. The deal is also helping to save civilian lives in Israel and Gaza by putting a stop to the fighting. It is ramping up the delivery of much needed humanitarian aid into Gaza.

So let's be clear: This agreement was possible because of the steadfast and unwavering support of the United States for Israel. And it was brought about because of the advocacy of the hostage families, together with bipartisan diplomatic leadership.

Now I am going to take a moment and speak directly to all of the families who have been waiting for nearly 500 days—waiting for news, waiting for a phone call, waiting for a moment that they could embrace their loved ones once again.

Your pain, your perseverance, your strength in the face of heartbreak and tragedy and your tireless effort pushing forward for a deal, pushing forward

for progress—you got us to this point. You did. You have made the difference.

Though nothing can undo the devastation in the past 15 months, I can only hope that this agreement can begin to provide some form of relief.

I know that we are all relieved to see three hostages finally freed over the weekend and reunited with their families. Romi, Emily, and Doron are finally home—finally home. The images of embraces with their mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers filled our hearts; it fuels our resolve.

We know that our work is not yet over, so I want to be clear: The United States will not rest until every single hostage is returned home. Now more than ever, we must continue being vigilant to make sure this agreement is fully carried out. The road ahead undoubtedly will be difficult, but with our continued, unconditional support of Israel and commitment to regional stability, this deal can bring some much needed peace of mind to the people of Israel, to the hostages, to their families, and to the region as a whole.

We pray for the families who are still waiting the returns of their loved ones, and we hope to bring peace through strength.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The Senator from Louisiana.

GEORGE SOROS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, last week, President Biden—I wish him well—gave his farewell address to America. He said a number of things, but one in particular got my attention. He warned America about—his words, not mine—“a dangerous concentration of power in the hands of a very few ultra-wealthy people.”

President Biden went on to say:

Today, an oligarchy is taking shape in America of extreme wealth, power, and influence that literally threatens our entire democracy, our basic rights and freedoms, and a fair shot for everyone to get ahead.

I don't know who President Biden was talking about, but I know one particular circumstance about which I am going to speak that fits his warning. Again, I don't know if the circumstance I am about to describe is what President Biden meant, but if the shoe fits, wear it, Cinderella.

Let me cut to the chase. Mr. George Soros is an oligarch. He is one of the wealthiest people in the world. He is a friend of President Biden's—nothing wrong with that. In fact, President Biden just gave him I think the highest civilian honor that a President can give to a civilian—the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Mr. George Soros is buying WWL AM radio in New Orleans. Let me say that again. That may not mean much to you, Mr. President, but it means a lot to my people in Louisiana. Mr. George Soros is buying WWL AM radio in New Orleans.

WWL AM radio is practically an institution in my State. It has been around since 1922—1922—over 100 years.

It is a clear channel—what the communications experts call a clear channel class A station. Its transmitter output is about 50,000 watts. That is a lot, folks. That is the maximum for commercial AM stations in the United States. It is the lead station on the New Orleans Saints Radio network. It is an important station, and Mr. George Soros is buying it.

What does that mean, and how did this happen? WWL is owned by a national company called Audacy. Audacy has about 220 radio stations nationwide, one of which, of course, is WWL—the second largest radio network in America. It reaches I think 45 different markets throughout our country, 165 million Americans. It is huge.

Audacy borrowed too much money. They took on too much debt. They took on about \$1.9 billion worth of debt, and they couldn't service that debt with their revenues. So what did they do? They did what many other corporations do when they can't service their debt: They went into what is called chapter 11 bankruptcy—not chapter 7. Chapter 7 is when they liquidate the company. Chapter 11 bankruptcy is when a company goes into bankruptcy in front of a bankruptcy judge and says: Judge, we want to get all of our creditors and debtors together and restructure our cash flow and our debt so we can come out of this bankruptcy a surviving entity.

They went into chapter 11 with a bankruptcy plan. Mr. George Soros immediately pounced. Of that \$1.9 billion in debt, he bought about \$415 million of it; cash on the barrelhead; paid 50 cents on the dollar.

One of the tenets of the reorganization was that all the current shareholders would be wiped out. The new creditors would assume equity positions in the company. I know that sounds complicated, and it can be, but really what it means is that the bondholders—one of which is Mr. Soros after he bought it, bought the \$450 million worth of debt—became a shareholder, and Mr. Soros is now the largest single shareholder in Audacy radio stations, including WWL AM in New Orleans, an institution.

In America, you can't just go do this. Why is that? Because those airwaves on which WWL and the other radio stations broadcast—they don't belong to the radio stations. They belong to you and you and you and you. These airwaves—the spectrum, if you will—are owned by the American people.

Years ago, we created the Federal Communications Commission, the FCC. We set it up to be in charge of the airwaves that belong to the American people to make sure that those airwaves were being used prudently by radio stations. For example, if a radio station is bought by a bunch of foreign nationals or foreign entities, the FCC has to approve it. For example, anytime a broadcast license, as is the case with Audacy, is transferred, the FCC has to approve it. So Mr. Soros's purchase of WWL Radio and the 219 other

radio stations had to go before the FCC, and it did, and it went—the approval for Mr. Soros went through the FCC like green grass through a goose. It was a party-line vote. It was last September. All three Democrats—there are five people on the FCC—all three Democrats said let it go, and they short-circuited the normal process.

Now, I am not an FCC expert, and I am not a communications law expert, but this has been widely reported, and I have read about it in many reports. Normally, on a deal of this size, when 220 radio stations are being transferred—their licenses—using airwaves that belong to the American people and there is a substantial percentage of foreign owners, it would take about a year to get through the FCC. The FCC would do a complete investigation. Not this time—no. This time was special. What happened was what some members of the media have called the Soros shortcut. They just got together and rammed it through. Did I mention it was like green grass through a goose—3 to 2?

Now, the two Republicans on the Commission—they are screaming the whole time: Whoa, Nellie! Whoa! Whoa! Why aren't we taking this seriously? Why aren't we investigating this? Why aren't we doing our due diligence?

They were outvoted 3 to 2.

You know, even in a democracy, when you have the votes—you can make a porcupine like hot peppers if you have the votes. That doesn't make it right.

A number of people petitioned the FCC and said: Please don't do this.

One of the groups that petitioned the FCC was a group called Media Research Center. The FCC—three Democrats, two Republicans—dismissed them. But this is what the Media Research Center said—their words, not mine:

There is no question that George Soros and his affiliated businesses are looking to control these radio stations to advance their particular brand of activism.

The MRC urged the FCC not to create a "special Soros shortcut" that would circumvent their rules and allow the deal to move forward. They did it anyway.

Here is what Mr. Troy A. Miller, NRB president and CEO, said. He said—his words, not mine:

The fact that the FCC is apparently willing to bypass the usual protocols—

That means the normal procedures—to get this transaction done just weeks before a presidential election—

And right after the President of the United States gave Mr. Soros the Presidential Medal of Freedom—

seriously undermines the Commission's credibility and raises warranted questions of whether administrative processes are being manipulated—

Manipulated—

to exert political [interference and] preference.

Here is what one of the Republican members of the FCC, in dissent, said—

Commissioner Brendan Carr, who is soon to be Chairman of the FCC now that there is a new sheriff in town. Here is what Mr. Carr said:

The Commission's decision today [approving Mr. Soros's plan] is unprecedented. Never before has the Commission voted to approve the transfer of a broadcast license—let alone the transfer of broadcast licenses for over 200 radio stations across more than 40 markets—without following the requirements and procedures codified in federal law.

Pass me the sick bucket. This isn't right, but they did it.

Now, this is America. You are entitled to believe what you want. If it is legal, you are entitled to do what you want. And Mr. Soros is certainly entitled to his opinion. He is. I don't agree with him, but he is certainly entitled to it in America. I am not much into this cancel culture, and hopefully we have seen the end of it, but when you are acquiring radio licenses which can influence public opinion and you are doing it in part—not exclusively but in part—with foreign money, well, that is why we have the FCC.

But I want to make this clear: I believe in free speech and free expression. You are not free if you can't say what you think. You are not free if you can't express yourself. Mr. Soros has that right. But here is where he stands. I want my people in Louisiana to know who is buying WWL Radio in New Orleans. Mr. Soros is a billionaire. God bless him. He made his money himself. He has poured much of his wealth into what, in my opinion, are radical causes.

He is now working with his son, who I understand is a very smart young man. His name is Alex Soros. Mr. George Soros and Mr. Alex Soros hold some—how should I put this?—non-mainstream American beliefs.

For example, Mr. George Soros has called the United States "the main obstacle to a stable and just world." Mr. Soros believes that our country is "the main obstacle to a stable and just world," not China, not Iran, not North Korea—the United States of America.

Pass me the sick bucket.

Mr. Soros has also said that China has—his words, not mine—that China has a "better functioning government than the United States of America."

Mr. Soros does not believe that the United States should have secure borders. He once called national borders an "obstacle" to his plan for widespread immigrant resettlement.

Mr. Soros and his family, as you probably know, have spent millions and millions of dollars to elect prosecutors throughout America who believe that violent criminals are the real victims. These prosecutors believe for the most part that if a cop has to shoot a criminal, it is always the cop's fault, but if a criminal shoots a cop, it is always the gun's fault. These prosecutors whom Mr. Soros has backed with millions of dollars all believe that if you are concerned about crime, you are automatically a racist.

Mr. Soros and his son Alex—Alex in particular—have called for softer sentences on violent criminals. This is what he has said—his words, not mine. Mr. Alex Soros said:

But if we are serious about ending mass incarceration, we must also rethink our response to crimes that are more serious, including violent ones. Even those who have been victims of violence increasingly do not believe in long-term prison sentences.

In short, Mr. Soros—both George and Alex believe that America would be better off if we had open borders. They believe that America would be better off, in my opinion—this is how I read their writings—if we ended jails and if we ran our government like the Communist Party of China. I don't agree with that, but Mr. Soros—both of them are entitled to their opinion.

But my people in Louisiana are entitled to know whose opinion they are hearing on the radio, and this has not been reported once in Louisiana. Let me say it again.

Mr. George Soros, through an expedited procedure—I am trying to be evenhanded here—who received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Biden and who is close to President Biden and all of my Democratic colleagues, on a 3-to-2 vote at the FCC, has been able to buy over 200 radio stations throughout America, including WWL Radio. I want my people to know about it, and I want us to make sure that it was done legally. I am not saying it wasn't done legally; I am saying that it looks funny. Not funny ha-ha—it looks weird the way this was done. It has the aroma of politics, and I hope the new FCC revisits this issue.

These licenses and these airwaves do not belong to me or to the FCC or to Audacity or to WWL; they belong to you and you and you—the American people. We are supposed to make sure, through our FCC—that is why God created the FCC—that these licenses are not just given to anybody.

CHAGOS ISLANDS

Mr. President, let me say one other thing quickly. I didn't mean to go on this long. You have heard me talk about this before, and I am going to talk about it again.

This is India. This is China. Right here are the Chagos Islands—right now owned by the United Kingdom. America, the United States of America, with your tax dollars, has a very important military base out in the Chagos Islands, on an island called Diego Garcia.

Now, the United Nations, as I have said before, has said to Britain, the UK, which acquired the Chagos Islands from France—the folks at the United Nations, with their whey protein powder and man purses, say: Bad United Kingdom. Bad United Kingdom. You are a bunch of colonialists. Give it back. Give the Chagos Islands back—not "give them back to the people of the Chagos Islands"; give them back to this island down here, Mauritius, over 1,000 miles away. Give it back to Mauritius. That is who had it when France

transferred—Mauritius was a province of France when France transferred all of its ownership to Mauritius and to the Chagos Islands in the early 1800s.

The new government in the United Kingdom said: Oh, we feel so guilty. We are going to give it back. We are going to give it back—and our Air Force base with it, which we use to rearm and restock our submarines in Indochina—in the Indian Ocean to combat China.

This kind of stupid takes a plan, folks. This kind of stupid takes a plan.

The United Kingdom said: OK. We feel guilty. We are going to give it back. We are going to give it to Mauritius, and we are going to start paying Mauritius £9 billion over 10 years. And you know who went along with it? The prior administration.

Now, I have talked to President Trump about this, and I have talked to Marco Rubio about this—our esteemed new Secretary of State—and I am hoping they are going to do something about it.

The United Nations has no jurisdiction over the United Kingdom or us in America, and this is our military base. And, already, if we give the Chagos Islands to Mauritius, Mauritius says they will lease to us our own base for about 9 billion pounds over 10 years. Already, China is circling Mauritius. Already, China is trying to be Mauritius' best friend.

And I don't have anything against the Government of Mauritius. They are wonderful people. I understand they want the money. They want our money. They want your money. They want us to pay them for our own military base.

We need to stop this deal. President Trump and Secretary Rubio need to pick up the phone and call Prime Minister Starmer in the United Kingdom and say to the Prime Minister: Mr. Prime Minister, with all due respect, stop dipping into your ketamine stash. Put down the bong. We need this military base to combat China. Don't do it.

And if the President will do that and the Secretary of State will do that, I believe Mr. Starmer, who tried to ram this through the week before President Trump took office but was stopped—I believe that he will give in.

I don't have anything against Mr. Starmer. I don't have anything against the people of Mauritius Island. I am sure they are all wonderful people.

But our struggle with China is serious. It is as serious as four heart attacks and a stroke. And it is bone-deep, down-to-the-marrow stupid for us, because of guilt over colonialism, to bow to the wishes of the United Nations and give a military base that we built to Mauritius, which eventually will end up in the hands of the Communist Party of China. That is why I say that kind of stupid takes a plan.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

Mr. President, on a final point, I want to just highlight this. The people of Mexico have sent some of their firefighters to help us in California, and I

want to thank our friends in Mexico for doing that. Other countries have sent their firefighters too. But because we are proximate to Mexico, their fighters were able to get here earlier, and I just want to thank the people of Mexico for their generosity.

My work here is done. I will show myself to the door.

And before I do that, I will 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. MURRAY. 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 Washington.

BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, families are looking to us to solve problems. They are looking at us to lower prices. They are looking for help getting food on the table or getting childcare or getting their prescriptions filled. But what they are seeing instead, today, is Republicans lying about women, lying about healthcare, and lying about the tragic realities that families face when they learn that their baby has a fatal diagnosis and cannot survive long after birth.

Of all the bills that we could be voting on right now, it is an absolute disgrace that Republicans are spending their first weeks in power attacking women, criminalizing doctors, and lying about abortion.

This bill would create a new government mandate that would override the best judgment of grieving families who find out their fetus has a fatal condition. And it would create new, medically unnecessary barriers for doctors and patients, at a time when doctors already have their hands tied when it comes to providing basic reproductive healthcare.

Republicans' whole premise on this bill is a sham. Their whole bill is a disgrace, and we are here on the floor today to call it out.

I am not going to let anyone perpetuate the so-called "abortion until birth" myths and lies about people who have abortions and the providers who care for them. That is not how abortion works, and Republicans know it.

Killing a baby is already illegal in every single State. In fact, we passed a law in 2002 that made that crystal clear. I would know because I was here. It passed unanimously. Doctors already have a legal obligation to provide appropriate medical care to any infant born in this country.

And let's be clear: We already know Republicans' sham bill is not going to go anywhere, by the way. We have been here before. After all, Republicans held a vote on this bill a few years ago, and not a single Democrat who is still in the Senate today voted for it.

The last time we voted on this bill, I spoke about something Republicans re-

fused to acknowledge in this debate: the actual voices and experiences of women who receive a heartbreaking diagnosis late in pregnancy, what they actually go through, and how this bill would hurt them and their families.

I spoke then about Judy. She is from Washington State. Her son's organs did not develop properly. One lung was 20 percent formed, and the other was missing entirely.

I spoke about Lindsay. Her daughter had an aggressive, inoperable tumor growing into her brain, her heart, and her lungs.

I spoke about Darla. One of her twins had serious medical complications. Not terminating that pregnancy would have put her other twin's health at risk. How you ignore something like that I will never understand. But instead Republicans are talking about things that simply do not happen.

However, I have a different story to share today. You see, the last time I shared those stories of women who were able to make the choice that was right for their family, but the stories now are of women who were denied that choice. And that is because Republicans have ripped away abortion rights, and State abortion bans have forced some women into the kind of nightmare Republicans are now seeking to take nationwide.

In Florida, Deborah learned, at 23 weeks, her baby had no kidneys, and it would not survive after birth. She felt an abortion was the right step for her family. But Florida gave her no choice about what happened next. They forced her to carry a doomed pregnancy for months.

Do you know what it is like to go for months, pregnant with a baby you know will not survive, and getting questions and comments like: Oh, is this your first child? Are you excited?

Do you know what it is like fighting back tears as you try to decide whether to just nod politely or explain that, actually, your world is falling apart and, all the while, knowing you have to go through all of this against your will because some politician decided they knew better?

Deborah avoided going out. She was afraid to go to the grocery store. And she said:

I just went into a really dark place, you know, essentially planning my son's birth and funeral at the same time.

That is what abortion bans do. That is what happens when we take choice away from patients, when Republicans decide they know better.

And Deborah is far from the only woman to go through this. Infant deaths from birth defects jumped in Florida following their abortion ban.

Now, Republicans have a bill here to take that issue nationwide. That is what we are voting on here tomorrow. That is their top priority, now that Trump is in office. And not only are they trying to take that abortion heartbreak nationwide, they are lying about what is at stake here and lying

about what women like Deborah are going through, what their own policies will cause more women to go through. Shame on them. This is infuriating.

Women like Deborah may not be billionaires, but they should still have their voices heard. And as long as I am here, they will be.

So here is my message for Republicans: Families don't need less choice about how to handle tragic medical news. What families actually need is affordable groceries. What families actually need is childcare. What they actually need is paid leave, quality healthcare, access to programs like SNAP and Medicaid, which Republicans want to cut to the bone.

Now, I can't predict what attack Republicans will launch on abortion next, but I can promise we will be here to call them out, both for what they are trying to do—lie about women and doctors—and for everything they are failing to do—lowering costs and making life easier for folks back home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I really want to thank my friend, our great leader on women's issues and on choice issues, Senator MURRAY, for leading this floor block. She has been indomitable on this issue. I can't think of a person who has done more to protect the rights of women than PATTY MURRAY. So thank you for your great leadership.

I want to thank all my other colleagues who will join me as well.

Look, it is Donald Trump's first week as President, and Republicans are already escalating their war on women's reproductive freedoms. They didn't wait long. And the Republicans' desire to impose politicians' and their views on women's health and substitute their judgment for the judgment of the woman, her family, and her doctor continues.

There are many different permutations and combinations of this, but it is always: Take the women's rights away. Let some politician for some ideological reason decide.

This week, Senate Republicans will advance their so-called Born-Alive bill, a bill we have all seen before, which the Senate squarely rejected in the past. The bill is deeply pernicious because it attacks women's healthcare through false narratives and outright fearmongering. It seeks to make something illegal that is already illegal.

In essence, the Republican bill would substitute the judgment of qualified medical professionals and the wishes of millions of women and their families with an ultraright ideology. It is the long hand of injustice reaching down and hurting women from afar.

And so much of the legislation is passed, frankly, by men who have, really, no understanding of what women go through when they are through difficult situations like the one my colleague from Washington State has outlined.

This would harm the ability of medical professionals to provide healthcare based on evidence and on science. It would expose medical professionals to the risk of punishment and prosecution if they don't comply with the hard right.

So we are here because we need to expose this bill exactly for what it is: myth-based fearmongering. It is an attack on reproductive care.

The anti-choice movement keeps trying to come up with these scenarios to try and scare people, but they misstate the facts and misstate the evidence.

This bill is clear. It is an attack on reproductive care. It is anti-women, anti-family, anti-science.

I will tell my Republican colleagues this: Democrats will oppose any attempt to erode access to high-quality and safe reproductive care. Democrats will continue to fight for America's women, America's doctors, and America's families who sometimes have to make heartbreaking, difficult decisions when serious complications arise during pregnancy.

That is what makes this bill so, so horrible. It basically takes a woman who is in a very serious, difficult situation and tries to use her as a political football. That is a bad, bad thing.

So we should resoundingly reject this deeply partisan bill when it comes to the floor later this week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this is not the first time we have considered this measure on the floor nor the first time I have spoken about it.

I want to thank Senator MURRAY for leading this conversation on a very serious topic.

I want to thank Senator SCHUMER for joining in this conversation as well. I couldn't agree with him more when he said: What we are trying to do with this bill is to make illegal what is already illegal.

I am going to make an invitation to anyone following this debate who wants to judge for themselves, to reach their own conclusion, as to whether or not there are laws existent in America today which cover the situation described in this bill.

I am going to give you the name of a physician in Philadelphia who is serving a life sentence in prison for having violated the current law, and I want you to look it up and read it yourself. Don't take my words for it. His name is Kermit, K-E-R-M-I-T, Gosnell, G-O-S-N-E-L-L. Write that down if you want to follow this debate and want to draw your own conclusions by doing some personal research. Look it up on the internet: Kermit Gosnell. I will tell you his story in a moment, but it proves the fact that we have existing laws that make this current bill unnecessary.

Tomorrow marks the 52nd year since our Nation's highest Court issued a rule recognizing a woman's constitu-

tionally protected right to choose. *Roe v. Wade* enshrined into law something that should have been a given in America: In America, women have the right to make decisions about their own bodies. And, as a result of *Roe*, America's women took a giant leap forward in gender equity. The decision in *Roe* afforded women the right to choose whether, when, and how to start a family.

But after nearly 50 years of progress, in June 2022, the Supreme Court overruled *Roe* with *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, dragging women's rights half a century backward. Following that decision, we saw Republican-led States open the floodgates to abortion restrictions—laws that, in some cases, have had deadly consequences for women who could not access critical healthcare that they needed.

Instead of addressing the healthcare crisis that *Dobbs* has unleashed, Republicans are now instead looking to make it even harder for women to access comprehensive and compassionate healthcare.

Tomorrow, they will attempt to bring to the floor the so-called Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act. They want to bring it to a vote—this bill that, as Senator SCHUMER said, is already covered in law.

The bill, they say, creates new standards of care for physicians providing reproductive healthcare that are not based in medicine, fact, or science.

The goal of the bill that we will consider, introduced by the Republicans, is to target and intimidate reproductive healthcare providers and make it harder for women to access comprehensive and compassionate healthcare. This bill offers a poorly drafted and dangerous solution to a problem that simply does not exist.

The authors of this bill will tell you that this legislation simply ensures that all children born alive as a result of a so-called attempted abortion are provided the same medical care as any other newborn of the same gestational age. They say that is all it does. But we already have a law on the books that ensures that any child born in America, regardless of the circumstances surrounding that birth, is afforded equal protection under the law.

In 2002, the House and Senate passed, on a bipartisan basis, the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act. Do you know who signed that into law? Then-President George W. Bush. Put simply, it is already illegal to kill a child born alive in America. And in rare cases where a doctor does harm a baby in violation of State and Federal laws, they are held legally accountable.

The year was 2013. Dr. Kermit Gosnell, a Pennsylvania doctor, was convicted on three counts of first-degree murder for murdering babies after botched abortions. Gosnell was sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole under existing law, and he is currently serving that sentence at

Pennsylvania's State Correctional Institution at Huntingdon.

Do you know what else the authors of this legislation didn't tell you and won't tell you? Abortions late in pregnancy are incredibly rare. And when they do occur, it is most often because of a heartbreaking, late-breaking, fatal fetal diagnosis or because a woman's doctor has told her that she may not survive the pregnancy or because a woman lives in a State that prevented her from getting an abortion earlier. No, Republicans would rather have you believe that vast numbers of women are intentionally waiting until the final days of their pregnancy to have abortions.

This is a cruel political contrivance. These are women who often already have had their baby showers, picked out names, persevered through morning sickness, back pain, swollen ankles, countless doctors' appointments and tests. These are women who wanted their babies.

And what is the response from the actual doctors on this legislation? Ask the professionals to respond to the Republican bill that is coming to the floor, the so-called Born-Alive bill. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists said this when the House passed the bill last year:

The offensively named "born-alive" legislation is another cruel and misguided attempt to interfere with evidence-based medical decision making between patients and their physicians.

Laws that ban or criminalize evidence-based care and rely on medically unsupported theories and misinformation are dangerous to families and their clinicians. This bill negatively affects all obstetric and gynecologic care.

What I just read to you is a quote from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Given this reality, what would happen if this bill were signed into law by the new President?

Take the case of Meredith Shiner, a constituent of mine in Illinois who was thrilled to learn a few years ago that she and her husband were going to have a little baby boy. However, at 22 weeks and 6 days, Meredith woke up with a terrible abdominal pain, rushed to the hospital thinking she had a bladder infection. She didn't realize the seriousness of what was happening until the doctor told her she was in labor. The prognosis was grim. Having the baby at 22 weeks and 6 days meant although the baby would be born alive, the chances of survival were almost nonexistent.

Knowing medical interventions would be futile, Meredith and her husband made the difficult decision to take the minutes they had with their son to hold him, to touch him, to look at him until he gently passed away, as doctors provided palliative care.

This bill is written in such an overly broad way, vague way, that had it been the law, those same doctors that provided compassionate care to Meredith, her husband, and their son could be subject to 5 years in prison.

In these heartbreaking situations, it is not the time for politicians to dictate the course of medical treatment, as this bill would do. Those wrenching decisions, those personal tragic moments, must be left to medical professionals and the individuals in their care. It is the only compassionate outcome.

This week, we lost a lifelong advocate for women's rights, Cecile Richards. She spent her life fighting to keep politics out of healthcare and defending every woman's right to decide when and how to start their family. We lost Cecile to glioblastoma—the same brain cancer that took John McCain, Beau Biden, and Teddy Kennedy.

If Senate Republicans truly cared about saving lives, they would be working with us to expand access to healthcare, increase funding for medical research that results in new cures, and implement policies that address our Nation's abysmal record of infant and maternal mortality.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleagues Senator MURRAY and Senator SCHUMER and Senator DURBIN and my close colleague from Minnesota Senator KLOBUCHAR and others to stand up for women and for doctors in my home State of Minnesota and around the country.

And I just want to appreciate Senator DURBIN for raising Cecile Richards, who was a dear friend of mine and someone who I worked with closely when I worked at Planned Parenthood. And I was thinking about something that Cecile often pointed to. She would quote the great American poet, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and this poet would say: It is not one damn thing after another. It is the same damn thing over and over again.

And here we have that being shown on the Senate floor. Once again Republicans are here introducing this bill—not to talk about what we can do to lower prices for Americans, not to talk about how we can lower the cost of housing, or how to help people's lives become more affordable.

Instead, one of the very first bills that they are putting forward is for a vote in service of a national abortion ban that, I can tell you, the people in Minnesota do not want, the people in America have made it abundantly clear that they do not want. And I guess the nicest thing you could say about this is that it is out of touch with where Americans are.

But let's talk about it a little bit more because I think it is important that we fight some of the myths and the disinformation that this legislation promotes.

What this bill would do, it would put Congress and politicians in the middle of personal medical decisions that patients and doctors should be able to make together without political interference. It would override physicians'

professional judgments about what is best for their patients, and it would put physicians in the position of facing criminal penalties if their judgment about what is best for their patients goes against what is described in this bill.

So, colleagues, let's be clear. At the core of the debate here is whether or not we trust women to make the very best decisions for themselves and their families. And in difficult medical, challenging, often tragic, medical situations, should women and their physicians be making decisions about their lives and their health—often their very lives—or is this about politics?

And I think Americans say this is not about politics. Politics should stay out of it.

I know that everybody on this floor has talked to their own constituents who have experienced what really happens for women who are needing abortion care later in their pregnancy. These stories are inevitably heartbreaking and tragic, and they each are individual and unique. Every situation is different. But they always are about women and families that are thrilled to be pregnant. In some cases, as my colleagues have said, they have already picked out a name. They have decorated the nursery. They have planned a baby shower. But it becomes clear, as the pregnancy progresses, the devastating news that this child is not going to survive. And in some cases, the mother's life is also at risk; her health, her ability to have children in the future are at risk.

And as I said, every situation is going to be unique because everyone is going to have a different diagnosis, different personal histories, different family circumstances, and that means everybody is going to need to have their own individual care. But what every single one of these women have in common is that each one of them deserves the dignity and the autonomy and the freedom to be able to make those decisions, make their own medical decisions, without a bunch of politicians getting in the way.

But let's be really clear here. Women are not waking up in the last weeks of their pregnancy just to change their mind about that pregnancy. I mean, how disrespectful of women is that attitude? Because these are terrible situations where something has gone catastrophically wrong. They are not just changing their minds. They are doing everything they can to take care of themselves and their families.

You know, I know that in this country, we don't tell oncologists how to treat their patients. We don't tell emergency room doctors what they need to do in any specific circumstances to save lives, and we shouldn't be telling women's doctors how to take care of their patients.

But, colleagues, that is what this bill does. It would give politicians in this room a seat in the doctor's offices and in the ERs with women all over this

country. And that has an intimidating impact on providers who are already desperately trying to keep their head down and do their jobs while operating under the chaos that has erupted after the Supreme Court overturned Roe.

So, colleagues, this should be about treating women with respect. We should be all in agreement that decisions about women's healthcare aren't different from decisions about men's healthcare or anyone's healthcare. So why would we be treating women differently?

Colleagues, let's get out of the business of dictating medical care for women. Let's trust women and their doctors.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleagues. I want to thank Senator MURRAY for her leadership, but also Senator SMITH, who has long led on this issue and has stood up time and time again for freedoms and reproductive freedom.

Yesterday, as she noted, we lost Cecile Richards, who was a true force of nature who spent her career fighting for reproductive freedom. We lost her just 2 days before what would be the 52nd anniversary of Roe v. Wade.

But we all know that our country is now well into its third year without the protections of Roe. In the years since the Supreme Court overturned half a century of precedent and stripped away a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions—going against 70, 80 percent of Americans who believe that this decision should be made by a woman, her family, her doctor, and not by politicians; who believe, as my colleagues just noted, that politicians should not be in the waiting room making the decisions for families—women are now at the mercy of a patchwork of State laws that are creating chaos when it comes to accessing reproductive care.

So the solution is not the bill before us this week. The solution is not to take rare cases of the most tragic nature, as my colleagues have described.

I am a former prosecutor. I know what murder is. Murder is murder, including murder of a baby.

We are here talking about tragic cases where doctors have to make a decision in the moment with the family about how they are going to handle very, very tragic situations with a baby.

Today, nearly 20 States have enacted some form of abortion restriction. The result, a third of women of reproductive age now live under extreme, dangerous bans. And in States across the country, women are being turned away from emergency rooms, forced to travel hundreds of miles for healthcare. So adding to that situation, this idea that we are going to start intervening in these rare, tragic cases would be a horrible result for so many women.

I am thinking about the pregnant teenager in Texas who died after being denied care in three hospital visits. I am thinking about the young woman from Florida who was forced to miscarry in a bathroom due to her State's restrictions. By the time she finally got to a hospital, she had lost almost half the blood in her body. And we will never forget the heartbreaking story of the 10-year-old in Ohio who had to go to Indiana in order to get a legal abortion after she was raped. People said that story was a hoax. It wasn't a hoax; it was true.

Doctors are being threatened with prosecution for doing their jobs, an issue that will only get worse if we pass the legislation that Republicans have brought to the floor.

We already know that there have been repeated attempts to restrict mifepristone. Just last week, a judge allowed Idaho, Kansas, and Missouri to proceed with their lawsuit challenging FDA approval of the drug, which is safely used in 90 countries.

This is our reality right now, but it doesn't have to be our future. I call on our colleagues to join us in codifying Roe v. Wade into law. And simply because someone may have different views—I know many people in my own family who may be pro-life, but they don't believe that their views for what they would do in their personal life would apply to other people—and certainly not people—women—who at the very end of a pregnancy, something they have been so looking forward to, having a baby, have to have the Federal Government intervene and tell the doctor that we can't do this or she can't do that.

This isn't about politics. This isn't about red States and blue States. People across the country are on our side on this, and we ask our colleagues to vote with us and reject this bill.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am proud to join my colleagues on the floor today in opposition to the Born-Alive Abortion Survivor Protection Act.

If you are wondering whether that title to a legislation makes sense, the answer is, no, it does not. This legislation is simply a blatant attempt to interfere with evidence-based patient care and medical practices while enshrining lies about abortion care.

My Republican colleagues spent the last 4 years calling Democrats alarmists. But here they are aggressively pursuing legislation that would persecute providers for doing their jobs and making a tragic situation for families even worse. Medical professionals are and have always been required by law to provide infants high-quality care from the moment they are born.

There is absolutely no evidence that this law is being broken. To suggest otherwise is deeply offensive and dangerous. For any family—all of us know

families, if they are not our own—learning their child will be stillborn or not survive beyond birth is a profound loss, deeply grief-stricken.

This legislation would deepen that loss. It would remove any control a woman may have over her pregnancy and force the family to endure unnecessary and unethical medical overreach at the hands of politicians—that is right, at the hands of politicians, not medical personnel.

The bill would force physicians to provide invasive and hopeless measures, which are both medically and ethically inappropriate in these situations. That is why the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists strongly oppose this legislative effort.

Let's listen to the doctors, the scientists, the professionals, rather than trying to "message bill" an anti-scientific, anti-medical science stand.

We have seen now how overturning Roe has emboldened Republicans across the United States and in this very Chamber to make policy based on their own personal beliefs instead of evidence-based practices. This legislation is just another opportunity for Republicans to stand on their soapbox and lie to the American people.

It also creates fear and apprehension on the part of people across the country. These policies actively harm families. Pretending otherwise is a slap in the face to those who voted for all of us and you, in particular.

Let me close by invoking the spirit of Cecile Richards, after losing her just yesterday. She was a giant. She modeled guts and grit and public service, showing courage and fortitude beyond words as a champion of women's reproductive freedom. I will always remember her smile, her fierce determination, her endless energy. They will be with me always, and they inspire me to say today to my Republican colleagues: Please leave alone the women who deserve doctor's care and that care alone, not our interference.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to express my strong opposition to Republicans' so-called Born-Alive bill.

I want to commend Senator MURRAY and all my colleagues who have done so much good work on this. This is not the first time the Senate has debated this bill on the Senate floor, and I doubt it will be the last.

Republicans claim this legislation will protect women and children. The foundation of this Republican bill is that babies are forced to go without basic medical care after they are born. This is a disgusting, stomach-churning lie that is pedaled to fearmonger the American people.

No child born alive in the United States is denied the healthcare they need to survive. It is already illegal to do so. In reality, what this bill does is turn what is already an impossibly difficult situation for countless expecting parents into a living hell.

Imagine you and your spouse get the good news that you are expecting. You are over the Moon until a few months later when you get the worst news you could possibly imagine receiving during pregnancy. For reasons out of your control, your baby has developed a terminal medical condition and will not survive once they are born. On top of that, to force the mother to continue carrying the baby to term would most likely be deadly for her.

Many women and couples are all too familiar with the gut-wrenching decisions that come next. What a statement about Republican priorities that this is one of the first pieces of legislation brought to the Senate floor just a few hours after Donald Trump was sworn into office.

Republicans talk a big game about being “pro-life” and being the party of family values. Their actions show reality couldn’t be any further from the truth. For example, the Republicans recently blocked a bipartisan expansion of the child tax credit that would have really helped to lift kids out of poverty. Now they are gearing up to cut food stamps so kids go hungry. They put Medicaid and health insurance for millions of children on the chopping block.

If Republicans really care about helping women and children, they would be using their new-found majority to vote on legislation that cuts housing and childcare costs or grocery bills and keep moms safe.

Let me close this way, Mr. President, and colleagues. This deeply flawed Republican Born-Alive bill is the real Republican agenda on full display. While Republicans are full steam ahead with their crusade against reproductive freedom, all my colleagues who are here today, led by Senator MURRAY, are focused on fighting inflation, bringing down costs, getting to work for working families. I am proud to be associated with their efforts.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues today because I strongly oppose this legislation. I oppose it because it would significantly interfere with the doctor-patient relationship. And I oppose it because it would pose unnecessary and harmful obstacles to a woman’s right—to all women’s right to make our own decisions about our own reproductive health.

This legislation has one purpose, and that is to make safe abortion services even more inaccessible by intimidating doctors with the threat of criminal liability. This is fearmongering at its finest.

And by choosing to focus on this bill during President Trump’s first week in office, some Republicans—and I say some because they don’t all support this bill—are choosing to politicize a family’s problem instead of focusing on making life easier, more affordable,

and better for all Americans, which President Trump promised when he was campaigning when he said he wasn’t interested in a Federal law that would outlaw abortions.

Abortions performed later in pregnancy are rare, and they are done as the result of fatal diagnoses for the fetus, the mother, or both. These are tragic, heartbreaking situations that no one—I am going to repeat that—that no one wants. And by inserting new uncertainty and risk of criminal liability into the process, this legislation only further increases the risk that a woman will not be able to get the medical care that she needs.

This bill ignores these important realities in hopes of scoring political points with anti-choice factions.

And the timing is done deliberately because many of those groups are going to be here in Washington on Friday. So we should see this bill for what it is. It is a political stunt.

Again and again, at every turn, some Republicans and the Trump administration have pushed forward dangerous policies intended to threaten access to abortion care. I think it is just shameful. They should be ashamed of themselves. This bill is just another battle in a long line of attacks on the ongoing war on women’s health.

Now, more than ever, we need to stand up and defend women’s healthcare, make certain that abortions are safe and legal. And we know that banning abortions doesn’t actually stop them. You just make them more dangerous for women. Enough is enough. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation and its consideration on the Senate floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues in opposing this legislation that is the Republican Party’s latest effort to take away a woman’s fundamental freedom to make her own healthcare decisions and take away a family’s fundamental right to navigate heartbreaking and complex health decisions without government interference.

I come from the “Live Free or Die” State. Granite Staters and Americans love freedom. Our country’s promise is that freedom belongs to everyone.

But today, thanks to the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and the extreme actions by Republican legislatures in some States, women in America are not free. In a sense, this legislation that we are debating right now is disconnected from reality. This bill ignores a pretty basic fact: Infanticide is illegal in every corner of this country.

The claim that this legislation will save lives is disingenuous, and the assumption underlying this bill that an expectant mother would seek an abortion after months of pregnancy for anything but the most dire of reasons shows a deliberate willingness to ignore the realities of women’s health.

So here are the facts. All that this legislation will do is make it harder for doctors to perform lifesaving care for their patients. And it will make it harder for families to make the best healthcare decisions for themselves in moments of great heartbreak as they face the final moments of a desired pregnancy or the final moments of a terminally ill newborn’s life.

It is also remarkable that this is among the first pieces of legislation that the Republicans have brought to the floor since the inauguration of the new President. This is, of course, legislation in search of a problem. But it is not in search of a motive.

Some of my colleagues have decided that rather than address the most pressing issues facing the American people, they will, instead, push legislation to curtail the freedom of women—just the latest in their long line of effort since *Roe* was overturned to take away more and more freedom from half of the population.

I am willing and eager to work with my colleagues to tackle the greatest challenges facing our country. That is what our constituents expect and deserve of us and something that this bill so clearly fails to do. This legislation will not bring down the price of groceries, nor will it reduce rents or do anything to make it easier for families to make ends meet. But it will make life harder for expectant mothers facing a painful choice.

It won’t make healthcare more affordable, though it provides that doctors can be put in jail for providing care for their patients. It won’t keep our children safe from crime or fentanyl traffickers, though it will make our daughters less free.

This legislation, in short, does nothing to address any of the great challenges that America faces. It seeks only to deny and diminish the freedom of our fellow Americans.

But this is what some of our colleagues have decided to focus on during the first full day of the new administration. Across our country, in red States and blue alike, in the distant corners of the land of the free, there is no great clamor to further limit freedom; there is no great clamor to have Members of Congress substitute their judgment for that of a woman’s, her doctor’s, and her family’s. But you wouldn’t know it if you follow the action of the Senate majority today.

We cannot lose sight of what this debate is ultimately about. At the center of this debate is a very simple question: Do we believe in the promise of our Declaration of Independence that we all are created equal? Do we believe that freedom belongs to everyone? And do we believe that women deserve to be free and equal citizens in the United States of America?

This is America, the world’s greatest democracy. Here, women should not be second-class citizens. In this country, each of us is supposed to have the freedom to chart our own future. We know

well that that freedom includes the freedom to make personal, private decisions that others may disagree with.

Our commitment to putting freedom first is part of what makes America different. Indeed, that is what makes us exceptional. The American people understand freedom's importance. Their leaders should remember it too. The American people have not asked for the extreme agenda that this legislation represents. They haven't asked the majority to further restrict their freedom.

I urge my colleagues to listen to the American people, to put aside this partisan agenda, and to get to work on tackling the challenges that are facing our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to this deceptively named Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

Tomorrow is the 52nd anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the decision that guaranteed fundamental rights to choose abortion before that right was stripped away. Now reproductive freedom is under attack in multiple States. Over a dozen States have passed abortion bans, and several pregnant women in Georgia and Texas have died because they could not access safe abortions. In some States, patients don't have access to legal abortion care even after they have been raped. Multiple States are currently suing to restrict access to even medication for abortion.

We don't yet know how the new administration is going to handle Federal protections for pregnant women in medical emergencies. The new administration, yesterday, took down a government website that offered just information about reproductive care. This was one of the top priorities yesterday of this administration on day one—taking down that website.

Instead of working to resolve any of the serious, real challenges, my colleagues are trying to force a vote on something that is completely unnecessary. It is already illegal to kill a child who is born alive in this country. I was a Member of the Senate when we passed, in 2002, the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act to ensure that all infants have legal protections.

The so-called Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Act, as my colleague from New Hampshire just said, is legislation in search of a problem. It is deliberately misleading and offensive to pregnant people and to their healthcare providers.

It is incredibly heartbreaking—these scenarios—where a baby is born with a fatal diagnosis, and the baby's parents must want to spend those precious moments holding and saying goodbye to their child, but under these extreme ideas, doctors would have to perform aggressive medical care that would only prolong a family's suffering.

We need to honor that these are medical decisions left to the woman, her

physician, and to her family. We trust that doctors and nurses know how to carry this out. We want to honor these—not politicians, not lawyers—so I will be voting against this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do so.

We also need to make sure that here in the Senate, as my colleague said, we are working to lower costs. We need to make sure that they don't try to cut Medicare or food assistance or the neediest of issues for young families who are being impacted. Healthcare in the United States needs to be strengthened; drug costs need to be lowered; and we need to help and protect working families.

I thank my colleagues for being here today.

I yield the floor.

CERTIFICATES OF ELECTION

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Chair lays before the Senate the certificate of appointment to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of former Senator J.D. VANCE of Ohio and the certificate of appointment to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of former Senator Marco Rubio of Florida.

The certificates, the Chair is advised, are in the forms suggested by the Senate. If there be no objection, the reading of the certificates will be waived, and they will be printed in full in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the certificates were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATE OF OHIO CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

To the President of the Senate of the United States:

This is to certify that, pursuant to the power vested in me by the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Ohio, I, Mike DeWine, the Governor of Ohio, do hereby appoint Jon Husted a Senator from Ohio to represent Ohio in the Senate of the United States until the vacancy therein, resulting from the resignation of JD Vance to assume the Vice Presidency of the United States, is filled by election as provided by law.

Witness: His excellency our Governor Mike DeWine, and our seal hereto affixed at Washington, D.C. this 18th day of January, in the year of our Lord 2025.

MIKE DEWINE,
Governor.
FRANK LAROSE,
Secretary of State.

[State Seal Affixed]

STATE OF FLORIDA CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

To the President of the Senate of the United States:

This is to certify that, pursuant to the power vested in me by the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Florida, I, Ron DeSantis, the Governor of Florida, do hereby appoint Ashley Moody a Senator to represent the State of Florida in the Senate of the United States until the vacancy therein caused by the resignation of the Honorable Marco Rubio, is filled by election as provided by law.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the

State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, this 21st day of January, 2025.

RONALD D. DESANTIS,
Governor.

Attest:

CORD BYRD,
Secretary of State.

[State Seal Affixed]

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS OF OFFICE

The VICE PRESIDENT. If the Senators-designate will now present themselves at the desk, the Chair will administer the oaths of office.

The Senator Jon Husted, escorted by Mr. Moreno and Governor DeWine, and the Senator Ashley Moody, escorted by Mr. SCOTT of Florida, advanced to the desk of the Vice President; the oaths prescribed by law were administered by the Vice President of the United States; and they subscribed to the oaths in the Official Oath Book.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Great. Congratulations, Senators.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mr. BUDD assumed the Chair.)

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

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

BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SUR- VIVORS PROTECTION ACT—MO- TION TO PROCEED

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, unfortunately, we were at the point of almost having a consent agreement to have a vote on the confirmation of John Ratcliffe to be CIA Director tomorrow—not today, not yesterday when it should have happened, but tomorrow—but the Senator from Connecticut has decided to object at the last minute.

I don't really understand the objection to Mr. Ratcliffe. He was confirmed by this Senate to be the Director of National Intelligence. He was fully vetted through the bipartisan process in the Senate Intelligence Committee. We voted him out yesterday on a 14-to-3 vote.

Senator SCHUMER stood here yesterday and talked about how we are going to cooperate on highly qualified, capable nominees with integrity, which John Ratcliffe is, but the only vote we got yesterday was Senator Rubio.

Now we are not going to have a vote today, and apparently we are not going to have a vote tomorrow, which means I hope nobody is making any plans for the weekend or the evenings because

we are going to get these nominees confirmed—starting with Mr. Ratcliffe and then moving on to Mr. Hegseth and moving on to Ms. Noem—the easy way or the hard way.

We tried to cooperate with the Democrats. The cooperation has not been forthcoming, so I guess it is going to be the hard way starting on Thursday.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader, on January 22, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar No. 1, John Ratcliffe to be the Director of the CIA; that there be up to 2 hours of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees on the nomination; that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the nomination; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, as the Senator knows, there are serious concerns that many of us have about John Ratcliffe's ability to distance himself from the political interests of President Trump in his work as CIA Director.

During his short 8 months as DNI in 2020, he repeatedly politicized intelligence in a way that does raise for many of us real questions about whether he is going to spin highly sensitive intelligence his Agency will gather for political purposes.

I don't think it is too much to ask to make sure that we have a full, real debate that lasts 2 days on the Senate floor given the serious questions that have arisen about his qualifications to do this job in an apolitical manner. I understand that we have differences about the qualifications of this nominee, but it is important for the American public to hear us have a debate here about the qualifications of folks who are going to be leading the most sensitive national security Agencies. If he has the votes, he can be on the job this weekend.

For that reason, I would object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. It is fine if the Democrats have legitimate concerns with this nominee or any other nominee. We had legitimate concerns with President Biden's nominees. Come down to the floor. Get it off your chest.

You talk about a full and real debate for 2 days. I hate to disappoint the people watching here. You are probably seeing more debate than we will have

on John Ratcliffe's nomination for the next 48 hours before we confirm him. That is what I predict.

We could have debated this anytime today. We debated it for 2 months in the Intelligence Committee. The Senator from Virginia, the vice chair of the committee, worked diligently and promptly with me—his team with my team—to process this nomination so it would be ready for confirmation yesterday. On a bipartisan basis, 14 to 3—not many other nominees are going to come out of committee with that kind of vote.

So I understand the Democrats are opposed to some of President Trump's nominees, and I understand they want to vote no, and I respect that. But should we be denying the country a Senate-confirmed CIA Director in such dangerous times for no good reason?

Again, maybe Senator MURPHY has more to say. I invite him to come down to the floor and speak again if there is a lot more to say. I predict, though, that once again this will be the longest debate we have about John Ratcliffe's nomination over the next 2 days.

What this is really about is trying to drag out all of these nominations, to play procedural games, as we are about to with Pete Hegseth's nomination, to try to deny President Trump his Cabinet in a prompt and timely fashion, just like the Democrats did in 2017. Yep, it happened in 2021 as well because around here, the shoe gets on the other foot pretty quickly. But it didn't happen in 2009. It didn't happen in 2001 and before that. We should get back to that practice. We should especially get back to that practice when it is a highly accomplished, well-qualified nominee of integrity like John Ratcliffe is.

So I regret that now we are going to spin our wheels for 2 days, but, as I said, don't make plans for the weekend, and don't have any dinner dates scheduled starting on Thursday night because we are going to get these nominees done the easy, collegial way or apparently the hard way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I was listening to the chair of the Intelligence Committee just a moment ago talking about this nominee, and I was curious.

I ask the Senator from Arkansas, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, what was the vote coming out of committee for Mr. Ratcliffe?

Mr. COTTON. The vote was 14 to 3.

Mr. THUNE. OK. So 14 to 3 coming out of committee, and we have now wasted a whole day where we could have been acting on that nomination.

So, really, I think the question before the Senate is, Do we want to vote on these folks on Tuesday or vote on them on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday? Because that is what we are going to do. This can be easy or this can be hard.

This is a nominee that came out of the Intelligence Committee 14 to 3. It

is a bipartisan nomination to the Central Intelligence Agency. This is about America's national security interests, and we are stalling.

So that is not going to happen. We are going to file cloture on him. You can force us to hang around here, and we can vote on these things Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. But we are going to vote on him.

This one shouldn't be hard, folks. I understand there are some that are going to draw some opposition from the other side of the aisle. But Democrats and Republicans, in a very big bipartisan fashion, agree that he is very qualified for this job that is an important job to America's national security interests. And, frankly, I believe, we ought to fill it as soon as we possibly can. So it is going to be a big vote here on the floor.

Everything we are doing right now is just stalling. I don't know what that accomplishes for you, but we are going to be here voting on it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill 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. 1, John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

John Thune, Steve Daines, John Kennedy, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Mike Crapo, Tim Sheehy, Deb Fischer, Tommy Tuberville, Rick Scott of Florida, Pete Ricketts, Katie Britt, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Roger Marshall, Eric Schmitt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 9 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Banks	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Moreno
Blackburn	Grassley	Mullin
Boozman	Hagerty	Murkowski
Britt	Hawley	Paul
Budd	Hoeven	Ricketts
Capito	Husted	Risch
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Collins	Johnson	Schmitt
Cornyn	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lankford	Sheehy
Crapo	Lee	Sullivan
Cruz	Lummis	Thune
Curtis	Marshall	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	McCormick	Wicker
Fetterman	Moody	Young

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Sanders
Baldwin	Kaine	Schatz
Bennet	Kelly	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kim	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	King	Shaheen
Booker	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Cantwell	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Gallego	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	
Hickenlooper	Rosen	

The motion was agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 3.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mrs. MURRAY. 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. BARRASSO: The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 10 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Blackburn	Britt
Barrasso	Boozman	Budd

Capito	Hawley
Cassidy	Hoeven
Collins	Husted
Cornyn	Hyde-Smith
Cotton	Johnson
Cramer	Justice
Crapo	Kennedy
Cruz	Lankford
Curtis	Lee
Daines	Lummis
Ernst	Marshall
Fetterman	McConnell
Fischer	McCormick
Graham	Moody
Grassley	Moran
Hagerty	Moreno

NAYS—45

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Baldwin	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Kaine	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schumer
Booker	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Coons	Lujan	Smith
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warnock
Gallego	Ossoff	Warren
Gillibrand	Padilla	Welch
Hassan	Peters	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Reed	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Markey	Paul
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The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 3, Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense.

John Thune, Steve Daines, John Kennedy, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Mike Crapo, Tim Sheehy, Deb Fischer, Tommy Tuberville, Rick Scott of Florida, Pete Ricketts, Katie Britt, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Roger Marshall, Eric Schmitt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 4.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kristi Noem, of South Dakota, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 4, Kristi Noem, of South Dakota, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

John Thune, Steve Daines, John Kennedy, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Tim Sheehy, Mike Crapo, Deb Fischer, Tommy Tuberville, Rick Scott of Florida, Pete Ricketts, Katie Britt, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Roger Marshall, Eric Schmitt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to resume legislative session.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CATFISH FARMERS OF ARKANSAS

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Catfish Farmers of Arkansas.

Established in 1975, members of the Catfish Farmers of Arkansas include producers, suppliers, businessowners, researchers, educators, and many other stakeholders. Together, they work to ensure the success of the catfish industry in both the Natural State and nationwide.

The Catfish Farmers of Arkansas has made enormous strides advancing its

unique interests over five decades by providing regular industry updates, supporting research, and promoting policies that support producers. The association has demonstrated time and time again its invaluable role on behalf of catfish farmers across the State.

As the birthplace of the commercial catfish industry, Arkansas has had a long and proud history with catfish production. Today, catfish is the leading aquaculture good in the United States, and the Natural State continues to be a top producer. This legacy of catfish production is widely appreciated and recognized by Arkansans.

In honor of its 50th anniversary, the Catfish Farmers of Arkansas will host the 2025 annual convention for the Catfish Farmers of America. By bringing in catfish producers from across the region, this event will honor both the present and past leadership of the Catfish Farmers of Arkansas for its efforts in elevating catfish production to consistently meet consumer demands for quality and availability.

Congratulations to the Catfish Farmers of Arkansas on 50 successful years. I applaud the organization's continued support for catfish producers and look forward to working together further to advocate for the industry and our farmers.●

RECOGNIZING JONES DAIRY

● Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize Jones Dairy of Milford, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 1903, Minor Jones and his wife Emma opened Jones Dairy when they rented 160 acres of farmland in Milford, IA. The family raised a variety of crops and livestock, ranging from cattle and pigs to corn and soybeans. In 1934, the couple purchased the land where Jones Dairy Farm remains today. Upon returning home from World War II, their son James became the second-generation owner of the Jones family farm. James and his wife raised their five children on the farm and began specializing in dairy cattle. Their youngest son Patrick developed a strong interest in dairy farming and, specifically, Jersey cows. Patrick and James worked together to expand the business while modernizing dairy production on the farm. In 1982, Patrick and his wife Nancy purchased Jones Dairy, becoming the third-generation owners. The couple raised their eight children on the farm and oversaw an expansion to 1,500 cows and over 1,200 acres of farmland.

Today, two of Patrick and Nancy's children Aaron and Nathan manage the dairy operations full time. Jones Dairy continues to be a beloved gathering place for the family, including Patrick and Nancy's 14 grandchildren.

Jones Dairy has grown to employ 20 northwest Iowa community members and boasts a sophisticated operation, milking 1,800 cows three times a day using a 64-stall DeLaval rotary parlor that was added in their 2023 expansion. The Grade A milk is then transported by a semi-tanker to where it is made into cheese and sent out across the Midwest. Over 12,000 gallons of milk are produced each day, and Jones Dairy sells nearly 4.3 million gallons of milk annually. Jones Dairy also grows cover crops, such as winter rye, for soil health and forage feed for the cows.

Beyond the milk production, the farm offers daily tours for visitors to have the chance to milk cows, bottle-feed newborn calves, and enjoy a petting zoo. In 2015, Jones Dairy was awarded the Iowa Venture Award by the Iowa Area Development Group. Additionally, during their 2023 expansion project, the farm not only sought to prioritize cow comfort and efficiency, but also hospitality. State-of-the-art viewing windows and programming space enable Jones Dairy to fulfill its mission to educate guests about the important connection between farms and food. The family farm remains an active part of the community by hosting local school districts for immersive field trips and 4-H-sponsored events, with over 500 schoolchildren visiting annually. Later this year, Jones Dairy looks forward to celebrating 122 years in Iowa.

It is clear that the family-owned and operated Jones Dairy's commitment to family while supporting Iowa's dairy industry. I want to congratulate the Jones family, as well as the entire team at Jones Dairy, for their continued dedication to family farming and educating the next generation of Iowans. I look forward to seeing their continued success in Iowa.●

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-112. A communication from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to Civil Penalty Amounts, 2025" (RIN2105-AF16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-113. A communication from the Manager of Legal Litigation and Support, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Ottumwa, IA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2024-2293)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-114. A communication from the Acting Chief of Staff, Enforcement Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "In the Matter of Amendment of Section

1.80(b) of the Commission's Rules Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties to Reflect Inflation" (DA Docket No. 25-5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-115. A communication from the Legal Yeoman, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Marine Equipment on Board Vessels and Offshore Units or Facilities" ((RIN1625-AC76) (Docket No. USCG-2020-0519)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-116. A communication from the Legal Yeoman, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Mariner Credentialing Program Transformation" ((RIN1625-AC86) (Docket No. USCG-2021-0834)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-117. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation, and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Update and Relocation of the Department of Energy Technology Investment Agreement Regulations" (RIN1991-AC19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-118. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation, and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Inflation Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-119. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation, and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Privacy Act of 1974: Implementation of Exemptions" (RIN1903-AA16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-120. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation, and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Test Procedure for Central Air Conditioners and Heat Pumps" (RIN1904-AF19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-121. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2024 Federal Programs and Services Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Palau (2024 Palau FPSA); to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-122. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reference Measurement Principle and Calibration Procedure for the Measurement of Ozone in the Atmosphere (Chemiluminescence Method); Correction" ((RIN2060-AV63) (FRL No. 9344.1-01-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-123. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of California; Coachella Valley; Extreme Attainment Plan for 1997 8-Hour Ozone Standards" (FRL No. 11677-03-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-124. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Withdrawal of Technical Amendment" (FRL No. 11687-02-R5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-125. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Minor Corrections to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Regulations" ((RIN2040-AG39) (FRL No. 12062-01-OW)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-126. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; AK; Updates to Materials Incorporated by Reference" (FRL No. 12384-01-R10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-127. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interim Final Determination to Defer Sanctions, San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 12536-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-128. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Hazardous and Solid Waste Management System: Disposal of Coal Combustion Residuals from Electric Utilities; Legacy CCR Surface Impoundments; Correction" ((RIN2050-AH34) (FRL No. 7814.1-04-OLEM)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-129. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Medicare Beneficiary Ombudsman Fiscal Year 2021 Report to Congress"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-130. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Finalizing Medicare Rules under Section 902 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 for Calendar Year 2024"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-131. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Response"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-132. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Total Medicare Part B Spending on Lab Tests Decreased in 2023, Driven in Part by Less Spending on COVID 19 Tests"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-133. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "FY 2022 Annual Report to Congress on the Child Support Program"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-134. A communication from the Regulations Writer, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Use of Electronic Payroll Data to Improve Program Administration" (RIN0960-AH88) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2025; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-135. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2026; and Basic Health Program" (RIN0938-AV41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 14, 2025; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-136. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Preventive Medicine and Public Health Training Grant Program Fiscal Year 2023"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-137. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2022-2023 Report to Congress on Organ Donation and the Recovery, Preservation, and Transportation of Organs"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-138. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2020-2021 Scientific and Clinical Status of Organ Transplantation"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-139. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Loan Repayment Program for the Year 2023"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-140. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "FY 2019 Older Americans Act Report to Congress"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-141. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and B Supplemental Awards Fiscal Year 2024"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-142. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Biennial Report to the President, Congress, and the National Council on Disability on the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-143. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on the Prevention and Reduction of Underage Drinking"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-144. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on the Benefits and Costs of Federal Regulations and Agency Compliance with the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-145. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Statistical Programs of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-146. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 Report to Congress on the Administration of the Indian Health Service Tribal Self-Governance Program"; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-147. A communication from the Legal Advisor, Office of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2025; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-148. A communication from the Chief of Foreign Investment Review Section, National Security Division, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Preventing Access to U.S. Sensitive Personal Data and Government-Related Data by Countries of Concern or Covered Persons" (RIN1124-AA01) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2025; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-149. A communication from the Acting Chief Privacy and Civil Liberties Officer, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal years 2021-2024 annual privacy report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-150. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Presumptive Service Connection for Leukemia, Multiple Myelomas, Myelodysplastic Syndromes, and Myelofibrosis Due to Exposure to Fine Particulate Matter" (RIN2900-AS27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 14, 2025; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-1. A petition from citizens of the United States relative to votes on motions to exclude Members-elect and Senators-elect who are disqualified under Section 3 of the 14th Amendment, to exclude electoral votes for candidates disqualified thereby, and to invoke the 12th Amendment as necessary; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PAUL, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment with a preamble:

S. Res. 29. An original resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the President of the United States possesses legal authority under existing law to take immediate and necessary action to secure the southwest border of the United States.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. CRAPO for the Committee on Finance.

*Scott Bessent, of South Carolina, to be Secretary of the Treasury.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CURTIS, Ms. LUMMIS, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 154. A bill to amend the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2015, to reauthorize the Colorado River System conservation pilot program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 155. A bill to improve communication between the United States Postal Service and local communities relating to the relocation and establishment of Postal Service retail service facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

S. 156. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to modify the delivery of technical assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 157. A bill to authorize certain States to take certain actions on certain Federal land to secure an international border of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

S. 158. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide that aliens who have been convicted of, or who have committed, sex offenses or domestic violence are inadmissible and deportable; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. COTTON, Mr. SHEEHY, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. LUMMIS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. SCHMITT, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mrs. BRITT,

Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CASSIDY, and Ms. ERNST):

S. 159. A bill to designate Ansarallah as a foreign terrorist organization and impose certain sanctions on Ansarallah, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SHEEHY (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 160. A bill to amend the Wildfire Suppression Aircraft Transfer Act of 1996 to reauthorize the sale by the Department of Defense of aircraft and parts for wildfire suppression purposes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 161. A bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to issue rules relating to the testing procedures used under the New Car Assessment Program of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 162. A bill to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to improve foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. FETTERMAN):

S. 163. A bill to require institutions of higher education participating in Federal student aid programs to share information about title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including a link to the webpage of the Office for Civil Rights where an individual can submit a complaint regarding discrimination in violation of such title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. SHEEHY, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 164. A bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for en bloc consideration in resolutions of disapproval for "midnight rules", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. BANKS, Mr. CRUZ, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH):

S. 165. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to list fentanyl-related substances as schedule I controlled substances; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TILLIS:

S. 166. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to create or enhance penalties for murder and assault committed against a law enforcement officer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TILLIS:

S. 167. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to punish criminal offenses targeting law enforcement officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHMITT:

S. 168. A bill to establish a debt reduction fund to reduce the national debt of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. KING, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 169. A bill to assist States in carrying out projects to expand the child care workforce and child care facilities in the States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 170. A bill to prohibit the appointment of former fossil fuel executive officers and fossil fuel lobbyists as the heads of certain departments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. MORAN):

S. 171. A bill to remove the lesser prairie-chicken from the lists of threatened species and endangered species published pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, to amend that Act to exclude the lesser prairie-chicken from the authority of that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 172. A bill to clarify the country of origin of certain articles imported into the United States for purposes of certain trade enforcement actions; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 173. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase excise taxes on fuel used by private jets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FISCHER:

S. 174. A bill to improve the transparency of Amtrak operations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MORENO:

S. 175. A bill to rescind the unobligated balances of amounts appropriated for Internal Revenue Service enhancements and use such funding for an External Revenue Service; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. SHEEHY, and Mr. BUDD):

S.J. Res. 3. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service relating to "Gross Proceeds Reporting by Brokers That Regularly Provide Services Effectuating Digital Asset Sales"; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. PAUL:

S. Res. 29. An original resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the President of the United States possesses legal authority under existing law to take immediate and necessary action to secure the southwest border of the United States; from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; placed on the calendar.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 6

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. MORENO) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 6, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

S. 40

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 40, a bill to address the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865 and to establish a commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery, its subsequent de jure and de facto racial and economic discrimination against African Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African Americans, to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies, and for other purposes.

S. 68

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 68, a bill to prohibit the suspension of collections on loans made to small businesses related to COVID-19, and for other purposes.

S. 100

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCCORMICK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 100, a bill to repeal the Corporate Transparency Act.

S. 112

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. MORENO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 112, a bill to amend section 235(b)(2)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to require the implementation of the Migrant Protection Protocols.

S. 124

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) were added as cosponsors of S. 124, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for disciplinary procedures for supervisors and managers at the Department of Veterans Affairs and to modify the procedures of personnel actions against employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 126

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 126, a bill to increase the rates of pay under the statutory pay systems and for prevailing rate employees by 4.3 percent, and for other purposes.

S. 133

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 133, a bill to modify the fire management assistance cost share, and for other purposes.

S. 134

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Massachu-

setts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) were added as cosponsors of S. 134, a bill to place limitations on excepting positions from the competitive service, and for other purposes.

S. 143

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 143, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to repeal the natural gas tax.

S. 145

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCCORMICK), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) were added as cosponsors of S. 145, a bill to require the redesignation of Ansarallah as a foreign terrorist organization.

S. 146

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 146, a bill to require covered platforms to remove nonconsensual intimate visual depictions, and for other purposes.

S. 147

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 147, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to provide grants to air pollution control agencies to implement a cleaner air space program, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 28

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. KIM), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 28, a resolution honoring the service of women in combat roles in the Armed Forces.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 29—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES POSSESSES LEGAL AUTHORITY UNDER EXISTING LAW TO TAKE IMMEDIATE AND NECESSARY ACTION TO SECURE THE SOUTHWEST BORDER OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. PAUL submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs which was placed on the calendar:

S. RES. 29

Whereas, since the start of the Biden-Harris Administration, nearly 11,000,000 individuals have been encountered attempting to enter the United States unlawfully;

Whereas U.S. Customs and Border Protection has—

(1) apprehended nearly 400 suspected terrorists attempting to enter the United States illegally between ports of entry;

(2) encountered an additional 1,587 suspected terrorists at United States ports of entry; and

(3) identified more than 1,700,000 special interest aliens;

Whereas, since October 1, 2021, more than 120,000 illegal aliens with criminal warrants or convictions were encountered along United States borders, including—

(1) more than 4,800 illegal aliens who were convicted of assault, battery, or domestic violence;

(2) more than 3,300 illegal aliens who were convicted of theft-related offenses;

(3) nearly 1,400 illegal aliens who were convicted of sexual offenses; and

(4) nearly 200 illegal aliens who were convicted of homicide or manslaughter;

Whereas, under section 235(b)(2)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225(b)(2)(C)), the Department of Homeland Security is authorized to immediately return certain applicants for admission or asylum to a contiguous foreign territory in accordance with the memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled “Policy Guidance for Implementation of the Migrant Protection Protocols”, dated January 25, 2019, or any substantially similar policy changes issued or taken on or after January 20, 2025, whether set forth in a memorandum, executive order, regulation, directive, or by other action;

Whereas, under section 212(f) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(f)), the President has been given broad authority to suspend the entry of all aliens, or to impose any restrictions upon the entry of aliens the President deems appropriate, allowing the President to bar the entry of nationals whose admission could be detrimental to the interests of the United States;

Whereas, under section 208(b)(2)(C) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1158(b)(2)(C)), the Department of Homeland Security is authorized to promulgate additional limitations and conditions under which an alien shall be ineligible for asylum, including making asylum seekers ineligible if they enter or attempt to enter the United States across the southern border without first applying for protection from persecution or torture in at least 1 country, other than the alien’s country of citizenship, nationality, or last lawful habitual residence, through which the alien transited en route to the United States; and

Whereas the “Remain in Mexico” policy (also known as the Migrant Protection Protocols) was an effective measure that enhanced border security, helped deter illegal entries, and made the United States safer: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that the President has the authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.), including sections 208(a)(2)(A), 212(f), and 235(b)(2)(C) (8 U.S.C. 1158(a)(2)(A), 1182(f), and 1225(b)(2)(C)) to take action to secure the southern border and protect the sovereignty and security of the United States; and

(2) urges the President and the Secretary of Homeland Security to utilize all available statutory authority to expeditiously reinstate or implement policies and programs that will promote orderly and lawful entry at the border, deter illegal immigration, and protect national security, including by—

(A) immediately removing illegal aliens;

(B) immediately returning illegal aliens to Mexico;

(C) reinstating the Migrant Protection Protocols (commonly known as “Remain in Mexico”) or any substantially similar policy;

(D) ending the catch-and-release policy;

(E) ending abuses of humanitarian parole authority;

(F) detaining inadmissible aliens;

(G) making illegal aliens ineligible for asylum;

(H) using expedited removal authority; and

(I) eliminating taxpayer-funded benefits for illegal aliens.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I have four requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 10:15 a.m., to consider a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 10 a.m., to consider nominations.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 10 a.m., to consider the adoption of committee rules.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 10 a.m., to consider a nomination.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that when the

Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 11 a.m. on Wednesday, January 22; 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 the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 4, S. 6; finally, that the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 4, S. 6 at 2:30 p.m.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:11 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at 11 a.m.