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Senate

The Senate met at 10 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.

Eternal God, before You nations rise and fall. They grow strong or wither by Your design. Help our Nation and world to embrace righteousness and to strive for unity and renewal.

Lord, hasten the coming of Your Kingdom, where pain, tears, and death will be no more. Teach all nations the way of peace so we may plow up battlefields and pound weapons into liberation tools. Teach us to talk across boundaries as brothers and sisters, united by Your love.

Today, inspire our Senators and all who work with them to strive in their efforts to transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows.

And, Lord, we continue to pray for those involved with the Texas flooding.

We pray in Your magnificent 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 (Mrs. MOODY). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Jonathan Gould, of Virginia, to be Comptroller of the Currency for a term of five years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

SREBRENICA GENOCIDE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, July 11 is recognized by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica.

This town in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the scene of the worst genocide on European soil since the Holocaust. Bosnian Serb separatists murdered 8,000 of their fellow Bosnians at that time—these fellow Bosnians had been their coworkers, their neighbors, even friends—because of their Muslim heritage, practicing that faith or not practicing.

Many Bosnian families who survived the genocide but who lost their family members became refugees and found a home in my State of Iowa. Bosnian Iowans have enriched Iowan communities with their strong work ethic, family values, and unique culture.

Today, there are renewed calls for ethnic separatism in Bosnia. That dredges up painful memories for those who lived through the genocide of the 1990s.

As we commemorate the loss, which so many Bosnian families experienced, we ought to be alert to the renewed efforts to finalize the ethnic cleansing project that began in the 1990s.

The Dayton Accords are rightly celebrated for ending that killing of 8,000, but they essentially froze the

frontlines and enshrined ethnic divisions by creating two entities within Bosnia and Herzegovina. These two entities are named Republika Srpska and the Federation.

Prior to the war and the ethnic cleansing, Bosnians of Orthodox, Muslim, and Catholic heritage were very intermixed; although, many Bosnians were not particularly practicing their respective religions.

The territory that is now the Republika Srpska used to have a large percentage of Bosnians of Muslim heritage, but most are now gone. However, I have talked to Bosnians in Iowa of Muslim heritage who still have family living in the old country.

Separatists in Bosnia and their advocates here falsely imply this area was always populated overwhelmingly by Orthodox Bosnian Serbs so they ought to have their own state. They also spin narratives that this is some great clash of faiths or civilizations.

Bosnians share a common European culture. However, it seems like ethnic identity—not whether or how a Bosnian practices a faith—has been the focus of conflict.

There are no easy answers for Bosnia's future, but I am convinced that state-building based on ethnic cleansing is not the right way to go, and we should have learned that from the genocide of 1995.

NOMINATION OF WHITNEY D. HERMANDORFER

On another subject, Madam President, before noon today, we will begin our first set of votes on the nomination of Whitney Hermandorfer to serve as circuit judge for the Sixth Circuit. Before we do, I want to express my support for her nomination and urge my colleagues to support her nomination and confirm her.

Ms. Hermandorfer is President Trump's first judicial nominee, and she really is a home-run pick or, using a more appropriate expression for a former basketball player, her nomination is "nothing but net."

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



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Ms. Hermandorfer's list of accolades is something to behold. She graduated magna cum laude from Princeton University and was cocaptain of her basketball team. She was valedictorian at George Washington Law School and clerked for three of the current Supreme Court Justices as well as another Federal judge.

Currently, Ms. Hermandorfer is director of the strategic litigation unit in the Tennessee Attorney General's Office and has led some of the most important litigation in our country, including a recent victory before the Supreme Court.

At her hearing, we witnessed firsthand her impressive intellect, composure under pressure, professionalism, and collegial nature. Her performance at her hearing was no surprise to anyone who knows her. Her nomination has been praised by practitioners and academics from across the political spectrum. They understand that Ms. Hermandorfer is dedicated to following the rule of law, not to advancing her preferred policy outcomes.

Too often, we have seen judges play policymaker instead of being just simply a jurist. Ms. Hermandorfer understands the powerful role that judges have in our system of government, but even more importantly, she respects the limitation of that power.

During the Biden administration, a substantial majority of judicial nominees received bipartisan support. In fact, more than 80 percent of his nominees got bipartisan support. Republicans wouldn't have picked most of those judges, but many of them still got support from my side of the aisle.

Given her impeccable qualifications, I hope we can have the same bipartisan support today for Ms. Hermandorfer; otherwise, it just shows how politically partisan the other side has become.

The Senate's advice and consent role for judicial nominees is one of our most important jobs. Sometimes these decisions can be difficult, but in this case, it is pretty simple. I am confident Ms. Hermandorfer will be an excellent judge, and I urge my colleagues to support her nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam 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.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, on Tuesday evening, I filed cloture on the nomination of Whitney Hermandorfer, of Tennessee, to be U.S. circuit judge for the Sixth Circuit, the first of President Trump's judicial nominees that we will consider this month.

I am excited that the White House has started sending over judicial nomi-

nations and eager to get to floor confirmation of Trump's nominees.

One of the great achievements of President Trump's first term was the confirmation of some 234 judges to the Federal bench. At the start of the first Trump administration, the President and Congress were faced with well over 100 openings in the judiciary, a daunting number but an incredible opportunity to shape the Federal bench.

The administration got right to work on identifying good judicial candidates, and Leader McConnell determined that we were going to fill those slots and others that would open up—and not just fill them, of course. The President and Leader McConnell and then-Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley were determined to fill them with the right kind of judges, judges who would faithfully interpret the law, not attempt to legislate from the bench.

Our interest was in putting judges on the bench who would look at the law, the Constitution, and the facts of the case and rule based on those criteria and nothing else. That might seem like an obvious goal for judicial nominations, but, unfortunately, that is not always the case. In fact, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle frequently seem to prefer another kind of judge, the kind of judge who will rule in line with Democrats' policy preferences, even when the law doesn't support them.

You only have to look at Democrats' attempts to politicize and delegitimize the Supreme Court for daring to occasionally rule against Democrats' preferred outcomes to realize that Democrats aren't interested in judges who will rule according to law; they are interested in judges who will rule according to the platform of the Democratic Party. That is a very dangerous thing.

Our system is based on a belief in the rule of law. In the American system, the law is supposed to be the final, impartial arbiter. Cases are to be decided based on what the law says, not on what a particular judge feels. Sure, it might seem nice when an activist judge goes outside the meaning of the law and rules for your preferred outcome. But what happens when that same judge reaches beyond the law to your detriment? What protection do you have if the law is no longer the highest authority?

Equal justice under the law can only be maintained as long as judges actually rule based on the law and not on their personal feelings or political opinions. An activist judiciary is a threat to justice, it is a threat to the separation of powers, and it is a threat to individual liberty.

And one of the things I am proudest of in the first Trump administration is the number of judges we put on the bench who understand this—who understand that our system depends on the rule of law, not the rule of unelected judges; who understand that their job is to interpret the law, not

usurp the job of the people's elected representatives by legislating from the bench.

We are not facing the number of judicial vacancies this Congress that we faced during President Trump's first term. There are currently only around 50 vacancies on the Federal bench. So our job now is to continue the good work that we began during the first Trump administration by filling those vacancies with more judges who understand the proper role of a judge, and that starts with confirming Ms. Hermandorfer.

I am grateful to Leader McConnell and Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley and to Lindsey Graham for their incredible efforts during President Trump's first term, and I am grateful to President Trump for the caliber of judges he has nominated and continues to nominate to the bench. I look forward to working with President Trump and Chairman Grassley to confirm more outstanding judges during this Congress.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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.

NOMINATION OF WHITNEY D. HERMANDORFER

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, later today, Senate Republicans will hold the first procedural vote on a judicial nominee in Donald Trump's second term, Whitney Hermandorfer, to be a circuit judge on the Sixth Circuit.

Everyone knows that for Donald Trump's judges, one thing has always mattered most: loyalty to him. Not experience, not independence, not knowledge of the law, not even following the rule of law. When it comes to judges, Donald Trump cares only about one thing: fealty. He doesn't care about the law, precedent, or even what the Constitution says. He only wants them to do whatever he wants, no matter how baseless or irrational it is.

A quick glance at Ms. Hermandorfer's background shows she is unqualified to serve on the bench. She has less than 10 years of legal experience. She has never served as the sole or chief counsel on a single case that was tried to verdict. Indeed, she has made a career out of going after people's reproductive rights, their transgender rights, and anti-discrimination policies.

At the Tennessee Attorney General's Office, she has tried to strike down protections for employees who need reproductive care. She supported Donald Trump's firing of more than a dozen inspectors general, even filing an amicus brief on behalf of Tennessee.

The list of reasons why Ms. Hermandorfer would make a terrible

judge goes on and on and on. If Ms. Hermandorfer is the standard for Donald Trump's judges in his second term, then it is clear Republicans learned nothing from the first time around.

The American people don't want Donald Trump's foot soldiers wearing black robes. They want experienced, fair, and independent jurists committed to upholding the law. Ms. Hermandorfer falls way short of the mark, and I oppose her nomination.

Again, when the only criteria for choosing a judge is fealty to Donald Trump, the judiciary runs amok; the judiciary is weakened; and the executive, as they are trying to take away power from the first branch of government, the Congress, is also trying to take away power from the third branch of government, the judiciary, in an effort to make Donald Trump a virtual King. That is what he wants. That is terrible for America and terrible for what this country has always stood for.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Madam President, on Hegseth, Secretary Hegseth continues to be an embarrassment and a liability, and Donald Trump should never have chosen him to lead the Pentagon.

For the second time this year, Secretary Hegseth haphazardly canceled the shipment of vital weapons that Ukraine needs in its war for survival against Vladimir Putin; and for the second time this year, his decision was eventually walked back by the President. The White House is apparently claiming that Secretary Hegseth acted without alerting a soul outside the Pentagon—not the U.S. Special Envoy to Ukraine, not the Secretary of State, and not even the President of the United States.

It is good that the President now says he will reinstate the shipment of weapons to Ukraine, but the administration's handling of this situation has been unacceptable. When asked by reporters who ordered the pause, the President said:

I don't know. Why don't you tell me.

This is amateur hour. Amateur hour. What the heck is going on at the Pentagon?

When Hegseth was up for the nomination, we all talked on our side of the aisle—Democrats talked—about how bad he would be, how unqualified he is. And this is just another example. Being a host of a talk radio show does not qualify you to be Secretary of Defense, as this incident shows.

The pause of weapons to Ukraine is, at best, a dangerous breakdown in communications and, at worst, a sign that Secretary Hegseth is more interested in helping Putin than helping Ukraine.

And what are U.S. allies supposed to make of this weapons pause? Sure, it is good that Donald Trump reversed himself, but our allies will wonder: Will this happen again?

You know who benefits most from Secretary Hegseth's and Donald Trump's incompetence? Vladimir

Putin. When Putin sees the disorganization and lack of strategy, he has no incentive to negotiate. So Donald Trump is actually undercutting himself—and Hegseth is undercutting Trump—in a desire to come to an agreement, a fair agreement, for Ukraine. When Putin sees America pause vital weapons shipments to Ukraine, even for a moment, it emboldens him.

Instead of saying "I don't know; why don't you tell me," here is what Donald Trump should do. He should unequivocally state the United States stands with Ukraine and against Putin. He should state that he fully supports additional air defense for Ukraine and a strong bipartisan sanctions package moving through the Senate, one that will give more leverage against Putin.

And Donald Trump should pick someone else to serve as Secretary of Defense. All of the charges, all of the arguments we made against him—that he was incompetent, inexperienced, and unreliable—seem to be coming true, unfortunately, for the defense of this country.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Madam President, on natural disasters, we continue to pray and mourn for everyone affected by the flooding in Texas. I still can't get the picture of those beautiful little girls—I believe it was 27 of them—all gone in the flood, and I think about their parents mourning for them, the beautiful, young lives cut short.

The tragedy is a reminder that we all have a responsibility as public servants to secure every resource possible to protect our communities from the threats of Mother Nature, which we all know are growing every year.

You don't have to be a scientist, you don't have to be someone who studies the weather every day, to know that it has changed rapidly; and it is obvious that global warming—more carbon in our atmosphere—is the main cause.

So we need all the help we can get against natural disasters. We need to protect ourselves from the threats of Mother Nature, which are growing rapidly with increasing frequency. This is especially true in my home State of New York, which has seen its own share of natural disasters, including a tornado earlier this week in Ontario County. In New York, we never used to have any tornadoes. Last year, they counted 40.

So I am alarmed that the Department of Homeland Security has canceled a \$3 million grant to the University at Albany Mesonet Program. The EMPOWER Program at the University at Albany is essential to help all New Yorkers stay safe—whether you live in New York City, in the suburbs, or Upstate. It is essential for all New Yorkers, who need to be protected against extreme weather like flooding and who need the warning—which obviously didn't occur in Texas—that bad, bad, dangerous weather is coming.

The Mesonet Program takes data from 127 different weather stations—

from Western New York to Staten Island—to provide better weather models using realtime observations. It helps local emergency managers make better informed decisions and quicker decisions to protect lives and property.

It is just utterly amazing that right after the Texas flood, the Department of Homeland Security is thinking of eliminating this program which should go across the whole country. It is one of the most advanced weather detection programs we have. It looks at the atmosphere in various layers, and it quickly combines information from various Mesonet stations and gets to the local authorities, more quickly and more accurately, the dangers that might occur from extreme weather.

So today, I am calling on Secretary Noem and the Department of Homeland Security to reinstate funding for the EMPOWER Program immediately. It makes no sense—no sense at all—to deprive States like New York of resources when we need to stay fully prepared against natural disaster and severe weather.

Make no mistake, these cuts to this program, which is based in Albany, will reverberate from one end of my State to the other. It will reverberate in places like Staten Island, where the College of Staten Island has a mesonet facility that is used by the EMPOWER Program. If this funding is canceled, it puts pressure at the State level to make it up, and that means fewer resources to alert local officials when dangerous and fast storms develop.

Canceling this funding is just completely wrong, and it is ill-informed. You know, it is typical of this administration. They just want to cut, cut, cut without even realizing the consequences. And in the wake of the horrible tragedy in Texas, to do this now seems all the more not only inappropriate but galling and wrongheaded. People in New York will be at greater risk to unexpected storms.

Canceling this funding is ill-informed. It is also dangerous. I urge Secretary Noem to reverse course immediately.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUSTED). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The majority whip.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last Friday, President Trump signed into law our historic legislation to deliver safety and prosperity for the American people. Every Democrat in this Chamber voted against it.

So, once again, Democrats do what they do: They turn to the courts to try to undo what Congress has done. This time, it is about the government funding of Planned Parenthood.

Now, we just heard the minority leader come to the floor and say: People want fair judges who will uphold the law. By Monday afternoon, Democrats had filed a lawsuit in Boston, MA, challenging the very law that was just signed on the Fourth of July.

Now, I have spoken about this Massachusetts district court in the past. Look, this is one of the Democrats' favorite venues when they want to obstruct the law—the law of the land. That is because 11 of the 13 judges were appointed by Democrat Presidents.

Well, by Monday evening, an unelected district court judge appointed by President Obama granted a temporary injunction—there they go again, another temporary injunction—blocking the law of the land. The judge did not issue a legal opinion or explain her decision. Instead, this one, lone judge, who has a history of radical rulings and partisan activism from the bench, halted the duly enacted law. As a result, millions of taxpayer dollars could be forced to be spent. This is money that taxpayers will never be able to recover.

One judge in one district trying to dictate and derail national policy and a national law—this is another example of radicals in robes undermining the elected branches of our government.

As Law Professor Elizabeth Foley recently wrote in the Wall Street Journal, the separation of powers is “under assault by rogue judges claiming national power.”

Over 40 nationwide injunctions have been filed against the Trump administration in the first 6 months. Thirty-five of them were issued by district courts in just four States and the District of Columbia—California, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Washington State. This is nearly triple the number of injunctions that President Biden faced his entire 4 years in office.

Look, Democrats continue to use the courts to try to reverse President Trump's popular policies. Democrats aren't seeking an unbiased review; they are using the courts as a political tool. It is not how the Constitution is supposed to work.

Even Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan, an Obama appointee, has opposed nationwide injunctions. In 2022, Justice Kagan said:

It just can't be right that one district judge can stop a nationwide policy in its tracks and leave it stopped for the years it takes to go through the normal process.

I agree with Justice Kagan.

The Supreme Court has recently and repeatedly taken steps to rein in these radical judges. The Supreme Court has overturned 11 injunctions against the administration just since January. That includes Tuesday's 8-to-1 order in the case of *Trump v. American Federation of Government Employees*.

This abuse of the courts needs to end. That is why I support the Judicial Relief Clarification Act. This legislation was written by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, CHUCK GRASSLEY of

Iowa. His legislation would limit lower courts from using sweeping injunctions to block national policies.

Additionally, the Senate must move quickly to confirm judges who apply the laws as written, not judges who try to legislate from the bench.

Later today, we are going to begin the process of confirming President Trump's first judicial nominee this term. It is for President Trump's nominee to serve on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. Her name is Whitney Hermandorfer. She is smart. She is tough. She is ready to serve. She has the full backing of her home State Senators, Senator BLACKBURN and Senator HAGERTY of Tennessee. She also has the support of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY.

Mr. President, the Constitution is clear: Congress controls Federal spending. The power of the purse belongs to Congress—doesn't belong to unelected district court judges with a gavel and a grudge.

The American people deserve better. Enough is enough. It is time to restore constitutional order. It is time to rein in rogue judges. It is time to confirm judges who respect the rule of law.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the Gould and Hermandorfer nominations.

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

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HAGERTY. 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 Tennessee.

NOMINATION OF WHITNEY D. HERMANDORFER

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I am here today to urge my colleagues to support the confirmation of Whitney Hermandorfer. Whitney Hermandorfer is President Trump's nominee to be a judge on the Sixth Circuit.

This is a defining moment for the second Trump administration because Whitney is the first judicial nominee to be brought forward to serve at the circuit court level. She is the first Trump nominee to come before the U.S. Senate, and she is a perfect candidate to be that first nominee.

She is going to set the benchmark for excellence for all future judicial nominees. Indeed, I don't think President Trump could have made a better choice.

Ms. Hermandorfer is eminently qualified. She graduated first in her law school class. Then she clerked on the district court for DC, the DC Circuit, and, not once but twice, at the Supreme Court of the United States.

Whitney served as lead strategist and advocate for our home State of Ten-

nessee, representing the Volunteer State in its most complex and important cases, and, unsurprisingly to everybody that knew her and knows her, she did an exceptional job.

Ms. Hermandorfer has the experience and the demeanor that our very best judges possess, along with a genuine humility, kindness, and a sense of optimism that I think everybody will appreciate.

Most important, Ms. Hermandorfer will faithfully discharge the solemn duties of a judge. She will interpret the Constitution according to its original meaning. She will administer justice without fear, without favor. She will rule without preference for the poor or the rich, the weak or the powerful. She will protect the precious rights recognized in the Constitution and safeguard the delicate separation of powers that our Founders established.

Whitney Hermandorfer is an outstanding nominee. Any delay in confirming her deprives our courts of the very best and the very brightest that our Nation can offer.

So I am here today to urge my colleagues to support her nomination on today's procedural vote, and I am going to encourage this body to quickly proceed to her confirmation.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 64, Jonathan Gould, of Virginia, to be Comptroller of the Currency for a term of five years.

John Thune, John Barrasso, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John R. Curtis, Rick Scott of Florida, Bernie Moreno, Pete Ricketts, Eric Schmitt, Jon A. Husted, Roger Marshall, Jim Justice, Tommy Tuberville, Bill Hagerty, Joni Ernst, James E. Risch, Marsha Blackburn, Tim Sheehy.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jonathan Gould, of Virginia, to be Comptroller of the Currency for a term of five years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted “yea.”

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr.

BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted— yeas 50, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 381 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—5

Blumenthal	Graham	Tillis
Duckworth	Murphy	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 50, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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. 261, Whitney D. Hermandorfer, of Tennessee, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

John Thune, Lindsey Graham, Shelley Moore Capito, Ted Budd, Mike Lee, Tom Cotton, John Barrasso, Bernie Moreno, Cynthia M. Lummis, Katie Boyd Britt, Eric Schmitt, Roger Marshall, Marsha Blackburn, Markwayne Mullin, Steve Daines, Jim Banks, Chuck Grassley.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Whitney D. Hermandorfer, of Tennessee, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

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

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) would have voted "yea," the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 382 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—43

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

NOT VOTING—6

Blumenthal	Graham	Murphy
Duckworth	Hickenlooper	Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JUSTICE). The yeas are 51, the nays are 43, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Whitney D. Hermandorfer, of Tennessee, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

(The remarks of Mr. WELCH pertaining to the introduction of S. 2247 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. WELCH. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MOODY). The Senator from Texas.

CENTRAL TEXAS FLOODS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, 2 days ago, I came to the floor to speak

about the catastrophic flooding in Central Texas, and I would like to update my colleagues on the status of those recovery operations and also to express my gratitude to many of them who have reached out and offered their condolences—not to me but through me to my constituents and the people who are still grieving and who were so adversely affected by this natural disaster. For many who are affected by this tragedy, the pain will never go away.

At this point in the rescue and recovery efforts, more than 119 deaths so far have been confirmed across the State. Remember, this happened mainly the early morning of July 4, in the early morning hours. But that 119 deaths so far includes 36 children in Kerr County alone.

Sadly, we learned a couple of days ago that, after counting all of the day campers and other people who were camping alongside the Guadalupe River during the Fourth of July weekend, where they were expecting to celebrate the Nation's birth but also fireworks displays and cookouts and things like that, unfortunately, people outside of the organized camps, mainly children and counselors—170 of them are missing in addition.

So, for many of my constituents back home in Texas, the nightmare is not over. Of course, these loved ones who were lost were mothers and fathers and teachers, high schoolers, and precious children, young children.

Those who died at Camp Mystic, an all-girls Christian summer camp, included two 8-year-old girls from Austin named Linnie McCown and Mary Stevens. As hard as it is to look at the pictures of these young girls, I think it is important to remember that these are not just numbers; these are human lives that were lost in this tragedy and families left behind who will never ever forget this terrible tragedy, nor fully recover.

These two young girls were sleeping in a cabin called the Bubble Inn, which was close to the banks of the Guadalupe River.

Linnie attended Casis Elementary School in West Austin. Her father Michael drove down to the Hill Country to search for his daughter. He told a reporter that when he went to the cabin at Camp Mystic and saw the stuffed animals, charm bracelets, and photos, he wanted to take some of those for each parent, even while he himself was looking for answers about his own daughter.

After learning about Linnie's death, Michael wrote on social media:

She filled our hearts with so much joy we cannot begin to explain. We are going to miss her very much but know she's up there shining bright.

Mary Stevens attended Highland Park Elementary School in North Central Austin. Her mother Stacy said on a post after her death:

Our world is shattered but I have peace getting your letters and knowing you were

having the time of your life at camp and had a dance party with all of your friends before the Lord decided to take you from us. He has bigger plans for you.

Mary and Linnie were just two of the victims of this horrific flooding, and there are many others with their own stories and families and futures that were cut far too short.

Now 6 days after the flooding, rescue and recovery efforts for those who remain unaccounted for are still underway. I would like to reiterate the message of Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, who shared with me in Kerrville on Saturday her No. 1 priority, which was to save lives and to reunite families.

As I said, there are now 170, at last count, people still missing in Kerr County alone, including 5 campers and 1 counselor from Camp Mystic. This number does not include others that were missing in surrounding counties like Travis, Williamson County, Burnet County, and it doesn't include out-of-town visitors who may have been vacationing in Central Texas. Because of that, the sad reality is, this number will rise.

Once again, I want to recognize Governor Abbott and the many other State and local officials who snapped into action in response to this disaster, as well as the first-line responders who are committed to recovering as many people as possible.

More than 19 different State, local, and national government entities have been involved in these rescue efforts, and according to Lieutenant Colonel Baker of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas game wardens alone have conducted more than 400 rescues and 30 recoveries.

I am grateful as well to President Trump and Secretary Noem for their rapid Federal response. President Trump, when I talked to him on Saturday morning, said: Whatever you need. And that message was reiterated by Secretary Noem. And, of course, the President agreed to a Federal disaster declaration at the request of Governor Abbott on the spot.

I am especially thankful to the President for his kind words of love and support for those who have lost everything during this very, very sad time for Texas. The President and the First Lady are expected to come to Central Texas tomorrow, and I look forward to joining them once again.

To all of my Senate colleagues who have expressed words of kindness and condolences over the last few days, I want to express my appreciation to them. It is not hard for each of us to imagine, as parents or grandparents or husbands or wives, what a loss like this must mean in the lives of those who have been left behind.

Occasionally, we see people try to make political hay and engage in the blame game after a disaster like this. Of course, I guess I am not entirely surprised by that, but my request to them is, Please, wait. Wait until we

have recovered all of those who are unaccounted for. There will be plenty of time for a thorough investigation of the facts and circumstances. Of course, it is only normal to say: Well, we want to make sure, in the future, we learn lessons from this experience so that we can save lives in the future. That time will come, but it is not now.

We need to use our words to encourage and to uplift and to console our fellow Americans during this difficult time. Now is not the time for partisanship; now is the time for unity. As Texans, we are accustomed to working and playing as a team. We don't point fingers. We ask: What can I do to help?

So the best thing we can do right now is to offer our condolences to the families of the victims and to continue to support the ongoing recovery efforts. It is imperative right now that we continue to work relentlessly, in the words of Governor Abbott, to recover as many people as possible who are yet unaccounted for. And he said: We will account for all of them.

Again, I want to reiterate what I said previously in that there is zero evidence of any failure on the part of the National Weather Service or any government Agency that they contributed to this horrific disaster. But if there are technologies we can implement, training we can promote, or systems we can improve, we should look to doing that in the future, for the future. There will be time for Federal efforts beyond the major disaster declaration granted by the Trump administration. We have already begun to try to identify legislative efforts we might undertake here in the Congress.

In listening to my colleague from Vermont, we know that natural disasters like this are not confined to any specific part of the country, to any State, or to any region. They happen everywhere at different times and in different places. It remains unclear whether there is anything that could have been done differently to prevent this horrible tragedy from taking place, but our goal must, nevertheless, remain to prevent more mothers and fathers and families from suffering the very great pain that so many are feeling right now.

This week, there has been example after example of Texans helping fellow Texans. Countless prayer vigils and donation drives have been organized across the State in honor of those who lost their lives in the flooding. Fundraisers have raised tens of thousands of dollars for everything from a fund in memory of Mystic camper Hadley Hanna to money for Lyle and Sue Glen-na, a couple from Minnesota who managed to use their car horns to alert others at their campground of the incoming flood, likely saving multiple lives in the process.

There wasn't a single spot left in the parking lot of the George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas for the vigil that was held there, and University of Texas students gathered at UT

Tower in Austin to honor Chloe Childress and Katherine Ferruzzo—Camp Mystic counselors and incoming freshmen. Chloe lost her life in the flooding, and Katherine remains unaccounted for at this time.

As a father of two daughters, I can't imagine what these parents are going through, or grandparents or families or friends, given the loss of these young girls—of these lives that had only just begun. For those who are still waiting to hear news about their missing children or family members, they should know that we are doing everything humanly possible to find them and bring them home.

While I can't show the photos of every person who has died or is still missing due to the flooding, I want all who have lost loved ones to know that the prayers of those of us here and, I believe, of those across the Nation are lifting them up and are with them during their time of unimaginable grief.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2230

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, the World Series of Poker is currently underway in my hometown of Las Vegas, NV, where tens of thousands of Americans have converged around one of the largest and most prestigious gaming events across the globe.

This world-renowned tournament and the visitors who flock to Nevada to witness it help drive my State's economy. Anyone who has ever heard of Las Vegas knows that our gaming industry is a massive contributor to our State's GDP. Unfortunately, tucked into the Republicans' tax bill was a provision that puts the industry at risk not just in Nevada but across the country.

Until last week, the law of the land was that gamblers could deduct 100 percent of their losses from their annual taxes. For example, if a gambler won \$500,000 and lost \$500,000 in a year, that gambler would be able to deduct \$500,000 from their taxes and break even. But under the new law that was recently passed by the Republicans and signed into law by the President, gamblers will only be able to deduct 90 percent of their losses on their annual taxes; so that same taxpayer would now have \$50,000 in taxable income even though they lost everything they won that year. They would literally be paying taxes on money they don't have.

This makes no sense, and it will do irreparable harm to our country's gaming industry if it takes effect, especially in Nevada. It will disincentivize professional gamblers, like players at the World Series of Poker, from doing what they do best and contributing to our economy. It will move major events that drive our economy offshore and push wagering into illegal markets, and it could punish tourists who come to Vegas to win big.

Let me be clear: The Republican tax bill is full of provisions that are bad for

Nevada and this country. That is why I didn't vote for it. And while it will take years to undo the damage that bill will cause, this ridiculous gaming tax is something we can fix today. That is largely because this provision being included in that tax bill was as a result of Republicans haphazardly inventing new budget rules to ram their debt-busting bill through Congress. These new rules they made up forced them to make changes to existing policy even if it made that policy worse for Americans. And that is what happened here.

Nobody thinks this is a good idea, and I am not sure many of my Republican colleagues even knew this was in the bill that they passed. So I am proposing a simple solution, which is a return to the previous policy. My legislation would allow taxpayers to once again deduct 100 percent of their losses from their yearly taxes. We must make this fix. Nevadans take pride in our gaming industry, and the current law could cause serious damage to my State and to our country as a whole.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII and as if in legislative session, the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of S. 2230 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, in reserving the right to object, as my distinguished colleague is very much aware, a number of important and impactful provisions from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act were challenged and, unfortunately, stricken during Byrd challenges. There are also a number of provisions that had to be written in a very specific way to comply with this Byrd rule. The underlying bill is an effort to fix one of those instances, and I am supportive of this policy change. I want to make that clear.

Another provision that was, unfortunately, not included in the final bill as a result of the Byrd rule was an exemption for qualified religious institutions from the excise tax on investment income of certain private colleges and universities, also known as the university endowment tax. The qualified religious institution provision would exempt any institution that, in short, is longstanding and has substantive ties to a religious organization.

Religious institutions have served a very important purpose in our country throughout our history and have, by and large, not been offenders of the woke and DEI problems that are rampant at many other major universities with large endowments.

As long as my Democratic colleagues are keen on fixing provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act that were

the result of this Byrd process, I think it is only fair that we fix this one as well. Again, I strongly support the underlying bill, but we will have to object, unless the Senator can agree to my request.

Accordingly, I ask that the Senator modify her request to include my amendment, which is at the desk; that the amendment be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the modification?

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, in reserving the right to object, I want everybody to understand what is going on here on the floor of the Senate.

Last week, the Republicans passed a gigantic bill that was full of massive cuts to healthcare and food assistance as well as huge tax handouts to big corporations and the ultrawealthy. It also included a lot of smaller scale policies that didn't get a lot of notice. In a lot of cases, they were just half-baked, poorly written, and now I see Republican Senators walking all over the Capitol, saying they didn't even know anything about this policy and this process.

The Republican bill is full of special carve-outs for some groups and new taxes on others. The fact is, when you rush a process like this in this way and cram in all of these policies that you haven't really thought about, you risk some consequences for people back home, and that is what is going on here in this attempt by our colleague to pass this special tax carve-out for one institution—just one—in his home State.

The Finance Committee's Democratic staff already litigated this issue in bipartisan meetings with the Parliamentarian. We knocked this proposal out of the Republican bill specifically—specifically—for one reason: It is a special carve-out, and it is plain and simple that that is what is going on.

My own view is, if my Republican colleagues want to exempt their home State colleges and universities from the endowment tax, they shouldn't have passed this deeply flawed bill in the first place. So I strongly support our colleague from Nevada's efforts. I oppose the amendment proposed by our Finance Committee colleague Senator YOUNG.

I close by way of saying: It is just not right to give a special home State tax carve-out a free ride on an entirely separate proposal. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original proposal?

Mr. YOUNG. I object.

It is understandable that my colleagues would want to characterize this imminently reasonable request as something that is parochial in nature.

I will say, however, that when we advanced the largest tax cut for middle- and working-class Americans in American history, when we advanced this broader initiative to make Medicaid more sustainable for all Americans and take Medicaid back to its original purpose, when we invested in critical resources in our military—at a time when the world is not becoming less dangerous; it is becoming more dangerous—when we beefed up border security, we also thought it right and proper to ensure that our religious institutions were cared for, that we continued to incentivize their critical investments in education and other important causes.

Unfortunately, it was through a Democratic Byrd process. It was a partisan effort to initiate a process to strip out the provisions that would have exempted religious institutions from attacks that should not be applied to them.

So I seek an exemption on behalf of all these religious institutions across the country that are broadly supported, at the same time that I seek relief for the Senator from Nevada, in the interest of her State, for gambling purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I have to say, it is a shame that we cannot pass this commonsense fix, S. 2230, because the Republicans want to weigh it down with unrelated measures that they voted to support.

I appreciate my colleague from Indiana, and I hope we can work together, because I know he supports S. 2230, to try to get this passed and fix this. This is something that—my understanding is—many Republicans, along with Democrats, did not even know was part of that process. And now I hope we can. But I hope it doesn't get caught in this constant churn now that Republicans, when they vote for a bill, they are trying to undo some of those votes because of things they didn't like in the bill. If they didn't like it, they should have voted against the bill.

It really is doing a disservice to so many across the country. It is not just a unique thing for Nevada. This is gaming. Gaming exists across the country, almost in every State. There are so many people who are going to be impacted by this, and it just does not make sense. This is a Republican piece of legislation that is actually causing people to pay taxes on money they lost. It makes no sense.

That is all this is. It is trying to fix it and put us back to the status quo.

I will say this—and, again, I really appreciate my colleague from Indiana, but the Byrd process is not partisan. It is a Senate process we have. It is a bipartisan process. Democrats have used it in the past. Republicans have used it in the past. It is a Senate process that is part of the procedure that we have here.

If—if—my colleagues wanted to protect qualified religious institutions' exemption, they shouldn't have put it in the bill they passed or they should have introduced an amendment to knock it out. They should have done something to show that they were there.

I am hopeful this legislation that I am trying to pass on behalf of so many—so many—across this country, Americans, that it does not now get caught up in a Republican loop of trying to protect the very provisions that they voted to support in that Republican "Big Betrayal Bill."

I am disappointed, but I am not done. And I can promise you this: We will continue to work to try to get S. 2230 passed. It is just common sense, and it has bipartisan support here in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, I want to start out by thanking my dear friend and colleague Senator CORTEZ MASTO for leading the effort to fix this terrible provision.

I have to say I am extremely disappointed in what just happened. Senate Republicans are, once again, showing that they couldn't care less about the impacts of their new extreme law.

Last week, President Trump signed into law Republicans' disastrous "Big Beautiful Betrayal," which, among all the terrible cuts to healthcare, to food assistance, and all of the rest, the "Big Beautiful Betrayal" included a damaging provision that will impose a higher tax burden for people who play games at casinos—casinos not just in Nevada but all around this country—and lose money.

You heard that right. Under Republicans' new law, individuals who play blackjack or poker while they are on vacation or wherever they are at—any other games at casinos—will now owe taxes to the government on the money that they lost. That is because Republicans' extreme law placed a new limit on the amount of gaming losses that Americans can deduct.

What does this actually mean? It means if someone wins a big jackpot in Las Vegas and then loses that jackpot later on, they would still be liable for paying 10 percent in taxes on gaming "income," even though they hadn't brought home anything.

Their loss equaled their win. They had no winnings at all.

How can that be right? How does it make sense? I don't know. It is Senate Republican math. That is what they seemed to use in their "Big Beautiful Betrayal Bill." It is not just bad math; it is bad policy.

What makes it even worse is that Senate Republicans snuck in this provision in this terrible bill so they can collect more money from people so that they can pay for more tax giveaways to billionaires. This is exactly what is happening, and it is shameful.

This is going to hurt people who visit casinos. It is going to hurt Nevada's gaming industry more broadly, which supports nearly a third of the jobs in our State. It generates billions of dollars for our local economy.

That is why Senator CORTEZ MASTO and I agreed that we must pass our FULL HOUSE Act and eliminate this new tax burden.

I am extremely disappointed that Washington politicians are refusing to fix the terrible policy they enacted that is going to hurt my State—our State—and our economy.

We need to restore the full wagering loss deduction and bring fairness back to our tax system. I won't stop working and won't stop pushing until this gets done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING JOHN STULP

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my great friend John Stulp. John passed away this past Monday, July 7. He was with his family in Lamar, out on the Eastern Plains, a place that he loved more than anything.

John was a good man—a great man, by any measure. Certainly, he was defined by his unwavering commitment to his family, his neighbors, his friends, and his home State of Colorado. He was the essence of a public servant.

His list of contributions to our State is impressively long. He served as Colorado's commissioner of agriculture during my predecessor Bill Ritter's governorship, and I appreciate Governor Ritter introducing me to him, discovering him for me.

John Stulp was a former Prowers County commissioner, a Democratic commissioner in a county that is not well-known for Democratic commissioners.

He was also a former State board of land commissioner, a State wildlife commissioner, and a member of the State board of agriculture.

And in John's mind, above all that, he was a dryland wheat farmer and a cow-calf rancher from southeast Colorado.

John's reputation for patient consensus-building is well-known throughout our State and trusted throughout our State.

In 2011, I was the newly elected Governor, and Colorado had already experienced a couple of years of drought. The years 2011 and 2012 were bad years for drought, and I was convinced that we needed a blueprint, a plan of some sort, to address the gap between the State's

projected growth and its future water supply to make sure that we had the supply that could match our needs.

I recruited John to serve as my top water policy adviser. We made it a cabinet-level position. He came to all our cabinet meetings. He was our water czar. It was clear to me that we would be hard-pressed to find anyone that could do the work he did. John understood the agricultural community in Colorado better than almost anyone.

Maybe that is why, when I first approached him with the idea of a statewide water plan, he wasn't immediately convinced. Actually, he was far from it; he was, I would say, more than skeptical. He knew how hard it would be to map Colorado's water supply, to chart a plan to conserve water that we might need in the next 50 years, and to get everybody at the table. In Colorado, we talk about how whiskey is for drinking but water is for fighting. He didn't think it was a smart idea for me politically, as a new Governor, to take on an issue that had the potential to be so divisive, but he understood that we couldn't let our rivers and farms be at risk of running dry and that we needed him, Colorado needed him.

He set aside his reservations and he rolled up his sleeves and he went to work—he and James Eckholt and a lot of other people. It was remarkable to watch them. He crisscrossed the State hosting roundtables, talking with farmers, listening to stakeholders—really hearing them—trying to resolve the issues and trying to align their self-interests.

John poured his heart and soul into that plan, and in the end, John accomplished what I think even he previously believed would not be possible. We finalized the State's first-ever water plan in November of 2015. It certainly would never have happened without his prodigious efforts. He created a framework that will evolve as our State's climate and demographics continue to evolve.

More importantly, in the process, he created an ecosystem, a network, of relationships across geographic and political boundaries. And that was one of his many great legacies—his many legacies—that he leaves to Colorado. Certainly, his family is his greatest legacy, but he did a lot for the ability of Colorado's future and water.

When you travel a lot with someone, you spend a lot of miles with them and you stay at their home, you share their food, you meet their neighbors, you get a real sense of their goodness. I am not sure there are gradations of goodness. But I have traveled long distances with John Stulp. I stayed at his home in Prowers County, where he and his remarkable wife Jane would cook up a barbecue and get me together with some of their neighbors. He even loaned my son Teddy a .410 shotgun so he could learn how to shoot.

If I did believe in gradations of goodness, John and Jane Stulp would be at the very top. Even with all the great

contributions he made to our State, I think John's goodness, the pureness and the deepness of his heart, is what I will miss the most.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TUBERVILLE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask that the scheduled rollcall vote begin immediately.

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

VOTE ON GOULD NOMINATION

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 383 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—45

Alsobrooks	Duckworth	Hirono
Baldwin	Durbin	Kaine
Bennet	Fetterman	Kelly
Blunt Rochester	Gallego	Kim
Booker	Gillibrand	King
Cantwell	Hassan	Klobuchar
Coons	Heinrich	Lujan
Cortez Masto	Hickenlooper	Markey

Merkley	Sanders	Van Hollen
Murray	Schatz	Warner
Ossoff	Schiff	Warnock
Padilla	Schumer	Warren
Peters	Shaheen	Welch
Reed	Slotkin	Whitehouse
Rosen	Smith	Wyden

NOT VOTING—5

Blumenthal	Hawley	Tillis
Graham	Murphy	

The nomination was confirmed.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

RESCISSION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, last week, Republicans made the wrong kind of history. That is because last week, they passed what may well be the single most expensive piece of legislation in the history of our country—all to help the rich and hurt the poor. This should go in the "Guinness Book of World Records."

Let's not forget that the history doesn't end there because they passed the biggest bill in the history of the Senate with the biggest gimmick in the history of the Senate by basically saying that trillions of dollars in tax cuts for billionaires are free.

This farce is only getting worse because now do you know what Republicans are turning to? Do you know what the next order of business in the Senate is? They are going to take up President Trump's request to slash local news and bipartisan foreign policy investments in order to "balance the debt." That is a serious case of amnesia.

Republicans just saddled the national credit card with \$4 trillion in debt—that is trillions with a "t"—so that they could give massive tax breaks to the richest people in the country. They would have added even more to that debt if they hadn't cut over \$1 trillion in healthcare and nutrition assistance for millions of Americans.

But now that it has passed, now that they have saddled the next generation with loads of debt to help billionaire donors, many Republicans want to return to talking now about getting the Nation's fiscal house in order. Are you kidding me? Do you really think we don't remember what just happened last week? Thank goodness for C-SPAN, and we all should review the tape.

One week ago, Republicans were pretending trillions in debt for tax giveaways to their corporate buddies and megadonors was nothing—literally nothing. Now these same Republicans say that local news, which provides crucial information in emergencies, is just too expensive to support. Now these same Republicans say that we can't afford to continue lifesaving aid that prevents famine and epidemics even though—keep in mind—we are talking about a sum total of less than

0.14 percent of our overall Federal budget. The irony is almost as rich as the corporate CEOs, who made out like bandits in that big, awful mess the Republicans passed last week.

This rescissions package is not just bad because many Republicans are trying to have it both ways on deficits and the debt now; it is just plain bad on the substance. These cuts hurt our communities, and they hurt our country.

Let's start with the local news.

Republicans are trying to rip away investments that support over 1,500 local public TV and radio stations. These are stations that serve rural areas and that give them local news you simply cannot find anywhere else. It is coverage that matters to people, like what community events are coming up, how the school board is preparing for next year, weather and market reports for our farmers, not to mention emergency alerts when a disaster strikes.

You do not have to look hard to find an example of how important it is that we get disaster warnings right.

When the devastating wildfires hit Southern California earlier this year, public radio broadcasts let millions of people know how to stay safe.

When Hurricane Helene battered North Carolina, a local public radio station was the only source of information for many people.

Then, of course, there was the recent tragedy in Texas and a flooding in New Mexico. These were incredibly deadly floods. My heart goes out to all of the families who were affected, especially those who lost loved ones, and my deep gratitude goes out to our first responders. I am committed to helping those communities recover, to coming together like we always do as a nation after a tragedy.

While we learn more now about what is needed, one thing that all of our communities need is a strong emergency response system. One thing I can tell you is, when dangers arise, cutting local news stations, silencing trusted sources that can push out important warnings when cell towers fail and your home internet connection goes out, won't make anything better.

Don't even get me started on how this rescissions bill will hurt free educational programming for countless kids. We are talking about shows that kids and parents love. But after saddling our country with trillions in debt for billionaires, many Republicans are saying: There is just not a penny left for our kids. Sorry. We are going to feed Big Bird to the fat cats.

That is the message Republicans are sending here. This isn't quite how they would put it on "Sesame Street," but America knows that message is brought to you by the letters "BS," and it is so dangerously shortsighted. Talk to any parent. They will warn you that if the Republicans' cuts end up canceling free, high-quality programming that is thoughtfully developed to get kids thinking and growing their curiosity, there is an alarming amount of

low-quality junk to fill that void—content that is instead carefully engineered to keep kids watching and shorten their attention spans.

Actually, do you know what, it makes sense. Maybe getting our kids hooked on brain-rot TV is part of the Republican plan. After all, if our kids are watching PBS, they might learn to count, and if our kids learn to count, how will Republicans ever convince anyone that trillions of dollars in tax cuts are free?

So I know. Let's not forget. President Trump wants Senate Republicans to rip up investments they themselves—they themselves—helped secure to advance America's global leadership. Apparently, being the leader of the free world is now just too expensive.

The reality of that matter is that these are investments that pay off for our own country, from supporting American farmers and companies that provide the food assistance that saves lives; to stopping dangerous viruses and epidemics while they are still far overseas, away from us, before they have a chance to threaten American lives; to preventing conflict, avoiding chaos and crisis that can cause a dangerous spiral; to strengthening our ties with key partners and defending our interests in international organizations.

We don't just make these investments because they are the right thing to do; we do it because it is the smart thing to do for America. But it is worth saying that it is the right thing to do as well.

It is unthinkable wrong that this President is willing to shell out trillions for some of the richest people in the world, only to turn around and say that less than a penny a day is too expensive to protect hundreds of thousands of little girls from HIV. It is wrong for Republicans to say, "Oh, we have got to get those corporate executives a bigger bonus," only to turn around next week and say, "Oh, we don't really have to worry about the work our farmers do to help those starving kids." It is also foolish to think that this is just a luxury or just charitable work. Our farmers know better. Americans who contract infectious diseases abroad know better. The companies in our States that work overseas to stabilize conflict-affected communities alongside the DOD know better. It is bad strategy and a surefire way to hand China the upper hand. But we cannot lose sight of the fact that it is just plain wrong.

Let's be clear. If they cut this funding, Republicans will not just be turning America away from the world; they will be turning the world away from America.

Do Republicans really want to cause needless suffering or slash bipartisan funding and break commitments we already made together to save a quick buck? Is America's credibility so cheap to them?

They talk about peace through strength as if they are carrying on Ronald Reagan's legacy. Reagan spent about a half a percent of our GDP on foreign assistance. Today, we spend less than half that.

Keep in mind that cuts proposed here are really a drop in the bucket compared to the tsunami of spending and tax giveaways that Republicans just passed. I mean, you could cut every single penny the U.S. has spent on foreign assistance since World War II, and it would not add up to the cost of the tax cuts the Republicans passed last week. And that is all saying nothing about how pushing this through won't just cut bipartisan investments; it will cut out the heart of the basic principles that make bipartisan deals possible. How are we supposed to negotiate a bipartisan deal if Republicans turn around and put it through the shredder in a partisan vote?

This entire package next week should be rejected outright. There is nothing about it that is serious except for the threat it poses to our communities.

To suggest even for a second that Republicans are doing this to address the debt is laughable, and I encourage the American people to laugh at anyone who pretends as much because you could cut the equivalent of this bill every single day for an entire year and it still would not match the cost of the billionaire tax cuts the Republicans passed last week.

So, to my Republican colleagues, instead of doing Trump's dirty work, instead of doing Russell Vought's bidding, let's do our jobs. Reject these partisan cuts to bipartisan funding and turn our focus squarely to the job ahead: writing bipartisan, full-funding appropriations bills.

Do you know what? If there is a discrete pot of funding that is not being spent well, if there are cuts that make sense to include, if there are things that need to be updated and things that need to be reformed, let's have a conversation about what makes sense to rescind and improve as we write those bills in committee, the way we have always done.

My Democratic colleagues and I have said for months that we are willing to discuss rescissions in our bipartisan spending bills. We have done this in a bipartisan fashion for years no matter who has been in the White House or which party has had the majority in either Chamber.

My commitment to Chair COLLINS and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle remains the same: I am willing to work with you to include rescissions in our bipartisan spending bills as we continue to work on the fiscal year 2026 process.

Instead of moving forward with this partisan rescissions package, let's reject that package and have these discussions and work together. Let's move forward on the bipartisan appropriations process and address all of those decisions there.

I yield the floor.

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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

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

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

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 25-59, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Israel for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$510 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
Director.

Enclosures

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25-59

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

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Israel.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$500 million.
Other \$ 10 million.
Total \$510 million.

Funding Source: Foreign Military Financing

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Three thousand eight hundred forty-five (3,845) KMU-558B/B Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) guidance kits for the BLU-109 bomb body.

Three thousand two hundred eighty (3,280) KMU-572 F/B JDAM guidance kits for the MK 82 bomb body.

Non-Major Defense Equipment: The following non-MDE items will also be included: U.S. government and contractor engineering, logistics, and technical support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (IS-P-AVR).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

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

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

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: June 30, 2025.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Israel—Munitions Guidance Kits and Munitions Support

The Government of Israel has requested to buy three thousand eight hundred forty-five (3,845) KMU-558B/B Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) guidance kits for the BLU-109 bomb body and three thousand two hundred eighty (3,280) KMU-572 F/B JDAM guidance kits for the MK 82 bomb body. The following non-MDE items will also be included: U.S. government and contractor engineering, logistics, and technical support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is \$510 million.

The United States is committed to the security of Israel, and it is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Israel to develop and maintain a strong and ready self-defense capability. This proposed sale is consistent with those objectives.

The proposed sale will enhance Israel's capability to meet current and future threats by improving its ability to defend Israel's borders, vital infrastructure, and population centers. This proposed sale will increase the interoperability with U.S. forces and conveys U.S. commitment to Israel's security and armed forces modernization. Israel will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

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

The principal contractor will be The Boeing Company, located in St. Charles, MO. Part of the JDAM guidance kit requirement may be transferred from U.S. government stock. At this time, the U.S. government is not aware of any offset agreement proposed in connection with this potential sale. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor.

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

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

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25-59

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

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. Joint Direct-Attack Munitions (JDAM) consist of a bomb body paired with a warhead-specific guidance kit containing an Inertial Navigation System (INS)/Global Positioning System (GPS) guidance capability with Selective Availability Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM) or M-Code that converts unguided free-fall bombs into accurate, adverse weather "smart" munitions. The JDAM weapon can be delivered from modest standoff ranges at high or low altitudes against a variety of land and surface targets during the day or night. The JDAM can receive target coordinates via preplanned mission data from the delivery aircraft, by on-board aircraft sensors (e.g., forward-looking infrared, radar) during captive carry, or from a third-party source via manual or automated aircrew cockpit entry.

a. The KMU-558 guidance kit is paired with a BLU-109 class warhead to assemble a GBU-31 JDAM.

b. The KMU-572 guidance kit is paired with a MK 82 class warhead to assemble a GBU-38 JDAM.

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

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

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

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

U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE LEGAL OPINION

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the GAO Congressional Review Act legal opinion dated May 28, 2025.

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

DECISION

Matter of: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—Applicability of the Congressional Review Act to Record of Decision for Barred Owl Management Strategy.

File: B-337059.

Date: May 28, 2025.

DIGEST

In August 2024, the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued a record of decision titled, Record of Decision for Final Barred Owl Management Strategy Implementation and Issuance of a Migratory Bird Treaty Act Special Purpose Permit in Washington, Oregon, and California (Barred Owl ROD or ROD). The ROD announced FWS's decision to adopt a barred owl management strategy to improve the survival and recovery of northern spotted owls and to prevent declines in California spotted owls, both of which compete with barred owls. The Barred Owl Management Strategy adopted by the ROD provides a framework for federal, state, or tribal gov-

ernment agencies, or private landowners, to implement barred owl management through the lethal removal of barred owls.

The Congressional Review Act (CRA) requires that before a rule can take effect, an agency must submit the rule to both the House of Representatives and the Senate, as well as the Comptroller General. CRA incorporates the Administrative Procedure Act's (APA) definition of a rule for this purpose, with three exceptions. We conclude that the Barred Owl ROD is a rule for purposes of CRA because it meets the APA definition of a rule, and no CRA exception applies. Therefore, the ROD is subject to CRA's submission requirements.

DECISION

In August 2024, the U.S. Department of the Interior (Interior), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) announced its decision to adopt a barred owl management strategy. Record of Decision for Final Barred Owl Management Strategy Implementation and Issuance of a Migratory Bird Treaty Act Special Purpose Permit in Washington, Oregon, and California (Aug. 2024) (Barred Owl ROD or ROD). We received a request for a decision as to whether the Barred Owl ROD is a rule for purposes of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). As discussed below, we conclude that the ROD is a rule subject to CRA's submission requirements.

Our practice when rendering decisions is to contact the relevant agencies to obtain factual information and their legal views on the subject of the request. Accordingly, we reached out to Interior on February 4, 2025, and received Interior's response on March 18, 2025.

BACKGROUND

Barred Owl ROD

The Barred Owl ROD documents FWS's decision to adopt the Final Barred Owl Management Strategy (Barred Owl Management Strategy or Strategy) and issue an associated permit under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) to implement the Strategy. The ROD states that the purpose of the action "is to reduce barred owl populations to improve the survival and recovery of northern spotted owls" (a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act) "and to prevent declines in California spotted owls" (proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act). The ROD explains that barred owls, a non-native invasive species in western North America, compete with northern and California spotted owls, and this competition "is a primary cause of the rapid and ongoing decline of northern spotted owl populations" and poses a similar risk to California spotted owls as barred owl populations expand southward.

The Barred Owl Management Strategy provides a framework for federal, state, or tribal government agencies, or private landowners, to implement barred owl management. The Strategy involves the lethal removal of barred owls from specific areas and describes removal protocols and a monitoring plan for FWS as well as governmental and non-governmental entities designated by FWS. The Strategy provides for barred owl management in all provinces in the northern spotted owl range and throughout the California spotted owl range.

The MBTA prohibits the lethal removal of protected migratory bird species, including the barred owl, unless authorized by FWS in accordance with 50 C.F.R. parts 13 and 21. As part of the Barred Owl ROD, FWS approved the issuance of a Special Purpose Agency Species Protection Permit to the FWS Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office under the MBTA to implement the Strategy in Washington, Oregon, and California, and to authorize the lethal removal of barred owls by

FWS and other governmental or non-governmental entities designated by FWS. In particular, implementers and removal specialists designated by FWS under the MBTA Permit must meet the training and skill requirements described in the Strategy and must follow the Strategy's removal protocols.

The ROD states that it was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA implementing regulations in effect when the NEPA process commenced, and Interior's NEPA regulations. As part of the NEPA process, FWS developed a draft strategy and shared it for public comment along with a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). After considering and addressing comments and input from the public and various stakeholders, FWS revised the draft Strategy and released it with a final EIS. The final EIS evaluated six alternatives, and the ROD adopted the preferred alternative, with some minor clarifying edits and corrections to the Strategy.

Congressional Review Act (CRA)

CRA, enacted in 1996 to strengthen congressional oversight of agency rulemaking, requires federal agencies to submit a report on each new rule to both houses of Congress and the Comptroller General for review before the rule can take effect. The report must contain a copy of the rule, "a concise general statement relating to the rule," and the rule's proposed effective date. CRA allows Congress to review and disapprove rules issued by federal agencies for a period of 60 days using special procedures. If a resolution of disapproval is enacted, then the new rule has no force or effect.

CRA adopts the definition of "rule" under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which states that a rule is "the whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of an agency." However, CRA excludes three categories of APA rules from coverage: (1) rules of particular applicability; (2) rules relating to agency management or personnel; and (3) rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice that do not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties.

FWS did not submit a CRA report to Congress or the Comptroller General on the Barred Owl ROD. In its response to us, Interior provided additional information about the Barred Owl ROD but did not state a position as to whether it is a rule under CRA.

DISCUSSION

To determine whether the Barred Owl ROD is a rule subject to review under CRA, we first address whether it meets the APA definition of a rule. As explained below, we conclude that the ROD meets this definition. The next step is to determine whether the document falls into one of the categories of APA rules excepted from CRA's requirements. We conclude that the ROD does not fall within any of the exceptions. Therefore, the ROD is a rule subject to CRA's submission requirements.

The Barred Owl ROD is a Rule Under APA

The Barred Owl ROD meets the APA definition of a rule. First, the ROD is an agency statement as it is an official document issued by FWS.

Second, the ROD is of future effect. An agency action of future effect is one "concerned with policy considerations for the future rather than the evaluation of past or present conduct." In particular, we previously examined another FWS record of de-

cision documenting the actions necessary to restore and maintain certain types of fish in a particular river. We determined that the essential purpose of the record of decision was "to set policy for the future," and it was "clearly intended to have future effect, namely the restoration and maintenance of . . . [certain] fishery resources in the . . . [river]." Like the record of decision at issue in B-287557, the Barred Owl ROD sets policy for the future, namely the adopted Barred Owl Management Strategy, and is likewise intended to restore and maintain certain wildlife populations, in this case the northern spotted owl and California spotted owl, in particular geographic areas, specifically portions of Washington, Oregon, and California.

Finally, the Barred Owl ROD prescribes and implements law and policy and describes agency procedure and practice requirements. An agency statement implements, interprets, or prescribes law or policy when the action creates new regulations, changes regulatory requirements or official policy, or alters how the agency will exercise its discretion, among other things. The ROD prescribes and implements a new policy, the Barred Owl Management Strategy, to improve the survival and recovery of northern spotted owls and to prevent declines in California spotted owls from barred owl competition through the lethal removal of barred owls from specific areas.

An agency statement describes agency organization, procedure, or practice requirements when the statement discusses the internal operations of an agency, including statements that govern the conduct of agency proceedings. The Barred Owl ROD adopts the Barred Owl Management Strategy, which includes detailed procedures and practices for barred owl management, and these procedures and practices apply to FWS to the extent the agency itself engages in barred owl management. The Strategy also describes procedures for designating other governmental and non-governmental entities as implementers and removal specialists. In particular, the Strategy describes the information that requesting entities and individuals must submit to FWS and the process for FWS review and approval. In addition, the Strategy includes a monitoring program under which implementers must submit certain information to ensure actions are consistent with the Strategy and to assess the success of the management effort.

CRA Exceptions

Having determined that the Barred Owl ROD meets the APA definition of rule, we next consider whether the ROD falls within one of the three categories of APA rules not subject to CRA.

(1) Rule of Particular Applicability

The Barred Owl ROD is not a rule of particular applicability. Such rules are addressed to a specific, identified person or entity and address actions that person or entity may or may not take, taking into account facts and circumstances specific to that person or entity. In determining whether a rule is one of general or particular applicability, we have noted that a rule need not apply to the population as a whole to be considered a rule of general applicability; rather, all that is required is that the rule has general applicability within its intended range, regardless of the magnitude of the range. For example, we have determined that a rule is one of general applicability even if the rule is limited to a specific geographic area, so long as the rule does not apply to specific, identified persons or entities.

The Barred Owl ROD adopts the Barred Owl Management Strategy, and although the Strategy is focused on specific areas within

Washington, Oregon, and California, the Strategy is not addressed to specific, identified persons or entities. Instead, the Strategy provides a framework for any federal, state, or tribal government agency, or private landowner, to implement barred owl management.

(2) Rule of Agency Management or Personnel

The Barred Owl ROD is not a rule of agency management or personnel. This exception applies to rules relating to "purely internal agency matters." These include rules related to controlling, directing, or supervising internal management issues, as well as those related to personnel issues like communications between employees and managers, leave, or benefits.

The Barred Owl ROD does not involve internal agency management or personnel matters. Rather, the ROD adopts a Barred Owl Management Strategy that provides a framework for federal, state, or tribal government agencies, or private landowners, to implement barred owl management. Although FWS will be one entity implementing the Strategy—as demonstrated by the issuance of the MBTA Permit to the FWS Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office—FWS contemplates designating other governmental and non-governmental entities to implement the Strategy under its MBTA Permit and also expects that other entities could potentially apply for their own permit using the Strategy.

(3) Rule of Agency Organization, Procedure, or Practice that Does Not Substantially Affect Non-Agency Parties

Finally, the Barred Owl ROD is not a rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice that does not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties. A rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice is a rule that is limited to an agency's methods of operation or how the agency organizes its internal operations. Although certain rules directed at non-agency parties are considered rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice—such as those that affect the way regulated entities submit information to an agency, how the agency reviews that information, or the type or timing of actions the agency will take based on that submission—rules that are directed at and primarily concerned with the behavior of non-agency parties do not fall within this category.

As discussed above, the Barred Owl Management Strategy adopted by the ROD provides a framework for non-agency parties to implement barred owl management. This includes detailed requirements and guidance for non-agency parties designated by FWS to implement the Strategy, including removal protocols and how those parties might prioritize actions under the Strategy. These elements of the Strategy are primarily focused on the behavior of those non-agency parties rather than FWS's internal operations.

On the other hand, the Barred Owl Management Strategy also describes FWS's methods of operation. For example, the implementation requirements and guidance apply to FWS to the extent the agency itself engages in barred owl management under the Strategy. The Strategy also describes procedures for designating other governmental and non-governmental entities as implementers and removal specialists. In particular, the Strategy describes the information that requesting entities and individuals must submit to FWS and the process for FWS review and approval. However, notwithstanding the inclusion of these agency procedures and practices, the Strategy's primary focus on the conduct of non-agency parties implementing barred owl management establishes that the

ROD does not qualify as a rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice.

In addition, the ROD substantially affects the rights or obligations of non-agency parties. Although the Strategy adopted by the ROD does not require an entity to implement barred owl management and actions are limited to the lands of willing landowners and land managers, we have previously concluded that rules establishing requirements for voluntary programs may still substantially affect non-agency parties that choose to participate.

In B-334146, we examined U.S. Department of Agriculture actions establishing four new financial assistance programs. The actions prescribed each program's eligibility requirements, application requirements, calculation and distribution of funds, and, in some cases, reporting requirements and limitations on how funds could be used. Although participation in the programs was voluntary, we concluded that the actions substantially affected non-agency parties because they directly determined whether interested entities would receive funding under the programs, and, for certain programs, imposed additional implementation and reporting requirements on program participants.

The ROD's adoption of the Barred Owl Management Strategy establishes a new voluntary program for interested governmental and non-governmental entities. Like the eligibility and application requirements included in the actions at issue in B-334146, the Strategy prescribes the information that must be submitted by non-agency parties interested in becoming implementers and removal specialists, as well as qualifications for persons participating in removal activities. And just as some of the actions in B-334146 imposed additional requirements on program participants, the Strategy includes requirements for individuals and entities designated as implementers by FWS. For example, the Strategy prescribes detailed protocols for removal activities, as well as reporting requirements. In short, the ROD and adopted Strategy substantially affect non-agency parties by describing who may implement barred owl removal activities, the information those persons or entities must submit to FWS (both to be designated as implementers or removal specialists and as part of subsequent reporting requirements), and the protocols those persons or entities must follow when conducting removal activities.

CONCLUSION

The Barred Owl ROD meets the APA definition of a rule, and no exception applies. Therefore, the ROD is subject to CRA's requirement that it be submitted to Congress and the Comptroller General before it can take effect.

TRIBUTE TO PAULA BRADLEY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate and wish a very happy 90th birthday to Paula Bradley, who serves as a senior field representative in my Providence office. Paula has served in the Federal workforce for 30 distinguished years, first for former Congressman Patrick Kennedy before joining my team in 2011.

Paula is a fixture in senior communities all across the State of Rhode Island. She is a walking encyclopedia of the State and Federal programs available to help our seniors. And she is a tireless advocate when redtape gets in the way of a senior accessing their hard-earned benefits. From restoring

interrupted Medicare coverage, to reinstating Social Security benefits, to facilitating a ride or a Meals on Wheels delivery, Paula consistently gets results when called into action.

Paula is beloved by the seniors she assists and the senior center staffs she interacts with on a daily basis. She is an excellent listener, quick to remember faces and names, and is always checking back in with her seniors to ensure their problems remain resolved. She is loved and admired by my staff for the care with which she treats her seniors and the hopeful spirit she embodies.

A proud Portsmouth resident, Paula has generously devoted herself to volunteer service in her local community on Aquidneck Island. Though Paula has never sought publicity for her hard work, she recently received a 2024 Vision Award from the East Bay Community Action Program for decades of service in their Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. Kim Wetherald, East Bay Community Action Program's director of volunteer services, said it best: "Paula makes things happen for people."

I know how important Rhode Island's senior community is to Paula, but nothing is more important to her than her beloved husband Dale; her children Mary-Ellen, Bill, Peter, and Paul; her grandchildren Jennifer, John, Stephanie, James, Andrew, Brad, and Veronica; and her many great-grandchildren.

Thank you, Paula, for your dedication to the people of Rhode Island. My team, Ocean State seniors, and our State as a whole are better off because of your decades of exceptional service. I wish you all the best as you celebrate with your cherished family and friends. Happy birthday, my friend.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:57 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. McLaughlin, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate: H.R. 4. An act to rescind certain budget authority proposed to be rescinded in special messages transmitted to the Congress by the President on June 3, 2025, in accordance with section 1012(a) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 4. An act to rescind certain budget authority proposed to be rescinded in special messages transmitted to the Congress by the President on June 3, 2025, in accordance with section 1012(a) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974; referred jointly to the Committee on Appropriations; the Budget pursuant to the order of 1/30/1975 as amended by the order of 4/1/1986.

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-1271. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of vice admiral in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1272. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of admiral in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1273. A communication from the Director of the Regulations Development Staff, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Publication Method of Lists of States With and Without State Meat or Poultry Inspection Programs" (RIN0583-AE03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1274. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "School Bus Operations, 49 CFR Part 605" (RIN2132-AB53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1275. A communication from the Associate Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revising the Duration of Design Certifications" (RIN3150-AL26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1276. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Transportation for Elderly and Handicapped Persons" (RIN2132-AB54) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1277. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Transit Asset Management" (RIN2132-AB56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1278. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Charter Service" (RIN2132-AB38) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1279. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revision of National Environmental Policy Act Regulations" (RIN2132-AB51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1280. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule

entitled "Organizations, Functions, and Procedures" (RIN2132-AB52) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1281. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Lebanon that was declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1282. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the situation in Mali that was declared in Executive Order 13882 of July 26, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1283. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B); Extension of Compliance Dates" (RIN3170-AB40) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1284. A communication from the Acting Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of the Comptroller's 2024 Annual Report on Preservation and Promotion of Minority-Owned National Banks and Federal Savings Associations; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1285. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 9, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HOEVEN, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 2256. An original bill making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 119-37).

By Mr. MULLIN, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 2257. An original bill making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 119-38).

By Mr. BOOZMAN, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 222. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to allow schools that participate in the school lunch program to serve whole milk, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SUL-

LIVAN, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 2235. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to reauthorize the diesel emissions reduction program; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 2236. A bill to establish a comprehensive United States Government initiative to build the capacity of young leaders and entrepreneurs in Africa, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. SMITH, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2237. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend acute hospital care at home waiver flexibilities, and to require an additional study and report on such flexibilities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. MORENO):

S. 2238. A bill to prevent the theft of catalytic converters and other precious metal car parts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. KIM, Mr. KING, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2239. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to establish a pilot program regarding treating pregnancy as a qualifying event for enrollment in TRICARE Select; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 2240. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to expand authorities for intergovernmental support agreements for the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HUSTED (for himself and Ms. SLOTKIN):

S. 2241. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to train certain employees of Department of Labor how to effectively detect and assist law enforcement in preventing human trafficking during the course of their official duties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 2242. A bill to require the Director of National Intelligence to submit an action plan to enhance counternarcotics collaboration, coordination, and cooperation with the Government of Mexico, and for other purposes; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. WELCH):

S. 2243. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to assess certain fees on shipping and other vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2244. A bill to require immediate changes to Medicaid relating to alien eligibility and payments to Medicaid expansion States that furnish health care to certain aliens; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2245. A bill to amend the Digital Coast Act to improve the acquisition, integration, and accessibility of data of the Digital Coast program and to extend the program; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2246. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to prohibit certain offices of the Small

Business Administration from undertaking a reduction in force, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. WELCH:

S. 2247. A bill to enhance local capacity and expand local control over the disaster response, recovery, and preparedness process, to guarantee stable Federal funding streams for disaster-impacted communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 2248. A bill to reauthorize titles II and V of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 2249. A bill to expand eligibility for special overtime pay to U.S. Border Patrol agents classified above grade GS-12; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. COTTON):

S. 2250. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, relating to sentencing of armed career criminals; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. BUDD, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. HAWLEY, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 2251. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to prevent the use of funds under such Act to teach or advance concepts related to gender ideology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2252. A bill to require United States foreign assistance commodities to be made available for their intended purposes before they expire; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2253. A bill to increase consumer protection with respect to negative options in all media, including on the internet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GALLEGO (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

S. 2254. A bill to codify the Federal Trade Commission's negative option rule; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. COONS, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 2255. A bill to provide for the vacating of certain convictions and expungement of certain arrests of victims of human trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HOEVEN:

S. 2256. An original bill making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. MULLIN:

S. 2257. An original bill making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. HAWLEY:

S. 2258. A bill to prohibit the acquisition and ownership of agricultural land and residential real property by certain foreign entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. SLOTKIN:

S. 2259. A bill to prohibit the operation on property of the Department of Defense of certain vehicles designed, developed, manufactured, or supplied by persons owned by, controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction of a foreign entity of concern, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PADILLA:

S. 2260. A bill to provide for the water quality restoration of the Tijuana River and the New River, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PADILLA:

S. 2261. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to provide for the establishment of standards to limit the carbon intensity of the fuel used by certain vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. CURTIS):

S. 2262. A bill to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to clarify the nature of public investment for purposes of certain rulemaking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

S. 2263. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to exempt air traffic controllers from certain mandatory separation requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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

S.J. Res. 61. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Land Management relating to "Miles City Field Office Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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

S.J. Res. 62. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Land Management relating to "North Dakota Field Office Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Mrs. MOODY):

S. Res. 317. A resolution commending the courage, bravery, and resolve of the fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters of Cuba, who, 4 years ago, stood in the face of brutal harassment, beatings, and torture to protest against the Communist Cuban regime, demanding access to their fundamental rights to life, dignity, and freedom; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. Res. 318. A resolution recognizing that climate change poses a growing threat to public health and necessitates coordinated action to mitigate its impacts and safeguard the health and well-being of all people in the United States; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. KIM, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. Res. 319. A resolution recognizing and celebrating 100 years of quantum mechanics; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. COONS, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. OSSOFF, Ms. SMITH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. LUJÁN, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. Con. Res. 16. A concurrent resolution recognizing the significance of equal pay and the disparity in wages paid to men and to Black women; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 176

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 176, a bill to direct the President to take such actions as may be necessary to prohibit the purchase of public or private real estate located in the United States by citizens and entities of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes.

S. 1318

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BANKS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1318, a bill to direct the American Battle Monuments Commission to establish a program to identify American-Jewish servicemembers buried in United States military cemeteries overseas under markers that incorrectly represent their religion and heritage, and for other purposes.

S. 1375

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1375, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate the exception for de minimis payments by third party settlement organizations with respect to returns relating to payments made in settlement of payment card and third party network transactions, as in effect prior to the enactment of the American Rescue Plan Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1383

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) and the Senator from Florida (Mrs. MOODY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1383, a bill to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. COONS, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN), the Senator

from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Florida (Mrs. MOODY) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1659, a bill to amend titles 11 and 28, United States Code, to modify the compensation payable to trustees serving in cases under chapter 7 of title 11, United States Code, to extend the term of certain temporary offices of bankruptcy judges, and for other purposes.

S. 1918

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1918, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a refundable tax credit against income tax for the purchase of qualified access technology for the blind.

S. 1970

At the request of Mr. BUDD, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1970, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the service members of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam-Studies and Observations Group, in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service in South Vietnam, North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia during the Vietnam War.

S. 1973

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1973, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity, and for other purposes.

S. 1974

At the request of Mr. COONS, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1974, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to allow certain public health data modernization grants to be used to track hospital bed capacity, and for other purposes.

S. 2211

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2211, a bill to reauthorize the Special Diabetes Program for Type 1 Diabetes and the Special Diabetes Program for Indians.

S. RES. 315

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 315, a resolution expressing support for the designation of July 10, 2025, as Journeyman Lineworkers Recognition Day.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WELCH:

S. 2247. A bill to enhance local capacity and expand local control over the disaster response, recovery, and preparedness process, to guarantee stable Federal funding streams for disaster-impacted communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, exactly 2 years ago today, Vermont was struck with devastating floods. Those floods occurred not only a year ago today, but 2 years ago today. We had back-to-back floods in 2023 and 2024, doing about a billion dollars' worth of damage.

And by the end of last year, every county in Vermont, all 14 counties, were hit by flooding. That billion dollars in damages affected homes; it affected businesses; it affected farms.

We had 6,000 tons of debris that was removed, 77 State bridges and 63 State roads were closed; 704 miles of rail was closed, and 159 miles of rail trail was closed.

We are far from alone in Vermont in having suffered enormous damage from wild weather events. And I see my colleague from Texas, to whom all of us extend our heartfelt sorrow and condolences at the flooding in Texas and the loss of lives of those wonderful Texans and those kids.

This type of wild weather event can hit any one of our States at any time of its own choosing. And all of our States have been affected at one time or another.

Now, I want to talk about FEMA. Our experience in Vermont with FEMA is that it is absolutely essential and actually quite helpful in the immediate aftermath of the weather event.

FEMA can preposition resources. It has the capacity to surge resources and personnel, including people with real experience, and can coordinate with the local response, which is always very intense, from State resources and also from incredible outpouring of help from volunteers.

But acknowledging the importance of FEMA in the immediate aftermath of a wild weather event in any of our States cannot disregard the fact that we need to reform FEMA. We need significant reform in FEMA.

In the aftermath of the floods of 2023 and 2024, I visited all of our communities that were affected, and I followed up after that to talk to our local officials, our local volunteers, our local regional planning commissions: What worked and what didn't in the long-term response?

And what I heard from officials—regardless of what their political orientation was but local officials who had a real sense of urgency about getting the community back on its feet—was that FEMA was too slow; it was too bureaucratic; it was conflicting in the advice and information that it gave. And the ability to respond quickly and timely was really inhibited because of the centralization of the decision-making authority in FEMA in Washington or in one of the regional locations where

FEMA has administrative structures. For Vermont that, ironically, is Puerto Rico, which is not only not close to Vermont but doesn't have anything close to the weather in Vermont.

So the aftermath of repairing, getting the community back on its feet—that is where FEMA has failed us. It is because of the centralization, in my view—actually, less important than my view—in the view of the local officials who have ongoing responsibility to get the community back on its feet. They just couldn't get answers.

Let me just give some examples. When there is a culvert out, there is a road out, there is a bridge down, the people whose bridge is affected, the people who are threatened if we have a culvert replaced that is too small for what now we know will be the required carrying capacity of a culvert, the best people to make that are right there in that community. They have a sense of urgency. They have a commitment to the well-being of the people they represent in that community. They have the pressure of local community people watching to see if they are making progress on that recovery.

But what has happened with FEMA, where everything is centralized, is you don't get an answer. Can we replace an 18-inch culvert with a 36-inch culvert? Can we do the bridge over Hartland Road? Or can we make a change because the bridge over Route 5 is more important to get fixed and that is the priority?

One of the problems that our communities had is that the program managers—those are the people assigned by FEMA to serve communities as the bridge between the local community and FEMA—they are changed constantly. So we have had in some of our small towns—and I am talking towns with a population of like 300—they have one program manager after another and over the course of a year and a half might have seven or eight program managers. When that program manager is doing good work and asking questions and they are getting answers from the town clerk, the new program manager comes in, and it is as though nothing ever happened, and they have to start all over again. So it creates an enormous amount of frustration.

We have a situation with the town of Stannard where the town clerk—this is the town of 300—the town had to make a decision about repaving a road. It is a gravel surface. In order to get repaved more than a year after the road had been repaired, with the town borrowing money it really couldn't afford for a project that clearly was ultimately going to be covered by FEMA, the town clerk was getting questions about, what is the size of the gravel stones in that roadbed 12 inches down? That makes no sense. And what happens, of course, is it creates an immense amount of frustration.

A community that goes through a major weather event, in the shock of it, in the immediate aftermath, every-

one rushes in to help. But if it is your farm, if it is your business, if it is your home, you have to live with the effects of a slow-moving, nonresponsive, centralized bureaucracy rather than get on with life and get an answer. Yes or no? Can you do this or not?

So as a result of my discussions with the communities that have been affected in Vermont, today, I have introduced a bill that is called the Disaster Assistance Improvement and Decentralization, AID, Act. Quite simply, what this bill does is it recognizes that if you are going to get as quick a recovery as possible, as efficient a recovery as possible, as cost-effective a recovery as possible, you actually have to delegate responsibility and authority to the local community that has to live with the consequences of the damage that has been done. There has to be a partnership. There has to be accountability.

But where FEMA's role is going to be better on this is on oversight to make sure that there is the proper use of taxpayer, FEMA-authorized money. But it is not going to micromanage local folks to death in the name of oversight; it is going to empower the local folks to make those decisions that have to be made right now about getting that community back on its feet.

Every single one of us is horrified when the people we represent suffer the result of a wild and catastrophic weather event. The loss of life is horrifying. The destruction to the well-being of the community is inconsolable. But we can help by making that long-term recovery process work better, and the only way it is really going to work better is by having much more authority in local hands—the decisions that they can make about the culvert, about the bridge, about the grade of gravel that goes into the repairs.

So my hope is that we can come together as a Congress to fix FEMA so that its capacity to help our communities when they have been hurt so hard through no fault of their own—that they will be able to get the capacity to make decisions, act, and get their community back on its feet.

Now, I do oppose this discussion that we are had hearing to some extent from President Trump and Secretary Noem about abolishing FEMA. You know, we can abolish FEMA when we can get an Executive order abolishing and banning wild weather events, but that day is not going to come. But another storm in one of our communities inevitably will come.

What I want us to do, for your State and mine, is to have a FEMA that can be on hand, prepositioned, and help in the immediate aftermath and then be a partner but where we put the decision making and the capacity to act and the flexibility that is necessary for the wise recovery of our communities in the hands of our local officials. I think this will make a much better recovery process for the folks all of us represent in the great United States of America.

By Mr. PADILLA:

S. 2260. A bill to provide for the water quality restoration of the Tijuana River and the New River, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Border Water Quality Restoration and Protection Act of 2025. This bill aims to reduce pollution along the U.S.-Mexico border and improve water quality throughout the Tijuana River and New River watersheds. It would designate the Environmental Protection Agency as the lead Agency to coordinate all Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies to build and maintain needed infrastructure projects to address pollution along the border.

The Tijuana River watershed is in the midst of an environmental crisis, as stormwater flows from the upper watershed, originating in Tijuana, Mexico, and carries trash, sediment, and sewage into San Diego County.

Imperial County, like San Diego County, also faces serious impacts from the raw sewage, industrial waste, and trash that is carried by the New River from Mexicali, Mexico, through the city of Calexico before ultimately draining into the Salton Sea, where local families face exposure to dangerous pathogens.

Since 2019, more than 100 billion gallons of sewage have flowed across the U.S.-Mexico border into the Tijuana River Valley and neighboring communities, forcing long-lasting beach closures, including the closure of Imperial Beach for more than 1,200 days in a row.

Needless to say, this transboundary pollution crisis has disproportionately harmed underserved communities along San Diego's southern border for decades. U.S. military personnel, Border Patrol agents, and the local environment and economy have also suffered harmful impacts from waterborne and airborne transboundary sewage.

This bill will build upon the past several years of work I have undertaken alongside the late Senator Feinstein to bolster the resources of the Environmental Protection Agency and the International Boundary and Water Commission to repair, rehabilitate, and expand the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant, including securing \$300 million in the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement and more than \$250 million through fiscal year 2025 appropriations legislation.

Establishing a program for the Tijuana and New Rivers is critical for the EPA to integrate and coordinate water quality restoration and protection activities by stakeholders across the region and will facilitate better coordination by Federal, State, Tribal, local, public, nonprofit, and other relevant stakeholders. California communities have suffered the impacts of transboundary sewage for too long, and this legislation will facilitate long-awaited solutions to manage stormwater flows

to reduce negative impacts to nearby communities and the regional economy and restore water quality and ecosystems throughout these watersheds.

I want to thank my colleagues, especially Senator ADAM SCHIFF, Senator CORY BOOKER, and Congressman JUAN VARGAS, for reintroducing this bill with me. I hope my colleagues will join me to pass the Border Water Quality Restoration and Protection Act of 2025 to address this public health and environmental crisis.

By Mr. PADILLA:

S. 2261. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to provide for the establishment of standards to limit the carbon intensity of the fuel used by certain vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Clean Shipping Act of 2025. This bill aims to reduce harmful emissions from oceangoing vessels and improve air quality for the nearly 40 percent of Americans that live within 3 miles of a port.

Globally, maritime shipping is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, emitting an estimated 1 billion tons of GHG emissions per year and roughly 3 percent of total anthropogenic global-warming carbon-dioxide emissions. According to the International Maritime Organization, global shipping emissions could more than double between 2018 and 2050.

That is why the United States signed two shipping declarations at COP26 to call for zero-emission fuels on international commercial vessels by 2030 and the establishment of zero-emission shipping routes by the middle of the 2020 decade.

This bill would establish a pathway to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from all oceangoing vessels that do business with the United States. It would protect air quality and public health in near-port communities, reduce climate pollution from large marine vessels calling on U.S. ports, and ensure the global maritime sector cuts emissions—all while giving the EPA the flexibility needed for smooth implementation.

More than 90 percent of global trade is transported by oceangoing vessels, which produce an estimated 3 percent of global anthropogenic emissions. Yet these emissions are unregulated in the United States.

The International Maritime Organization's Interessional Working Group on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships plans to meet at the end of the month.

This bill would send a strong signal of our commitment to our international partners, empower the EPA to set standards to reduce harmful pollution in accordance with our national and international climate goals, provide certainty to the global shipping industry, and catalyze research and development to transition oceangoing vessels that rely on diesel engines.

This bill enjoys the support of environmentalists and industry stakeholders alike who recognize the urgent need to reduce emissions from the shipping sector.

I want to thank my colleagues, especially Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE and Congressman ROBERT GARCIA, for reintroducing this bill with me. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Clean Shipping Act of 2025 as quickly as possible.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. CURTIS):

S. 2262. A bill to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to clarify the nature of public investment for purposes of certain rule-making, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2262

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "American Voices in Federal Lands Act".

SEC. 2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN CERTAIN PUBLIC LAND RULEMAKING.

(a) DEFINITION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.—Section 103(d) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702(d)) is amended by striking "citizens" and inserting "citizens of the United States, in accordance with section 310(d), as applicable."

(b) PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT RELATING TO CERTAIN RULES AND REGULATIONS.—Section 310 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1740) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 310. RULES AND REGULATIONS.

"(a) AUTHORIZATION.—

"(1) SECRETARY.—Subject to subsection (d), the Secretary, with respect to public lands, shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of—

"(A) this Act; and

"(B) other laws applicable to public lands.

"(2) SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.—The Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to land in the National Forest System, shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of this Act.

"(b) REQUIREMENT.—The promulgation of rules and regulations pursuant to this section shall be in accordance with chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, without regard to section 553(a)(2) of that title.

"(c) ABSENCE OF REGULATION.—Before the promulgation of a rule or regulation pursuant to this section with respect to public lands or land in the National Forest System, the applicable land shall be administered under existing rules and regulations concerning the land, to the maximum extent practicable.

"(d) PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT RELATING TO BUREAU LAND.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, with respect to public lands managed by the Bureau, the Secretary—

"(1) in promulgating any applicable regulations pursuant to this or any other Act, may take into consideration only public comments received from citizens of the United States; and

“(2) in any public involvement under this Act or any other provision of law (including regulations), shall establish and implement a process commonly known as ‘Completely Automated Public Test to tell Computers and Humans Apart (CAPTCHA)’ to deter attempts at public involvement via artificial intelligence.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 317—COMMENDING THE COURAGE, BRAVERY, AND RESOLVE OF THE FATHERS, MOTHERS, SONS, AND DAUGHTERS OF CUBA, WHO, 4 YEARS AGO, STOOD IN THE FACE OF BRUTAL HARASSMENT, BEATINGS, AND TORTURE TO PROTEST AGAINST THE COMMUNIST CUBAN REGIME, DEMANDING ACCESS TO THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS TO LIFE, DIGNITY, AND FREEDOM

Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Mrs. MOODY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 317

Whereas July 11, 2025, marks 4 years since the historic, pro-democracy demonstration in Cuba when thousands of courageous Cubans took to the streets in more than 40 cities, across all provinces, to demand access to their freedoms and civil liberties and call for an end to communism, censorship, and the oppression imposed by the totalitarian Cuban regime;

Whereas, in an attempt to silence the Cuban people and prevent future protests from taking place, the Cuban dictatorship responded with a wave of terror, repression, and criminalization and detained and persecuted more than 1,400 protestors, including women and children;

Whereas, in a crude and savage effort to silence the Cuban people, the Communist regime cut internet connectivity and mobile services throughout Cuba, which hindered the Cuban people from organizing and hid from the outside world images and videos of the oppressive and brutal crackdown by the regime;

Whereas totalitarian regimes such as Communist China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela, and Nicaragua continue to surveil and repress their citizens in a similar manner to the Cuban regime, with China maintaining electronic surveillance facilities in Cuba to spy on Americans and citizens of China abroad;

Whereas the ongoing imprisonment of José Daniel Ferrer García and hundreds of other Cuban human rights and democracy activists who have worked tirelessly to advocate for fundamental civil liberties for the Cuban people continues to demonstrate the brutal, despotic nature of the regime in Cuba, which aims to silence anyone who would dare speak out against its cruelty and barbarity;

Whereas, according to human rights organizations, since the July 11, 2021 protests, hundreds of Cuban activists have been subjected to months of solitary confinement, physical and psychological torture, and inhumane treatment from Cuban operatives, resulting in dire health conditions;

Whereas many imprisoned Cuban democracy activists continue to suffer from severe health complications, malnutrition, and physical signs of repeated torture while being denied adequate medical care and contact with their families;

Whereas, 4 years after the historic demonstration, an unknown number of protesters remain in prison, including minors, many are being held without access to or communication with family members, international human rights organizations, or legal counsel, and some have been disappeared;

Whereas, in an effort to intimidate Cubans from daring to protest again, the Cuban regime has continued to hold mass sham “trials” that lack any semblance of due process and has imposed disproportionate prison terms of up to 25 years for ill-defined charges such as “public disorder, contempt, or violence”;

Whereas the brutal and illegitimate Communist regime remains terrified of the brave and resilient men and women of Cuba who stand resolute in speaking out against the regime’s humanitarian crimes and efforts to persecute, kidnap, torture, and kill anyone who stands up against its tyranny;

Whereas the economic situation in Cuba has continued to deteriorate under the failed policies of the Communist regime, with widespread shortages of food, medicine, and basic necessities affecting the daily lives of the Cuban people;

Whereas the corruption and failures of Cuba’s closed, Communist economy, in which many industries are run by the Cuban military, have continued to fail the people of Cuba while enriching the regime’s elite;

Whereas President Donald J. Trump has strengthened the policy of the United States toward Cuba through a National Security Presidential Memorandum that restores a robust Cuba policy, ends economic practices that disproportionately benefit the Cuban government and military, enforces the statutory ban on United States tourism to Cuba, supports the economic embargo, and mandates a review of human rights abuses in Cuba, demonstrating a firm commitment to standing with the Cuban people in their quest for justice, liberty, and freedom; and

Whereas the international community should stand in solidarity with the Cuban people in condemning the human rights atrocities committed by the brutal, illegitimate, totalitarian, Communist regime and should demand freedom and democracy for the men, women, and children of Cuba: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the bravery, courage, and resolve of the members of the pro-democracy movement and all freedom activists in Cuba for risking their lives to bring freedom to the Cuban people;

(2) condemns the continued repression of the hundreds of pro-democracy activists and political prisoners, including children, that the Cuban regime is unjustly detaining and subjecting to physical and psychological torture, and calls for their immediate and unconditional release;

(3) condemns the Cuban regime’s brutal, totalitarian dictatorship and demands an end to the suffering of the men, women, and children of Cuba and the impunity of the regime’s human rights abusers;

(4) calls for the international community to stand with the Cuban people and speak out against the Cuban regime’s repressive acts and infringement on fundamental freedoms, such as expression, belief, and assembly;

(5) urges the international community to hold the Cuban regime accountable for its human rights violations through coordinated sanctions and diplomatic pressure;

(6) calls upon the administration of President Trump to put democracy, human rights, and civil liberties at the core of its Cuba policy by maintaining strong sanctions on the

Cuban regime until all conditions in United States law for removing sanctions are met;

(7) supports the right of the Cuban people to peaceful assembly and free expression, and condemns any efforts by the Cuban regime to suppress those fundamental rights; and

(8) encourages continued support for Cuban civil society organizations and independent media that work to promote democracy and human rights in Cuba.

SENATE RESOLUTION 318—RECOGNIZING THAT CLIMATE CHANGE POSES A GROWING THREAT TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND NECESSITATES COORDINATED ACTION TO MITIGATE ITS IMPACTS AND SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF ALL PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 318

Whereas climate change is the most significant threat to human health in the 21st century, as affirmed by a broad scientific consensus, including more than 200 medical journals;

Whereas climate change is driving illness, injury, displacement, and death across the United States, including—

(1) by worsening respiratory and allergy-related illnesses and contributing to an increase in cancer risks through climate change fueled-increases in air pollution, longer pollen seasons, and increased exposure to wildfire smoke, ground-level ozone, and fine particulate matter that threaten the health of over 150,000,000 people in the United States living in areas with unhealthy air;

(2) by increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease, heart attacks, and strokes, often worsened by extreme heat waves;

(3) by increasing direct and indirect behavioral and mental health complications, including pre-disaster anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, substance use disorder, domestic violence, and suicidality, linked to climate-driven disasters with children, pregnant individuals, people living in high-risk zones, communities of color, and low-income communities bearing the brunt of long-term psychological and emotional harm;

(4) by disproportionately increasing the rates of homelessness and displacement among infants and young children, who face the highest risk of homelessness from climate disasters when living in substandard housing or high-risk zones;

(5) by disproportionately increasing the prevalence of food-, insect-, and water-borne diseases, as climate change expands the range and seasonality of vectors, while flooding and warming accelerate microbial contamination of food and drinking water;

(6) by increasing water-borne pathogens, which already cause over 7,000,000 illnesses, 118,000 hospitalizations, and 6,600 deaths annually in the United States, a burden that is expected to rise as climate-driven extreme weather and warming destabilize water and sanitation systems;

(7) by heightening the risk of pregnancy-related complications, including still birth and preterm birth, which studies show can increase by 1 to 2 percent for each additional day of extreme heat exposure and mounting

death and disability resulting from extreme weather events that continue to displace and endanger millions of people in the United States annually; and

(8) by increasing the prevalence of extreme weather events, which cause death and injuries and displace and endanger millions of people in the United States annually;

Whereas people with disabilities are 2 to 4 times more likely to die or be injured during climate-related disasters, including heatwaves, hurricanes, and floods, due to evacuation barriers, medical equipment failures, and lack of accessible emergency infrastructure;

Whereas historically underserved communities, including post-industrial regions, rural areas, Tribal nations, low-income and working-class neighborhoods, communities of color, and people with disabilities and pre-existing comorbidities, face disproportionate health risks from climate hazards, such as extreme heat, severe storms, drought, and air and water pollution, often due to decades of systemic underinvestment and environmental injustice;

Whereas workers, including those in agriculture, construction, delivery, manufacturing, and warehouse settings, face growing health and safety risks from climate change-related hazards, such as extreme heat, poor air quality, and extreme weather, and require stronger protections, standards, and workplace rights to safeguard their well-being;

Whereas climate change costs the United States economy billions of dollars a year through its wide-ranging harms, including property damage, lost labor productivity, and increased rates of climate-related illness and mental health issues that strain the health care system of the United States;

Whereas, in 2024 alone, the United States experienced 27 separate billion-dollar climate disasters, each compounding both financial and public health burdens on the people of the United States;

Whereas resilient health care organizations that are equipped to remain operational during disasters are essential to their communities' health, safety, recovery, and well-being;

Whereas the health care sector is responsible for approximately 8.5 percent of carbon emissions in the United States, exacerbating the climate crisis and health-related emergencies;

Whereas many emergency preparedness investments, such as improving energy efficiency, upgrading infrastructure, and installing onsite renewable energy and battery storage systems, bring health and sustainability benefits and yield significant operational savings for health care organizations;

Whereas health care organizations, providers, and frontline health workers require sustained Federal support, clear climate adaptation guidance that addresses both physical infrastructure and psychological resilience, and reliable, consistently accessible, and locally relevant data in order to assess local climate risks, identify strengths, resources, support networks, and other key protective factors, prepare for and respond to climate change-related health threats, equitably serve at-risk populations and patients, and expand access and protections for temporarily and permanently displaced populations following a disaster;

Whereas frontline health care workers and providers, particularly those in underserved and resource-limited settings, face increased physical, mental, and psychosocial health risks from climate change-related events, including extreme heat, poor air quality, infectious disease outbreaks, and disaster response demands, and must be equipped with

the training, protections, and support necessary to continue delivering safe and equitable care; and

Whereas delivering such support and guidance requires collaboration and coordination across the public health, data infrastructure, health insurance, quality improvement, workforce development, environmental health, and emergency preparedness and response functions across the Department of Health and Human Services and relevant Federal agencies: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Department of Health and Human Services should use all practicable means and measures to increase the health sector's climate readiness and response, including increasing the ability to withstand and maintain operations during extreme weather events, strengthening the climate resilience of health infrastructure and supply chains, and lowering the sector's environmental impact;

(2) funding appropriated by Congress to facilitate energy efficiency retrofits, investments in clean vehicles and onsite renewable energy and storage, and planning for climate resilience projects by health care organizations and community-based organizations should be distributed without delay and with particular attention to historically underserved communities and organizations by the responsible Federal agencies;

(3) the Department of Health and Human Services should prioritize technical assistance, capacity building, and equitable access to funding for Tribal health systems, rural hospitals and clinics, and historically underresourced health care providers to support climate adaptation and preparedness;

(4) Federal agencies with responsibilities for public health, health care, and environmental data, including the Department of Health and Human Services, should orchestrate and support efforts to close information gaps and synthesize data on the health impacts of climate change, including mitigation and adaptation strategies, and use that information to develop timely, targeted, accessible, and evidence-based education and communication tools on climate-related health threats;

(5) the Department of Health and Human Services should fully reinstate the Office of Climate Change and Health Equity and the Office of Environmental Justice with the staffing and resources necessary to lead and coordinate departmental efforts, guide equitable implementation, and use all available levers to address the health impacts of climate change for all people in the United States, and particularly for those most at risk;

(6) critical agencies, staff, and programmatic functions necessary to support the goal of reducing the health impacts of climate change should be fully funded, reinstated, and supported, including,—

(A) those within the Administration for Children and Families;

(B) the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response;

(C) the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality;

(D) the Indian Health Service;

(E) those within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, such as the National Center for Environmental Health, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health; and

(F) those within the National Institutes of Health, including the Climate Change and Health Initiative;

(7) investments in climate resilience and health infrastructure should include support for—

(A) workforce training, job quality standards, and equitable access to careers in public health;

(B) emergency preparedness and energy and environmental response, particularly for workers from historically underserved communities; and

(C) community-led mental wellness and resilience building initiatives and mutual aid networks;

(8) relevant Federal agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services, should ensure community-based organizations, Tribal governments, and environmental justice groups are meaningfully engaged in climate-health decision-making processes, and are provided with the resources and authority necessary to lead and support local resilience efforts, including public health preparedness, infrastructure adaptation, emergency response planning, support for psychological and emotional well-being, and efforts to address climate-related health disparities;

(9) the Department of Labor, through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, should promulgate a worker heat protection standard that, in accordance with the best available evidence, establishes the maximum protective program of measures an employer shall implement to regulate employees' exposure to heat stress and prevent heat-related illness and injury that attains the highest degree of health and safety protection to the extent feasible; and

(10) the Department of Health and Human Services and other relevant Federal agencies should provide annual progress reports to Congress and the public on climate resilience investments, measurable health outcomes, and equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable populations and regions.

SENATE RESOLUTION 319—RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF QUANTUM MECHANICS

Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. KIM, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 319

Whereas, in 1925, the foundational principles of quantum mechanics were formulated by pioneering physicists and advanced by scientists in the United States, including Richard Feynman, John Archibald Wheeler, David Bohm, Bryce Dewitt, and Peter Shor, among others, laying the groundwork for a revolutionary understanding of physics that examines the behavior of matter and energy at the atomic and subatomic levels;

Whereas quantum mechanics has led to groundbreaking scientific advancements, enabling the development of modern technologies that improve the daily lives of people, such as semiconductors, lasers, superconductive materials, magnetic resonance imaging, and the global positioning system;

Whereas the study and application of optics, photonics, cryogenics, and condensed matter physics have been instrumental in advancing quantum technologies by leveraging fundamental quantum principles such as superposition, entanglement, and interference;

Whereas ongoing breakthroughs in quantum information science, including in quantum computing, quantum simulation, quantum communication, quantum cryptography, quantum sensing, and materials science, promise to enhance national security, drive economic growth, and advance numerous industries;

Whereas the advancement of quantum technologies creates high-quality jobs and fosters innovation across critical sectors, such as chemistry, biology, healthcare, finance, transportation, telecommunications, and advanced manufacturing;

Whereas the United States has been a global leader in quantum research and innovation, with significant contributions from private industry, national laboratories, universities, and government agencies; and

Whereas 2025 marks the 100th anniversary of quantum mechanics, providing an opportunity to educate the public, inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers, and highlight the strategic importance of quantum science, technology, and education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 100th anniversary of quantum mechanics and its profound impact on science and technology;

(2) celebrates the contributions of scientists, engineers, and innovators in the United States in advancing quantum science;

(3) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to maintaining leadership in quantum research and development; and

(4) supports efforts to raise public awareness of quantum science and its potential to shape the future of computing, security, healthcare, and industry.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 16—RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EQUAL PAY AND THE DISPARITY IN WAGES PAID TO MEN AND TO BLACK WOMEN

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. COONS, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. OSSOFF, Ms. SMITH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. LUJÁN, and Ms. ROSEN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. CON. RES. 16

Whereas July 10, 2025, is Black Women's Equal Pay Day, a day of observance of the wage gap between working Black women and working White, non-Hispanic men;

Whereas section 6(d) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(d)) (commonly known as the "Equal Pay Act of 1963") prohibits discrimination in compensation for equal work on the basis of sex;

Whereas title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) prohibits discrimination in compensation because of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex;

Whereas despite the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 6 decades ago, which requires that men and women in the same workplace be given equal pay for equal work, data from the Bureau of the Census show that Black women working full time and year round are paid 66 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men;

Whereas, when part-time and part-year workers are included in the comparison, Black women are paid 64 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men;

Whereas, if the current trends continue, on average, Black women will have to wait over 200 years to achieve equal pay;

Whereas the median annual pay for a Black woman in the United States working full time, year round, is \$50,390, which means that, if the current wage gap were to continue, the average Black woman would lose nearly \$1,019,200 in potential earnings because of the wage gap over the course of a 40-year career;

Whereas lost wages mean Black women have less money to support themselves and their families, to save and invest for the future, and to spend on goods and services, causing businesses and the economy to suffer as a result;

Whereas the median earnings of Black women are less than the median earnings of men at every level of academic achievement, and in leadership and professional positions;

Whereas Black women with bachelor's and master's degrees experience a larger wage gap in comparison to White, non-Hispanic men than Black women with a high school diploma;

Whereas, in the United States, more than 69 percent of Black mothers are the sole or primary breadwinners for their families, compared to slightly more than one-third of one percent of non-Hispanic white mothers;

Whereas the lack of access to affordable, quality childcare, paid family and medical leave, paid sick leave, and other family-friendly workplace policies contributes to the wage gap by forcing many Black women to choose between their paycheck or job and getting quality care for themselves or their family members;

Whereas if the wage gap were eliminated, on average, a Black woman working full time would have enough money for over 2 additional years of tuition and fees for a 4-year public university, the full cost of tuition and fees for a public 2-year community college, more than 49 additional months of premiums for employer-based family health insurance coverage with employer contributions, over 58 weeks of food for a family of 4, more than 13 additional months of home ownership costs, including mortgage payments, real estate taxes, insurance, utilities, and fuel costs, 17 more months of rental costs, including rent payments, utilities, and fuel, almost a full year of child care for 2 children, or enough money to pay off an average borrower's Federal student loan debt in under 2 years;

Whereas Black women face dual and compounding discrimination based upon both their race and gender;

Whereas at least 38 percent of women have been sexually harassed at the workplace and over 78 percent of sexual harassment charges filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission are filed by women, yet the prevalence of sexual harassment is likely much higher, as research has found that only a small number of women who experience harassment formally report incidents for reasons including fear of retaliation;

Whereas workplace harassment forces many women to leave their occupation or industry;

Whereas individuals who are targets of harassment are 6.5 times as likely as individuals who are not targets of harassment to change jobs or pass up opportunities for advancement, contributing to the gender wage gap;

Whereas Black women are the most likely of all racial and ethnic groups to have filed a sexual harassment charge;

Whereas nearly two-thirds of workers paid the minimum wage or less are women, and there is an over-representation of women of color in low-wage and tipped occupations;

Whereas 60 percent of private sector workers reported that they were either discouraged or prohibited by their employers from discussing wage and salary information, which can hide pay discrimination and prevent remedies;

Whereas the pay disparity faced by Black women is part of a wider set of disparities faced by Black women in home ownership, unemployment, poverty, access to childcare, and the ability to accumulate wealth;

Whereas the gender wage gap for Black women has narrowed by only 5 cents in the last 2 decades;

Whereas true pay equity requires a multifaceted strategy that addresses the gendered and racial injustices that Black women face daily; and

Whereas many national organizations have designated July 10, 2025, as Black Women's Equal Pay Day to recognize the persistent and detrimental wage gap Black women face: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the disparity in wages paid to Black women and its impact on women, families, and the United States; and

(2) reaffirms its support for ensuring equal pay for equal work and narrowing the gender wage gap.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

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

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 10, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, July 10, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 65.

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 Luke Pettit, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

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. 65, Luke Pettit, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

John Thune, John Barrasso, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John R. Curtis, Rick Scott of Florida, Bernie Moreno, Pete Ricketts, Eric Schmitt, Jon A. Husted, Roger Marshall, Jim Justice, Tommy Tuberville, Bill Hagerty, Joni Ernst, James E. Risch, Marsha Blackburn, Tim Sheehy.

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. 134.

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 Anthony Tata, of Florida, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

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. 134, Anthony Tata, of Florida, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, Thom Tillis, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, John R. Curtis, Joni Ernst, Lindsey Graham, Deb Fischer, Pete Ricketts, Roger Marshall, Chuck Grassley, Tommy Tuberville, Bill Cassidy, Jon A. Husted, Mike Rounds, John Kennedy.

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. 184.

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 Joseph Edlow, of Maryland, to be Director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department 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. 184, Joseph Edlow, of Maryland, to be Director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

John Thune, Eric Schmitt, John R. Curtis, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Bill Cassidy, Jon A. Husted, Steve Daines, Marsha Blackburn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Ron Johnson, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, Mike Rounds, Bernie Moreno, Pete Ricketts, Jim Justice, Bill Hagerty.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

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

FILING RELIEF FOR NATURAL DISASTERS ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 517 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 517) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the rules for postponing certain deadlines by reason of disaster.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 517) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF JULY 10, 2025, AS JOURNEYMAN LINEWORKERS RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be discharged from further consideration and the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 315.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 315) expressing support for the designation of July 10, 2025, as Journeyman Lineworkers Recognition Day.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 315) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of July 8, 2025, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF QUANTUM MECHANICS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 319, submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 319) recognizing and celebrating 100 years of quantum mechanics.

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 319) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JULY 14,
2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, July 14; 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 be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, the Senate proceed to executive session and execute the order of

July 9 with respect to the Hermendorfer nomination; finally, notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture motions filed on July 10 ripen following disposition of the Hermendorfer nomination and if any nominations are confirmed during Monday's session of the Senate, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
JULY 14, 2025, AT 3 P.M.

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 2:41 p.m., adjourned until Monday, July 14, 2025, at 3 p.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by
the Senate July 10, 2025:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
JONATHAN GOULD, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE COMPTROLLER
OF THE CURRENCY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.