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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.

O God, our hope in times of praise and privation, guide our lawmakers on each step of their pilgrimage. Make them supreme in compassion, mercy, and love. Give them fellowship with You, one another, and their constituents. Bring our Senators more and more into oneness with You, fellowship with Your suffering, and obedience to Your commands. Fill them with the spirit of Your peace. In their weakness, give strength. In their anxiety, give serenity. In their discouragement, give optimism.

Lord, we thank You for the police who helped defend the Capitol on January 6, 2021. Continue to strengthen and protect them in all of their tomorrows.

We pray in Your merciful 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). The Senator from Iowa.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, before I speak, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

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

## RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 Joshua Simmons, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### RURAL HEALTHCARE

Mr. GRASSLEY. On December 29, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced that my State of Iowa will receive over $209 million this year from the Rural Health Transformation Fund. This Federal funding will boost Iowa hospitals, Iowa clinics, Iowa nursing homes, Iowa legal centers, and other rural providers.

I was proud to help craft the Working Families Tax Cut law that the President signed on July 4 last year. That law provides for the largest Federal investment in rural healthcare in history.

Under Iowa's Governor Kim Reynolds' leadership, Iowa is positioned very well to use this historic investment to build a high-quality, sustainable system of care for Iowans across the State. My State of Iowa, under Governor Reynolds' leadership, plans to use this Federal investment toward telehealth, workforce, preventing and treating cancer, improving coordination of care, streamlining data sharing, and expanding emergency medical care. These investments will improve health, well-being, and quality of life not only in Iowa but in all of rural America.

I am pleased that Iowa is maximizing this Federal investment in rural communities, not investing in bureaucracy. And to show how this investment is going to pay off without wasting money on administrative costs, Iowa's administrative costs for this Federal funding are projected to be less than 1 percent. Too often, you see Federal grants with administrative cost rates of 8 percent, 15 percent, and I have even seen, on more than one occasion, things as high as 60 percent. So I am glad Iowa is wisely using this Federal investment. And I look forward to seeing the result in rural Iowa.

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

#### WORKING FAMILIES TAX CUTS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last year, Republicans followed through on our promises to the American people.

The cornerstone of that was the Working Families Tax Cuts and the rest of that landmark legislation—a bill that helps deliver safer streets; that puts more money in Americans' pockets; and that creates new opportunities to get ahead. I have said that we did 10 years of legislating in this bill. There is a lot in it. It is generational in terms of its content and its impact, and this year, hard-working Americans will start to see the benefits of what Republicans delivered.

At the top of that list is the permanent tax relief in this bill. For too many Americans, affordability remains a challenge, and affordability begins with how much money you have in your budget and your pocket. Thanks to the Working Families Tax Cuts,

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



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hard-working Americans will see bigger paychecks this year, and that is breathing room that families can count on this year and in the years to come because Republicans' tax reform is permanent.

As the W2s go out this month and Americans prepare to file their taxes, they can also expect to see benefits from the Working Families Tax Cuts in their tax returns. They will be able to take a larger standard deduction, and seniors will be able to take a new bonus deduction on top of that. The child tax credit is now worth $2,200 per child, and it is linked to inflation so it will never lose its value. Workers who earn tips and overtime won't have to pay Federal taxes on that income either. All of that adds up to bigger refunds come April.

The Working Families Tax Cuts provide much needed relief after a yearslong inflation crisis that is still—still—straining families' budgets; so passing this bill—and delivering an average $3,700 tax cut to hard-working Americans—was a priority for Republicans. But that is not the only thing this bill did—far from it. We also made generational investments in healthcare, national security, and public safety.

Since 2005, more than 100 hospitals in rural parts of this country have closed their doors. It is important that we support and strengthen critical healthcare access points for Americans who live in rural areas. So, in our legislation, Republicans created the $50 billion Rural Health Transformation Fund to bolster rural healthcare; to expand access; to modernize care; and to strengthen the rural healthcare workforce.

Our landmark legislation also addresses pressing security needs. In the months since this bill passed, not a single—single—illegal immigrant has been released into the United States. That is thanks, in part, to the generational investment we made to sustain the Trump administration's border security policies.

Our bill invests in hiring more border agents, increasing detention capacity, and providing the technology and resources needed to stop the flow of illegal immigrants and illegal drugs across our borders.

Then there is national security. After 4 years of the Biden administration and Democrats putting defense spending on the back burner, Republicans made a historic investment to help rebuild our military so we can deter and defeat today's threats and tomorrow's.

Our legislation boosts shipbuilding and defense production capacity. It grows our Air Force fleet, protects the homeland with the Golden Dome missile defense system and modernization of our nuclear deterrent and more. We are continuing our efforts with the kind of sustained investment that is needed to keep America's military strong for the long term.

Our landmark legislation also makes a serious investment in public safety here at home. That starts by supporting the police. There is funding for State and local law enforcement agencies in this bill, including boots-on-the-ground efforts to combat violent crime. Our legislation supports efforts to combat drug trafficking and target precursor chemicals used in the production of fentanyl, and it provides resources for State and local law enforcement to assist Federal officers in enforcing immigration laws.

I am also proud of the investment this bill makes in modernizing America's air traffic control system. The systems being used in air traffic control towers today are in desperate need of an update, and our legislation provides the support needed to deploy state-of-the-art technology across America. I am glad that the modernization efforts this bill supports are now underway.

There is a lot more I can talk about when it comes to our once-in-a-generation legislation: its support for small businesses, farmers, and ranchers; its provisions addressing waste, fraud, and abuse in Federal programs to save taxpayer money; or its support for the next generation through more educational choice and investment accounts for a secure future.

But I will leave it here. Republicans delivered a big win for the American people last year with our bill. And in 2026, the American people are going to feel its impact. I look forward to that story unfolding, literally, in every corner of America.

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

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

## RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

## VENEZUELA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, I joined with House and Senate leaders for a briefing with Secretaries Rubio and Hegseth, Attorney General Bondi, and other officials about what comes next in Venezuela and beyond.

For 2 long hours, we heard yesterday from the administration. And what we heard was little more than wishful thinking and no real answers. We got no clear answer to any of the four questions I have been asking the administration for days:

First, how many troops are we going to commit to Venezuela? Are there any limits? No answer.

Second, for how long would we be committed to running Venezuela? No answer.

Third, how much is this all going to cost? They said they had no cost estimate.

And fourth, what country is next? Is Colombia on the table? Are we going to invade a NATO ally like Greenland? Where does this belligerence stop? I was very troubled—very troubled—by their answer on this as well.

Sitting in yesterday's briefing, it is clear the administration pulled the trigger on step 1 of their plan in Venezuela without figuring out how they are going to follow through on steps 2 to 10.

How do you enter a country and remove its leader by force without knowing anything about what happens after?

The current Vice President for Venezuela now says she may cooperate with the United States, but her grip on power is weak. She has many rivals in government, and her reputation for steadfastness and honesty leaves much to be desired. And all of the remaining regime leaders in Venezuela are so corrupt that it is naive for the administration to think we can rely on any of them to maintain stability.

Now, this is how we get into endless wars. The administration has a 1-day plan on how to get rid of Maduro but no idea of what happens after. It is what happened to us in Iraq. Yes, this is how we get into endless wars: a 1-day plan to get rid of Maduro but no idea what happens after. Look at history. Look at Iraq. Look at so many other places. This is what leads to endless wars.

And last night, Donald Trump added to the fires of confusion once again.

He was asked who exactly is in charge in Venezuela, and he simply said, ''Me.'' Donald Trump. A lot of macho going on there.

How the hell does Donald Trump expect to exert direct control over Venezuela? We have so many problems here at home—people who are struggling to make ends meet when the economy is slowing down and costs are going up. Yesterday, Donald Trump even suggested we might spend up to 18 months in Venezuela rebuilding its oil infrastructure. And that is probably a low estimate according to most experts. Most experts think it could take easily longer than that, the Venezuela oil fields are such a mess. And are you kidding me? How are we going to spend 18 months and potentially tens of billions of dollars in taxpayer money in Venezuela at a time when people here at home don't even have basic healthcare?

There are also reports that Stephen Miller might be heavily involved in the governance of Venezuela. I asked about this at our briefing, and the answers were very troubling. This is the same Stephen Miller who yesterday went to CNN and asserted that Greenland rightfully belongs to the United States and nobody will fight the U.S. military over Greenland.

What is going on here? What kind of venture is this?

The language Miller used comes right out of the 1930s, directed by a senior official of the United States against a NATO ally. God help us and the future of world order.

Donald Trump has opened a Pandora's box. We have to take seriously that, after Venezuela, he may attack other nations without warning—maybe Colombia, maybe even a NATO ally like Greenland run by Denmark. All the while, how does any of this belligerence in Venezuela or Greenland put America first?

How does any of this help people here at home pay the bills, pay for their healthcare, put a roof over their heads, pay for their groceries or their energy bill? The American people voted for Donald Trump to put America first. That is what he campaigned on. A lot of his most hard-right supporters voted for him because he was ''America First.''

Well, ''America First'' means focusing on healthcare costs and all kinds of rising costs here at home, instead of using taxpayer dollars to build up the oil fields in Venezuela. It means helping American farmers instead of bailing out Argentinian farmers. It means bringing manufacturing back to our shores instead of giving critical chips away to China.

It means helping people pay their rent, pay their mortgage, pay their energy bill, instead of launching an attack on foreign countries and putting our troops in danger.

JEFFREY EPSTEIN

Mr. President, on Epstein, it has been 18 days—18 days—since the administration was required by law to release the full Epstein files to the American public, and it has been 15 days since the administration has released any documentation on Jeffrey Epstein.

Now, the Department of Justice says it has released less than 1 percent of the files—less than 1 percent in 18 days at 2½ weeks. Are you kidding me? They say they were preparing well in advance, and they have only gotten 1 percent done?

It is deliberate stonewalling of the American people, what Congress and the American people are demanding. It is an outlandishly naked attempt to hide the truth and defy the law. People across America are wondering, scratching their heads, and asking, What the hell is Donald Trump hiding? His Justice Department is so adamant about slow-walking everything.

Let's be very clear about what the Justice Department is doing and what I warned would happen. They are using every trick in the book to ignore the will of Congress and to ignore Federal law. Every single Member of Congress, with one exception, spoke in unanimity: The administration must release the truth about Jeffrey Epstein—no dodging, no obfuscation, no hiding. It has been 18 days, and what does the administration have to show for it? Less than 1 percent of the truth. It is unacceptable.

The American people won't stand for it. And the Senate is going to take every action available to ensure that every shred of evidence that must see the light of day comes out. Jeffrey Epstein's victims deserve no less. The American people deserve no less.

Donald Trump, why are you hiding the truth about Jeffrey Epstein from the American people?

ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. President, on January 6, later this afternoon, I will join with Leader JEFFRIES and Members of both the House and Senate to mark the 5-year anniversary of the deadly insurrection of January 6.

It is a bitter, frustrating, and somber day for all of us who were in the building that fateful morning and afternoon. I remember standing right here on this very spot, alongside other Senators, getting ready to certify the 2020 election. All of a sudden—all of a sudden—my security detail pulled my collar like this, gripped me by the arm, and told me we had to get out because a mob of rioters had broken into the Capitol.

At that moment, I saw the Vice President was instantly rushed out of the Chamber as well. He was sitting up in that chair. We went downstairs. We turned toward one hallway and for a moment came within several yards of angry rioters before my detail pulled us away to safety.

It was a dark, scary, violent day. They pulled me away toward safety—not from. And when the MAGA rioters desecrated this Chamber, they ransacked offices, waved Confederate flags through these hallways, and used violence to try and steal an election. All of that happened, and it was propagated by Donald Trump.

But make no mistake, January 6 was also a day when the power of democracy ultimately prevailed. It was a day where U.S. Capitol Police faced their moment of maximum danger and responded with maximum valor.

Let us take a moment to remember all our brave public servicemembers, Capitol Police, DC Police, and all other officers who died in connection with the attack. I just want to thank our officers who were here on that day, who do their jobs every day without fanfare.

Of course, the 5-year anniversary of January 6 comes at a bitter and complicated moment. The very same man who sought to steal an election and delegitimize our democracy has now returned to office by the very same means he tried to destroy.

And what was Donald Trump's first official action while in office? Donald Trump—a man who claims to stand up for the police, a man who says he cares about law and order—pardoned every single convicted insurrectionist on his very first day as President.

These pardons are among the most sickening things Donald Trump has done in office. His betrayal of law enforcement—of democracy—makes a mockery of the rule of law. These pardons were an explicit endorsement of using violence to get your way. That is who Donald Trump is at his core: a man who is happy to see violence work in his favor to get what he wants.

And in this Chamber, especially in the House of Representatives, too many Republicans remain silent in the face of obvious evil. That is true in both Chambers, unfortunately. Too many have tried to rewrite the history of January 6. Too many are trying to turn these criminals into martyrs and into heroes. That is perverse, it is a lie, and it is wicked. History will curse those who absolve or celebrate the violence that happened on January 6.

We must never relent on speaking the truth of January 6 in the face of the hurricane of lies that comes from Donald Trump. That is a moral obligation, our obligation to this grand democracy, as Members of this institution and as citizens of this great democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

RURAL HEALTHCARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, for 24 years, I practiced medicine as an orthopedic surgeon in Wyoming. And over that time, I know what it is like to practice in a frontier State, a State where huge distances separate us.

Medical care is needed everywhere. I know how important it is to provide available, affordable, quality care for the citizens in my State and in the Presiding Officer's State.

(Mr. SHEEHY assumed the Chair.)

And as in the Presiding Officer's State today where people are celebrating an overtime victory by the Montana football team last evening—a 1-point difference—and people traveled vast distances to get to the game, they also travel vast distances to get to care.

So in my State of Wyoming and in the Presiding Officer's State of Montana where the distances are great, we know how important it is to provide quality care for all of our citizens.

I want everyone in my State to be able to get the care that they need from a doctor they choose, at a price they can afford. And that is why we worked so hard—myself and the Presiding Officer, working together—during the Working Families Tax Cut bill that we passed last year to include a specific, large component for rural healthcare, for the patients in our small communities to get the care that they need and, many times, closer to home.

And we funded this program in a way that it really provides the necessary care in our communities. And I know, in my home State of Wyoming, $205 million came to the State of Wyoming, and it is headed specifically to our critical access hospitals. It is heading for emergency medical services, emergency medical technicians.

It is to address the needs we have all across our State. And it is also going for education—to provide the education needed, to provide to make sure that, in the future, there are people there to continue to be able to deliver the care—because we need the money to

help strengthen and to train and to retain nurses and EMTs and paramedics and X-ray technicians, essential healthcare workers.

You know, if we want them to stay local, we need to train them locally. And the Presiding Officer sees that in his home State, and I certainly see it in mine.

Well, now, hospitals and clinics and health centers in vulnerable rural communities will have the necessary resources that we need to allow us to treat patients closer to home.

More choices and better care is a direct result of the Republicans' Working Families Tax Cut bill. This Rural Health Transformation Program that we put in place for $50 billion is the largest Federal investment in rural healthcare ever.

Now, Democrats talk constantly about access to healthcare. Yet when Republicans—when we proposed this fund to help in rural America, every single Democrat in the Senate voted against it. Every single one of them said: Nope. We are not interested in funding rural healthcare.

When Democrats shut down the government last fall—lots of pain for the American people—one of their demands to reopen the government was to slash all of the funding for rural healthcare. They say they are for rural healthcare. They say they are for healthcare. But when given the chance, they refused and actually voted to eliminate our efforts to provide healthcare for rural Americans. That tells you exactly how little these far-left Democrats value America. Democrats have a long history—and it continues today—of thumbing their noses and turning their backs on rural communities and rural America.

At the same time, last summer, what did they vote to do? They voted to provide taxpayer-funded healthcare to illegal immigrants. Democrats: Yes for illegal immigrant healthcare; no for rural American healthcare. And they did it as we continue to uncover massive amounts of fraud. We are seeing it now in Minnesota with government programs, scammers who stole billions of dollars from taxpayers.

Republicans are committed to ensuring Americans have the healthcare they deserve and that the money goes where it needs to go: to American citizens who are deserving and need the care and need the funding and need the support, not to people ripping off the system as the Democrats look the other way.

In September, I attended the grand opening of a hospital in Pinedale, WY. For years, the nearest hospital was 85 miles from Pinedale—and that 85 miles includes curvy roads and a mountain pass. And if the roads were closed due to weather, the next hospital, which was a different direction, was 100 miles away. So this new hospital in Sublette County is going to be saving lives.

Republicans want rural communities across America to have what Pinedale has today: care they need, doctors they choose, closer to home. Regrettably, many other rural communities are not so fortunate.

And let me tell you what has happened since ObamaCare has become law. Since the Democrats passed ObamaCare on a party-line vote 15 years ago, over 100 rural hospitals have closed—over 100. It is yet another broken promise from the failure of ObamaCare.

Republicans are reversing the trajectory: we are strengthening hospitals; we are supporting providers; and we are keeping care closer to home. That is our commitment, and this is just the beginning. Hundreds of millions of dollars are flowing now, and more funding will continue for the next 5 years. More communities are going to be better served; more patients will receive care; and more lives will be served.

Rural America deserves this sort of treatment and respect and care from the Federal Government. These are the hard-working people that make this country great. High-quality care is necessary for them, and we need to make sure it is where they need it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNIZING THE PLAINVILLE TIMES

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, my hometown is Plainville, KS. The population, according to Google just this morning, is 1,746. I rise this morning to recognize and pay tribute to my hometown newspaper, the Plainville Times.

Several months ago, the headline of the paper—the very top story was—''Newspaper for Sale.'' Last month, the Times published its final edition as a standalone newspaper and announced it will merge with a neighboring town's newspaper, the Stockton Sentinel, to continue news coverage for local residents. So I take sadness in the demise, the departure of my hometown paper. I take pleasure and pride in its continuation with the news being covered by the Times Sentinel.

For more than a century, the Plainville Times has served the surrounding communities by providing information, education, and timely reporting. The paper first began in 1800, though it changed its names several times over the years, and it became known as the Plainville Times in 1904.

Growing up in this small town in western Kansas, I saw firsthand how the newspaper supported the community and brought neighbors, friends, and even strangers together. Community journalism pulls us together. National journalism has the habit of tearing us apart.

Over the years, the Plainville Times has kept the community informed on important local issues like a new business coming to town, a city council meeting, or the score of a high school football game. Rural papers bring community residents together for special moments. It is where we see when we have a new birth. It is where we see when we lose a fellow citizen. It is where we celebrate with others about a 50th wedding anniversary. It is the joys of graduation and holiday celebrations. It is about ribbon cuttings. It is the pain of funeral services and natural disasters and really everything in between.

Community journalism is important to the future of communities across Kansas and the Nation. Today, community journalism faces growing challenges with a rapidly changing media environment, as well as workforce struggles and financial strains. Many rural newspapers have very limited staffs, and it is not uncommon for one person to fill the role of reporter, photographer, and editor.

Those who dedicate their lives to this profession, in so many instances in newspapers across Kansas, I find the person that is just doing the job because nobody else would do it. Despite these challenges, that newspaper, including the Plainville Times, leaves lasting marks on the rural towns they cover.

As a kid growing up in Plainville, then representing my hometown as a Member of Congress, and now as a U.S. Senator, I had the opportunity to know and speak with, get acquainted with the Times editors during my lifetime, including Harlan Lill, who was the editor when I was a kid; Carol Van Dyke, who then replaced him; and the current editor Candace Rachel, whom I grew up with in my hometown. She is a longtime native of Plainville, and Candace is deeply committed to our community and has devoted her life to providing news and information to Kansans.

Whether I am attending a Lions Club meeting or visiting the local high school, Candace is always there with her pen and pad and a camera slung over her shoulder. She is one of those editors who does it all. Candace is always there at everything. She loves supporting local sports, the athletes, their parents, their families. She loves to celebrate the victories and bemoan the losses. She always can be spotted on the sidelines of a local football field, the basketball courts, and at baseball games. I appreciate her. I appreciate her love for our community, and I appreciate the way she treats every citizen of my hometown—with the greatest of respect.

I want to thank the Times' publisher, Frank Mercer of Main Street Media, as well as its staff, Bret Greenwood and Tonia Goertz, for their commitment to local journalism.

Over the years, the Plainville Times has been dedicated to pursuing the truth in informing local communities and providing a critical service to rural America. The paper has gained a reputation for informative, fair reporting,

and it has earned recognition from the Kansas Press Association for its work.

With the merging of the Plainville Times with the Stockton Sentinel—Stockton, incidentally, being our cross-county rival—the unified paper will continue to cover Plainville and Rooks County. That is the good news.

I want to congratulate the owners of the Stockton Sentinel, Bart Hamilton and Susan Hamilton Schneider. I am grateful for their investment in local journalism and their support for Stockton, for Plainville, for Palco, for Damar and Zurich, for Codell—for the communities that make up our small county.

I look forward to staying informed on local news. I receive the Plainville Times every week. When I get home, it is in the stack of newspapers that I have yet to read. It is the very first one. My wife would say my first comment is: Oh, the Plainville Times is here.

I look forward every week to seeing what is going on in my hometown, and I appreciate the publication that has provided me and so many others with that information. The Plainville Times and now the Stockton Sentinel Times will be important to every resident who lives in the area.

I again thank those who made this newspaper what it is, and I congratulate and wish the best for those who will make what this newspaper will become.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON SIMMONS NOMINATION

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, 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 bill clerk called the roll.

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

[Rollcall Vote No. 2 Ex.]

YEAS—53

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Banks | Graham | 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 | Lummis | Thune |
| Cruz | Marshall | Tillis |
| Curtis | McConnell | Tuberville |
| Daines | McCormick | Wicker |
| Ernst | Moody | Young |
| Fischer | Moran | |

NAYS—47

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

The nomination was confirmed.

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

## RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:36 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. BRITT).

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

FERNANDO MENDOZA

Mr. BANKS. Madam President, as we begin the new year, there are a lot of things that Members of Congress and the American people are paying attention to. But something really extraordinary is going on in my home State of Indiana. It is not just Hoosiers who are paying attention; the whole country is following Indiana football.

I am the first in my family to go to college, and it was a no-brainer for me to attend Indiana University in Bloomington.

Everyone knows that IU is a basketball school. IU basketball won five national championships. We had the legendary 1976 undefeated team in the NCAA—the only undefeated team in college basketball history.

When I got to college in the 1990s, one of the reasons I attended IU was to watch Bobby Knight-coached basketball games. We had great players over the years: Isaiah Thomas, Damon Bailey, Steve Alford, and so many others who played on the floor at Assembly Hall and made Indiana very proud. Assembly Hall is the mecca of college basketball. Again, it is one of the reasons that I wanted to go to college there in the first place. When I go back to IU and attend basketball games, I still get choked up in the pregame show at Assembly Hall each and every time.

But IU was never known as a football school. Sure, we had some great talent over the years—Antwaan Randle El was the star player when I attended IU—but IU football always had a lot more downs than it had ups. In fact, when I was a student at Indiana University, the football program was so bad that they gave free season tickets to all of the students who lived in the dorms, and at every game, the stadium was hardly ever even half full except for those occasions when the Ohio State Buckeyes came over the State line to play in Bloomington.

As IU fans, we were trained to never get our hopes up about Indiana football, but now, my, how the tides have turned. Now, the entire country is watching one of the greatest turnarounds in sports history. From being college football's alltime leader in losses to now having an undefeated season, wherein we won the Rose Bowl, the Big Ten Championship, and had a Heisman Trophy winner, IU football has captured the country's attention. In fact, the great Dick Vitale said, ''Hoosier football is the greatest turn around'' that he has ever seen.

When IU President Pam Whitten and athletic director Scott Dolson brought on coach Curt Cignetti, IU's football program turned around overnight. And when my wife and I attended the IU game earlier this season against Wisconsin, the stadium was absolutely packed—a real change from what past games used to look like. Coach Cignetti has brought great pride to the State of Indiana.

I want to highlight the incredible young man who has led IU's team to glory this season, the great Fernando Mendoza.

Just 3 weeks ago, Fernando became the first Heisman Trophy winner in Indiana University's history. When I was in college, I have got to tell you that it would have been impossible to imagine having had a Heisman Trophy winner at Indiana University. What makes this man truly exceptional is not simply his award-winning career on the field. What makes Fernando so incredible is that he represents the very best of what we hope to see in our Nation's young people—a combination of excellence, character, faith, and service to others.

In fact, a few days ago, Fernando led the Hoosiers to an incredible 38-to-3 victory over Alabama in the Rose Bowl, winning the first ever Rose Bowl in IU's history and the first win in the modern playoff era for the Indiana Hoosiers.

Right after the game, Fernando was asked about the big win. And do you know what he said? Before saying anything else, he said:

My team and I want to give all the glory to God.

In all of his interviews, Fernando always makes sure to thank God first. That is a man who has his priorities straight. That is a man who is proud to live out his faith, who honors God in everything that he does.

But there is more.

With Fernando Mendoza, there is really no ''I'' in ''team.'' When he received his Heisman trophy, Fernando made it clear that it wasn't his trophy alone. Instead he said that it was ''our trophy.'' That is why he has made the gracious decision to keep the Heisman Trophy in Bloomington, IN. It is because the Trophy belongs to the university and to the fans, he said.

I am incredibly proud of that decision, and I want to thank Fernando Mendoza for making that decision. I can't wait to go to Bloomington to see it.

In his Heisman Trophy speech, Fernando mentioned how his family has always stood by his side throughout his career and that they have never stopped believing in him. Fernando particularly thanked his mother Elsa.

He said:

This is your trophy as much as it is mine.

Elsa suffers from multiple sclerosis, a tough and often painful disease. In honor of his mother, Fernando has raised over $100,000 to fight MS. What an incredible act of kindness, and what a special way to honor his mother.

In that Heisman Trophy acceptance speech, after thanking his teammates, his family, and Coach Cignetti, Fernando addressed the young people who might be tuning in.

He said:

I want every kid out there who feels overlooked and underestimated to know I was you. I was that kid too. I was in your shoes. The truth is, you don't need the most stars, hype, or rankings. You just need discipline, heart, and people who believe in you, and you need to believe in your own abilities.

Our young people need role models today more than ever, and they need role models like Fernando Mendoza. He shows them that faith matters, that family comes first, and that hard work pays off. He is proof that you can be a champion on the field and still be humble, that you can be competitive and still put God first, that success means nothing if you are not using it to help others. Fernando Mendoza is the kind of young man that I want my three daughters to look up to and other kids of their generation to look up to too. Indiana is lucky to have him. We are proud to have him, and America is better because of him.

I don't know how this story ends at the semifinal game in Atlanta on Friday that I am looking forward to attending and at the championship game in Miami the following week. I can't wait to cheer on the Hoosiers. I don't know how this great story ends. The Hoosiers have a possibility to be the first team ever to win 16 games and go undefeated, but I can't tell you how much pride the great State of Indiana has in this football team wearing the ''Indiana'' on their uniform. They represent us so well. The Hoosier State is proud, and I wanted to take a moment to come to the floor and just simply say, ''Go Hoosiers.''

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Well played, Senator. Congratulations.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sara Bailey, of Texas, to be Director of National Drug Control Policy.

### NOMINATION OF SARA BAILEY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Sara Bailey, nominated to lead the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Ms. Bailey, like so many of President Trump's nominees, was chosen for her loyalty and MAGA bona fides, rather than any policy expertise or leadership experience. Ms. Bailey has spent years fanning flames of division and hatred in this country, attacking immigrants, Members of Congress, and praising dictators who indiscriminately strip the rights of their citizens.

America is experiencing a drug crisis. Illegal narcotics trafficked from other countries and the abuse of prescription opioids have taken the lives of too many people. This great challenge demands an experienced, accomplished leader to serve as drug czar. Past nominees have been law enforcement professionals who have taken down drug smuggling rings, State public health experts, or physicians with a deep understanding of addiction. Ms. Bailey lacks any serious qualifications for this role. She is not a physician or addiction specialist. She has never been a prosecutor or law enforcement official.

To prove her MAGA loyalty to President Trump, she endorsed the President's irresponsible and deadly plans to cut funding to the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program, which is on the frontlines of keeping illegal drugs off our streets and out of our country. If she were an expert on addiction, Ms. Bailey would know that kneecapping the Federal Agencies that provide substance abuse and mental health services would have deadly consequences.

With his recent pardon of high-profile drug kingpin and former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez and his nomination of Ms. Bailey, President Trump has proven once again that he prioritizes loyalty and political favors ahead of the safety and well-being of the American people.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose her nomination.

### VOTE ON BAILEY NOMINATION

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

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 3 Ex.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—48

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

The nomination was confirmed.

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

The Senator from North Carolina.

### ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, we all know that today is the anniversary of what actually I consider to be one of the worst days in my 11 years in the U.S. Senate. I think it will probably be that through my final year. And I think there are going to be some speeches later on today that may talk on the subject.

I came here mainly to thank the parliamentary staff, the Sergeant at Arms, and the Capitol Police officers who got us all into a safe environment within literally minutes of the Capitol being breached and our safety being threatened here. I am going to come back to that a little bit later.

But I think it is important for anybody who speaks this afternoon to not just talk about the moments of January 6, but let's at least talk about the months leading up to January 6. Let's talk about the ''defund the police'' effort that was building steam for a couple of years before January 6, 2021. Let's talk about the images on TV when Kenosha—a building was burning. I think it was about August timeframe when the riots were happening. I think it was Kenosha. A building is burning, and I think it was CNN that said: Mostly peaceful protest in Kenosha—but there is a building burning in the background; people have been hospitalized, right?

Let's talk about ActBlue, which is the Democrats' equivalent—we have a fundraising engine too. I am not saying they have something we don't. But they actually allowed Black Lives Matter, in the years leading up to January 6, to raise money on their website for the 13.12-mile race because 1–3–1–2 translates into A-C-A-B, which translates into ''all cops are bastards,'' a

fundraising effort by the Democrats on the very site that my colleagues use to raise money. I have got no problem with that. I used the Republican equivalent. I am a Republican.

But I also think it is important—everybody around here has the clarity of their being in the right and the other side being in the wrong. But if anybody thinks that January 6 was just about what happened on that day, then I would encourage you to do your research and see all of the things that we were saying about law enforcement long before January 6. Right?

It is very important for us to understand: January 6 didn't happen because of a single event or a single set of attitudes on that day. It happened because of an attitude around here that law enforcement is bad; that they risk their life every day, but all cops are bastards, according to the ActBlue website which, to their credit, finally was taken down after I continued to make it an issue for them—long after January 6, by the way, only about 2 years ago. So we had been demonizing police officers.

And then we lead up to January 6, and they breached this building. I have got to tell you, as a Member, the last Member that left this Senate Chamber—because I was standing right there—and so angry that I didn't want to leave and we left. We were spirited away, just about a few blocks away, and we were safe. Actually, within an hour of the Capitol being breached—this part of the Capitol—we were being served a warm meal.

Now, let's back up, though, back to that time. I used to sit right there. I was sitting in that chair when I heard the doors being slammed. I heard—I think it was the Sergeant at Arms saying: Shut the door because we see shadows here. We see people running all around this building. We heard things breaking. We heard people knocking on the door.

And then it happened. We had somebody die on the House side because they tried to jump through an area that was only about from me to the President right here, the Presiding Officer of House Members. Sadly, she lost her life, but she put herself in that situation, like everybody else that breached this building and destroyed this institution of democracy.

So I am here to thank the staff. I remember the staff being so focused on the event that day that they made sure that those ballots were carried with us offsite. They were so focused on the task at hand, they weren't thinking about their personal safety; they were thinking about their role in certifying the election.

Now, we had the Democrats saying that January 6 was a horrible day for democracy and that it was a true threat to democracy.

I would submit to anyone who has paid attention to say it was a wonderful stress test for democracy because what happened is, courageous parliamentary staff, Sergeant at Arms staff, police officers, got us off to safety; they stabilized the security of this building; we came back before ever leaving this complex; and we certified the election. That doesn't sound like a weak institution to me; it sounds like an institution that withstood one of the most significant stress tests in the history of this country, and it prevailed. And the reason it prevailed is because of the staff and the law enforcement officers that kept every single one of us safe—not a scratch on any of us.

Now, I would note that some of the first people out of this Chamber—I won't name names—the people being escorted by police happened to be OK or sympathetic with the ''defund the police'' message. But they were the first ones, when there was a moment of crisis, to look to them to get them to safety.

And we should look at every police officer and every Sergeant at Arms' officer and every Capitol Police officer and thank them every single day for their part in making sure that this democratic institution withstood the stress test.

So the last thing I want to leave you with is, I think there is a lot of confusion about the reason why this day is dark to me. Quite honestly, I found, actually, inspiration in what law enforcement did that day. What made it a dark day for me is when we had blanket pardons for the people who did damage to this building.

Now, once again, let's look on a balanced basis. There may be people coming to the floor today saying that these pardons were awful. Shame on the President for doing it.

The fact of the matter is, the Biden administration ended up going overboard with prosecuting people who were dumb enough to walk into the building, but they weren't the leaders. And they were absolutely submitted to prosecutions and costs and things that they probably shouldn't have. They should have probably gotten a fine, and most likely they never would have done it again.

But the President, on the advice of somebody in the White House—and I hope I find out the name of that person—also pardoned criminals who injured police officers, who destroyed this building.

Is there anybody listening to me today—all 30 of them that are listening—is there anybody here, if you had that happen to your office or your business, would you think, Well, they were just a little hotheaded, let them go and not prosecute them or would you hold them accountable for destroying the citadel of democracy?

So I believe that there were many people that should have been pardoned. The people who just came in; they didn't understand what was happening. The people that led the vanguard, the people that were waving through, the people that burned the buildings, the people that injured a police officer, leading to the death of an officer, should go to prison for as long as the law allows. And yet they got loose, including the QAnon Shaman.

Now, people from my side of the aisle said: What a terrible thing we are doing to these people, imprisoning them. Do you all know this guy—I forget his name, but we all know the dude with the horns and no shirt. Do you know—everybody is talking about these horrible conditions that these people were in when they were in jail or prison. This man got transferred from a DC prison to another prison because the prison he was originally incarcerated in did not satisfy his organic diet. I am not kidding you.

So I think a lot of people are overblowing, as we oftentimes do here. We have some Democrats today say it was all about January 6. It was about the complacency and the onslaught against law enforcement for years before January 6. That, I give to my Democratic colleagues.

And then after January 6, I look to my Republican colleagues and say: Don't take the bait. People that harm police officers and destroy Federal buildings should go to prison, and it is a damn shame they are out because nearly three dozen of them have actually been arrested for another crime since they were pardoned.

And, here, we have to speak truth to power. I support President Trump. I campaigned for President Trump. I would support him again if he ran for reelection, which is not going to happen. However, we acted on bad advice. We let bad people go, and we sent the message that if you come to this Capitol and you got the right President in office, he is going to let you get past things that not any one of us would get away with if we did it in our home State.

OK. I vented a little bit. But I want to let everybody know that comes to the floor: Don't come to this floor with some righteous indignation that you think one party or the other is responsible. We are both responsible. We should own it because this Capitol and this democracy deserves better.

The last thing I will leave you with is, we actually passed a law that was to allow a plaque to be mounted thanking the law enforcement officers who actually helped us that day, responded to the call of Washington. It was a horrible scene.

I find out and I heard from Speaker JOHNSON that it is unimplementable. And I found out the reason why this plaque cannot be placed on a wall anywhere is because the letter of the legislation says that it would list the law enforcement officers who responded that day.

Well, this plaque that is ready to be installed actually lists every law enforcement agency that responded that day because there were hundreds, if not thousands, of people who responded to the call.

So later this week I am going to help the Speaker with his ability to implement the installation of this plaque by coming to the floor and seeking unanimous consent to simply say: We won't list the individuals, but we will list their agencies. And I look forward to the opportunity to do that later this week.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 574

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, before starting the series of speeches that are scheduled for this afternoon, I have a resolution observing the fifth anniversary of the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol at the desk, and I would like to call up for a passage by unanimous consent.

The resolution is straightforward. It simply says that the January 6 Capitol attack was an assault on democracy, that the U.S. Capitol Police and other law enforcement personnel who defended the Capitol were heroes, and that we, as a body, express our gratitude to all the dedicated personnel of the U.S. Capitol for their service that day. I believe, in a bipartisan spirit, it would be a great symbol of our congressional unity to pass this today on the fifth anniversary of January 6.

So as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 574; that the resolution be agreed to; that the preamble be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

You know, January 6 was my first day on the job here in the U.S. Senate. Come to think of it, that was the first day of the year and the start of a huge disaster the next 4 years. I sat right over there. Again, it was my first time on the Senate floor.

One of the first things I heard from my Democratic colleagues, after we returned to the floor that same night, after being taken and hidden out for a few hours, was that this was the worst disaster and was even worse than Pearl Harbor. By the way, that was a real attack that killed 2,403 Americans.

And I thought at that time: Are you kidding me? What are we talking about here?

Then almost immediately afterwards, those same Democrats that said this about Pearl Harbor, they came after all of us Republicans and said this January 6 attack was racist. And, you know, I didn't understand that—being the first day here, I went, Wait a minute. I mean, I thought we are all in this together. They know dang well this wasn't a racist attack, but it was just something that they wanted to use, but they never miss an opportunity to paint somebody a racist, you know, when it comes to the Democrats.

So January 6 had nothing to do with racism. Let's be clear what happened that day. Democrats and the Deep State hate Donald Trump so much that they helped orchestrate a coup against our government. It has been looked at, vilified; and the information that we found today is just amazing. And it first started with the tampering of the 2020 Presidential election results to oust President Trump and to install a different type of government. As a result, great American patriots gathered in Washington to peacefully—peacefully—protest the illegal tampering of the election of 2020.

When the leader of the Democratic Party at that time, NANCY PELOSI, and the Deep State learned of Trump supporters coming to Washington, DC—which, by the way, was hundreds of thousands of people—they started and got an idea. Now, again, this has all been proven. They decided to infiltrate the crowd with antifa and intelligence community members who would stir up trouble. The FBI has confirmed that there were 274 FBI agents in plain clothes in the Capitol here that day.

Then they set up Capitol Police by failing and refusing President Trump's offer to bring in National Guard as backup. They turned it down.

I interact with Capitol Hill police here every day. They are brave men and women who work tirelessly to help keep us all safe. But they were set up to fail by the Democrats that day. And then, of course, Democrats placed all the blame on President Trump and the Republicans for everything that happened that day and afterwards. They had the majority.

NANCY PELOSI spearheaded the true insurrection that day. This has all been proven true, and she even admitted responsibility for the massive security failures of that day. But the Democrats' plan to destroy President Trump and his supporters, it didn't end on that January 6, 2021. For the next 4 years—next 4 years—Joe Biden and the Democrats did everything they could do—everything—to arrest, harass, bankrupt, deplatform, and kill President Trump—not to mention the hundreds of innocent patriotic Americans who sat behind bars for the past 5 years over this made up witch hunt. That is one of the most embarrassing things I have seen since I have been here.

Thankfully, most of them now have been released. You know, conveniently, the Biden DOJ neglected to investigate members of the intelligence community for their treasonous involvement in the events of January 6. That was very convenient. As a matter of fact, they never brought the guy in who was in charge of Capitol Hill police for an interview. They never wanted to talk to him. He was in charge of the Capitol Hill police—because he knew the truth.

Still today, Democrats are trying to rewrite the true events of that history. They keep mentioning all of these Capitol Police who supposedly died on January 6. Now, don't get me wrong. We have brave people that work in this building. But this was made up, and it continued to be made up. The only person who died on January 6 was Ashli Babbitt, an unarmed Air Force veteran who was shot that day in this building.

Recently, Senate Democrats attempted—think about this—attempted to strip Ashli Babbitt of her military funeral honors. Now, why would they do that? Ashli Babbitt was wrongfully killed on January 6, 2021. The Federal Government admitted it, and they paid money to her family as part of a legal settlement. Interesting. But Democrats, they don't care about the truth.

Today is a reminder that radical Democrats and the Deep State, they don't like our country the way we run it too much, and they will do whatever it takes to try to make the Republican Party and President Trump look bad. Unfortunately, for them, the American people aren't buying it. Mr. President, 77 million people came to the rescue of our country a year ago in November—77 million people. And that is why President Trump is back in the White House, and thank God he is.

So, no, we don't need a resolution condemning the attack on the Capitol on January 6. In fact, the only thing we should be doing is condemning NANCY PELOSI's role in setting up the government orchestration and orchestrated the hoax of January 6.

So before I object, I want to turn and yield the floor to my colleague from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. JUSTICE. Mr. President, I reserve my right to object.

I would like to start by just saying a few comments, and that is just this: I think about my good friend, my colleague from the great State of Alabama. He is a patriot. He is a good man. He is a man full of common sense. He is a man that absolutely cannot stand wasting time. He can't stand worthless grandstanding, and neither can I. I didn't come here for that. He will be a great, great Governor.

You know, I had 8 years of serving the great people of West Virginia. It is the honor of my life. We approach things the same way in a lot, a lot of ways. You know, we are both coaches. We tease each other that we are the best two coaches in the U.S. Senate. We are the only two coaches in the U.S. Senate, but we still think we are the best.

You know, we concentrate on things like moving the ball forward, don't we? We absolutely listen to our team. We listen to voters. We listen to—who I always call the voters—Toby and Edith. This is a gigantic distraction again by the Democrats just because they hate our great President beyond all good sense. When are they ever going to get over hating Donald Trump?

Now, you know me well enough to know that I speak the truth. And I know the Trump family, and I know

President Trump really well. I have seen Eric Trump underneath my vehicle changing the tire on my vehicle so far back in the woods that you can't imagine how far away we were. They are good people, and they are a good family, and God knows what he has achieved is off the charts. It is so good; it is unbelievable.

Today what we see is, again, the Democrats grasping at straws, doing stuff absolutely to try to make a scene. That is what this is all about. For God's sake, President Trump was elected unbelievably—unbelievably. Why in the world are we not moving on? Why in the world do we continue to waste more and more and more time? Is it any wonder why we earn the badge of courage—14 percent approval rating—and we still won't do anything about it.

We need to do things. We need to really get stuff done here. We need to help our farmers, and I am sure my colleague from Alabama would help a lot of great farmers in the State of Alabama soon. We need to help our families. We need to make American lives better and better. And in my opinion, America needs to lead the world, and that is what we are doing today. Instead of the world absolutely leading us, we are doing what the world wants us to do. We are stepping up. We are leading the world.

Again, I want to thank Senator TUBERVILLE in every way. And to my Democratic colleagues that I respect more than you know in all ways—and I think that is how we all should be—please, let's stop wasting time; and please, let's stop this unnecessary and totally useless grandstanding politics. We have got to stop this. This is a total waste of time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. For those reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from California.

ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today joined by Democratic Leader SCHUMER and so many of our colleagues in raising our voices on this fifth anniversary of a dark day in American history. Yes, it has been 5 years, and some on the other side of the aisle may ask, Why are we still talking about this? I think we just witnessed why it is important to keep talking about this—because the lies continue, the conspiracy theories continue, and the truth must be told. We will not let history be rewritten.

The truth is that 5 years ago today, insurrectionists stormed the Capitol in an unprecedented attempt to disrupt the peaceful transfer of power. The truth is police were beaten as a violent crowd surged forward. The truth is there were Members of Congress literally running for their lives, rushed out of this very Chamber and told to hide and barricade themselves.

It was an attack instigated and fueled by lies, a coordinated campaign by President Trump to overturn the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election.

Now, even on that day, as rioters threatened to hang Vice President Pence, Trump tweeted a message to them that the election had been stolen; that they were ''patriots''—his words, not mine—that he ''loved them'' as the violence erupted.

Special Counsel Jack Smith recently testified that President Trump was the ''most culpable and most responsible person'' in this January 6 conspiracy. He continued, ''These crimes were committed for his benefit. The attack that happened at the Capitol does not happen without him.''

Now, despite the President's attempts to rewrite history, today, for the sake of our democracy and for the sake of future generations, we remember and highlight the truth. See, we all vividly remember where we were 5 years ago. Unlike most of my colleagues who will speak out, I was not in this Chamber 5 years ago. I was still serving as California Secretary of State at the time, where I had spent years working to keep our elections, not just accessible for all eligible voters, but safe and secure, which they have always been despite the claims of the President.

On November 3, 2020, it was my privilege to serve as the chief elections officer in the Nation's most populous and diverse State. I assure you that, even under the best of circumstances, election administrations are complex operations, but in 2020, our election workers faced the additional and unprecedented challenge of a global health crisis. Those election workers stepped up. They rose to the occasion. As a result, California election officials and volunteers administered an extremely accessible, secure, and safe election that drew an historic turnout, and we saw similar electoral performances across the country. By every objective measure, the 2020 election was a success.

But, furious at his loss, none of that mattered to President Trump. He didn't just refuse to concede the election; he filed and lost more than 60 frivolous lawsuits that challenged the election. He personally called State elections officials, including, as I know the Presiding Officer will remember, the Georgia secretary of state, asking him to find more votes. He also called State legislature leaders in Michigan, in Arizona, and in Pennsylvania, trying to pressure them to change the official vote results; and he lied to the American people, denying his loss. He lied to them again just this morning, to a roomful of House Republicans, calling the 2020 Presidential election rigged.

Online and across the country, President Trump's Big Lie caught fire, and, clearly, it is still burning. Sadly, many Republicans participated in fanning the flames by spreading false claims of voter fraud for political gain. Others stood by silently as President Trump radicalized his supporters with these lies. They chose loyalty to Trump over the truth, and our Nation paid the price.

On January 6, we saw, we witnessed, we lived through what was once unthinkable—an unprecedented attack on this Capitol by violent extremists who were incited by the President. He told a crowd that was gathered outside the White House to ''fight like hell'' or ''you're not going to have a country anymore.'' Then he pointed them directly at the Capitol.

Armed rioters brutally beat police officers and stormed this building. For the first time in our Nation's history, the Confederate flag flew inside the Halls of this Capitol. Members of militarized hate groups searched the hallways with the intent to kill Democratic- and Republican-elected leaders. They found their way to the House floor and to this very Chamber to try and stop the certification of the Presidential election.

The deadly January 6 attack will forever remain an ugly stain on American history. But, yes, thanks to the bravery of the U.S. Capitol Police and other law enforcement officers who risked their lives, including five officers who tragically lost their lives, the assault on our democracy failed. Still, Speaker JOHNSON refuses to install a plaque—required by law—honoring the police officers who defended the Capitol that day. Even this morning, the President is shamefully blaming officers for, as he said, deliberately escalating the violence that day. But thanks to the strength of the American people and our institutions, our democracy has survived. It continues to be tested, but it has survived.

In the aftermath, Congress enacted meaningful changes through the Electoral Count Reform and Presidential Transition Improvement Act.

Despite this action, we are still not out of the woods. Clearly, President Trump's attacks on the right to vote and the very foundation of our democracy have continued. In one of his first acts in his second term, Trump issued a blanket pardon of more than 1,500 of the defendants charged with attacking the Capitol, including more than 1,200 who were convicted—1,200 convicted. Upon hearing the news of the pardon, one of the Capitol Police officers injured that day who testified against the rioters felt Trump was ''trying to erase what [he] did.'' Not satisfied with that, the January 6 convicts are now seeking hundreds of millions of dollars in payouts of taxpayer money.

Mr. President, I would like to share with all of you that Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are introducing new legislation today to bar these payouts.

But this is about more than just payouts and pardons. Trump doesn't believe he has done anything wrong. The President continues to work to undermine the midterm elections in a desperate attempt to hold onto power.

Five years after January 6, Trump continues to double down on the Big Lie conspiracy. He has already issued an Executive order that threatens to seize authority over State elections administration. Thankfully, much of it has been blocked by Federal courts, but he is threatening more of the same or even a phony national emergency while he tries to disenfranchise millions of eligible voters. He has staffed the White House, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Homeland Security with known election deniers. In 2020, he was trying to make calls to Georgia, demanding 11,000 more votes, but now Trump is pressuring States to redraw congressional districts to tilt the scales before the upcoming midterm elections.

I refuse to stay silent while Trump tries to rig the next election and continue to lie about the last election. We will fight for the future of our free and fair elections in this country.

Mr. President, Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are also leading the No Rewards for January 6 Rioters Act to forbid payouts to January 6 rioters.

I will continue to press the Office of Special Counsel to investigate the many brazen Hatch Act violations related to partisan political campaigns being waged from the current Oval Office and the current Department of Justice.

We must defend bipartisan State election administrations in this country and take to the floor to warn Americans about the Trump administration's efforts to rig election rules ahead of this year's midterm elections. American democracy was here long before Trump came into power, and it will be here long after he is gone because we will continue to fight every anti-voter, undemocratic action this White House rolls out.

I thank my coalition for participating in the floor block this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. President, 5 years ago, our Nation and democracy experienced one of its darkest days when a violent mob—incited by President Trump—ransacked the Capitol.

Brave police officers were beaten, crushed, bear-sprayed, and maced while defending our democracy with their bare hands. The sacred Halls of Congress, including the Senate floor, where we are standing today, were desecrated. Symbols of hate were flown through these sacred halls. Worse, blood and more was smeared on the walls and floors. The certification of the election was delayed, and later that night, with blood still staining the Capitol Grounds, many of the President's allies still—still—voted against certifying the election.

I was in the House of Representatives on January 6. I was in the House of Representatives exactly 5 years ago. I was asked by Speaker PELOSI to be one of the managers of the floor debate that day, to be one of the managers opposing the efforts to decertify the electors, and I remember vividly what that day was like.

I remember being surprised to look up from my notes from where I was speaking and rebutting what others were saying to see that Speaker PELOSI was no longer presiding in the Chamber. She had been removed so quickly that I didn't even see her leave the Chamber. Then I saw the Capitol Police come back onto the floor, grab our No. 2, STENY HOYER, and whisk him off the floor. I noticed only peripherally Members were on their phones and not in a way that they were texting but, rather, in that they were watching. What they were watching, of course, were hundreds and thousands of people outside the Capitol who were starting to beat their way into this building. Then I could hear them myself outside the Chamber as they were banging on doors and trying to get in. I remember Capitol Police officers coming back on the floor, making sequential and more serious statements about the emergency and that we needed to get out our gas masks. I remember grabbing one under my seat and the difficulty we all had in just opening them.

I remember when the Capitol Police came back on the floor and said: You need to get out. You need to get out now.

I remember waiting, as Members fled the floor, until two Republicans came up to me.

One said: You can't let them see you.

The other said: That's right. I know these people. I can talk to these people. I can talk my way through these people. You're in a whole different category.

At first, I was moved by their evident concern for my safety. Then my next thought was, if you hadn't been lying about the election, I wouldn't need to worry about my safety. None of us would.

As I walked off the floor and through the tunnels that day, I remember thinking back to when I had first been elected and how, a few months later, it was 9/11 and how we had gathered on the steps of the Capitol—Democrats and Republicans—to sing ''God Bless America.'' That tragedy had been unifying for the country, and I remember thinking, on January 6, as I walked through those tunnels, that this tragedy would not be unifying.

But little could I have imagined that the person who incited that attack on this building—the person who led that first effort to prevent the peaceful transfer of power—would once again be President and that among his first acts in Congress would be to pardon hundreds and hundreds of violent attackers who beat the Capitol Police and Metropolitan Police who were defending us on that day or that we would hear the rampant kind of denials that we just heard from one of my Republican colleagues on this floor—this repugnant, this dangerous, this disgraceful effort to rewrite history; to pretend that this was somehow this misunderstood, peaceful gathering of tourists on January 6.

I was proud to serve on the January 6 Committee. What really came home to me while serving on that committee, more than anything else, was a large part of what saved us on that day—what saved our democracy on that day—which were Republicans of good faith who were willing to do their duty and uphold their oath: Brad Raffensperger, who said, when the President called him and berated him for an hour to find 11,780 votes that did not exist, that he would not do it; or Rusty Bowers, the Republican speaker in Arizona, who said to Rudy Giuliani, when he was urging much the same, that what you are asking me to do is a violation of my oath, and he would not do it.

But now we are seeing a systematic effort to weed out anyone who defies the President's false narrative. In hearing after hearing on the Senate Judiciary Committee, candidates for high office and for the Federal bench cannot be confirmed if they admit that Joe Biden won the 2020 election and Donald Trump lost. It is a prerequisite to be nominated or confirmed that you must adhere to the Big Lie. This is where we are.

Most astonishing to me after January 6 is that I would find our democracy in more danger today than I did on that day. The danger has grown along with the denial. The danger has grown along with efforts by this administration to try to succeed next time where it failed in overturning the election by seating within local elections boards diehard partisans who will ignore the law in favor of their favored partisan candidate; by pushing out election workers; by trying to rewrite election laws; by trying to sow doubt in the election system so that, if necessary, if they lose the next election, they can try to deny and overturn that too. This is the danger that we face.

We thought democracy was inevitable. We were wrong. As it turns out, every generation has its own struggle for democracy.

Our parents' and grandparents' generations went off to world war to defend our democracy. What we have to do is by comparison so much less, but it is nevertheless so very important. We have the same obligation as those that went before us to preserve this incredible legacy we have been given by our Founders.

I am grateful to Senator PADILLA for organizing this special order hour for us to remember the horrors of that day, and we dedicate ourselves to making sure that something like January 6 never happens in this country again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, my husband and I sheltered in place right

here in this building and prayed that our lock would hold. Five years ago, we had to hunker down in the Capitol as alarms blared, glass shattered, and rioters stormed the Halls of this building chanting ''hang Mike Pence.''

We heard them just outside the room I was in, feet away from this Chamber. They were looking for any lawmaker they could find, screaming ''kill the infidels.'' We felt them bashing against our door trying to get in. We held our breath and waited for what seemed like forever.

And this time every year, it feels like I am still holding my breath because I know it wasn't just my husband and I that were in danger that day and it wasn't just the windows that were shattered. It was our democracy that was under attack—our democracy—and the very idea that we use our voices and our votes in this country, not violence.

And the same forces that ignited the insurrection 5 years ago are still here. The same lies are still being spread about the 2020 election—you just heard some of them—by the same bad actors; the same President who told the crowd just hours before that violent insurrection that he would march to the Capitol with them is now accusing Democrats of treason and sharing calls to execute them.

And the same violent people—the people who stormed and battered our Capitol Police, the people who brought bats and knives and zip ties, the people who left blood and feces and broken glass littered throughout the Halls of this building—they are walking free today because President Trump thinks they were the victims.

On his first day in office, Trump pardoned rioters who assaulted officers with pepper spray and metal poles. Trump pardoned people who crushed police with riot shields. Trump pardoned an insurrectionist who violently punched, slapped, and swatted police and even choked one officer to the ground. Trump pardoned someone who plunged a stun gun into a Capitol Police officer's neck.

Trump pardoned those people and many like them with no care for how dangerous or violent they were.

He even let the leader of the Proud Boys out of prison.

The story doesn't end there because several people that Trump let out of prison are now back in jail for other crimes: gun charges, breaking and entering, burglary, a fatal drunk driving accident, child pornography, aggravated kidnapping, sexual assault—even plotting to kill the FBI agents who investigated them.

Months after Trump pardoned Christopher Moynihan—one of the first rioters to breach the police barricades—he was arrested again for threatening the life of Leader JEFFRIES.

Make no mistake: Trump's mass pardons were a dangerous endorsement of political violence, telling criminals you can beat cops within an inch of their life as long as it is in service to President Trump.

They are also part of an all-out effort by the President and his allies to rewrite the history of the insurrection of that day. President Trump's Justice Department just took down the public database that laid out the thousands of investigations.

He just put up a website that blames Capitol Police for escalating the situation. Seriously. Trump isn't just siding with the rioters; he is trying to blame our law enforcement.

And President Trump's allies in Congress, to this day, have refused to hang a plaque honoring our Capitol Police officers for their sacrifice.

We lost a Capitol Police officer that day. Several others took their lives in the trauma that followed. Capitol Police officers suffered severe injuries—cracked ribs, smashed spinal discs, brain injuries, even the loss of an eye—and yet, Speaker JOHNSON has turned a plaque that was meant to be proof of their bravery into proof of his own cowardice.

No matter how many criminals Trump pardons, no matter how many lies he tells, and no matter how loudly he tells them, no President can rewrite history unless we stand by and let him.

I, for one, am never forgetting the truth of that day. It is burned into my brain, and I am never letting our country forget it either. This is a battle I have no doubt we can win. But the challenge before us at this moment is greater than just fighting for truth and history.

It is not enough to make sure that we simply remember the truth of the January 6 insurrection. The real fight is to ensure we learn the lesson of the January 6 insurrection because there is no reason to think the same insurrectionists that are now free and the same President—now bolder than ever in challenging our laws and our Constitution—won't try once again to get their way through threats and through violence.

Trump has already made clear where he stands on democracy. He made it clear 5 years ago when he promised to march on the Capitol. He made it clear last year when he pardoned everybody that did storm the Capitol. He makes it clear every single day.

That is why it is incumbent on all of us in this country to be just as clear where we stand on democracy, especially when it comes to standing up to Trump. Our government of the people, by the people, for the people is an amazing accomplishment, but it is not automatic or inevitable. It takes work. It takes people speaking up. It takes Congress listening and acting.

At the end of the day, our democracy is only as strong as our resolve. It is as enduring as our courage. January 6 was a day that tested that resolve. It was a day that tested that courage.

Frankly, some people in this body failed that test, but 5 years ago today, as I sheltered in place steps away from right here, it wasn't just the locks that held. The courage of our Capitol Police held. And most importantly, the resolve of some leaders to put country before party held.

To my colleagues and to the American people: I know we can continue to protect this democracy, but only if we tell the full truth about the threat that we faced 5 years ago and the challenges we face today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise with my colleagues and thank them for gathering to talk about this most important anniversary. I think all of us are used to giving speeches on the Senate floor to an empty Chamber.

When you grow up and you learn about the Senate, you generally think people are here listening to one another, but when you come to the Senate, you find that is usually not the case.

One of the things about January 6, 2021, that was very memorable in my mind was that we were all together. We were all here in the midst of a most momentous occasion—the certification of the 2020 election result—looking each other in the eye. And we all experienced the confusion of the Vice President being ushered away and those doors shutting—first the glass doors, and then the wooden doors—as the Sergeant at Arms told us that the Senate was under attack. We remember sheltering here for 45 minutes to an hour before a path had been cleared where we could go elsewhere to be safe.

We remember the brave Senate staff as we were exiting remembering to pick up the wooden boxes that contained the certifications from the various States so that we could actually complete the work of that day and not see those boxes burned by the rioters out on the grounds of the Capitol.

We were all together.

It somehow seems fitting that as we gather 5 years later, it is an empty Chamber again because many want to forget or pretend or ignore what happened that day.

I express my thanks to my colleague from Washington and others to make sure that even if we stand in this Chamber virtually alone, we are not going to forget, and we won't be silent about what occurred.

I want to mention three things as I think about those days. Only one is a memory that I have, but I want to begin with just telling you the names of the five police officers who lost their life defending this Capitol. All five were residents of Virginia.

Brian Sicknick was a member of the Capitol Police, from Springfield, VA. He was 42 years old. He had served with the Capitol Police for 13 years. He was attacked directly by that mob on January 6, and 1 day later, on January 7, he died from multiple strokes that occurred just hours after that attack.

Brian Sicknick, 42 years old.

It is a little painful to say that the other four names that I am going to now read to you and describe were four police officers who lost their lives by suicide—who were here defending this Capitol, defending us, defending me—and were so traumatized by this seat of democracy being attacked by a mob that they lost their lives by suicide in the days and weeks after the attack.

The first was a friend of mine—and I suspect a friend of many—who were here: Howie Liebengood, a Capitol Police officer who grew up in Vienna, VA. He was 51 years old. He was a 15-year veteran of the U.S. Capitol Police.

Howie was an interesting guy because of his tie to the Senate. His father had worked for the Senate during Howie's entire life. This was his family. It wasn't just his job. He grew up coming to work with his dad. He grew up knowing the Halls of this Capitol as if it was his backyard.

When he graduated from college, he actually tried to break into being a NASCAR driver, which was his passion and his dad's passion. But after a few years of finding that that was hard to do, he went into the family business; he came to the family office, which was the U.S. Capitol.

Most of us remember Howie because he usually worked at the Delaware door into the Russell Building where folks come in, that door that staff and Senate visitors come in too. And I would see Howie every morning. My office is in the Russell Building, one floor up from that door where he would be every morning.

He would be this cheerful guy, greeting you, greeting your staff, making a joke, and always quick with a smile and quick with some funny quip. Howie just seemed like that kind of classic definition of just the hail fellow well met. He didn't ever meet a stranger. He loved this place as if it were his home.

He was here protecting the Capitol on January 6. He saw this place that had been his home under attack. This home of democracy, his personal home for him, everything in his life—his dad's career, his own career, his love for this institution, his love for the people in the institution—he saw it under attack by those trying to disrupt our democracy.

His wife Serena, who has also gotten to be a friend, said that Howie went into a deep depression. After this, a few days later, he came back to work and he actually was in an accident in one of the Capitol Police vehicles because his attention was elsewhere.

One day shortly after that accident, he came home and Serena said he seemed to be in a very distant mood, and he went upstairs and, a few minutes later, died by suicide.

I worked with Serena and other Senators, and I do thank Senators for this because there was a provision in the benefit for Capitol Police officers that, frankly, was a national provision for most that you could receive a benefit if your death was in the line of duty. You had to prove that it was in the line of duty. If it was during a traffic accident or summer vacation, you didn't get a line-of-duty death benefit, but there was an exclusion if you died by suicide.

You weren't even allowed to prove that the mental health or depression or the pressure that drove you to die by suicide was connected to the line of duty, and that was a bar that was common in law enforcement agency benefits packages all over the United States, including the Capitol Police.

I worked with Senator DUCKWORTH and Senate colleagues, and we got that law changed, so that law enforcement officers who died by suicide after a traumatic event, such as that attack, at least tried to make their case that that death was not in vain, but it was a death that was connected to your law enforcement career.

And I worked with Serena on that, and we were able to get the law changed in a way that affects Capitol Police and others, that corrects an arcane or old-timey view of what suicide is. I think of Howie every time I walk in that door. That is the door I come into work every day. I have been here for 13 years now. It has been 5 years since January 6, 2021. But when I walk in that door, and Howie Leavengood is not there, I think of him.

Jeffrey Smith was a Metropolitan Police Officer and lived in Fairfax. He was 35 years old. He was a 12-year patrolman with the Metropolitan Police Department. Like Howie, he died shortly after the attack by suicide.

Kyle DeFreytag was a Metropolitan Police officer from Alexandria, VA. He was 26 years old, had his whole life before him. He was a 5-year veteran of the Metropolitan Police Department. He died after the attack—after defending this Capitol, after defending us—by suicide.

Finally, the fifth was Gunther Hashida, who was also from the Metropolitan Police, lived in Dumfries, VA, longtime resident of Northern Virginia, 43 years old, an 18-year veteran of the Metropolitan Police Department, also took his life after the attack by suicide.

These were law enforcement officers who are tough people who see a lot of tough stuff, but they weren't prepared. They weren't prepared to deal with an attack on the Capitol motivated by the President of the United States, and that caused them to spiral into a depression. And they are no longer with us as a result.

I just felt like it was important that we tell their stories. They are Virginians. Their families are Virginians. Their names should not be forgotten. Their names should be displayed in the Capitol.

The second thing I want to say is just one memory from that day, and then I will conclude with something that motivates me.

There was only one thing that day that happened that gave me some, I don't know, glimmer of hope, I guess. And I think we all know in life that sometimes in dark moments you can get a glimmer of hope, and sometimes in really good moments there can be a worm in the apple too. It is one of the mysteries of life.

We were gathered in a room after we had been escorted from this Chamber. It was during the thick of COVID, packed full of Senators and staff. Everybody but one person, as I recall, was wearing a mask, packed together for hours and hours and hours. And we were told by Senate officials that the room had been equipped so that we could complete the electoral college count and certification in that room.

And I give some credit to my Senate colleagues because it was interesting, without even discussing it, all 100 people looked at each other and just said: We are not doing it here. You are going to get the Chamber clear. We don't care how many hours it takes, and we are going to go back. And we will complete this business in the full view of the American public. And we did. But we had to wait for hours to do that because it took hours to suppress the attack.

TV monitors were wheeled into the room so that we could watch what was happening. Here was the only thing that happened that put a smile on my face that day, and it made me reflect upon who we are as a nation and gave me a sense of hope.

As the Capitol Police, together with the Metropolitan Police, were battling to stop the attack, a few hours in, the television showed Virginia State police cruisers arriving so Virginia officers could help defend democracy.

And I went over to Senator WARNER, my colleague and friend of now 46 years, and I said: MARK, the last time there was an insurrection against the government of the United States, 160 years ago, Virginia was leading it. Virginia was leading it. And here we are, and the Virginia State Police are arriving at the Capitol to save the Union from an insurrection fomented by the Commander in Chief of the United States. There was a tragedy in that statement, but there was also something positive about the arc of history in a Virginia that had led an insurrection and was now so committed to the Union that the first to respond, other than those immediately here on the campus, were the Virginia State Police.

The last thing I will say is this, a motivation, because you have got to look for motivation on days like this, and you have got to look for motivation when you think nobody really cares about what you are talking about.

Senators usually wear Senate pins. I generally don't wear mine because I lose everything, and the Senate pin that we wear is actually kind of valuable. And I was told when I got here, if you lose it, it costs $400 to get a new one. So I have it in a special place, and I don't wear it. And I hope I may be

able to give it to one of my kids one day. But this year, 2026, 250 years of American democracy, I am wearing a different pin, and I have been wearing it most days. And it is the Virginia State seal.

And I will just tell you about the seal quickly. I have talked about it once or twice on the floor, but I just feel motivated to talk about it again.

Mr. President, 250 years of American democracy, July 4, 1776, we know what happened in Philadelphia, the Declaration of Independence. On July 5, 1776, now on the Fourth, there were a lot of Virginians in Philadelphia like Thomas Jefferson and others. The A team was in Philadelphia. The B team was in Williamsburg, the Virginia B team.

And on July 5, 1776, here is what they did: They wrote the Virginia bill of rights and passed it. They passed the Virginia Constitution, the first constitution. They elected Patrick Henry the first Governor of the Commonwealth, and they passed and embraced a draft of a State seal that had been designed in 3 days by a four-member committee, including George Wythe, who was the dean of the William & Mary Law School.

The seal is an interesting one. It is a woman, an Amazon, sometimes controversial because one breast is exposed—it is a figure from Roman mythology—standing on top of a deposed Monarch with his crown falling off with the motto ''Sic Semper Tyrannis,'' ''Thus be it always to tyrants.''

Of all the States, every State has a motto, but Virginia's is the only one that is kind of a warning. New York has a good one, ''Excelsior,'' ''Onward.'' Most States have great—''Ad Astra Per Aspera,'' Kansas, ''To the stars through adversity.'' Michigan is a funny one. ''If you seek a pleasant peninsula, look about you.'' I have always wondered about that one.

But Virginia's motto is the only one kind of a warning or rebuke: ''Thus be it always to tyrants,'' ''Sic Semper Tyrannis.'' And those who put this together, they used the future verb tense. They didn't say: We don't like tyrants; down with tyrants; King George is a tyrant. ''Semper'' means always. They used the future verb tense because they knew tyranny was not something that was just in the rearview mirror.

Virginia has never changed its motto. We have never changed our flag. We continue to hold out the sad reality that tyranny is a fact of human nature, not just a form of government. It is a fact of human nature. And the woman standing atop the tyrant in Roman mythology represents virtue, and virtue is a permanent factor of human nature as well.

The Founders believed we had to be on guard against tyranny. The Founders also believed, with confidence, that virtue would prevail over tyranny but not without our effort. And so standing in a nearly empty Chamber today on a day that has meaning to me, and maybe not to a whole lot of other people, I just say I am motivated by this. I am motivated by the notion that if we put our shoulders to the wheel in this great democracy, at 250, we can win out over tyranny. We can turn this year of 250 into a celebration of American democracy, not a requiem, not a wake, not a saying goodbye but a revitalization.

And with that, I thank you for your indulgence.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you to my friend Senator KAINE of Virginia for his good words, and I thank Senator PADILLA for organizing this floor block, and all of my colleagues who have come to the floor today. I see Senator PETERS is waiting.

Why are we here to speak on this difficult and somber day? Because 5 years ago today, down to this very hour, the temple of democracy was turned into a snake pit of mob violence. Its windows were smashed. Its offices vandalized. Lawmakers and our staffs—everyday citizens who love their country and work here every day—hid beneath desks and feared for their lives.

Nearly 140 police officers were injured as 5 people lost their lives. It is like yesterday to me. I was sitting right at this desk. I had just known on January 5, the day before, that I was becoming majority leader because we had won the seats in Georgia. And I am sitting there and looking at something, and all of a sudden, I feel a hand on my collar. It was Michael Lanczycki, the head of my security team. He said: You are in danger. We have got to get out of here. I looked up at my desk, and I saw Pence being rushed off the platform.

We went out the door. We made a right turn. We opened another door, and we were within 20 feet of these hooligans, one of whom recognized me and said: Let's get him.

Because of the bravery of the Capitol Police officers, nothing bad happened to us, but it was a horrible day. Five years later, I want to thank my detail, but all the members of the Capitol Police, the DC Police, our servicemembers, and all the first responders who helped us. You are heroes. On that day, you were the first line of defense for democracy—the first line of defense for democracy.

And it is shameful and cowardly today that the Trump White House has tried to rewrite history. Countries fail when they don't learn from their history, and yet to blame the Capitol Police force for creating violence is sickening. How could they do this? On the one hand, they say they love police officers, but right here they blame those here.

They were our heroes, the Capitol Police officers. And the only ones who caused violence were the rioters, egged on by Trump. So we thank our heroes. We also mourn those who perished in the days and weeks and months after the attack, especially the first responders.

And, of course, the anniversary here on January 6 comes at a bitter and complicated moment. Donald Trump is now back in office. How we could have let somebody who did this, hidden by all the propaganda and lies that he and his allies in the media and his allies in politics propagated, is just incredible. It is confounding. It makes you worry about democracy.

His pardons make a mockery of the rule of law. And on his very first day, he pardoned every single convicted insurrectionist—very first day as President.

That speaks loudly as to who Donald Trump is, the lowness of his character, the lack of any honor. And, sadly, too many of our Republican colleagues remain silent in the face of this obvious evil. Too many have tried to rewrite history. Too many are trying to turn the criminals into martyrs. We were here. I heard one of them say it was a tourist excursion. We were here. It was no tourist excursion. It was no tourist excursion at all.

And while the insurrection lasted just a day, the attack on democracy lives on. There are people, young people here, who may be susceptible to the same kind of propaganda because they think it happened once and the people who did it were heroes and were pardoned.

So this is dangerous, not only at this moment but in future moments and days and months and years ahead.

And that fight against democracy lives on in the threats against free and fair elections; the threats against workers—election workers, poll workers; threats live on in Donald Trump's very own Justice Department, which has tried to get its hands on State voter data, and it has abandoned any fight against voter discrimination.

And, of course, Donald Trump continues to plug in election deniers within the people's government. He makes them heroes. It is making night day, turning black into white, white into black.

The attacks are not over but neither—I want to assure the American people—is our fight to protect the democracy we love. The way forward is clear: We must speak the truth. We must fight the lies. We must never relent on speaking what happened on January 6 in the face of the hurricane of lies that comes from Donald Trump and, particularly, so many of his media allies.

To protect democracy, to speak the truth, to reveal and expose the lies, this is our moral obligation as Members of this institution and as citizens of this democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, it is with heavy hearts that we pause to mark the fifth anniversary of the January 6 assault on the U.S. Capitol—this

Capitol, this Capitol that represents article I of the Constitution, the people's representatives in the House and the Senate, forging the vision to be implemented by our Chief Executive.

There are two ways that a republic can be destroyed. The normal vision is with a mob attacking a Capitol or a White House and taking over a country in short order. The second way is for an authoritarian President to dismantle it from within, eroding the checks and balances of the Constitution. I don't think any of us who serve in this Chamber ever thought either was a possibility here in the United States of America with the strength of our two centuries-plus of determined efforts in the course of running a democratic Republic, but we were wrong.

Five years ago today, our Republic suffered just such an assault by a mob. I will never forget seeing an individual run down this aisle, then circle around to the desk where the Vice President was presiding, have the Vice President immediately gavel down the session, be escorted out, and everyone is looking around the room in mystery.

And then, soon, the Capitol Police officers were working to lock the doors on this level and the balconies above, a moment none of us who were here will ever forget and a moment that America should never forget—a mob that was tearing down the American flag and putting up a flag that said ''Donald Trump,'' a mob that was breaking down these doors and occupying this Chamber, and doing the same in the House of Representatives.

That moment, when we are counting the electoral college votes—the slates, those who were assigned to the electoral college to determine who was elected President—that moment, that is the peaceful transfer of power. The ballot box, the counting of the votes, the peaceful transfer of power—that is the vision at the heart of government by and for the people. That is the difference between a democratic republic and an authoritarian state.

And on that day, we went over to the House Chamber and started the rollcall of States. On the State of Alabama, no one objected. On the State of Alaska, no one objected. And then it came to Arizona, and a Member of the House and a Member of the Senate objected, and we came back over here to debate that issue of whether or not we would accept the slate from Arizona, and that is when the chaos ensued.

You know, up front here were these amazing three boxes. We carried them over to the House, and then when we came back to debate, they came back here to the Senate Chamber, these mahogany and leather boxes with all kinds of straps on them. They look like treasure. They look like they would be filled with gold. But their content is more precious than gold; their contents, the expression through the electoral college ballots of the will of the United States of America about who would next serve as the President of our Nation.

And if it wasn't for the quick action of our Parliamentarian team to grab those boxes, I am sure that the rioters who entered this Chamber just moments later would have destroyed those boxes—another symbolic destruction of a democratic Republic in an effort by some to create an authoritarian state.

We had some real heroes that day like Eugene Goodman, who got Senator Mitt Romney to safety, and then, seeing people coming up the stairs from the lower level, proceeded to steer those folks away from the center of the building and away from the Senate Chamber where we were sitting—an amazingly effective strategy to buy a few more minutes of time for the security of this Chamber.

And we remember the police officers who so valiantly defended this building—170 injured—and others who lost their lives as a consequence of the attack on that day: Brian Sicknick, Howard Liebengood, Jeffrey Smith, Gunther Hashida, and Kyle DeFreytag.

Now, there is a plaque that has been built, and I ask unanimous consent to have the text of it be entered into the RECORD.

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

ON BEHALF OF A GRATEFUL CONGRESS, THIS PLAQUE HONORS THE EXTRAORDINARY INDIVIDUALS WHO BRAVELY PROTECTED AND DEFENDED THIS SYMBOL OF DEMOCRACY ON JANUARY 6, 2021.

THEIR HEROISM WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

United States Capitol Police
Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia
Arlington County, Virginia, Police Department
Fairfax County, Virginia, Police Department
Maryland Department of State Police
Metro Transit Police Department
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
Montgomery County, Maryland, Department of Police
New Jersey State Police
Prince George's County, Maryland, Police Department
Prince William County, Virginia, Police Department
Virginia State Police
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Homeland Security
Federal Bureau of Investigation
National Guard Bureau, Department of Defense
Pentagon Force Protection Agency, Department of Defense
United States Marshals Service
United States Park Police
United States Secret Service

Mr. MERKLEY. The plaque says:

ON BEHALF OF A GRATEFUL CONGRESS, THIS PLAQUE HONORS THE EXTRAORDINARY INDIVIDUALS WHO BRAVELY PROTECTED AND DEFENDED THIS SYMBOL OF DEMOCRACY ON JANUARY 6, 2021.

THEIR HEROISM WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

And their heroism should never be forgotten.

And that plaque, which by law is supposed to be mounted on this Capitol, has not yet been mounted, and it needs to be mounted.

There is a second way that republics are lost. And in the last 20 years, around the world, this has primarily been the way it has happened—not with mobs storming the Capitol but from authoritarian figures destroying the republic from within. And out of those experiences, in a variety of countries around the world—countries like Venezuela, countries like Türkiye—there has become a set of principles about how to convert a democratic republic into a strongman state without a mob storming the Capitol that includes firing the government's referees, like Trump did when he fired 17 inspectors general and 200 career prosecutors in the Department of Justice; packing the government with loyalists to head key departments, as President Trump has done; demonizing the enemy within, trying to divide and concur; attacking those with dark skin as rapists and murderers and garbage, targeting people on the color of their skin and the language they speak, as this administration has done; disregarding due process; silencing free speech; shutting down programs, even though they are authorized and funded by Congress, in violation of the Constitution; abusing government authorities like licenses and permits and security clearances and research grants; weaponizing the Justice Department; seeking to put the military in the streets to stop peaceful dissent; and rigging the next election—all 10 of these things happening right now.

So 5 years ago, we witnessed the effort to destroy our Republic with an assault on this building, and right now we are witnessing the insidious determination of President Trump and his team to destroy our Republic from within through these 10 strategies.

Just as we stood and stopped the assault on this Capitol 5 years ago, we must stand and stop this President from destroying our Republic today. That is the best way to honor those who defended the Capitol 5 years ago.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today we mark the fifth anniversary of one of the most shocking attacks on our Nation and on our democracy. For the first time in our Nation's history, our longstanding tradition of the peaceful transfer of power was disrupted in a violent and deadly assault on the U.S. Capitol.

I remember that day vividly, sitting in this Chamber, conducting the ceremonial certification of our election before our proceedings were abruptly stopped.

In the hours that followed, thousands of our brave law enforcement officers, first responders, and National Guard members took swift action to protect every Member of Congress. They put their lives on the line to fend off the violent insurrectionists.

Those U.S. Capitol officers, the DC Metropolitan Police, the National Guard, and all who stepped in deserve our deepest gratitude and recognition for their valiant efforts to defend democracy on that infamous day.

We must also remember the legacy of the five heroic officers who lost their lives in the aftermath of that attack. The attack took an unimaginable toll on the first responders. It also deeply affected the Capitol Hill community and Americans all across our Nation who witnessed the assault on the heart of our democracy with their own eyes on television. We saw the images of officers engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the rioters. We saw pictures and videos of attackers with zip ties in the Senate Chamber and rioters with nooses on the Capitol grounds. To this day, those images are absolutely shocking.

But I have been astonished how quickly so many of my colleagues seem to have forgotten about the events of that day.

Following the horrific attack, as chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, I joined with then-Ranking Member Portman, Rules Committee Chairwoman KLOBUCHAR, and Ranking Member BLUNT to lead the first bipartisan oversight hearings, investigations, and report on the immediate changes needed to secure the Capitol and prevent a future attack.

This bipartisan effort evaluated the security, planning, and response failures related to the January 6 attack, which resulted in the implementation of significant recommendations that I am proud to say have strengthened security here at the Capitol and has better prepared us for any future attack.

I also led investigations into the failures of our Federal law enforcement and intelligence Agencies to prevent and respond to January 6 and the threat of domestic terrorism more broadly.

Both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security missed warning signs that could have prevented that day's attack. This was both a failure of imagination and a failure of leadership during the first Trump administration as they directed resources away—away—from the threat of domestic terrorism.

Five years later, I fear that, despite these efforts, our Nation has not learned, and the right lessons from this attack are being forgotten. Instead of confronting the dangerous threat of domestic terrorism head-on, the current administration has spent the last year dismantling the counterterrorism infrastructure meant to keep us safe.

President Trump has also twisted the meaning of the domestic terrorism threat beyond recognition, using it to label and target political speech and groups that he does not like and in ways that threaten all of us in this country.

President Trump has also made major cuts to key components of both the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, and he has diverted resources from our law enforcement and intelligence communities that should be focused on addressing terrorist threats to bolster—the reason for this is to bolster his political priorities.

Instead of condemning the violent attack and holding the attackers accountable, President Trump called them ''patriots.'' And he pardoned nearly 1,500 individuals who were found guilty of assaulting the very same law enforcement officers that we are honoring today—found them guilty in the court of law. Let us be clear, they were found guilty in the court of law because this Nation is a rule of law. But he pardoned them because the views of these rioters and attackers were his political supporters, rather than offenders who should be held accountable for breaking the law.

There is no question that President Trump prizes loyalty over the law, but he has taken that favoritism too far. Not only did he pardon people responsible for those heinous crimes on that day 5 years ago, he also targeted and fired the Justice Department experts who investigated and prosecuted the cases holding the January 6 attackers accountable for their crimes.

But the most concerning outcome in the 5 years since this attack is how quickly many of our elected leaders have helped to rewrite history and minimize the danger that our democracy faced on that day. Instead of uniting to condemn the attack—and the effort to overturn a free and fair election—too many of our Nation's political leaders were cowed by President Trump and repeated his lies and his conspiracies. Those actions have directly contributed to rising climate of political violence that we see today all across the political spectrum.

And finally, I was furious to see some of my colleagues not only fall in line to rewrite the history of this attack, but to insert a provision in recent legislation to give Senators a special payday because they were part of the criminal investigation into President Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election, the effort that led directly to the January 6 attack.

For the past 5 years, so many of my Democratic colleagues have joined me in calling for all Americans to put our country before our party and to commit to upholding our most cherished democratic principles before we lose them forever. It has been disheartening that many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are not joining us in those full-throated calls to defend our system of government that makes our Nation so unique.

If we, as the U.S. Senate or as a country, cannot agree on the lessons of the past, I fear that we are setting ourselves up to repeat them. Over the past year, in particular, it has never been clearer that our democratic institutions—our standards and our traditions—and the rights of every American are still under attack.

We can still come together and stand up for the Constitution, and we can stand up for the rule of law. We could still come together and use our authority as a coequal branch of government to hold this administration accountable for these ongoing attacks and actions that risk making our Nation less safe. And we can still come together to protect the promise of our democracy for generations to come.

So today I implore my colleagues to join me in unequivocally condemning the attack on our democracy on January 6 in 2021, and I urge all of them to help us protect our most treasured democratic principles. We have a chance to restore faith in our democratic way of life, but our democracy and our institutions can only endure as long as our elected leaders have the fortitude and the strength to protect and to defend them against all threats, no matter their origin.

In the 5 years since January 6, we have fallen short of that responsibility. In the darkest times of our Nation's nearly 250-year history, we have always found a way to come together to protect our democracy. And if we continue down this current path that we are on now, I am concerned that we are losing our most cherished freedoms for good. We cannot and must not ever let that happen.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today to condemn the acts of violence we have all been talking about that occurred on this date 5 years ago when violent insurrectionists stormed the U.S. Capitol.

Five years ago today, a mob viciously attacked Capitol Police officers to try to stop the Senate from certifying—right here in this room—the free and fair election that voted Donald Trump out of office. Now, many of my Senate colleagues will never forget that day because, as I have said, we were here.

I remember it very, very clearly as I was preparing to come up here to stand with the States who legally certified that election and argue against the oppositions that were coming from some of my colleagues. I remember, as I was coming up here in the Capitol Building, running into a Capitol Police officer who was in one of the restrooms with the door open, washing his eyes out because he had been pepper sprayed.

Now, I remember thinking, This Capitol Police officer here in the U.S. Capitol has been pepper sprayed, and he is here now trying to protect himself but most importantly protect all of us. What is happening that is so close to the Capitol right now that this police officer has been attacked?

But I will tell you what this police officer did, like many others that day—many others. He washed his eyes out.

He looked at us, saw the Senators who were there, and he said: Don't worry. We have got your back. We will protect you.

He ran out of that bathroom, up the stairs, and out the door to protect us. He didn't think twice about it. He had already been harmed by these violent insurrectionists, but he didn't think twice. He kept being the forefront, being out there, running to protect all of us that were doing our jobs here on the Senate floor.

I think that is what is so disturbing to many of us that lived through that day—and you don't have to have lived through this day. You know, I am talking to everyone in this room that was here, whether it is our Parliamentarian, our staff, everybody here, the interns, our reporters, everybody experienced that day. People manning the doors. Everybody felt it.

But you know who else felt it that day, you know, that feel just as emotional about what they saw? It was every American that was watching it unfold on TV because this is their Capitol. This is their building. This is the building of the people. And they were watching these violent insurrectionists try to tear it down and looking for Members of Congress—looking for Members of Congress to do who knows what, to prevent us from carrying out the duties of our office, but most importantly, carrying out the peaceful transfer of power that this country is known for and has been known for, for over 200 years.

Let me say this. That officer, along with another 150 of his fellow men and women in uniform, they were injured during the insurrection. Five police officers died because of it. Some members of President Trump's mob stole riot shields and used them to beat officers. One person assaulted law enforcement with a metal whip. Another choked an officer to the ground.

They brought weapons and zip ties to the Capitol. They used WD–40 and bear spray on our officers, and they assaulted Capitol Police with American flags. We know this firsthand from, not just the police officers, but from the videos of that day. And I know it firsthand because I saw it in the Halls of the Capitol, the paraphernalia that was littered throughout because of the damage that was caused by those insurrectionists.

I will tell you what, you don't have to take our word. Take the word of rioters because the rioters took videos of themselves doing these horrific things and then posted them online. The claims that these were peaceful protesters are disproved by their own evidence. They were proud to attack the men and woman who keep us safe in an attempt to steal an election. Why? Because President Trump couldn't handle the fact that he lost, because he would rather see our democracy crumble than acknowledge that the American people voted him out.

So earlier that day, he encouraged his supporters to march to the Capitol and intimidate the Senators and Members of Congress and his own Vice President, who were in this Chamber to certify those results. The mob smashed through the lines of Capitol Police officers. We saw that on video. They broke into the building. We saw it on video, and we saw it on TV, live. And they left a trail of destruction behind them—all in the name of Donald Trump.

Condemning their lawlessness and their actions against police officers is something we should all be able to agree on, but the truth is that President Trump does not care about that law enforcement. In fact, he is trying to sweep it all under the rug. A year after the insurrection, Congress passed a law to install a plaque honoring the police officers who bravely tried to hold off that violent mob that day; but now Republican leadership in Congress is refusing to unveil the memorial.

Recognizing heroic actions of law enforcement on January 6 is the least President Trump can do, but that would require him to acknowledge that his followers did something wrong. It shouldn't be hard to say that if you commit crimes against law enforcement and incite an insurrection, you should be brought to justice and held accountable.

But instead of standing with our police officers and denouncing these appalling actions, President Trump is rewarding them. He has decided that you don't need to face the consequences of your crime as long as you commit them on his behalf. One of the very first things President Trump did the day he was sworn in was to pardon more than 1,500 January 6 insurrectionists. Now, this is the President who claims he would restore law and order during his Presidency. His actions go against our democracy, our rule of law, and everything we stand for as a nation.

In the United States of America, no one is above the law—not the President and certainly not the convicted criminals he is treating like his own personal army. Letting these bad actors off the hook has encouraged their behavior. In fact, some of them gave interviews saying President Trump's pardons have vindicated their actions. Now, remember, these are some individuals who were convicted in our criminal justice system by a jury of their peers.

These pardons were an endorsement of political violence and an endorsement of attacking our law enforcement. And now, shockingly, within a year of President Trump putting these dangerous criminals back on the streets, several of them have been rearrested for committing crimes. At least a dozen of these men and women, including the one who assaulted Capitol Police officers with a metal whip, have been picked up on various charges ranging from soliciting a minor to plotting to murder the FBI agents who investigated him, to killing somebody while driving drunk to burglary—and I could go on. These are the people President Trump called patriots. These are the people President Trump put back on our streets making our communities less safe and putting innocent people in harm's way.

President Trump owns this. Every crime these violent insurrectionists commit while they roam free is on his head. This isn't a policy debate. It is about right and wrong. It is about who we are as a country. It is about our rule of law and order. Pardoning the January 6 insurrectionists is an insult to our law enforcement, to our rule of law, to our democracy, and, yes, to the American people, who believe in it, who fight for it. We cannot stand for it, and my Democratic colleagues and I will continue—continue—not only to speak out against it, because you can't whitewash this, but also to recognize those Capitol Police officers, those law enforcement officers, those men and women who ran headfirst into harm's way to protect us and this Capitol—the people's Capitol. They will be recognized every single day, and yes, we should have a plaque and a memorial and do so much more, and I am proud of my colleagues for drawing attention to this and continuing to support and thank those men and women who risked their lives to protect our rights and our democracy in this country.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, today is a difficult day particularly for our Capitol Police officers. This is the fifth anniversary of the day when a violent mob attacked this building and attacked them. It did a lot of injury and a lot of harm to Capitol Police officers—in some cases, as they say in the law, death resulting. Today, pardoned criminals who participated in that riot are on the streets of Washington, and if they come back to this Capitol, our police officers are going to have to treat them professionally.

And what support are they getting from all of us? In a better world, this would be a bipartisan showing of respect and gratitude for the police officers who suffered and fought that day to protect this building and an expression of bipartisan gratitude. But that is not where we are as a country right now.

One of the symptoms of Trumpism—frankly, of authoritarianism generally—is the obligation to lie. You are not on the team, you are not in the club, you are not part of the movement if you are not willing to lie for it. So you are constantly tested with the obligation to lie—little ones and then big ones. It tests the loyalty and gradually erodes personal virtue of the person who is increasingly obliged to lie.

So, instead of this being a bipartisan expression of gratitude and appreciation, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem to be away today, and it is left to us to remember and honor the brave law enforcement officers who defended the Capitol that day.

The MAGA world has decided that no crimes were committed that day. Well, that is new.

At the time, Senator TED CRUZ described those crimes as a ''violent terrorist attack on the Capitol.''

At the time, Senator JOHN CORNYN said, ''Those who planned & participated in the violence that day should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.''

At that time, Senator JOSH HAWLEY said that ''those who attacked police and broke the law must be prosecuted.''

Those are only a few of the expressions that we heard from our Republican colleagues at the time.

Republican colleagues also once denounced pardoning rioters, particularly violent rioters.

Vice President VANCE and the President of the Senate said:

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

Secretary Kristi Noem said:

We can't have a blanket approach. I would say each one of those cases needs to be looked at specifically.

Senator HAWLEY again:

I'm against it for people who assaulted cops, threw stuff at cops, broke down doors, broke windows.

Well, Trump came in, and he issued that blanket pardon virtually right away—nearly 1,600 rioters—and he commuted the sentence of 14 members of the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers militia. These were not great people. At least 33 of them have already been rearrested, charged, or sentenced for other crimes since that day. Four pardoned insurrectionists have already allegedly reoffended since receiving their pardons. One insurrectionist was charged with a felony for threatening to murder the House minority leader.

Now some of them are so emboldened that they are demanding a reward for having been prosecuted for the crimes that they committed that day and convicted in a court of law. That is an injury to them, in their view.

So, today, Senator PADILLA and I have introduced two bills to make clear that no one who stormed the Capitol should get any kind of payment, even from this MAGA Department of Justice—no taxpayer-funded cash giveaways, which, by the way, echoes that we should not be giving taxpayer-funded cash giveaways to our colleagues because their names came up in the investigation of the crimes of that day because they were called by the instigators of the crimes of that day.

So I urge my colleagues to support these bills. Let us not reward the violence that was done that day. Too many are trying to turn that day into a payday for themselves. It is beneath us, and I urge support for those two pieces of legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, exactly 5 years ago today, I, as well, was in this Chamber, listening to my colleagues debate something that never should have been in question—the validity of the electoral votes from my State of Arizona. We had just returned from the House Chamber, where we were supposed to be carrying out one of the most basic responsibilities of our democracy, and that is certifying the results of a free and fair election. Then, with no evidence and no shame, Republican Members of Congress challenged Arizona's votes. They were trying to discard the will of voters in my State because they just didn't like the outcome.

I was sitting right here in this seat, next to my friend CORY BOOKER. We knew it wasn't a typical day. We had seen the large protests gathering outside the Capitol, and we knew the President was holding a rally and repeating his lies that, by the way, he still continues to repeat today—his lies that the election was stolen from him. But here in the Senate we were just doing our jobs in following the Constitution and participating in the peaceful transfer of power. Then things started to change. Information came in pieces, and we could hear noise building outside the building. It became clear very quickly that something was wrong.

Vice President Pence was sitting where the Presiding Officer is sitting, and he was quickly ushered out of the room. It happened very fast. Staff began to come in from outside the Chamber while a Senator was still speaking. I was sitting right here, speaking to an intern who was shaking uncontrollably with fear. It was unusual and concerning, but we still did not understand the scale of what was happening beyond these walls.

(Mr. CURTIS assumed the Chair.)

At 1:56 p.m., my brother, Scott, texted me two words: ''chaos outside''—no explanation, no context.

I texted him back: ''What is going on out there?''

He asked whether I was safe and where my car was parked.

Then the messages kept coming from my brother: ''Protesters climbing the walls of the Capitol. Protesters fighting with police inside.''

He used the word ''protesters.'' We would all come to later learn that maybe ''rioters'' or ''insurrectionists'' would have been more accurate.

I have to say, I could not believe what my brother was saying. So I asked him to clarify. I said, ''At the Capitol?'' because after everything I have seen in my life, the idea that a mob could breach the U.S. Capitol was something I never thought I would ever witness in our country.

This situation was escalating very fast. Capitol Police made the call to evacuate, and we trusted them with our safety. Only later did we fully understand how close this came to something far worse. We didn't know that our colleague, the man who formerly had the Presiding Officer's seat in the Senate, Mitt Romney, was literally running for his life. He was a target because he had the courage—he had the courage—to speak the truth about the results of an election.

We didn't know that, at that very moment, Capitol Police officers were being pinned in doors, being beaten with flagpoles, and being attacked with bear spray. We didn't know that Officer Eugene Goodman was making a split-second decision to lead a group of the rioters away from the doors of this very Chamber, and we had seen that video from Igor Bobic of the Huffington Post that he had taken of that chase at great risk to his own personal safety.

I am going to read you a quote here:

The doors that lead into the Senate . . . are made of nothing but glass, mostly glass. So they're easily breachable. And if those doors had been breached, more than likely there would have been gunfire at that point.

This is a quote. These are the words of Inspector Thomas Lloyd of the U.S. Capitol Police, as reported in a new book by Mary Jalonick of the Associated Press. Gunfire—in this room—to protect Senators from getting hurt or worse. That is how close we were. Let's call it what it was. This was an insurrection—an insurrection aimed at stopping the peaceful transfer of power, an insurrection aimed at overturning a free and fair election.

Five years ago on January 6, this did not happen spontaneously. It did not happen by accident. It happened because the current President of the United States and former President Donald Trump refused to accept that he had lost. So when people minimize January 6 or try to rewrite what happened, I cannot accept that, and neither should any of us.

No one has done more than Donald Trump. He has used the powers of his office to hand out pardons—pardons to let people off who attacked police officers. I am the son of two cops. He pardoned over 1,000 individuals. Many of them attacked cops in and around this building. It is insulting to me and to law enforcement officers across our Nation.

These pardons, by the way, they do not just erase sentences; they send a message. And the message is: It is OK for you to commit violent acts as long as they are to support Donald Trump.

And in the years since these pardons, we have now seen exactly who these people are. Christopher Moynihan, who breached the Capitol 5 years ago today and came into this very room, he later threatened to kill House Minority Leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES.

John Banuelos, who fired a gun during the insurrection, was later arrested for kidnapping in the Presiding Officer's State of Utah.

Edward Kelley is serving a prison term through 2061 for developing a plan to murder law enforcement officers while he was being investigated for his role on January 6.

And many more have gone on to commit new and violent crimes.

These are the people that Donald Trump pardoned. We know who Donald Trump is. We know he won't take responsibility for this. I am under no illusion. We also know that he is not the man to unite our country, and I do not expect him to change.

We also can't expect these challenges to our democracy to be solved by somebody else or just go away with time. So we have to start being honest about what happened and clear about who caused it, which I think is why we are here today—because this insurrection didn't happen far away. An election wasn't almost overturned on another continent. Police officers weren't beaten in a foreign capital, and guns weren't drawn in some other senate somewhere else.

It all happened right here. It happened in the United States of America. It happened in this room. And fortunately, it failed here. But don't forget why this failed. This failed because of patriotic police officers. It failed because the will of the American people was stronger than an angry mob and stronger than Donald Trump.

But now the question is: If this happens again, will this fail? Democracy is not self-executing. It depends on leaders who tell the truth, respect the will of the people and the rule of law, and put the Constitution ahead of their own ambition. And it depends on every American being involved and holding their elected leaders accountable.

If we do that, if all of us do that, I know that our democracy can remain strong. We can get through this.

This year, we celebrate 250 years of American democracy. What a remarkable achievement. There is nothing our country can't do when we work together. I know that the future of this country and our democracy is bright, but all of us—every single one of us in this Chamber on both sides of the aisle—have to remain committed to it.

Mr. President, I know you are, and so many of us are as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Arizona for his remarks just now, for his patriotism and his leadership.

Today, we mark the anniversary of the January 6 attack on our Capitol, on our law enforcement officers, and on our democracy itself.

You have heard my colleagues recount the horrors of that day. Let me be clear: I, too, was in this Chamber as the events unfolded, and what happened on January 6, 2021, was in fact horrible, brutal, frightening, violent, and in some terrible cases lethal.

To all members of law enforcement who responded that day and to their families—but especially to the Capitol Police—thank you. We are grateful to you. We cannot repay what we owe you, but you are in our hearts today.

250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Mr. President, I come to the floor today because I find myself not only thinking about January 6 but thinking about another anniversary that we marked this week—250 years since the start of 1776, the year of American independence.

It was 250 years ago yesterday that New Hampshire adopted its State constitution after declaring its independence at a meeting in Exeter, a town where my husband and I raised our two children.

This year, there will be no shortage of celebrations of the anniversary of our independence, but it will be up to us—today's citizens of the United States—to decide as a country if these celebrations will represent an empty pageant or a renewal of principle. Because in this moment, a moment when our country is led by a government high on lawlessness and extremism, ambivalent toward freedom, inclined toward authoritarianism, the principles that our Nation was founded on in 1776 feel far more distant than even 250 years.

While the attack on the Capitol may have happened 5 years ago, President Trump's current, constant lawlessness makes every day feel like January 6. So today, it is worth asking: What does January 6 mean for the spirit of 1776? What does it mean for a nation built on self-evident truths that we have a President who continues to tell the lie—the fantasy—that the 2020 election was stolen? What does it mean to be a country where just powers are derived from the consent of the governed when we have a President who has sought to overturn the voices and votes of the people in a bid to stay in power?

Now, our Founders maintained that we are endowed with certain inalienable rights, but we have a President who routinely attacks the right to due process and freedom of speech, who has sought to use the heavy hand of government to banish critics from the airwaves.

We declared independence, in the words of Jefferson, because we didn't wish to be ruled by a King who ''cut off our trade'' and imposed ''taxes on us without our consent.''

But today we have a President unilaterally declaring costly trade wars on our allies and imposing hefty taxes on his citizens, a President who withholds the people's tax money already appropriated by Congress based on his latest whim. The power of the purse is now the power of the President because the majority in this body refuses to stand up to him.

Our Founders didn't draft a Constitution in order to build a more perfect Union only to one day have a President who rejects his responsibility and sworn oath to uphold it, and our Founders didn't create two other branches of government—a legislature and a judiciary—merely for a wayward Executive to ignore them.

Our Founders wanted the legislative and judicial branches to be checks on the Presidency, but this President seems to think that the clear rules set out in the Constitution are merely a suggestion box.

Surely, as patriots risked their lives, treasure, and sacred honor to establish a breathtaking experiment in self-government, they didn't intend to allow a President to use the long and hallowed arm of justice to target political foes, to ignore laws passed by the people's representatives, or to pardon violent criminals who tried to overthrow our democracy in his name.

There is nothing remotely patriotic, remotely decent about pardoning violent criminals who stormed our Capitol and assaulted police officers.

Can anyone in the administration look the families of the officers in their eyes and explain why such a pardon could possibly be justified?

Of course not.

But then again, this administration doesn't think it should have to. And make no mistake: The pardons may have voided the criminal convictions, but the wounds to the officers remain, as does the attack on our democracy.

When we talk about democracy, it is easy for it to feel merely like an abstract principle. But my dad, a World War II veteran, stressed to me, even as a kid, that freedom and democracy made a real difference in people's lives. Democracy is, in short, the best way to solve problems without violence, with the votes of citizens instead of the voices of a violent mob.

Look no further back than over the course of this last year, and you will see why democracy matters. Despite promising to bring down costs, the President has instead made life less affordable. He has taken away people's healthcare, launched costly trade wars on our allies abroad while making everything more expensive at home, and has spent his days flattering himself, putting his name on buildings and constructing monuments in his own honor.

Are we really surprised that a man who tried to overturn the will of the people in a free and fair election does not care about solving the problems that his constituents—the American people—face? If the President didn't think he was accountable to the people's will when he lost the election in 2020, why should we expect him to care about the priorities they want him to address after an election?

Democracy, of course, is about holding leaders accountable when they fail to make people's lives better, and this President disdains democracy because he simply can't deliver.

We are blessed to live in a great country, and we can't forget how unlikely our independence was. In 1776, we subsisted on gasps of hope, our plan little better than a prayer for recurring miracles—not just in Philadelphia but, later, on the icy currents of the Delaware, in the snows of Valley Forge, by the sea in Yorktown.

Mr. President, 1776 was a time when, in the words of Thomas Paine, ''nothing but hope and virtue could survive.''

Surely we didn't survive the hardships of our birth to, only 250 years

later, allow the way of the despot and the way of the mob to become the way of the future. Surely we did not build a new nation conceived in liberty only for its Capitol to one day be stormed by a mob at the behest of a President because he refused to acknowledge the basic right of every American to vote him out of office, to be free to disagree with him and reject him.

When the Declaration of Independence was signed, John Adams wrote in a letter that, hundreds of years from now, people will celebrate the day with what he called ''pomp and parade,'' but he also added that it will ''cost us to maintain this declaration.''

So we have a choice to make as a country. On this 250th anniversary of the year of our independence, we have to decide whether we wish to be governed by the spirit of January 6 or the spirit of 1776.

What is this spirit of 1776? It is the belief in government of, by, and for the people, not of, by, and for any one leader.

Here, no leader is above the law, nor are they above the people whom they serve. Look around this city. Our great monuments here were built by grateful citizens to honor others. They weren't built by greedy leaders to honor themselves.

The spirit of 1776 knows that lawlessness and extremism don't melt away on their own and must be rejected, even when it means standing up to a President or to one's own party. Political courage can be hard; regaining a freedom lost even harder.

And above all else, here in the United States of America, we know that we are not subjects to be ruled; we are citizens to be heard. This is America. This is where freedom rings. And perhaps these sound like lofty principles. Well, I am from the ''Live Free Or Die'' State.

In New Hampshire, we know that principles like freedom matter. We know that they matter because people gave their lives for these principles, and they died for these principles in the hope that the rest of us might live by them. So that is why on this January 6, I am choosing to embrace this spirit of 1776, and I hope that freedom-loving Americans of all political stripes do too.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. KIM. Mr. President, today is the fifth anniversary of the attack on this Capitol, on this extraordinary building that we love so dearly.

I personally believe that the Capitol Building is the most beautiful building in this country. It is the physical manifestation of article I of our Constitution, and I believe that to defile and disgrace this building is tantamount to defiling and disgracing our Constitution.

It should be the easiest thing for all of us across the political spectrum to say that this building is sacred ground. And I am speaking here in the Senate Chamber where rioters broke into. Look, regardless of our political affiliation, we should be able to say what happened, that it was wrong, and that it should never happen again.

Five years does not seem like a lot of time, but as anyone with young kids knows all too well, time moves quickly. I remember 2 days after January 6, I drove back home from the Capitol, back home to New Jersey. And I drove actually straight to my kids' daycare to be able to pick them up. My 2 boys were only 3 years old and 5 years old at the time. My older son usually bounds out and runs up to me, but this time, he walked out slowly, and he came up to me, and he asked me: Are you OK?

And I glanced towards my wife, who shrugged her shoulders, because we had specifically agreed that we would not mention anything to the kids at this point about what happened on January 6. So I looked back at my boy, and I asked him: What do you mean?

And he looked right back at me, and he said: Did something bad happen at work?

Now, he didn't know exactly what had happened, but he knew something did. He knew something not right happened. A 5-year-old child can grasp that fundamental fact about January 6, that we don't use the means of violence against one another, especially in determining the results of our democracy.

Now, if a 5-year-old can grasp that, why is it so difficult for so many, including some here at the Capitol, to be able to do the same? Why do so many pretend like nothing happened or seek to downplay the events of that day? I call this a purposeful amnesia. Five years out, it is so much more damaging to our democracy than the shattered windows of 5 years ago. This is the storm after the storm.

Now, here is an example to the extent with which congressional Republicans are trying to erase the history. In 2022, the year after the January 6 attack, Congress passed a law that mandated a plaque be placed on the western front of the Capitol to allow visitors to this building to remember.

Now, the plaque itself, pretty simple, an image of the Capitol with a few lines of text: ''On behalf of a grateful Congress, this plaque honors the extraordinary individuals who bravely protected and defended this symbol of democracy on January 6, 2021. Their heroism will never be forgotten.''

And beneath the text, various law enforcement entities are listed. A simple message of remembrance for those brave individuals who acted and for the democracy they defended. Now, we should be able to walk out of this Chamber today and view that plaque. In fact, it was supposed to be installed by March of 2023.

But instead, nearly 3 years after it was mandated to be made public, 5 years after the event it was meant to commemorate, the plaque is missing, is absent at the direction of Speaker JOHNSON. As of last night, it is not just absent; it is being explicitly denied because of Speaker JOHNSON, who is still refusing to do the simple thing, the right thing, and displaying it for the American people to see.

Now, that absence and denial is part of a broader effort by Speaker JOHNSON, President Trump, and so many others to prevent us from remembering, to encourage us to forget—the purposeful amnesia. Now, they have done this by gaslighting us, downplaying the events of that day. Speaker JOHNSON directed his conference to blur the face of rioters in publicly released images so they couldn't be ''charged by the Department of Justice.''

A member of his House conference referred to January 6 as resembling a ''normal tourist visit.'' President Trump called that day a ''day of love.'' He called the rioters patriots, and he pardoned more than 1,500 rioters on his first day in office last year, signing an Executive order directing the Department of Justice to drop pending cases against those suspected of taking part in this attack.

But we know better. We know the truth. Now, 5 years out, I still haven't found the words yet to fully tell my boys what happened then. I never fully answered my older son's questions: Are you OK? Did something bad happen at work?

I have avoided it for 5 years, and I have been wondering why. Why is it that I have been unable to be able to find the words to be able to talk to my child? And what I have come to understand today as I have been thinking about it is I have not talked to them about this because I have wanted to hold off on confronting the full implications of that day.

I think what I have been waiting for is some moment where I can say with assurance that things are better now, where I could tell them about what happened on January 6, but immediately say: That was a horrible thing in the past, but we are beyond it now. Things aren't going to be bad again.

But 5 years on, I am still waiting for that day, but it hasn't come—not yet. Now, 5 years in, I am faced with the reality that I don't actually know when that day will come. I don't actually even know if that day will come. I can't say for certain that we will get there.

When I look at today compared to 5 years ago, yes, our Capitol is secure today. Yes, our own security here is more assured. But I can't say that about our country. Sadly, when I reflect back on 5 years ago compared to today, I actually believe we are more divided now than we were 5 years ago.

I believe our democracy is even more fragile now than it was 5 years ago. And I believe that our future as a nation is more perilous than it was 5 years ago. The future threats to our democracy may not come in the form of

rioters storming our Halls, but that doesn't mean that the threat isn't present.

So after I am done here, I will go home and try to have a conversation with my boys. And I will tell them about the divisions we faced 5 years ago and that we continue to face as a nation. I will talk to them about the meaning of cowardice, of those hiding the truth from the American people to try to erase from our memories with that purposeful amnesia.

But I will also tell my boys it is not just about the broken windows and the fighting that occurred here on the Capitol Grounds, but I will tell them about the courage of those who kept us safe, of the Capitol Police officers, many who still serve and protect us to this day, who deserve better than how they have been treated, that they continue with their mission of keeping us safe, even if we are ones that deny what happened on that day and deny the injuries and the harm that they faced.

I will tell my boys growing up in New Jersey about a man from New Jersey named Brian Sicknick, someone whose name should never dissipate from the Halls of this building that he sought to protect. I will tell them about those willing to stand up for our Capitol and our democracy, whose example we should seek to replicate, not just on the anniversaries of January 6, but every day.

I hope to be able to tell my boys that we can heal this country. I hope that we can tell them that we are taking steps to mend the wounds of that day and of the days since that have driven us further apart as Americans.

I should not hold off on having this conversation, hoping and wishing for a day where I can tell them that the threat is passed and gone. We as Americans should confront the problems that we face full on, to not hide from the fact of how fragile our democracy is now. We see it for what it is, but the fragility of our democracy should renew our purpose and our conviction to stand up and do everything we can to make sure days like January 6 never happen again.

And that is my promise to you, to this country, to my State, and to my little boys, that the work can start right here, right now. I stand ready to heal this country and ready to make it OK for my boys, for your kids and your grandkids; let us keep fighting every day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, as we all remember if we were here 5 years ago, this building was attacked. The Capitol was stormed. Democracy was under siege, not just the physical structure, but our lives, literally. Each of us had a memory of that moment.

And I will never forget, I am sure most of my colleagues won't either, how we left this Chamber, without panic, but certainly in a surge of emotion as we heard the pounding at the doors as we were told to move quickly.

Senators were ordered to move out of harm's way, and we saw through the windows or the doors—or face-to-face some of us—the pipes and baseball bats. It was a moment that nobody who went through it can ever forget because insurrectionists scaled the walls; they smashed windows; they forced their way through the doors into this Chamber and the House. They broke into the legislative branch of government.

And it wasn't simply a symbolic move; it was literally to stop the counting of the electoral votes, to halt the peaceful transition of power, which is the trademark of our democracy.

Five years ago, Capitol Police and other law enforcement stood between these attackers and ourselves, Members of this body. They resisted the insurrectionists trying to scale these walls with their own bodies, and they were hurt. One hundred forty officers were injured, several died—five perished.

And in that terrible moment, one of the darkest times in the history of our democracy, we came together. We joined arms, maybe not literally, but we were together in that undisclosed location—Republicans and Democrats—who had walked at a pretty good pace through the halls and then confined together, guarded by members of law enforcement as well as the military.

We were together, and we felt under threat together, but we decided, when we were asked, that we would stay. We would not go home for the night, as some of the security wanted us to do. We would stay to count the votes. As dark as that moment was in the history of the United States of America, we can be proud, as a body, of that decision to count the votes and do our duty, rather than shirk it in the midst of that continuing unknown and potential danger as the security literally went through the broken glass and the desecrated offices and this very Chamber to make sure that there were no bombs or rioters left and we could come back with some assurance of safety. That moment, we came together, 5 years ago—5 years ago.

And what a difference 5 years makes. In the past 5 years, segments of society have latched onto baseless and harmful conspiracy theories about the attack. There are January 6 deniers, just as there are election deniers and there are Holocaust deniers. We live in an era when conspiracy theorists can spread falsehoods through social media and other means around the globe, certainly around our country.

And these baseless and harmful conspiracy theories are, by now, in a book by the current FBI Director, Kash Patel, who claims that the January 6 attack was ''the insurrection that never was'' and was encouraged by ''deep state'' agitators as a pretext to persecute Trump supporters.

Well, we know who incited the January 6 insurrection. It is on tape. It can be seen. In a speech outside the White House on January 6, Donald J. Trump claimed to a crowd of thousands of Trump supporters that ''we won this election and we won it by a landslide.''

He promised to ''stop the steal.'' He vowed that ''we will never give up, we will never concede.''

And, most damningly, he told that crowd:

> [I]f you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore.

And that is when the crowd marched down the National Mall to this building, which they stormed, to the police officers whom they attacked, and the doors that they knocked down.

They entered the Capitol at 2 p.m. Not until 4:17 p.m. did Donald Trump call those supporters to go home—2 hours after people were injured and some died.

So we shouldn't be surprised, perhaps, that Donald Trump, in one of his first acts of office, pardoned all of those rioters—blanket pardon, even the ones who hit and caused the deaths of the Capitol Police.

And maybe we shouldn't be surprised that just several weeks ago, when I asked three judicial nominees—three lawyers nominated to be Federal district judges by Donald Trump—''Was the Capitol attacked on January 6,'' they refused to answer, each of them parroting a standard remark to the effect of: President Biden was certified as the winner.

They refused to tell the truth about January 6. That is how history is degraded. That is how history is rewritten. That is how the truth is suppressed. That is why we are here today. That is why I am standing here to make sure that history is preserved.

You know, we say often we want to speak truth to power. We need to speak history to authority. We need to speak the truth to America about what happened on January 6.

Notwithstanding all of those conspiracy theorists, the Department of Justice inspector general reported there is ''no evidence . . . that the FBI had undercover employees in the various protest crowds, or at the Capitol, on January 6. No FBI CHS [confidential human source] was authorized to enter the Capitol or restricted area, or to otherwise break the law on January 6.''

I am under no illusion. I know this speech is not going to talk any of those conspiracy theorists out of their deep-seated beliefs, but we owe it to our children—and I owe it to two grandchildren born within the last 6 months—that we preserve history, despite the blanket pardon, despite the distortion of history that has occurred.

So we are here today to say to our Republican colleagues: Join us in preserving that history. Join us in making sure the truth is told from this Chamber to America, to all of our country.

Do not forget, 5 years ago, rioters, incited by President Trump, tried to destroy our democracy.

Trump pardoned, glorified them, even empowering some of them in key administration offices. We cannot allow him to rewrite history.

Do not forget. Police were brutally attacked, injured, and killed for doing their job to enable a peaceful democratic transition of power. They still bear the scars. So does our democracy.

Do not forget democracy is not guaranteed. It cannot be taken for granted. Do not forget it is our duty to remember the truth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today with so many of my colleagues to recognize the anniversary of one of the hardest days our democracy has faced, and I also want to focus on some of the work that we have done to respond and the work we still must do.

Five years ago, insurrectionists—they tried to overturn an election. They assaulted our heroic Capital Police officers and attacked not only this building but American democracy itself.

The President wants to rewrite the story of what happened that day, but he wasn't at that Capitol when the violent mob attacked. I was there.

As the incoming chair of the Rules Committee, it was my job and Roy Blunt's job to make sure all of the electoral ballots were counted. That morning began with pomp and circumstance. Senator Blunt and I and the Vice President led a train of elected officials from the Senate to the House to start the ceremony.

Three pairs of young women held the mahogany boxes with the electoral ballots for the entire country and then came the insurrection. We got back here. I remember speaking—my desk was up there. I remember the police telling me that this was happening, and I had to, in my role, tell the Senators to get away from the windows, and we were brought to an undisclosed location.

Capitol Police officers were attacked, pepper-sprayed, clubbed, and trampled. We were in that room together. I remember praying. I remember incoming President Biden on the TV. I remember the Senators trying to call the National Guard to see if anyone could help.

I remember in there coordinating, talking to Senator SCHUMER while Senator Blunt talked to Senator MCCONNELL about what we were going to do. And we vowed that morning, whatever happened, we were going to come back, and we were going to finish our job, no matter what time it was.

So Senator Blunt negotiated the negotiations about the number of objections. I worked on keeping everyone in that room and other things, and then, together, we got it done.

And at 3:30 in the morning, the only Senators left were Senator Blunt and myself and Vice President Pence, along with those same six women carrying those mahogany boxes from this Chamber to the other. But this time, it wasn't pageantry. It wasn't a parade. It was just the Vice President, Senator Blunt and myself and those boxes. But this time we were walking over broken glass. We were walking past marble pillars spray-painted with racist vulgarities.

But we made the walk. We got to the House. The House Members were there. Speaker PELOSI, at the time, was there waiting for us, and we did our jobs. That was January 6.

Tragically, five brave officers who reported for duty that day ultimately passed away, and the courage of these officers will be remembered forever.

And rewriting of history cannot stand. As we know today, the White House released a web page that described the day as ''patriots march to the Capitol'' and blamed the Capitol Police, and it doesn't even mention the injuries and the over 100 officers injured.

I remember them in the room protecting the Senators with scratches on their faces.

It was clear that this can never happen again.

Then, as I chaired the Rules Committee, Ranking Member Blunt and I, along with Chair GARY PETERS and Ranking Member Portman from the Homeland Security Committee, immediately launched a bipartisan investigation of what the failures were with security, planning, and response. We had a number of bipartisan hearings that stretched on for just a few months, and then we came out with major recommendations with then-Police Chief Manger, who implemented nearly every single one of them. Hundreds of changes were made.

Never again will police officers who are meant to guard us have worse equipment than people who are trying to invade the Capitol. Never again will they go to a bus and have their gear, their riot gear, locked in the bus. Never again will you hear the haunting words of an officer on the police radio say: ''Does anyone have a plan?''

We also had to help protect our democracy against future assaults. I worked on a bipartisan basis to update the antiquated Electoral Count Act in the Senate and helped usher that through, along, again, with Senator Blunt. We worked with the House Members to improve what the insurrectionists thought was some kind of a loophole that they could use to stop the will of the people. That law has now been changed. We worked to get better benefits for our officers, and we worked to change the number of officers to make sure that this wouldn't happen again.

Despite our bipartisan efforts after January 6 to protect this Capitol and our democracy, 5 years later, President Trump and his allies continue, sadly, to spread a false narrative. He has called January 6 a ''day of love.'' He has described the prosecutions of people for crimes related to the January 6 attack on the Capitol and on law enforcement as a ''grave national injustice.'' He has pardoned more than 1,500 criminals.

For this administration, it is the very heroes who defended our Capitol—our democracy—on January 6 whom they now consider a threat. I don't think career Federal prosecutors are terrorists or despicable people, as they have called them. I think they are public servants, and I think they are patriots.

We have seen repeated attacks on access to the ballot box from this administration. We must pass the Freedom to Vote Act, which would guarantee access to the ballot. As we mark the somber fifth anniversary of January 6, we know that democracy only held then because of those who defended the peaceful transfer of power. Those are the people whom we honor today: the Republican Senators who were willing to uphold that vote even though the candidate they supported did not win; the Republican Senators who actually, in this Chamber, spoke out and condemned the coup; the officers who protected us that day from something much worse than the fright that people experienced; and those who ended up dying and those who were injured. Those are the ones whom we honor today, not the insurrectionists.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

## MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

## 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. MIKE JOHNSON,
*Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 25–1O. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 21–17 of May 10, 2021.

Sincerely.

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director.*

Enclosure.

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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)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 25–1O. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 21–17 of May 10, 2021.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director.*

Enclosure.

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DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
*Washington, DC.*

Hon. BRIAN MAST,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 25–1O. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 21–17 of May 10, 2021.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director.*

Enclosure.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25–1O

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(C), AECA)

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Canada.

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 21–17; Date: May 10, 2021; Implementing Agency: Navy.

(iii) Description: On May 10, 2021, Congress was notified by congressional certification transmittal number 21–17 of the possible sale, under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, of four (4) Shipsets of the AEGIS Combat System (ACS); one (1) AEGIS Combat System Computer Program; four (4) Shipsets of AN/SPY–7 Solid State Radar Components; four (4) Shipsets of Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC); and three (3) Shipsets of the MK 41 Vertical Launch System. Also included were Mode 5/S capable Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) equipment; early ACS development activities for the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) Project to include U.S. Government and contractor representative engineering activities supporting design, integration, testing, technical documentation, modeling, and training; hardware to support development and testing in U.S. facilities; software; documentation (including combat system capabilities and limitations); training devices and services; technical support; and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated total cost was $1.7 billion. Major Defense Equipment (MDE) constituted $0.7 billion of this total.

On August 10, 2022, Congress was notified by congressional certification transmittal number 0L–22 of the inclusion of the following MDE items: four (4) shipsets of Global Positioning System Based Positioning, Navigation, and Timing Service (GPNTS). The estimated total value of the MDE items was $8 million, but did not cause an increase in the total estimated program cost. The estimated total case value remained $1.7 billion with MDE remaining $0.7 billion of this total.

On October 4, 2024, Congress was notified by congressional certification transmittal number 24–0L of the inclusion of the following MDE items: four (4) of AN/WSN–12 Inertial Navigation System (INS); two (2) Tactical Tomahawk Weapon Control System (TTWCS); five (5) Multifunction Information Distribution System Joint Tactical Radio Systems (MIDS JTRS) (4 installed, 1 test asset); four (4) MIDS On Ship Modernized (MOS Mod); two (2) Command and Control Processor (C2P); and four (4) AN/SLQ–32(v)6 Electronic Warfare System (EWS). The following non-MDE items was also included: Global Command and Control System—Maritime (GCCS—Ms), AN/WSN–7 INS; and MK–331 Torpedo Setting Panel (TSPs). The estimated total case value was $2.6 billion. MDE remained as $0.7 billion of this total.

This transmittal notifies the inclusion of the following MDE items: four (4) Next Generation Surface Search Radars; four (4) Rolling Airframe Missile Guided Missile Launcher Systems; four (4) Shipboard Panoramic Electro-Optic Infrared (SPEIR) systems; three (3) MK–45 5-inch gun mounts; and five (5) command and control processors. The following non-MDE items will also be included: MK–34 Gun Weapon Systems. The estimated total value of the new items is $1.3 billion. The estimated total cost of the new MDE items will increase by $500 million to a revised $1.2 billion. The estimated total cost of the new non-MDE items will increase by $800 million to a revised $2.7 billion. The estimated total case value will increase by $1.3 billion to a revised $3.9 billion.

(iv) Significance: This MDE was not included in the previous notification. The inclusion of this MDE represents an increase in capability over what was previously notified. The proposed articles and services will increase Canada's capability to meet current and future threats by incorporating tactical components integrated in the Aegis Combat System and currently fielding in the U.S. Navy.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the military capability of Canada, a NATO Ally that is an important force for ensuring political stability and economic progress, and a contributor to military, peacekeeping, and humanitarian operations around the world.

(vi) This capability will protect Canada by enabling it to neutralize and destroy adversary threats, improving Canada's contribution to collective hemispheric defense and to defense and deterrence in Europe, as directed by NATO's defense plans. Canada will have no difficulty absorbing these articles and services into its armed forces.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

Next Generation Surface Search Radar (NGSSR) is the U.S. Navy's multi-mission navigation, surface search and periscope detection radar replacing multiple legacy surface radar systems.

Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM) MK–31 Guided Missile Weapon System, including the Guided Missile Launcher System (GMLS), supports all variants of the RAM all-up-round for launch support and integration to multiple combat system configurations, providing terminal shipboard air defense on surface combatants.

Shipboard Panoramic Electro-Optic Infrared (SPEIR) is an electro-optic/infrared (EO/IR) system on surface ships that provides persistent detection and tracking of a wide variety of air and surface targets in support of multi-mission surface ship operations and defense.

The MK–45 gun mount is a fully automatic gun firing a 5-inch shell. It is the U.S. Navy's primary anti-surface gunnery capability also used for anti-air warfare as part of layered defense. It is controlled by the MK–160 Gun Computing System (GCS).

The command and control processor is a shipboard system that provides real-time control and management of Tactical Digital Information Links (TADILs) through interfaces with the host combat system and tactical data link terminals. TADILs include Link–16, Link–22, Satellite TADIL J, and Joint Range Extension.

The MK–34 Gun Weapon System is comprised of the MK–45 gun mount, MK–160 GCS, and MK–20 EO/IR gun sight system (EOSS). The system supports anti-air and antisurface warfare and Naval Gunfire Support through the use of 5-inch rounds and integration to the combat system.

The Sensitivity of Technology Statement contained in the original notification applies to additional items mentioned.

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

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 23, 2025.

## 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.

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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)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No.

0K–25. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 24–95 of August 30, 2024.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director*.

Enclosure.

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DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
*Washington, DC*.

Hon. BRIAN MAST,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington, DC*.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 0K–25. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 24–95 of August 30, 2024.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director*.

Enclosure.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 0K–25

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(A), AECA)

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Croatia.

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 24–95; Date: August 30, 2024; Implementing Agency: Army.

Funding Source: National Funds.

(iii) Description: On August 30, 2024, Congress was notified by congressional certification transmittal number 24–95 of the possible sale under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, of eight (8) M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS); twenty-four (24) M30A2 Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) Alternative Warhead (AW) Pods with Insensitive Munitions Propulsion System (IMPS); twenty-four (24) M31A2 GMLRS-Unitary High Explosive (HE) Pods with IMPS; two (2) M1152 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMIMWV) with Next Generation SECMI (NG SECM); eight (8) MI 152 HMIMWVs with Command and Control Communications Shelters; and thirty-six (36) Defense Advanced GPS Receivers (DAGR). The following non-MDE items were also included: Low Cost Reduced Range Practice Rocket (LCRRPR) pods; AN/PRC–117G radios; AN/PRC–158 radios; AN/PRC–160 radios; Common Fire Control Systems (CFCS); International Field Artillery Tactical Data Systems (IFATDS); software; training; resupply vehicles; technical assistance; and other related elements of program and logistics support. The estimated total program cost was $390 million.

This transmittal corrects the designation of International Field Artillery Tactical Data System (IFATDS) from non-MDE to MDE and reports a quantity of sixteen (16) IFATDS as required for MDE items. This transmittal also notifies the following non-MDE items: AN/PYQ–10 Simple Key Loaders. In addition, this transmittal updates the cost of MDE and non-MDE items from the original notification due to recent cost changes. The estimated non-MDE value will increase by $50 million to a revised $100 million. The estimated total case value will not increase and remain at $390 million. MDE will constitute $290 million of this total.

(iv) Significance: This notification is being provided because WIDE items were not enumerated in the original notification. This report corrects errors in the original notification updated costs of WIDE and non-MDE items from the original notification due to recent cost changes that increase the sensitivity of technology. The proposed sale will improve Croatia's capability to deter current and future threats and enhance its interoperability with U.S. and other allied forces. It will also enhance Croatia's artillery and mid-range fire capability.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a NATO Ally that continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in Europe.

(vi) Sensitivity of Technology:

The International Field Artillery Tactical Data System (IFATDS) is a multi-service (U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps) automated, expert decision support system used for command, control, communications, and integration, and synchronization of fires on ground targets during all phases of military conflict. The IFATDS provides the automated tools that significantly augment the capability of fire support coordinators, fire support asset commanders, and their respective staffs at every echelon during the planning and execution of fire support on dynamic battlefields in support of the Maneuver Commander.

The AN/PRC–117G Multiband Networking Manpack Radio is software defined, supporting in-field upgrades as new capabilities emerge. Equipped with Mobile User Objective System (MUOS)-ready hardware, the 117G extends communications beyond-line-of-sight with abilities for simultaneous satellite communications voice and data transmission. The final end-items are L3Harris AN/PRC–117G multi-channel manpack radios with Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver application and Selective Availability Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM).

The AN/PRC–158 is NSA-certified for voice and data up to U.S. TOP SECRET and meets all Joint Tactical Radio System Communication Security and Transmission Security requirements. Each of the manpack's two channels can transmit and receive voice and data simultaneously, and it comes fully equipped with integrated MUOS hardware. An expansion slot is available to provide future integration of mission modules for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance reception, mobile ad hoc networks, and signals intelligence. The AN/PRC–158 is a multi-domain, multi-channel tactical narrow and wide-band dual transceiver radio system providing Type 1 encryption and SAASM GPS location and timing capabilities.

The AN/PRC–160 is the high frequency (HF)/very high frequency (VHF) tactical radio system that features software-programmable L3Harris Siena Intermeasures anti-jamming. This manpack radio also has anti-spoofing GPS which prevents false friendly force and target reporting. The final end-items are L3Harris AN/PRC–160 multi-channel manpack radios with micro GPS receiver application module (MicroGRAM) receivers and SAASM.

The AN/PYQ–10 Simple Key Loader (SKL) is a ruggedized, portable, hand-held device, for securely receiving, storing, and transferring data between compatible cryptographic and communications equipment. The SKL employs type 1 encryption to protect stored key data and its software and firmware.

The Sensitivity of Technology Statement contained in the original notification applies to additional items mentioned.

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

(vii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 23, 2025.

## 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. MIKE JOHNSON,
*Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC*.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 25–99, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Denmark for defense articles and services estimated to cost $951 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MARY BETH MORGAN
(For Michael F. Miller, Director).

Enclosures.

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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. 25–99, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Denmark for defense articles and services estimated to cost $951 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MARY BETH MORGAN
(For Michael F. Miller, Director).

Enclosures.

---

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
*Washington, DC*.

Hon. BRIAN MAST,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 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. 25–99, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Denmark for defense articles and services estimated to cost $951 million. We

will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MARY BETH MORGAN
(For Michael F. Miller, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25–99

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

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Denmark.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $867 million.

Other $84 million.

Total $951 million.

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

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Two hundred thirty-six (236) Advanced Medium Range Air to Air Missiles—Extended Range (AMRAAM–ER).

Five (5) AIM–120–C8 AMRAAM guidance sections.

Non-Major Defense Equipment: The following non-MDE items will also be included: AMRAAM–ER load trainers, containers, and support equipment; spare parts, consumables and accessories, and repair and return support; weapons software and support equipment; classified software delivery and support; classified publications and technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; transportation support; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (DE–D–YAE).

(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: December 22, 2025.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Denmark—Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles—Extended Range

The Government of Denmark has requested to buy two hundred thirty-six (236) Advanced Medium Range Air to Air Missiles—Extended Range (AMRAAM–ER); and five (5) AIM–120–C8 guidance sections. The following non-MDE items will also be included: AMRAAM–ER load trainers, containers, and support equipment; spare parts, consumables and accessories, and repair and return support; weapons software and support equipment; classified software delivery and support; classified publications and technical documentation; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is $951 million.

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

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

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

The principal contractor will be RTX Corporation, located in Arlington, VA. At this time, the U.S. Government is not aware of any offset agreement proposed in connection with this potential sale. Any offset agreement with be defined in negotiations.

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

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

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25–99

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. The AIM–120–C8 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) is a supersonic, air or surface-launched, aerial intercept guided missile featuring digital technology and micro-miniature solid-state electronics. AMRAAM capabilities include look-down/shootdown, multiple launches against multiple targets, resistance to electronic countermeasures, and interception of high and low-flying and maneuvering targets. This potential sale will include AMRAAM containers, load trainers, guidance sections, and control section spares.

a. The Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile—Extended Range (AMRAAM–ER) utilizes an AIM–120–C8 seeker and warhead joined with a new control section and rocket motor, applicable only for surface-launch mode applications for the National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System (NASAMS). This provides extended range and altitude as well as higher speed and maneuverability.

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

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

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

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

## 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. MIKE JOHNSON,
*Speaker, House of Representatives,*
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 25–102, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Denmark for defense articles and services estimated to cost $1.8 billion. 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.

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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. 25–102, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Denmark for defense articles and services estimated to cost $1.8 billion. 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.

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DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
*Washington, DC.*

Hon. BRIAN MAST,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,*
*House of Representatives, 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. 25–102, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Denmark for defense articles and services estimated to cost $1.8 billion. 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. 25–102

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

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Denmark.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $1.25 billion.
Other $.55 billion.
Total $1.80 billion.
Funding Source: National Funds.
(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:
Major Defense Equipment (MDE):
Three (3) P–8A Patrol Aircraft.
Four (4) Multifunctional Distribution System Joint Tactical Radio Systems.
Four (4) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N.
Four (4) System processor replacements for AN/AAQ–24(V)N with Selective Availability Anti-spoofing Modules (SAASMs).
Eight (8) LN–251 with Embedded Global Positioning Systems/Inertial Navigations Systems with SAASMs.
Non-Major Defense Equipment: The following non-MDE items will be included: Tactical Open Mission Software; electro-optical and infrared MX–20HD systems; NexGEN Missile Warning Sensors for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N; AN/AAQ–2(V) acoustic systems; AN/APY–10 radar systems; ALQ–213 early warning management systems; A/N UPX–43 interrogators; KIV–78A cryptographic appliqués; A/N APX–123A Identification Friend or Foe transmitters; AN/ARC–210 ultra high frequency/very high frequency radios; AN/ALE–47 Countermeasures Dispenser System (CMDS) programmers; KY–100M communications security (COMSEC) devices; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.
(iv) Military Department: Navy (DE–P–LCE).
(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: December 29, 2025.
*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Denmark—Multi-Mission Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft P–8A

The Government of Denmark has requested to buy up to three (3) P–8A Patrol Aircraft; four (4) Multifunctional Distribution System Joint Tactical Radio Systems; four (4) Guardian Laser Transmitter Assemblies for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N; four (4) system processor replacements for AN/AAQ–24(V)N with Selective Availability Anti-spoofing Modules (SAASMs); and eight (8) LN–251 with Embedded Global Positioning Systems/Inertial Navigations Systems with SAASMs. The following non-MDE items will be included: Tactical Open Mission Software; electro-optical and infrared MX–20HD systems; NexGEN Missile Warning Sensors for the AN/AAQ–24(V)N; AN/AAQ–2(V) acoustic systems; AN/APY–10 radar systems; ALQ–213 early warning management systems; A/N UPX–43 interrogators; KIV–78A cryptographic appliqués; A/N APX–123A Identification Friend or Foe transmitters; AN/ARC–210 ultra high frequency/very high frequency radios; AN/ALE–47 Countermeasures Dispenser System (CMDS) programmers; KY–100M communications security (COMSEC) devices; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The total estimated cost is $1.8 billion.

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

The proposed sale will enhance Denmark's capability to meet current and future threats by providing a credible force that is capable of deterring adversaries and participating in NATO operations. The proposed sale will support its goal of improving national and territorial defense as well as interoperability with U.S. and NATO forces. Denmark will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

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

The principal contractor will be The Boeing Company, located in Arlington, VA. At this time, the U.S. Government is unaware of any offset agreement proposed in connection with this potential sale. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require 11 to 14 U.S. Government and contractor representatives to travel to Denmark for a duration of up to two years to support: aircraft fielding and maintenance, mission systems, training, and logistics and engineering technical assistance.

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

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25–102

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

Annex Item No. vii

Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The P–8A aircraft is a militarized version of the Boeing 737–800 Next Generation (NG) commercial aircraft. The P–8A is a long-range antisubmarine and anti-surface warfare intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft capable of broad-area, maritime, and littoral operations.

2. The Multifunctional Information Distribution System—Joint Tactical Radio System (MIDS JTRS) is an advanced Link–16 command, control, communications, and intelligence (C31) system. The MIDS–JTRS provides high-capacity, jam-resistant, digital communication links for exchange of near real-time tactical information, including both data and voice, among air, ground, and sea elements.

3. The Guardian Laser Transmitter Assembly (GLTA) is part of the AN/AAQ–24(V)N Direct Infrared Countermeasures (DIRCM) system. The GLTA accepts threat handoff from the mission workstation subsystem, tracks threats using an infrared (IR) camera, and provides high intensity laser jamming to defend against IR missile threats.

4. The Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures System (LAIRCM) System Processor Replacement (LSPR) analyzes the data from each Missile Warning Sensor and automatically deploys the appropriate countermeasure via the GLTA. The LSPR contains built-in-test circuitry.

5. The Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation System (INS) (EGI) LN–251 is a sensor that combines GPS and inertial sensor inputs. The EGI/INS provides accurate location information for navigation and targeting.

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

7. 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.

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

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

## 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. MIKE JOHNSON,
*Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 25–106, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Poland for defense articles and services estimated to cost $200 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.

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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. 25–106, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Poland for defense articles and services estimated to cost $200 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.

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
*Washington, DC.*

Hon. BRIAN MAST,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 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. 25–106, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Poland for defense articles and services estimated to cost $200 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. 25–106

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 Poland.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* $0 million.
Other $200 million.
Total $200 million.
Funding Source: National Funds.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case PL–D–TAH was below congressional notification threshold at $95 million ($0 in major defense equipment (MDE)) and included personnel training and training equipment; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The Government of Poland has requested that the case be amended to include training aids and other related elements of logistics and program support. This amendment will cause the case to exceed the notification threshold, and thus notification of the entire program is required. The above notification requirements are combined as follows:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.

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

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (PL–D–TAH).

(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: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 29, 2025.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Poland—Blanket Order Training

The Government of Poland has requested to buy training aids and other related elements of logistics and program support that will be added to a previously implemented case whose value was under the congressional notification threshold. The original Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case, valued at $95 million ($0 in major defense equipment (MDE)), included personnel training and training equipment; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. This notification is for a combined total of non-MDE training aids; personnel training and training equipment; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is $200 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a NATO Ally that is a force for political and economic stability in Europe.

The proposed sale will enhance Poland's capability to meet current and future threats and increase its interoperability with the U.S. and other NATO members and its allies through comprehensive U.S. Air Force Training. Poland will have no difficulty absorbing this training into its armed forces.

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

There is no principal contractor associated with this potential sale. Training will be provided by U.S. Government or contract vendors based upon requirements as they are determined. 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 Poland.

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

## 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. MIKE JOHNSON,
*Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 25–100, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Spain for defense articles and services estimated to cost $200 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.

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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. 25–100, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Spain for defense articles and services estimated to cost $200 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.

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DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
*Washington, DC.*

Hon. BRIAN MAST,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 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. 25–100, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Spain for defense articles and services estimated to cost $200 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. 25–100

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 Spain.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* $50 million.
Other $150 million.
Total $200 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case SP–P–LIC was below congressional notification threshold at $98.80 million ($11.25 million in MDE) and included fifty (50) F–404 Engine Fans, Computer Power Supply (CP–1325/APG–65), Receiver Exciter (R–2089/APG–65), associated services and equipment, spare parts, consumables, and accessories, classified software delivery and support. The Government of Spain has requested that the case be amended to include an additional two hundred (200) F–404 Engine Fans, Computer Power Supply (CP–1325/APG–65), Receiver Exciter (R–2089/APG–65, associated services and equipment, spare parts, consumables, and accessories, classified software delivery and support. This amendment will cause the case to exceed the notification threshold, and thus notification of the entire program is required. The above notification requirements are combined as follows.

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Two hundred fifty (250) F–404 Engine Fans.

Non-Major Defense Equipment: The following non-MDE items will also be included: Computer Power Supply (CP–1325/APG–65), receiver Exciter (R–2089/APG–65), associated services and equipment, spare parts, consumables, and accessories, repair and return support; classified software delivery and support; classified and unclassified publications, technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; studies and surveys; Contractor Logistics Support (CLS); U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (SP–P–LIC).

(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: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 22, 2025.

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

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Spain—F–404 Engine Fans

The Government of Spain has requested to buy an additional two hundred fifty (250) F–404 engine fans that will be added to a previous implemented case whose value was under the congressional notification threshold. The original Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case was valued at $98.80 million ($11.25 million in MDE) and included fifty (50) F–404 engine fans, Computer Power Supply (CP–1325/APG–65), Receiver Exciter (R–2089/APG–65), spare parts, consumables, and accessories, classified software delivery and support. This notification is for a combined total of two hundred fifty (250) F–404 engine fans. The following non-MDE items will also be included: Computer Power Supply (CP–1325/APG–65), Receiver Exciter (R–2089/APG–65), associated services and equipment, spare parts, consumables, and accessories, and classified software delivery and support; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is $200 million.

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

The proposed sale will improve Spain's capability to meet current and future threats and will enhance interoperability with U.S. forces and other allied forces. The enhanced capability will also strengthen its homeland defense. Spain 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 F–404 engine fans will be transferred from United States Navy 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 Spain.

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

## 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. MIKE JOHNSON,
*Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 25–1Q. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 18–40 of October 19, 2018.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director.*

Enclosure.

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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)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 25–1Q. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 18–40 of October 19, 2018.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director.*

Enclosure.

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DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
*Washington, DC.*

Hon. BRIAN MAST,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 25–1Q. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 18–40 of October 19, 2018.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
*Director.*

Enclosure.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25–1Q

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(C), AECA)

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of the United Kingdom.

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 18–40; Date: October 19, 2018; Implementing Agency: Army.

(iii) Description: On October 19, 2018, Congress was notified by congressional certification transmittal number 18–40 of the possible sale, under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, of sixteen (16) H–47 Chinook (Extended Range) helicopters; thirty-six (36) T–55–GA–714A engines (32 installed, 4 spares); forty-eight (48) embedded GPS inertial navigation units (32 installed, 16 spares); twenty (20) common missile warning systems (16 installed, 4 spares); twenty-two (22) radio-frequency countermeasures (16 installed, 6 spares); nineteen (19) multi-mode radars (16 installed, 3 spares); nineteen (19) electrooptical sensor systems (16 installed, 3 spares); forty (40) M–134D–T miniguns, plus mounts and tools (32 installed, 8 spares); and forty (40) M240H machine guns, plus mounts and tools (32 installed, 8 spares). The following non-Major Defense Equipment (MDE) items were also included: communications equipment; navigation equipment; aircraft survivability equipment; initial training equipment and services; synthetic training equipment; support package including spares and repair parts; special tools and test equipment; aviation ground support equipment; safety and air worthiness certification; technical support; maintenance support; technical and aircrew publications; mission planning system equipment and support; project management and governance; U.S. Government and contractor engineering and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total program cost was $3.5 billion. MDE constituted $1.655 billion of this total.

On March 12, 2024, Congress was notified by congressional certification transmittal number 24–0B, under Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, of the inclusion of the following MDE items: seventeen (17) Common Infrared Countermeasure (CIRCM) Systems; seventeen (17) Limited Missile Warning Receiver Systems (LIMWS); and seventeen (17) Degraded Visual Environment Pilotage Systems (DVEPS). The following non-MDE item was also included: Man-Portable Night Vision Devices. The estimated total value of these new items was $162 million, but this addition did not cause an increase in the total case value. The estimated total case value remained at $3.5 billion. MDE remained at $1.655 billion of this total.

This transmittal notifies the inclusion of the following additional MDE items: five (5) DVEPS. The estimated total value of the new items is $3.06 million and does not result in a net increase in the total case value. The estimated total case value remains at $3.5 billion. MDE continues to constitute $1.655 billion of this total.

(iv) Significance: The proposed sale will enhance the United Kingdom's capabilities to provide national defense and contribute to NATO and coalition operations.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a key NATO Ally that is an important force for political stability and economic progress in Europe.

(vi) Sensitivity of Technology:

DVEPS provides overmatch by providing increased situational awareness to the aircrew in degraded visual environment (DVE)

conditions, such as brownout, allowing special operations aviation assets to execute missions in nearly any environmental condition. DVEPS utilizes using three-dimensional (3D) imaging technology. DVEPS produces imagery, 3D conformal symbology, and system alerts to aid pilots in maintaining spatial awareness during and after transition from visual meteorological conditions (VMC) to DVE conditions. DVEPS includes a synthetic vision avionics backbone (SVAB), light detection and ranging (LiDAR) system, removable storage device, infrared camera, power distribution unit, and inertial measurement unit. The Sensitivity of Technology Statement contained in the original notification applies to additional items mentioned.

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

(vii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 31, 2025.

## VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. President, on January 5, 2026, I missed rollcall vote No. 1 on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 70, Keith Bass of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense due to a personal matter. Had I been present, I would have voted no.

## SUNSET SECTION 230 ACT

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, this bipartisan bill is a crucial first step to bring Members of Congress, industry, civil society, and families to the table to discuss the future of the internet. It does not aim to end the conversation.

Social media, and the internet broadly, continue to evolve. We need to keep up. Tech platforms must be appropriately incentivized to address the harmful content that has been allowed to proliferate online and influence our children, our communities, and our country as a whole.

Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 was passed into law during the early days of the internet, with the intent of incentivizing an environment where platforms could innovate. Section 230 also immunized platforms that engaged in good-faith moderation of content they deem to violate their platform's terms and conditions or community standards.

While section 230 played a central role in the growth of the internet as we know it today, the legislation could not have anticipated the growth and popularity of social media platforms we are now grappling with. For nearly 30 years, social media platforms have enjoyed blanket immunity for the content they host. They have failed to adequately police harmful content on their sites, despite their terms and conditions mandating them to do so.

While most of the conversation surrounding section 230 focuses on Big Tech, it is important to take into consideration small community-based platforms that are also protected by section 230. These platforms do not use algorithmic recommendations, do not contain live feeds, like buttons, and are not in the business of keeping people online. Rather, they serve as a platform for community engagement. I believe these platforms can serve as a model for content moderation, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to find ways to continue to provide protection for platforms that promote respectful exchange among users.

I have long advocated for free speech and believe that all communities should have the right to express themselves online. But tech platforms have made billions while ignoring violent and exploitative content and disinformation that lives on their platforms. It is time for Congress to act.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### TRIBUTE TO RICHARD A. SILVER

● Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the remarkable career of Richard A. Silver. Rick has long been recognized as a model of excellence in Connecticut's legal profession and as a national leader and champion for victims of wrongful harm and injustice. His specialties are in medical malpractice, personal injury, and complex civil litigation, but he is truly a tireless advocate of fairness and decency in a wide variety of causes.

Rick was born and raised in Stamford, CT, and became interested in the law as a means to give back to his community and help others. After graduating from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1960, he returned to Connecticut to begin work at the law firm of David Goldstein.

Rick was an immediate success—in fact, winning his very first case despite being given less than a week to prepare. In 1965, he set out on his own, eventually joined in his new firm by partners David Golub in 1975 and Ernie Teitell in 1978. From the outset, he sought to stay small and excel. His model has been so successful that many of his cases are referrals from other lawyers, a testament to the firm's extraordinary record and reputation.

Rick's legal advocacy has changed the landscape of medical malpractice law in Connecticut. His arguments before the Connecticut Supreme Court for the 1976 case of Katsetos v. Stamford Hospital were pathbreaking in the assessment of medical expert testimony and cemented a statewide standard of care. His victories in many other cases like Pisel v. Stamford Hospital and Oram v. DeCholnoky have been precedent setting and historic in imposing accountability and access to legal remedies.

Rick has been widely and repeatedly recognized and honored, and his leadership has been instrumental in raising standards of professional excellence. He has been listed in Best Lawyers in America under Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, and Product Liability Litigation since 1987 and has been included in Connecticut Super Lawyers since its inception. He is also on the board of governors for the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association, where he is co-chairman of the medical malpractice committee, previously served as president of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates, and is a member of both the American Law Institute and the American Association for Justice.

Equally important, Rick has been an extraordinary mentor and model, generously devoting his skill to developing talent in others and finding opportunities for others to excel. He has helped young lawyers to achieve success and public service.

Rick's lifelong commitment to giving back includes numerous worthy causes and organizations. His generosity is longstanding and legendary. He is a major supporter of the Silver Education Center, named in honor of his family, at the Bartlett Arboretum in Stamford, CT. He is also engaged in supporting higher education as a member of the board of trustees at Quinnipiac University and a member of the advisory boards for both the Quinnipiac University School of Law and Medical School.

Having recently celebrated his 90th birthday and more than six decades of remarkable public service, he shows no sign of slowing down. Now, as ever, the legal profession relies on him—as do countless clients seeking justice—for his dedication, courage, and skill. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating the remarkable career and work of Richard A. Silver.●

### TRIBUTE TO MARY HIGHTOWER

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and recognize the distinguished career of Mary Hightower, chief communications officer for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, upon her retirement after 23 years of exemplary service.

Mary's tenure with the division of agriculture has been marked by a tireless dedication to connecting the public with the vital research and extension work carried out across Arkansas. Her passion and skill for telling the stories of agriculture in the Natural State created a better understanding of the ongoing, critical work in support of our State's producers.

She was an integral force in elevating the organization's messaging efforts, strengthening the visibility and impact of both the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service through innovative storytelling, strategic outreach, and a deep commitment to the land-grant mission.

Her leadership transformed the division of ag's communications team, expanded its media reach, and brought

local agricultural expertise to the national stage. Mary's work has informed the public about scientific advances and community initiatives while also inspiring her colleagues and young communicators to pursue excellence in agricultural communication.

Throughout her career, Mary has been recognized with numerous awards for her outstanding contributions to journalism and communications, and her lasting influence on the industry and the division of agriculture will continue to be felt for years to come.

As she begins this next chapter of her life, I join Mary's family, friends, and colleagues in thanking her for her service to Arkansas and to the agricultural community. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mary Hightower on her remarkable career and in wishing her all the best in her retirement.●

## RECOGNIZING CENTERVILLE PRODUCE

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

Founded in 1951 and purchased by the Stober family in 1954, Centerville Produce began as a small, family-run operation selling cream, eggs, and livestock feed. Located in Centerville, IA, the business quickly became a trusted spot for local farmers and residents. In 1995, Ryan Stober, a veteran deeply committed to his community, purchased the business from his grandfather, carrying on the family legacy while expanding the company's reach and offerings. Earlier this year, the business transitioned to longtime employee Mike Spurgeon through a thoughtful succession plan that ensures the Centerville Produce's core mission will continue. Ryan remains actively involved, providing guidance as the business enters its next chapter.

Over the years, Centerville Produce grew from a modest feed store into one of Iowa's premier agricultural retail outlets. Today, the store offers a wide variety of livestock feed, animal nutrition products, pet food, and specialty items like Yeti coolers and Traeger wood pellet grills. With a knowledgeable team of 13 employees, the business has become a go-to destination for farmers, pet owners, and outdoor enthusiasts alike, blending tradition with modern products and services. The company has continually adapted to changing customer needs by expanding inventory, introducing new product lines, and maintaining the personal service customers have relied on for generations.

Under Ryan Stober's leadership, Centerville Produce became deeply woven into the fabric of the local community. The business is an active member of the chamber of commerce and proudly supports local county fairs, 4–H, Future Farmers of America, and high schools. Centerville Produce also sponsors Little League baseball, softball teams, and numerous youth programs. Ryan himself has served as president of the Appanoose Economic Development Corp., vice president of the Appanoose Community Railroad, and held board positions with the Rathbun Area Chamber of Commerce, Centerville Main Street, and the Centerville Municipal Waterworks Board. His longstanding commitment to civic involvement earned him the 2017 Daily Iowegian Citizen of the Year Award.

From its humble beginnings selling cream and eggs to becoming a comprehensive agriculture retail and pet supply hub, Centerville Produce exemplifies growth rooted in family values, community commitment, and a passion for serving customers. Its story is one of resilience, innovation, and dedication, showing how a locally owned business can make a lasting impact while honoring its heritage. Today, Centerville Produce stands as a model of how tradition, community engagement, and thoughtful growth can create a thriving, enduring business.

It is my honor to recognize Ryan Stober, Mike Spurgeon, and the entire Centerville Produce team for their outstanding work and dedication to their community. I look forward to their continued success and wish them the very best in the years ahead.●

## TRIBUTE TO PATRICK DOWNING

● Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, the military will take you all over the world, but Sweet Home Alabama has a way of bringing people back. That is true for Mobile native Colonel Patrick Downing, who found his way back to the Bay after 36 years of military service.

The son of a World War II marine, Pat enlisted in the Army at just 17 years old. In 1961, he signed up to be a part of the Special Forces unit, where he would serve for the next three decades—including two tours in Vietnam. Before he left, Pat married his high school sweetheart, Patricia, in a chapel at Fort Bragg. Upon arriving, Pat and his team were met with a mortar attack and told their unit had a bounty on their heads just for being in the country. But Pat wasn't deterred from his mission.

He returned home briefly, where he and Patricia welcomed their first child Patti. Pat also completed Officer Candidate School during his time in between deployments at just 24 years old. Pat continued to show a determination for finishing what he started, earning his high school diploma and going on to complete a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. His final military role was as an adviser to the Army Reserves in Birmingham, AL.

After retiring in 1996, Pat and Patricia knew that it was time to bring their family back to the Yellowhammer State for good after 19 moves over the years. He then used his passion for education to give back to his hometown, working at the University of South Alabama for more than 20 years until his retirement in 2015. He directed one of South's satellite campuses for 15 years and wrapped up his time directing transportation for the main campus and the Springhill campus.

Pat hasn't slowed down in retirement. Now, he serves Alabama's veterans in a number of roles—including with American Legion Post 88, Veterans of Foreign Wars, South Alabama Council, USS *Alabama* Battleship Commission, and the Alabama State Board of Veterans Affairs. Of all the many ways Pat has served those around him, two experiences stick out the most: bringing over 1,000 World War II vets to DC through Honor Flight South Alabama and working to establish a State cemetery for veterans in Spanish Fort, AL.

He and his wife are proud grandparents to seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. After traveling far and wide to protect our freedoms, I am glad Pat planted his roots down in Mobile.

It is my honor to recognize him as the January Veteran of the Month.●

## MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 4:52 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), as amended, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission for a term expiring on December 31, 2027: Mr. Taylor Budowich of Washington, DC.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), as amended, the Minority Leader appoints the following individual to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission: Mr. Leland Miller of Alexandria, Virginia.

As previously agreed, because of the change in Congress and the presumed statutory intent of the Commission, I am appointing Mr. Miller on behalf of the Speaker.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), as amended, the Minority

Leader appoints the following individual to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission: Mr. Jonathan Nicholas Stivers of Falls Church, Virginia.

## ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, January 6, 2026, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 222. An act 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.

## 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–2352. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 3(d)(3) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the re-export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the Ukraine in the amount of $14,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25–114) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2353. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Luxembourg in the amount of $100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 25–067) received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2354. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006, with respect to Belarus; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2355. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to serious human rights abuse and corruption that was declared in Executive Order 13818 of December 20, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2356. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13303 of May 22, 2003, with respect to the stabilization of Iraq; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2357. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 14059 of December 15, 2021, with respect to global illicit drug trafficking; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2358. A communication from the Official performing Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act that involved fiscal years 2019 through 2022 Operation and Maintenance and Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund appropriations; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–2359. A communication from the Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff, Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a transaction involving exports to Turkiye; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2360. A communication from the Acting President and Chairman, Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a transaction involving financing to support U.S. supply chain resiliency projects; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2361. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2024 Trends in the Quality of U.S. Healthcare Services''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2362. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Expiration of Interim Final Rule: Control of Communicable Diseases; Foreign Quarantine'' (RIN0920–AA75) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2363. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26–201, ''Uniform Special Deposits Act of 2025''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2364. A communication from the Director of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2025 through September 30, 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2365. A communication from the Acting Chief, Ethics Transparency and Integrity Branch, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to discontinuation of service in an acting role for a position covered by the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998 for the position of Director, Office of Government Ethics, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2366. A communication from the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Inspector General's Semiannual Report for the six-month period from April 1, 2025 through September 30, 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2367. A communication from the Chairwoman, Board of Governors, United States Postal Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Postal Services' Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2025 through September 30, 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2368. A communication from the Chairman of the United States International Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2369. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans Exemption Threshold'' (RIN7100–AH12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2370. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26–202, ''Uniform Commercial Code Financing Statement Forms Amendment Act of 2025''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2371. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26–203, ''Uniform College Athlete Name, Image, or Likeness Amendment Act of 2025''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2372. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26–205, ''Malcolm X Extension of Disposition Authority and Term Sheet Amendment Act of 2025''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2373. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26–200, ''Veteran Spouse Homestead Deduction Amendment Act of 2025''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2374. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 26–206, ''Closing of a Public Alley in Square 3524, S.O. 23–06402, Act of 2025''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2375. A communication from the Assistant Director, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting , pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulatory Capital Rule: Modifications to the Enhanced Supplementary Leverage Ratio Standards for U.S. Global Systemically Important Bank Holding Companies and Their Subsidiary Depository Institutions; Total Loss-Absorbing Capacity and Long-Term Debt Requirements for U.S. Global Systemically Important Bank Holding Companies'' (RIN1557–AF31) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2376. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Truth in Lending (Regulation Z)'' (RIN7100–AH10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2377. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Truth in Lending (Regulation M)'' (RIN7100–AH11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2378. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans Exemption Threshold'' (RIN7100–AH12) received in the Office of the President of the

Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2379. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fair Credit Reporting Act Disclosures'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2380. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Truth in Lending (Regulation Z) Annual Threshold Adjustments (Credit Cards, HOEPA, and Qualified Mortgages)'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2381. A communication from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the Large Financial Institution Rating System and Framework for the Supervision of Insurance Organizations'' (Docket No. OP–1868) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2382. A communication from the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Presidential $1 Dollar Coin Program''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2383. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Income of Foreign Governments and of International Organizations'' (RIN1545–BR10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2384. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Income of Foreign Governments and of International Organizations'' (RIN1545–BG08) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2385. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Tribal General Welfare Benefits'' (RIN1545–BQ95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2386. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''List of No-Rule Areas for IRS Letter Rulings and Determination Letters'' (Revenue Procedure 2026–3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2387. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Base Erosion and Anti-Abuse Tax Rules for Qualified Derivative Payments on Securities Lending Transactions'' (RIN1545–BR20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2388. A communication from the Section Chief, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Entities Wholly Owned by Indian Tribal Governments'' (RIN1545–BQ13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 18, 2025; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2389. A communication from the Director, Congressional, Legislative, and Intergovernmental Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to notifying Congress that the Commission did not complete or initiate competitive sourcing for conversion in fiscal year 2025, nor do they plan to do so in fiscal year 2026; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC–2390. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The Administration, Cost, and Impact of the Quality Improvement Organization Program for Medicare Beneficiaries for Fiscal Year 2024''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2391. A communication from the Action Under Secretary for International Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Audit of the Exchange Stabilization Fund's Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2024 and 2023''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2392. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fair Debt Collection Practices Act: CFPB Annual Report 2025''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2393. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Office of Minority and Women Inclusion Annual Report to Congress: Fiscal Year 2024''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2394. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fair Lending Report of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for 2024''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2395. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The Consumer Credit Card Market''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2396. A communication from the Chair of the United States International Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2397. A communication from the Deputy Director, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2398. A communication from the Associate Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2025 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2399. A communication from the Administrator of the General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2400. A communication from the Treasurer, National Gallery of Art, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Gallery's Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2401. A communication from the Director, Congressional, Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2402. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''COVID–19 Mitigation Policy Requirement in Head Start Programs; Recission'' (RIN0970–AD17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 5, 2026; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2403. A communication from the Principal Deputy Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Audit of Medicare Administrative Contractor Information Security Program Evaluations for Fiscal Year 2024''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2404. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Truth in Lending (Regulation Z); Non-application to Earned Wage Access Products'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 5, 2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

## 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, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WELCH, Mr. KIM, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. REED, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 3581. A bill to prohibit the payment of certain legal settlements to any individual convicted of assaulting a law enforcement officer in connection with breaching the Capitol on January 6, 2021; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. KIM, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. REED, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 3582. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds to compensate individuals who were prosecuted for their involvement in the attack on the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HUSTED:

S. 3583. A bill to establish a pilot program in which States may use consolidated funds, through Upward Mobility Grants, for anti-poverty programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

## SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. SMITH, Mr. REED, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. KING, Mr. KIM, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. Res. 574. A resolution observing the fifth anniversary of the attack on the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, and recognizing the essential work of United States Capitol personnel, including the United States Capitol Police; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

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

S. Res. 575. A resolution congratulating the Oklahoma State University men's cross country team for winning the 2025 National Collegiate Athletic Association Men's Division I Cross Country National Championship; considered and agreed to.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 128

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 128, a bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require proof of United States citizenship to register an individual to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 858

At the request of Mr. JUSTICE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 858, a bill to authorize the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish a commemorative work on the National Mall to honor the extraordinary acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients.

S. 1335

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1335, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude debt held by certain insurance companies from capital assets and to extend capital loss carryovers for such companies from 5 years to 10 years.

S. 1650

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1650, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify authorities relating to the collective bargaining of employees in the Veterans Health Administration.

S. 1707

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1707, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to minimum participation standards for pension plans and qualified trusts.

S. 1831

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1831, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to allow for periodic automatic reenrollment under qualified automatic contribution arrangements, and for other purposes.

S. 1935

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1935, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to provide for the testing of a community-based palliative care model.

S. 1945

At the request of Mr. JUSTICE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCCORMICK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1945, a bill to prohibit States and local governments from prohibiting or limiting the connection, reconnection, modification, installation, transportation, distribution, or expansion of an energy service based on the type or source of energy to be delivered, and for other purposes.

S. 2019

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2019, a bill to establish a Task Force for Recognizing and Averting Payment Scams, and for other purposes.

S. 2521

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2521, a bill to allow participants in the National Health Service Corps to defer their obligated service in order to receive training in palliative care services.

S. 2761

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2761, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide long-term stability for Medicare beneficiary access to clinical diagnostic laboratory tests by improving the accuracy of, and feasibility of data collection for, the private payor-based fee schedule payment rates applied under the Medicare program for such tests, and for other purposes.

S. 2870

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2870, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to require regulated persons to identify tableting machines and encapsulating machines by serial number.

S. 3048

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3048, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to allow for the use of telehealth in substance use disorder treatment, and for other purposes.

S. 3101

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3101, a bill to prevent citizens of foreign adversarial nations from entering into or enforcing surrogacy contracts in the United States.

S. 3229

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3229, a bill to limit the authority of the President to impose duties on articles of food.

S. 3257

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3257, a bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to revise regulations for certain individuals carrying out aviation activities who disclose a mental health diagnosis or condition, and for other purposes.

S. 3259

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3259, a bill to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to require remaining funds under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program to be used for deficit reduction.

S. 3322

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3322, a bill to amend or repeal certain provisions of Public Law 119–21 that undermine protections and heighten dangers for unaccompanied alien children, and for other purposes.

S. 3335

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCCORMICK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3335, a bill to reestablish the National Coal Council in the Department of Energy to provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Energy on matters relating to coal and the coal industry, and for other purposes.

S. 3376

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3376, a bill to require the

Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration to establish a pilot project to evaluate the effectiveness of technologies to combat cargo theft, and for other purposes.

S. 3456

At the request of Mr. SHEEHY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. KIM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3456, a bill to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a free annual National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass for law enforcement officers and firefighters.

S. 3492

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. ALSOBROOKS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3492, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to require skilled nursing facilities, nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities for the intellectually disabled, and inpatient rehabilitation facilities to permit essential caregivers access during any period in which regular visitation is restricted.

S.J. RES. 98

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. ALSOBROOKS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 98, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against Venezuela that have not been authorized by Congress.

## SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

### SENATE RESOLUTION 574—OBSERVING THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK ON THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL ON JANUARY 6, 2021, AND RECOGNIZING THE ESSENTIAL WORK OF UNITED STATES CAPITOL PERSONNEL, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. SMITH, Mr. REED, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. KING, Mr. KIM, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 574

Whereas, on January 6, 2021, violent insurrectionists, carrying Confederate flags and symbols, ransacked the Capitol, destroying property and vandalizing the building in an attempt to disrupt a joint session of Congress to count the electoral ballots and certify the results of the 2020 presidential election;

Whereas, for nearly 5 hours, those violent attackers used bear spray, flag poles, fire extinguishers, pipes, bats, bricks, and other items to assault law enforcement officers from the United States Capitol Police, the Metropolitan Police Department, and other law enforcement agencies who bravely defended the Capitol that day;

Whereas more than 100 law enforcement officers were injured defending the Capitol, including sustaining traumatic brain injuries, cracked ribs, smashed spinal discs, and stabbings, and the events of that day contributed to the deaths of 5 officers who later passed away;

Whereas, in the days following the January 6 attack, the Senate unanimously passed and Congress rightly awarded Congressional Gold Medals to the United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department, recognizing the many officers who deserve the deep gratitude of the United States for putting their lives on the line to protect the Capitol and the democratic process of the United States;

Whereas Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–103), which was signed into law on March 15, 2022, directing that a plaque be placed on the western front of the United States Capitol to honor the United States Capitol Police and other law enforcement officers who responded on January 6, 2021, yet nearly 4 years after passage, the Speaker of the House has failed to comply with that law and allow the completed plaque to be installed;

Whereas Capitol custodial, janitorial, and maintenance staff were there to pick up the pieces and deserve the distinct honor and gratitude of the United States, as they also put their lives on the line serving the United States on January 6, 2021;

Whereas the work of United States Capitol personnel, including the United States Capitol Police and Capitol custodial, janitorial, and maintenance staff, allowed Members of the Senate to return to the Senate Chamber to continue its constitutional duty to certify the electoral votes and secure the democracy of the United States;

Whereas the United States Capitol Police officers and Capitol custodial, janitorial, and maintenance staff and other essential workers, including food services staff, come to work each day and do their jobs with skill, dedication, and dignity; and

Whereas the work of the Capitol Police and Capitol personnel is too often overlooked, but remains essential to the functioning of the Federal Government: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That the Senate—

(1) expresses gratitude for the United States Capitol Police, the Metropolitan Police Department, personnel of the United States Capitol, and all the responding law enforcement officers for their bravery and service to the United States;

(2) recognizes the strength and commitment of the personnel of the United States Capitol who bring skill and dedication to their work every day and who worked through the night on January 6, 2021, and in the days following, to restore dignity to the United States Capitol and to ensure the democracy of the United States continues to function; and

(3) reaffirms its commitment to protect against efforts to undermine democracy and to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, including defending the legislative branch.

### SENATE RESOLUTION 575—CONGRATULATING THE OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2025 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION MEN'S DIVISION I CROSS COUNTRY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. MULLIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 575

Whereas the 2025 Oklahoma State University men's cross country team (referred to in this preamble as the ''Cowboys''), under the leadership of head coach Dave Smith, won the team's sixth National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as ''NCAA'') Division I championship title;

Whereas the Cowboys won the national men's cross country title for the second time in the last three years, making it the Oklahoma State University's 55th NCAA team championship overall;

Whereas the Cowboys competed in the 2025 NCAA Midwest Regional Championship 10,000-meter race, where they finished first in points, earning an automatic bid to compete for the national title;

Whereas the Cowboys finished the season by winning the Big 12 Cross Country Championship, NCAA Midwest Regional Championship, and the NCAA Division I Cross Country National Championship;

Whereas the Cowboys 24-man cross country team is comprised of talented distance athletes;

Whereas Adisu Guadie, Ryan Schoppe, Will Muirhead, Laban Kipkemboi, Brian Musau, Fouad Messaoudi, and Denis Kipngetich all played a key role in securing the Cowboys a sixth national title;

Whereas Brian Musau was the first of three Cowboys to cross the finish line in the top 10, finishing fourth and beating his previous 10,000 meter record by three seconds, and earned his third cross country All-America honor;

Whereas Fouad Messaoudi and Denis Kipngetich followed suit with fifth and sixth-place finishes, and both Cowboys earned their third cross country All-America honors;

Whereas Adisu Guadie and Ryan Schoppe both earned their first All-American honors; and

Whereas head coach Dave Smith was named Men's National Coach of the Year by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the 2025 Oklahoma State University men's cross country team on its championship season; and

(2) recognizes the 2025 Oklahoma State University men's cross country team for its hard work and dedication to the sport and for the excitement it brings to Oklahoma State University, the State of Oklahoma, and to Cowboy fans everywhere.

## 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 ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 3 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

## PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I first ask unanimous consent that my legislative fellow Molly Sanders, a proud Navy lieutenant, be granted floor privileges for the duration of her fellowship with my office.

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

## DISABLED VETERANS HOUSING SUPPORT ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 224 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 224) to amend section 102(a)(20) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to require the exclusion of service-connected disability compensation when determining whether a person is a person of low and moderate income, a person of low income, or a person of moderate income, and for other purposes.

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. 224) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

## CONGRATULATING THE OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2025 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION MEN'S DIVISION I CROSS COUNTRY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 575, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 575) congratulating the Oklahoma State University men's cross country team for winning the 2025 National Collegiate Athletic Association Men's Division I Cross Country National Championship.

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

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; that the preamble be agreed to; and that 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. 575) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Executive Session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 503; that the nomination be confirmed; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment as Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., sections 601 and 7034:

*To be general*

Lt. Gen. Christopher C. LaNeve

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

## ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 11:15 a.m. on Wednesday, January 7; 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, that Senator WHITEHOUSE or his designee be recognized to make a motion to proceed to Calendar No. 290, S.J. Res. 86 and, if made, the Senate vote on the motion to proceed at 2 p.m.

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

## ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The Senator from Arizona.

## ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. President, today marks 5 years since January 6, the day a violent mob attacked the U.S. Capitol in an effort to overturn a free and fair election and disrupt the peaceful transfer of power. It was not a protest. It was not a misunderstanding. It was an assault on our democracy.

I was there that day, as many of my colleagues were. I remember the pounding on the door of the House Chamber. I remember seeing staff stacking chairs against these doors to stop the mob from entering. I remember helping evacuate the floor as a mob was taking over the Capitol, and I remember looking around thinking about my family and whether we would make it out safely. That day left scars on this institution, on our democracy, and on the men and women who put themselves in harm's way to defend it.

I served in the U.S. Marine Corps. I swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, and I know what it means to take that oath seriously, not just in uniform but in life, which is why I will be offering an amendment to the Defense appropriations bill to ensure that military funeral honors remain reserved for those who have defended the Constitution, not for those who have sought to overthrow it.

Last year, the administration offered military honors for Ashli Babbitt. Ashli Babbitt was not a hero; she was part of the violent mob that tried to overturn our democracy. She ignored repeated lawful orders from Capitol Police. She pushed to the front of the crowd. She helped to smash a window into the Speaker's Lobby and attempted to force her way through a barricaded door while she was armed

with a weapon. She did not die defending her country; she died trying to tear it down.

Military funerals are sacred. They are reserved for those who upheld their oaths, who defended the Constitution and the rule of law. To grant those honors to someone who participated in an attack on this Capitol would dishonor every servicemember who actually served to uphold that oath.

I have seen real sacrifice. I have buried marines who gave their lives in protecting others. That is honor. Those who serve are expected to uphold military standards even after they leave service. When you violate the law and betray your oath, you forfeit the privilege of having military honors.

If we equate the January 6 insurrection with genuine sacrifice, we cheapen everything our servicemembers have done in the defense of this country. We erode trust in our military, and we feed the dangerous lie that January 6 was anything other than a betrayal of our democracy.

Taxpayer money should not be used to provide a military funeral to someone who took part in an attack on this Capitol. This is about accountability. It is about honoring those who have truly served with integrity, and it is about making clear, 5 years later, that we will not rewrite the history of January 6.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and to remember the men and women who have defended this country honorably—those who upheld their oaths, who protected our democracy—and those who continue to serve with courage and sacrifice.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

## ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. President, today is January 6, 2026. We are 6 days into what will surely be a defining year for our Nation. We will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of our country. We will hold midterm elections. Americans will determine the control of Congress.

But while there is much to look forward to on this cold winter night, I find myself transported back 5 years ago to January 6, 2021.

Over the last 5 years, a lot has been shared about the events of that day. It has been distorted, romanticized, even downplayed. But as they say in the play ''Hamilton,'' ''It matters who lives, who dies, who tells your story.''

For me, a lot has changed since 2021. Five years ago, I didn't carry the title I proudly carry today. No, not Senator, although, I am proud. It is grandmother.

Today, I rise here on the Senate floor to tell my story, not just for the history books but for my granddaughter Lennox and all of the young people of this country. It is a story of sorrow, fear, and loss, love, hate, and betrayal. But it is also a story of redemption, bravery, and resilience.

On January 6, I was a Member of the House of Representatives. Joe Biden had just been elected. Kamala Harris was just about to become the first woman and first person of color to serve as our Vice President. I was ready to watch history.

Because we were in the midst of a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, only a few Members of the States contesting the election results could be on the House floor. The rest of us were able to sign up for 1-hour shifts in the House Gallery.

I remember it like it was yesterday. I remember that night choosing what outfit to wear. I remember taking two pairs of boots with me to work. I ended up wearing the more comfortable ones, not knowing I would soon be running, ducking, and crawling on my hands and knees for safety.

I remember signing up for the first shift to watch from the Gallery. There was never a second shift. Not long into the proceedings, I saw the leadership and my colleagues whisked off the House floor. An announcement was made that the Capitol had been breached.

I sat stunned. And as they were taken to safety, I realized they forgot about us trapped up in the Gallery. We could hear the sounds of yelling and banging on the Chamber doors. We ducked for cover and were instructed to get the gas masks out from under our seats—gas masks that we didn't even know existed, that we did not know how to open or use.

And I remember my friend, former Congresswoman Val Demings of Florida grabbing my arm and locking eyes with me and saying: LISA, there is only one who can get us out of this.

And I began to pray.

People say that right before you die, your life flashes right before your eyes. In that moment, I saw history flash before mine. I saw the peaks and valleys of our American story. I saw slavery, reconstruction, Jim Crow. I saw a Trail of Tears, women locking arms marching for the right to vote, two World Wars, 9/11, the murder of George Floyd, and a global pandemic.

I saw the history of our Nation and the path that we had traveled to get us to this moment, and I prayed.

I recalled a piece of Scripture that tells us ''all things work together for the good,'' even the bad, because despite the violence, despite the trauma, despite how close we were to losing our democracy, brave men and women stood up to protect this institution, and we will never ever, ever forget them.

We, the Congress, came back in the wee hours of the morning to do our jobs, to certify the results of a free and fair election. It was a moment of redemption. And redemption is part of what makes America America because whenever we falter, there are ''shoulders to the till'' who push us forward, who remind us of the values upon which our Nation was founded so that we can ''come back stronger.''

I find myself thinking about those foundational values a lot these days, and a specific phrase from the preamble has risen above the rest, that we are to ''secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.''

The Founders used the common phrasing of the time where churches spoke of bestowing blessings of knowledge or faith. We, the United States, would bestow the ''Blessings of Liberty'' and not just for ourselves but for our posterity for future generations, for our children and our children's children, for my granddaughter Lennox.

But ''securing the Blessings of Liberty'' isn't just a promise, it is a call to action because while liberty is a blessing, it requires work to maintain, work that we have strayed away from many times in our history.

Five years after January 6, we are faltering once again. From efforts to dismantle the Department of Education and the EPA to the weaponization of the Department of Justice, to active efforts to strip birthright citizenship, the Federal Government is losing its ability to protect many of the blessings of liberties we have come to expect as Americans.

But this isn't new. We have seen this before. In the late 1800s, formerly enslaved people gained new rights—many Americans did. The 13, 14, 15 Amendments enumerated these rights. But without enforcement, they became no more than ink on paper.

I believe we are repeating history. There are some more focused on tearing down than building up. But here is the thing, you can tear down the East Wing of the White House, you can put your name on buildings, or try to tear down this very Capitol Building itself like was done 5 years ago, but our democracy is built on more than just bricks and marble. Ours is a democracy built on the values of liberty and justice for all, on the premise of freedom, on the ideals of equality and independence, and on our pioneering spirit of innovation.

Ours is a story of redemption. This very room that I am standing in is a testament to our system of governance, a room built by enslaved people where Lennox's grandmother now has the privilege to serve as a duly elected Senator.

When our democracy expands, when it breathes, we inch closer to those divinely inspired ideals of our founding documents and to truly securing the ''Blessings of Liberty.''

This is the story of America I want to pass on to my granddaughter, a story of courage and bright hope for a democracy that endures. But again progress isn't inevitable. It is a choice, and it requires effort.

In 2025, we let the aisle between our parties stretch to a chasm, but it is a new year and it is a new day and we must come together to choose progress to move forward to protect our democracy and patch the holes in our Republic, punctured by the few to spite the many.

As I close, I stand here today as a Senator with gratitude to those who protected us and even gave their lives on that day. And I stand here as Lennox's grandmother with words of wisdom from the late, great Justice Thurgood Marshall, who said:

This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on.

To our posterity, to Lennox, to the pages in this room, to the interns in our office, to the young people inspired to save the world that work on our staff, and to each and every young person in this Nation, I would add two more words to Justice Marshall's quote.

This democracy is yours. Make it ''your own'' because this democracy belongs to you too. So make it your own. Protect it like we did on January 6 and pass it on.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, first of all, I want to acknowledge the wonderful comments by my colleague the Senator from Delaware.

There are three reasons why it is very important we have this discussion:

No. 1, we have got to honor the Capitol Police who were on the receiving end of violent conduct by citizens who stormed the Capitol.

No. 2, it is important that we have accountability for who caused this and to be explicit about who caused this and who was the primary motivator.

And 3, it is extremely important for us not to allow history to be rewritten so what happened then will happen again.

So I want to start most directly with what we all share, and that is an incredible appreciation for the Capitol Police. They showed up that day. These are folks who oftentimes have to commute an hour and a half.

The person who was guarding us—I was in the Gallery of the House of Representatives—had an hour and a half commute each day—to and from work. He had two young kids. And the last thing in the world he wanted to do was to have to use his firearm in order to protect us. But it was clear he was going to do his duty.

We saw so many officers who were in the same place, where they were actually being assaulted by American citizens whose democracy was under assault by American citizens.

I want to express today what I think all of us feel and that is a deep appreciation for the men and women who serve on the Capitol Police force, the Metropolitan Police force, and other authorities who came to the assistance.

Second, it is important for us to be explicit about what happened here and who is accountable. We are having a debate about it. There is an effort to rewrite the history of what happened on January 6, but the fact is indisputable that the primary instigator of January 6 was the President of the United States then and who is the President of the United States now, and that is Donald Trump.

Why do I say that?

He is the one who lost the election. He is the one who created the narrative that it was a stolen election, despite the fact that of all of the challenges, they were largely dismissed by the courts. There was never evidence. There was the use of the Presidential power that he had because he did have and does have many American citizens who believe in him.

With the trust that he had with those everyday Americans, when they heard their leader say that the election was stolen, understandably, they believed him. When he said: Come to Washington; it will be wild, they came to Washington.

When he made his speech at the Ellipse and he said: We will march down to the Capitol, they marched down to the Capitol. When the whole place was falling apart here and he was getting urgent calls from the then-Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY, when he was hearing from others, he was going on to tweet against Mike Pence for not abusing the authority of the Vice President of the United States—by the way, it is not even authority. It is a ceremonial function to certify the election.

It was Donald Trump, who was, in the beginning, the instigator of the lie, the instigator of the call to people around the country who did believe in him to come here and stop the steal and who culminated his efforts with his speech at the Ellipse, telling people to march on the Capitol.

Now, the third reason it is absolutely so important is that history can't just be written, in this case, by the winner. And that is, Donald Trump did win the election. It was a fair-and-square election, despite all those things I just said that are true—not just that I believe are true.

But what happened on that day was shocking to me, and it was shocking to all Americans. Here is why: It is not just—when this happened, I was in the Gallery in the House. I was 30 feet from where the shot was fired. I was standing there witnessing the mob trying to break down the doors that the President enters to give the State of the Union Address and saw the glass and heard the glass shatter.

Even as that was happening, and all of us in the Chamber were bewildered as to what was going to happen, fearful of the violence that was occurring now and how that could escalate, I didn't believe it was happening. I didn't believe it was happening.

I was seeing it. I was hearing it. I was witnessing officers with their guns drawn, but I said to myself: PETER, this is the United States of America. We have a peaceful transfer of power. We win elections. We lose elections, but it is the people of this country who decide who the winner is—not politicians, not a mob attacking the Capitol.

This is a blessing that all of us have been bequeathed by those who came before us, the peaceful transfer of power.

The other aspect of this I couldn't believe was I was witnessing violence—and we have never had violence in the Capitol—in an effort to overturn an election. So two things happened that have never happened: an assault on the Capitol in the effort to overturn the results of an election and thwart the peaceful transfer of power.

That is on Donald Trump. I want to say that explicitly, as uncomfortable as that may be, and whatever policy positions he may have and others and many people may agree with, that attack on the Capitol was inspired, instigated, and accelerated by the explicit actions of the then-President of the United States.

We have to go back to where America began, and that is: We have elections; we do all we can to encourage people to vote; we count the votes; and we accept the outcome as decided by the people of this country.

That is what a democracy has to be about, where the competition is about ideas. It is about aspirational connection to the wonderful Americans that we represent and their confidence that we will serve with the honor, the integrity, and the commitment to their needs, not our preferences, that makes us all so proud to be representatives of the people who sent us here.

So this day is a day of commemoration for those who served us. But it has also got to be a day of accountability and assessment about what happened and how. It can't be whitewashed because the current President has support and was elected. He does. We have accepted that—those of us who didn't vote for him. But that does not whitewash, it doesn't exonerate, it doesn't erase what he did to cause this insurrection. He played the major role in this, and it is forever going to be a stain on that President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, 5 years ago, Donald Trump incited a vicious MAGA mob to storm the U.S. Capitol with one goal: to overturn the results of the 2020 Presidential election.

Fortunately, Trump and his gang of violent extremists failed in their mission to undermine our democracy that day, but make no mistake, Donald Trump continues to bear direct responsibility for this disgraceful attack, an attack that forever scarred our political system and scarred our Nation.

We cannot, and we must not forget, what happened on January 6, 2021. That morning, my colleagues and I started the day in this Chamber, ready to fulfill our constitutional duty to ratify the electoral college votes that would elect Joe Biden as the 46th President of the United States, a peaceful duty undertaken by Congress after every Presidential election since 1789.

But by the afternoon, the peaceful transition of power was obstructed by armed rioters sent to us by Donald Trump. Trump's vicious mob forced its way into the Capitol Building armed with firearms, bear spray, and baseball bats. The rioters beat U.S. Capitol Police officers with flagpoles bearing the American flag itself.

They blinded officers with chemical sprays. They smashed windows and caused millions of dollars in damage to our temple of democracy. They hunted for lawmakers in the Halls of this building. They called for the hanging of Vice President Mike Pence. For several hours, American democracy hung by a thread.

Those people came into this Chamber. They desecrated this Chamber. They went through the desks of the Members of the Senate here. They hung from the walls of this Chamber. They did the same thing to the House of Representatives. They were looking for House and Senate Members that they could capture.

And our Parliamentarians, they actually took the electoral college votes out of the well of the Senate and whisked them off to safety, and we thank the Parliamentarians for their courage that day.

The insurrection, however, resulted in the deaths of several of our officers here and injuries to more than 140 members of law enforcement, who were here trying to protect the Members, trying to protect the building, trying to protect the electoral college votes.

Just this morning, I spoke to a Capitol Police officer who stood shoulder to shoulder with Officer Brian Sicknick on January 6. He was with Officer Sicknick who collapsed in the Capitol after being assaulted by insurrectionists and, tragically, passed away the next day, trying to protect this institution, trying to protect democracy.

And to this day, the brave officers who defended Congress bear the scars, physical and mental, of that dark day. And thanks to these brave officers, the rioters were ultimately pushed out and lawmakers returned that night, as I could sit at this desk after 9 p.m. that night to return so that we could, in fact, ensure that Joe Biden was certified as the President of the United States, as the winner of the 2020 election. And democracy, though bent and battered and bruised, was not broken. That is what we are remembering here this evening.

But today, we confront something that perhaps is even more sinister than the heinous violence that occurred that day. Today, we face the systemic attempt by supposed leaders, by Trump and rightwing MAGA Republicans, to erase and rewrite the truth of January 6, whitewashing the violence of the riot and calling it a ''day of love.''

I invite everyone in this Chamber and across the country to watch the footage of that day, to ask the colleagues and families of those law enforcement officers who were hurt and killed that day if they see January 6, 2021, as a ''day of love.''

On his first day back in office, Trump pardoned the January 6 criminals en masse. He gave amnesty to the insurrectionists, rightfully charged with and legitimately convicted of assaulting law enforcement with dangerous weapons in this building as they protected democracy.

And as one of the first official acts of President Trump, as he came back into power in January of 2025, President Trump chose not to lower costs for the American people or to end Putin's war in Ukraine in 1 day, as he promised, and instead on his first day in office, Donald Trump chose to betray the brave law enforcement officers who protect us day in and day out. He chose to erase the crimes committed that day for his personal political benefit.

He chose to send the chilling message that political violence in his name would not only be condoned, it would be rewarded. Trump and his rightwing MAGA supporters hailed those who carried Confederate flags and symbols of White supremacy as patriots. That is gaslighting on steroids. The true patriots are our brave Capitol Police officers who fought on the frontline and held the line for as long as they possibly could. The true patriots are the Americans that stand up for democracy and speak out against authoritarianism. The true patriots are Americans who refused to bend the knee to wannabe Kings.

Trump will continue to lie about what happened here on January 6, 2021, but the video, the texts, the personal messages from that day do not. We all saw what happened that day. We all heard what happened that day. We cannot and we must never forget what happened that day.

January 6 was not an isolated incident. It was the first page in Trump's authoritarian playbook. It marked the start of Trump's sustained attack on our democracy, on the legitimacy of our elections, on our government institutions. In just the last year, Trump has unlawfully imprisoned international students for their speech. He has exacted revenge on his political rivals. He has deployed troops in our cities to do his bidding. He has ignored court orders. He has engaged in unauthorized and illegal acts of war. And now, Trump and MAGA Republicans have set their sights on the 2026 election.

They are rigging the system in their favor by peddling lies and misinformation, by enacting partisan gerrymandering schemes and by restricting access to the ballot for millions of Americans. Five years later, Donald Trump remains laser focused on sabotaging our free and fair elections in the United States of America. This President has no regard or respect for the Constitution. This President has no regard or respect for the rule of law. This President has no regard or respect for our most sacred values as a nation. He is testing our democracy day in and day out.

And in the face of this historic test, every American must denounce the actions of those who chose to subvert our Constitution on January 6. Every American must condemn those who continue to side with lawlessness and authoritarianism over the basic principles of American democracy, equality, freedom, and the peaceful transfer of power.

Every American must stand up and say no to this wannabe King. On the 250th anniversary of our country's founding, a founding that began in Massachusetts, on Lexington Green and in Concord with ''the shot heard round the world,'' we are once again saying we will stand up for democracy. Our future demands it. We ourselves must summon the courage to fight to protect a democracy that began 250 years ago. We must show the same courage to take on a king, a dictator, a despot in the same way that those minutemen and women 250 years ago displayed their courage.

Those great patriots, they did create a Constitution under which we live here, but that is now under assault. So it is up to us to stand up—and by the way, to redeem the courage of all of those police officers, all those law enforcement officers who gave their lives and their own personal health in order to protect this institution. That is what we remember today, and we must never forget it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

## ANNIVERSARY OF JANUARY 6

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, it was this time of the evening 5 years ago that the Senate had returned here to this Chamber and then gone back across to the House of Representatives to continue counting the ballots from each State, the ballots for the electors, the electoral college, the number of which would determine who would be the next President of the United States.

It is steeped in tradition. It is a complicated system because we don't have a direct election for a President, and it involves these beautiful boxes that would be displayed here on the Senate desk. They have the official statements and envelopes from all the secretaries of state across the country saying: We are validating that this is the slate from our State elections.

And then when the counting would begin in the House, we would parade over to the House of Representatives, and the ballots would start to be opened, one State and then another. And it was that evening when we started with the alphabet, beginning with the As, and when we came to the third State starting with an A, Arizona, there was an objection to validation of the slate.

And it is at that moment that we journeyed back from the House of Representatives here, and those beautiful wooden boxes with straps and buckles were replaced on the table here before the dais of the Senate. And then as we were in that moment of preparing to debate whether or not we would agree or disagree with the acceptance of the slate of electors from Arizona, that is when all hell broke loose. That is when rioters stormed the Senate steps, beat up the police officers, pushed through, and came into the Capitol seeking to stop the peaceful transfer of power, a moment none of us ever expected to witness in our lifetime.

In the course of that riot, more than 170 police officers were injured, and as a consequence of that day, five police officers died.

I would never believe it if I was reading a book, a novel, a fiction story about the Senate that rioters would storm the Capitol. I would never believe that this Chamber would be taken over by those rioters, that their fierce assault with flag poles and fire extinguishers and all sorts of handcrafted weapons would result in the death of a group of officers and more than 170 being injured. But it happened.

The end of that day was a good story because we returned to this Chamber, and we re-paraded over to the House and continued the counting and proceeded to establish who would be the next President of the United States of America.

But it feels particularly important today to honor those who defended this Capitol. It was certainly not within their frame of reference the degree to which that riot would be ginned up. Ginned up are the words of our then-sitting, outgoing President, President Trump, who wanted to interrupt the counting of the ballots, so he could continue to be President, break this chain of peaceful transition that had existed for 200-plus years.

It really was not within the frame of reference of any of us; it was outside the box of what we considered possible, what happened this evening 5 years ago. This is why earlier today, I was shocked to read that the plaque that we had passed a law to commemorate the service of the officers, that that plaque had been cast in bronze, but never actually displayed as required by the law that we adopted in 2022.

Here we are on the 5-year anniversary, and we have never put up this plaque. I have the plaque right here. It is incredibly elegant, a picture of the Capitol, and it says:

''On behalf of a grateful Congress, this plaque honors the extraordinary individuals who bravely protected and defended this symbol''—

The Capitol.

''this symbol of democracy on January 6, 2021. Their heroism will never be forgotten.''

And yet this plaque is forgotten—stuffed into a room, out of sight, never mounted.

How can that possibly be the case? We passed a law that this would be displayed. So, well, this is the night to fix that. This is the night to come, draft a simple resolution, and say: We here in the Senate, Democrats and Republicans together, want to see this plaque up on a wall.

Our leadership on both sides has already agreed to put up the plaque, but to do so in the course as required by the 2022 law requires some agreement from down the hall in the House of Representatives that, for whatever reason, hasn't been secured. But we can at least get it placed up here on the second floor of the Senate, the floor where we sat 5 years ago, the floor where the House sat 5 years ago. The Chambers are on this floor where we had the ballots from the States across the country that contained the electoral college slates.

So I drafted a resolution, and I wanted to be able to get unanimous consent tonight, but I also want it to be bipartisan. And it turns out that sometimes the gears here move more slowly, even on simple tasks, than one would like. But instead of asking for unanimous consent on this resolution tonight, instead, I am going to work with a colleague across the aisle, a colleague, a Republican from North Carolina, THOM TILLIS, who came here earlier today with the same sentiment in his heart that I have in my heart that this plaque needs to be up, needs to be up in the hallway here on the second floor.

And pending resolution of agreement with the House on where it should be, we can put it up here.

So I will read you the resolution, and here it is:

Directing the Architect of the Capitol to prominently display in a publicly accessible location on the second floor of the Senate wing of the United States Capitol, a plaque honoring the members of law enforcement responding on January 6, 2021, until the plaque can be placed in its permanent location; whereas, the United States owes its deepest gratitude to these officers of the United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Colombia, as well as officers from other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and protective entities who valiantly protected the United States Capitol, Members of Congress, and staff on January 6, 2021; whereas, section 214 of division 1 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 directed that a plaque be placed on the western front of the United States Capitol to honor the extraordinary individuals who bravely protected and defended this symbol of democracy, the United States Capitol, on January 6, 2021; and whereas their heroism should never be forgotten, now therefore be it resolved that the Architect of the Capitol shall prominently display the plaque authorized by section 214 of division 1 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 in a publicly accessible location on the second floor of the Senate wing of the United States Capitol until such time as the plaque can be placed at a permanent location on the western front of the United States Capitol.

So my colleague from North Carolina Senator TILLIS and I are carrying this sentiment in our heart; that here on the fifth anniversary, in which so many officers sacrificed so much, sustaining injuries, five sustaining death as a result of what transpired here, this plaque needs to go up, and it needs to go up this week.

But tonight, I am not asking unanimous consent because I want colleagues on both sides of the aisle to be able to do what is appropriate in the U.S. Senate, to be familiar with this, so that they can willingly—and, hopefully, enthusiastically—agree that this will be done.

Let not this representation of our appreciation of the sacrifice of the Capitol Police and other police departments—Federal, State, and local—that came to the defense of this Capitol, let this symbol of our appreciation not sit, stuffed into a back room, but be prominently displayed here on the second floor of the Senate wing of the Capitol because their heroism must never be forgotten.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

## VENEZUELA

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the invasion of Venezuela that the U.S. military carried out last weekend, which will be the subject of a War Powers Resolution vote on Thursday morning.

The news that President Trump had ordered an invasion of Venezuela on Saturday to capture Nicolas Maduro was a shock but not a surprise. Beginning with unauthorized military strikes against unknown persons on boats in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific starting in early September and continuing through the massing of U.S. military assets in the region over the past several months, the likelihood of this happening one day has been obvious to most observers.

In November, I forced a vote on a privileged and bipartisan War Powers Resolution to explicitly prohibit the use of the U.S. military to strike Venezuela without congressional approval. The administration, in my view, has not provided any clear rationale for the military pressure campaign, much less any legal rationale or request for congressional authorization for military action against this sovereign nation.

At that point, all Democrats supported my resolution, and two Republicans did so as well. But there were insufficient votes to pass it.

Many of my colleagues who voted against the resolution at that time told me that they did so because they viewed that President Trump was bluffing, and so they voted no for that reason.

In the aftermath of the invasion with the administration claiming it has the right to seize Venezuelan oil and ''run Venezuela'' under the supervision of the U.S. Secretaries of Defense and State, and with the President threatening to put boots on the ground and even conduct additional strikes to control the country, we can now agree this was no bluff.

After the administration actions over the weekend, which resulted in several injuries to U.S. servicemembers, and we are praying for them and their families for their recovery, Congress needs to tell the American public where it stands. And so on Thursday morning, I will, again, ask my colleagues to vote on a resolution specifying that we shouldn't wage military action within or against Venezuela unless Congress votes to authorize it.

We will have to vote later this week, and there will be a floor block of an hour tomorrow where a number of Senators are scheduled to speak briefly. But I wanted, for personal reasons, to speak at some length tonight about why this is such an important vote for the Senate, for the United States, and for the world.

Speaking as the lead Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee's Western Hemisphere Panel, before the Presiding Officer, who is the chairman of that panel, I know far too well the despotic nature of the Maduro rule in Venezuela, following a similarly despotic rule by Hugo Chavez. I have condemned the Maduro rule for years. I have visited the Venezuelan border in Cocuta, Colombia, and interviewed people exiting the country, from children to senior citizens leaving behind everything they have known because of this despotism.

And together with all of my colleagues in the Senate, I have advocated forcefully for a democratic transition for the electoral malfeasance of the last election where Maduro claimed victory when that was clearly not the case, and I have supported the Nobel Prize winner Maria Corina Machado's efforts, with others, to bring democracy to Venezuela.

So this discussion, this invasion, this vote is not about whether Maduro is a bad guy. He is. But here is the thing: I also speak as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, as a military dad, and as a former missionary in Latin America. The use or misuse of American troops is very personal to me, and the role that the United States plays in Latin America has been a lifelong field of both study and lived experience.

Mr. President, I know you served as a missionary in Taiwan.

I was a 21-year-old first-year student at Harvard Law School when I decided I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life and that I needed to take a year away from my studies to figure it out. So I wrote a letter to Jesuit missionaries working in Honduras that had a connection to the high school I attended in Kansas City, and I offered to take a year off school and come volunteer with them.

That is how I found myself in El Progreso, Honduras, in the intense heat in early September of 1980, more than 45 years ago. And during that academic year, I ran a small technical school, teaching teenage boys carpentry and welding. I was a Harvard Law student, but that meant nothing there. But being the son of an ironworker who ran a welding shop, now that was a vocation that the Jesuit missionaries could put to use during my time in Honduras.

I will say that year, from September of 1980 until, essentially, May 1981, was the pivotal year in my life. It put me on a path to serve others. As a civil rights lawyer in Richmond, VA—the capital of the Confederacy—for 18 years and as an elected official for 30 years and counting that year in Honduras, that formation year, that fortified my Catholic faith. It forged my fluency in Spanish. It taught me so many lessons about myself, my country, and the circumstances under which so many people live around this world in settings far less comfortable than what I had been used to growing up. I have drawn on those lessons from that time in Honduras every day for the last 45 years.

The families and students that I worked with showed me how to live with grace under the most challenging conditions. And the Jesuit missionaries—Brother Jaime, Father Patricio, Father Ramon, and others—showed me how serving other people is the path to happiness. I can never repay—never repay—the good they did for me, both my students and their families and these missionaries. But my life has been an attempt to do so ever since.

Now, the lessons of my time in Honduras were not all pleasant. When I was there, Honduras was a military dictatorship, and it was also one of the poorest countries in the Americas, second poorest next to Haiti. People prayed—prayed—for the day when they might have the ability to choose their own leaders, and they also hoped that they might have a future with a path out of the grinding poverty that surrounded them.

But I learned, as a naive 21-year-old, much to my sorrow, of the many instances in which misery throughout the region was spread by actions—sometimes unintentional but sometimes intentional—of the United States.

When I was in Honduras, the military dictatorship there suppressed political opposition and dissent, and it was supported by the United States in doing so. A long history of U.S. intervention in Honduras to protect the interests of two American fruit companies has left a legacy of corruption and underdevelopment whose consequences are still felt today, 45 years later.

Toward the end of my year in Honduras, the United States began secretly funding a band of rebels in the southern part of the country to wage destabilizing military action against the Government of neighboring Nicaragua, which had been ruled for decades by the U.S.-backed Somoza family dictatorship until it was overthrown in 1979.

Another neighbor just dozens of miles away, maybe 50 miles away—El Salvador—was in the midst of a devastating civil war in which a rightwing government used U.S.-trained military and security personnel to murder civilians, including Catholic bishop Oscar Romero, a few months before I arrived, and four American missionaries—Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan—a few months after I arrived. The civil war in El Salvador led to more than 65,000 civilian deaths.

Yet another neighbor not that far away, Guatemala, had a similar longstanding civil war sadly initiated after the United States engineered the overthrow of a popularly elected government in 1954. That war lasted for nearly 40 years, with as many as 200,000 deaths and nearly a million refugees chased from their homes by the civil war.

The Presiding Officer can think about his time as a young person as a missionary, and he can imagine. This was shocking to me. I had just gone to Honduras to teach carpentry and welding, but the conflicts I described were at my doorstep, with refugees from violence in neighboring countries flooding into Honduras and the murders of bishops, priests, and nuns spreading fear among the Catholic missionaries whom I worked with. And I was confronted with this very painful question: Why was the United States—my country, a nation that I loved—backing military dictatorships and death squads and the plotting of the overthrows of democratically elected governments at the expense of poor people who were just struggling so hard to feed their families?

I came home from that experience a changed person—fortified in my faith life, energized to serve others with my life, but also deeply concerned about the role that the United States was playing in Latin America. This part of our history—the part that I have given, the Reader's Digest version here in the last few minutes—isn't taught a lot at home because we have some reason to be ashamed of it, but it is remembered very clearly and very well throughout Latin America. They view a U.S. military invasion of a sovereign nation today to seize its oil as a sinister repeat of decades, generations, and even centuries of a painful past.

The Trump administration released a National Security Strategy in early December—barely more than a month ago—and it announced a clear plan for the Americas. I am going to quote from it:

> After years of neglect, the United States will reassert and enforce the Monroe Doctrine to restore American preeminence in the Western Hemisphere and to protect our homeland and our access to key geographies throughout the region.

The strategy prioritizes the Western Hemisphere first among all regions of the world, and I am going to get to a complement of that toward the end of my comments.

But let's talk about the Monroe Doctrine because that is not so well-known, and when the President and his

team say that we want to reassert the Monroe Doctrine, it is really important to discuss what that is.

The Monroe Doctrine goes all the way back to the 1820s. In that doctrine, Virginian President James Monroe and his Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, declared the Americas were now off-limits to European colonization or interference. Remember, most nations in the Americas had had a prehistory after their indigenous history of European colonization. So the Monroe Doctrine was like, you know, a ''No Trespassing'' sign or a ''Do Not Disturb'' sign, where America said the Americas would now be off-limits to European colonization or interference.

While it was a foreign policy doctrine about the Americas, it wasn't fundamentally about building good relationships with nations in the Americas. Rather, it was about keeping Europe away. Initially, Latin American nations appreciated it. They appreciated the United States clearly stating that European colonizers could no longer have free rein to continue the past practices that had used the Americas as a region for plunder or slavery. But over the years, after the initial declaration in the 1820s, Latin American leaders also came to see that the Monroe Doctrine had evolved to being more about American dominance than American partnership.

In the early 1900s, President Teddy Roosevelt expanded the doctrine to also assert the right of the United States to intervene in the domestic politics of all nations in the region. It was called the Roosevelt Corollary, and it declared that economic challenges in Venezuela threatened the nation's economy—the economy of Venezuela—thereby increasing the likelihood of its default on international debts.

How ironic that Venezuela thus became the first use of the Monroe Doctrine to justify U.S. intervention into another nation's domestic affairs rather than just, as it had been previously, a defensive doctrine to ward off European interference. The people of Venezuela know this history very, very well even if Americans have largely forgotten it. The reinterpretation of the Monroe Doctrine to now allow the U.S. intervention led to escalating U.S. military intervention in the region. Colombia, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic all were affected in the first half of the 20th century. During World War II, the United States invoked the Monroe Doctrine to occupy Greenland once Germany occupied Denmark.

In more recent years, under the Monroe Doctrine and its corollaries, President Eisenhower authorized U.S. assistance for the overthrow of a democratically elected Government in Guatemala and for a coup against the Government of Brazil. President Kennedy, as we know, authorized a U.S.-backed invasion of Cuba. President Johnson authorized U.S. troops to invade the Dominican Republic. President Nixon authorized U.S. support to assist the toppling of the democratically elected Government of Chile. President Reagan secretly funded the Contra war against Nicaragua and also authorized an invasion of Grenada, and the first President Bush authorized the invasion of Panama.

You will notice that I mention both Democratic and Republican Presidents. The Monroe Doctrine was not the fault of one party or the other. It was an attitude of the United States that stretched for nearly 200 years that we had the right to interfere with and dominate the politics of nations in our region.

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to a few decades of relative calm in the relations of the United States and its neighbors, and we turned our attention to the Global War on Terror. But now, after many years when the phrase ''Monroe Doctrine,'' I am sure, was not even mentioned once on the floor of the U.S. Senate, President Trump now pledges to revitalize the doctrine of American dominance in the hemisphere and go even further.

In his own words, ''[T]he Monroe Doctrine is a big deal, but we've superseded it by a lot, by a real lot. They now call it the Donroe Doctrine.''

Now, I am not sure which marketing department came up with the name ''Donroe Doctrine.'' It sounds sort of comical, but it is anything but humorous to Latin American nations whose history books are filled with example after example of the United States using our military to interfere in their domestic politics.

And that brings us to President Trump's invasion of Venezuela to arrest and depose its de facto leader and seize its oil.

Again, Nicolas Maduro was an incompetent and barbaric dictator who stole the last election just less than 2 years ago, which he clearly lost by every internal and international count, and he has presided over the economic collapse of a nation that was recently one of the most prosperous countries in the entire region, but multiple things can be true.

It is also true that President Trump's haphazard initiation of a unilateral war against the country of Venezuela is, in my view, a mistake of historic proportions that will make our country and our region and our world less secure. I view this invasion in the same way that many warned about the U.S. involvement in the war in Vietnam or in the initiation of the war in Iraq in terms of the potential negative consequences that it will likely deliver.

I hope to convince my colleagues, whether they believe the war is a good or a bad idea, to at least stand up and support the constitutional requirement that the United States shouldn't be waging a war without a vote of Congress.

I assert that the military action against Venezuela is illegal, is confusing in its true motives, is harmful to U.S. interests in the region, is a dangerous precedent if when followed by our adversaries is unnecessarily and suspiciously secret, is a frightening return to forever wars, is unpopular, and, finally, is profoundly disrespectful to U.S. troops.

First, the war is illegal. As I have argued on the floor of this body since I came here in 2013 and as I have asserted face-to-face with Presidents of both parties, only Congress can declare war or, in the modern phrase contained in the 1973 War Powers Resolution, ''authorize the use of military force in hostilities.'' That legislation was passed in response to the abuses of President Nixon both initiating war without notice to Congress, and it builds off one of the clearest parts of the Constitution: Congress and only Congress initiates war, and once initiated, the President and only the President as Commander in Chief is charged with the duty to execute the declared war.

The text of the Constitution is so clear. The Constitution has some phrases that are superclear: that you have got to be 35 years old to be President. Then there are other phrases that are a little vague. What is ''due process of law''? What is ''cruel and unusual punishment''? So you can put the phrases of the Constitution on a spectrum between extremely clear and somewhat ambiguous to be determined under the standards of the time.

When it comes to warmaking, the Founders of this Nation were very, very clear, and the meaning of the Constitution is not just in the text of that document. It was additionally clarified by the notes taken during the debate at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, by the Federalist Papers that were written by those involved in drafting the Constitution, and in correspondence between the Founders who were there which described what they were trying to accomplish. Congress declares war. The President executes upon that declaration.

Now, the Presiding Officer knows that the narrow exception has already been understood. The President as Commander in Chief has the power and the duty to defend the Nation for ongoing or imminent attack without asking for prior congressional approval, but any war that is offensive in nature or that would be sustained beyond that initial point of self-defense needs congressional authorization.

This administration has advanced no credible legal basis, under either American or international law, to invade Venezuela, to depose its leadership, to seize its oil, to run its country. There is a legal analysis issued by the administration to justify military strikes against boats in international waters. The administration has been unwilling—in a very rare instance—has been unwilling to share that rationale publicly. And I know why because I have read it. It is laughably weak, and the administration knows this.

As evidence of the administration's own insecurity about its own legal rationale, in October, the U.S. military carried out a strike against a submersible in international waters, and there were two survivors. The U.S. having slaughtered struggling survivors in September made a different decision in October to rescue the two survivors.

Well, they were narcotraffickers, so we would bring them to court, right? No. After rescuing survivors, the U.S. military returned these alleged narcotraffickers to their own countries for release rather than prosecuting them. Why? Because the U.S. understood that the flimsy legal rationale allowing targeting these individuals would not stand up if scrutinized in an American court.

While I am not at liberty to share the many weaknesses of the classified legal opinion, it does not violate any rule of classification to say what is not in the opinion—what is not in that 40-page legal document. There is nothing whatsoever about the legal rationale in that document that would allow for military action against the sovereign nation of Venezuela or any sovereign nation.

Now, the assertion of the administration that this is not military action but merely a law enforcement operation doesn't pass the smell test, and it doesn't pass the laugh test. The coordinated military mission—massing of ships and aircraft, deployment of forces on land, dropping of bombs, and seizures of a country's main political leader—is the very definition of hostilities.

The Saturday operation alone involved more than 150 aircraft—fighters, bombers, surveillance platforms, drones, refueling tankers—launched from at least 20 air bases across the Western Hemisphere. The killing of untold Venezuelan civilian and military personnel—the number is 80 and climbing by the U.S. Armed Forces—is hostilities. American troops were wounded in this invasion. That is the essence of hostilities.

Deep concerns about the legality of this military operation are widespread not only in this Chamber, but in the Pentagon, where leaders have been forced into retirement for raising questions about the legality of these actions among the American public and among American allies, some of whom have stopped sharing intelligence with the United States in these operations because they do not believe they are lawful. Unless and until the invasion of Venezuela and the ongoing operation to seize its oil and run its government are authorized by Congress, it is illegal.

Second, the reason for this war is deeply confusing to the American public because of the mixed messages sent by the administration. If you listen to Secretary Rubio, it is about countering narcotrafficking. If you listen to other officials, it is about changing the Venezuelan regime. If you listen to President Trump, it is about seizing oil or carrying out a ''Donroe Doctrine'' that allows the U.S. military to smash and grab anything we want anywhere in the hemisphere.

Why can't the administration get its story straight? We know narcotrafficking is a horrible scourge responsible for massive deaths in the United States and elsewhere, but President Trump has shown, as I have earlier discussed on the floor of the Senate, by the pardons of narcotraffickers Ross Ulbricht and Juan Orlando Hernandez, that he cares little about narcotrafficking.

The charges handed down against Nicolas Maduro—if you read the charging document—are eerily similar—eerily similar—to the same charges that were successfully prosecuted beginning in Donald Trump's first term when the case initiated against Honduran former President Hernandez, using his position as a head of state to manage a massive operation smuggling narcotics into the United States. But President Trump recently pardoned Hernandez in a shocking move. That proves that fighting narcotrafficking is not the goal here.

The likely goal is President Trump's desire to seize control of Venezuela's oil reserves. That explains his admission that while he chose not to notify Congress of the invasion in advance, he did disclose his war intent to his friends at American oil and gas companies. This is a war for plunder to benefit campaign contributors, and that explains why the President did not want to seek congressional authorization for this invasion and occupation.

As the father of a marine, what American parent wants to send their son or daughter to war risking injury and death to seize the oil of another nation on behalf of billionaire oil companies?

Third, this attack endangers American influence in the region by pushing nations away from the United States and toward China. We have seen in recent years, in the Foreign Relations Committee and others, how China has ramped up investments in the Americas. They have taken advantage of our focus in the Middle East to expand their influence in our neighborhood.

Many of the Chinese investments are hollow—even predatory—and as I have dialogued with heads of state throughout the Americas, one thing they often say to me is: We would rather deal with you guys than China, but they are offering help, and you are usually nowhere to be found.

But faced with the choice between a Chinese offer of partnership of some doubtfulness and an American ''Donroe Doctrine'' that asserts dominance, no self-respecting sovereign nation will knuckle under and agree to be subservient. The United States has slashed USAID and other humanitarian and civil society programming in the region. We have imposed massive tariffs that hurt the American economy but also hurt the economies of our American neighbors.

And now, after slashing humanitarian programs and after imposing tariffs, we assert the right to invade at will to seize the assets of sovereign nations in the Americas. We will find ourselves—if we pursue this path—with less and less influence in the region closest to our shores, and our chief adversary is likely to grow stronger.

As evidence of this, the Chinese Government put out a Latin America strategy document just last month, focusing on how American overreach and dominance is opening up opportunities for China in the Americas. This invasion plays right into China's hands.

Another downside of the attack is this: Increased chaos and instability always leads to more migration. Attacking Venezuela and, as President Trump has suggested, other nations in the region is likely to lead to even more desperate people crossing borders to immigrate, including to the United States. This has happened throughout history and will only continue and accelerate if the United States continues to carry out these military operations.

Fourth, the invasion of Venezuela by American troops to topple its leadership and seize its oil sets a dangerous precedent in the world that will be used by power-hungry dictators who are adversaries of the United States. If the U.S. can invade Venezuela, what is wrong with Russia invading Ukraine? What is wrong with China invading Taiwan? If the U.S. gets to dominate the Western Hemisphere, what is wrong with Iran trying to dominate Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen? If we can interfere to destabilize Venezuela's leadership, is it acceptable for foreign nations to interfere without consequence in American domestic politics?

The entire international legal order that the U.S. has led in the construction since World War II has been based on respect for the sovereignty of nations and the objection of those who would violate that principle. That respect has worked wonders for the U.S. economy and our national security, and it has also helped advance our interests across the world. The United States—as I have indicated—we have not been perfect in upholding the principle—and others certainly haven't either—but the principle is worth upholding.

The U.S. plays a leadership role for good or bad by our actions. There is no nation whose leadership example is as closely watched and followed as the U.S. example. The invasion of Venezuela under these circumstances has given a green light to more invasions by others in a way that is bad for the world and will harm U.S. interests as well.

Fifth, the invasion of Venezuela and the boat strikes preceding it have been suspiciously secret, with critical details shielded by public scrutiny by either Congress or the American public. The first boat strike occurred on September 2. So we are now more than 4

months into this operation, close to 200 people have been killed in dozens of strikes on open waters and the Venezuelan invasion.

American troops have been injured. The administration has removed the head of state, intends to seize its oil assets, proclaim that we will run Venezuela for an indeterminate future, weighed in on who should and shouldn't be entrusted with leading the Venezuelan Government. And yet there has not been a single public hearing—not been a single public hearing—in the House or Senate about this major military campaign. This is shocking. The administration has only been willing to offer limited information on occasion to Members in classified settings. It has offered next to nothing to the American people.

Because I can review material in classified settings, I know that the legal rationale for the boat strikes is deeply inadequate and flawed. But I can't fully explain why, even to Virginians whose kids are deployed in this military operation, because the rationale is only available to a limited number of Members in a classified setting.

I have had sessions in the SCIF about the targeting criteria for who gets bombed in international waters. And I would say that those criteria contain at least one critical flaw that I believe would be shocking to the American public, but I can't describe it because I only know about it from review of classified material.

The United States, at the President's say-so, has declared war against a number of groups. I can't say what the number is, and I can't say who the groups are because that has never been made public and it has only been made available in classified settings.

That is pretty important because, when the U.S. declares war publicly against an enemy, those connected to ISIS or al-Qaida are on notice that if they act with those groups, the U.S. has put a military target on them.

But if we declare war against a secret list of organizations whose identity can only be known by a tiny handful of people who have privileges to visit a classified facility in the U.S. Capitol, then many people are carrying out activities in their lives without knowing—without any knowledge—that the U.S. has put a target on them and rendered them eligible for attack.

The Presiding Officer may have seen this as well. I have seen the video of America striking shipwrecked sailors on September 2, who didn't even know that President Trump had placed them on a secret list to be targeted. But I can't fully describe it because the administration, while proudly and immediately displaying the video of the first strike on that boat, the strike that destroyed their ship, chose to hide the fact of that second strike and hide the video of the murder of those two shipwrecked sailors, even from Congress, and from the American public for nearly 2 months and continues to hide that shocking evidence from public scrutiny, which raises the question: If the administration believes this cause is so righteous, is so legal, is so necessary, is so in the national interest, what is it afraid of?

Put the facts before Congress and the American public in a public setting where they can be subjected to the questions that should precede U.S. involvement in a military campaign of this kind.

And if my colleagues in this body believe these actions are justified, well, what are they afraid of? Why haven't the Armed Services or Foreign Relations or Intelligence committees in either House, under the Republican leadership of those committees, called for even a single public hearing on this important matter?

They have been repeatedly asked to do so. They have been repeatedly urged to do so and have, thus far, resisted.

But America and Americans shouldn't tolerate a war waged in the dark in which oil executives get better notice of our military actions than Members of Congress or everyday Americans.

Sixth, the invasion of Venezuela represents a dangerous slide to the kind of forever wars, or permanent war footing, that this President specifically campaigned against. In the first year of his second term in office, President Trump has carried out unilateral and unauthorized military hostilities against or within Iran, Nigeria, Venezuela, and boats in international waters.

And the Venezuela invasion comes with a pledge to occupy the country, seize its oil, for some indeterminate future. But that is not all. The President has also strongly suggested the possibility of using the American military against other nations: Cuba, Mexico, Colombia, Panama, Greenland, and our NATO ally Denmark. Where does this end? If this President, or any President, can wage war on multiple continents in secret and without congressional notice, consultation, debate, or vote, we will have transformed the United States from the world's chief diplomat—an important position that we achieved when President Teddy Roosevelt won the Nobel Peace Prize for brokering the end of the Russo-Japanese War.

Since that time, the United States has been viewed as the chief diplomatic nation in the world. But if we can now wage war on Presidential say-so in secret, without congressional authorization, anywhere in the world, we will have transformed the United States from the world's chief diplomat into the world's chief bully. Is that what the American people want?

Seventh, the invasion of Venezuela without congressional authorization is deeply unpopular in Virginia and the Nation. Polling suggests that even after the exemplary performance of American troops, 63 percent of Americans do not believe the United States should have invaded Venezuela without congressional approval.

I have had conversations around Virginia, a very pro-military State, about this very topic, and in those conversations what I have noticed is this: The opposition to war in Venezuela without congressional authorization is not about article I versus article II powers; it is not about a constitutional abstraction or theory of government; it is about an instinctive wisdom among the American people that says war should be a last resort, and it shouldn't be entered into upon the say-so of one person—it is too big a decision for one person—but instead should only proceed after careful deliberation by a President and by the people's elected Congress.

And let's be clear, the American people are not asking for more wars right now. They are telling us that housing costs too much, that food costs too much, that healthcare costs too much, that childcare costs too much, that energy costs too much. They want us to fix the American economy, stop the tariffs and the chaos, make everyday life better for them.

This endless foreign adventurism, which was precisely what President Trump campaigned against, is very likely helping his own pockets and helping out oil companies and cronies and donors, but it is doing nothing for everyday folks. Instead, they are seeing higher costs, fewer jobs, slower growth, and a distracted President focused on air strikes and ballrooms.

It is long past time for the President and all of us to work on what he promised as a candidate instead of dismissing everyday folks' affordability concerns as a hoax.

Finally, the invasion of Venezuela and threats of unilateral military action against others is profoundly disrespectful of our Nation's military. Our troops aren't a palace guard to be used by a President in chaotic ways around the globe or deployed against Americans at home. That is not what they are for.

The juvenile decision to rebrand the Department of Defense as the Department of War, completely without legal authority and sure to be abandoned as soon as this administration exits the stage, sends a loud message to our troops and their families. People like my oldest son volunteer to serve because they love this country and they want to defend it against all enemies, foreign and domestic. They take that oath just as we do.

People of integrity don't see military service as measured by how much they wage war against others; they see it as a patriotic commitment to defend the United States and our allies. And a nation committed to ill-conceived and secretive wars, waged without adequate debate and consideration, will see over time a decreased willingness to serve by those whom we would most welcome as our military leadership.

I am not aware of any military service in Donald Trump's family. I wish he

would come to Virginia and talk to military families about what it means to wonder whether your kid or your spouse might get sent to war tomorrow. I have had those conversations with Virginians, both as Governor, where I was the titular commander of the Virginia Guard as we deployed thousands and thousands to Iraq and Afghanistan between 2006 and 2010, and, in the years since, family members repeatedly deployed during the 20-year global war on terror. These families are now hoping for some respite.

I have had these conversations with Virginians serving on warships in the Red Sea while getting fired on by Houthi militias, and I have had these conversations with Virginians whose families are part of the military assets now deployed in the Caribbean and Pacific and poised to strike Venezuela and other Latin American nations.

Just at church recently, somebody came up to me and said: Don't let this President send my kid to war.

Our military signs up for a tough job. When they volunteer in this all-volunteer military, they are signing up for a tough job, and they are always ready to do it. And when we ask them to do it, they always do it in ways that are so impressive. But they deeply want civilian leadership of this Nation to be wise in decision-making about how to use military force, wise when making the decision about when or how to put their lives on the line. And wise decision-making requires careful deliberation and debate, not impulsive action such as this Venezuelan invasion, where we now find it hard to answer even the most basic questions about what comes next: How long will we be there? What is the goal? Who will be in charge?

If we can't answer those questions, do we have a right to order these young men and women to risk their lives in military actions without a real plan?

Let me conclude with a positive message—positive message—about President Trump's national security strategy and a final plea to my Senate colleagues. I believe that this Trump national security strategy, which I believe was issued on the first Thursday in December, is right in placing the Americas as the top priority. If you read both the introduction and then the portions of the strategy that really get into the regions of the world, this is the only strategy that has been produced during the entire time in the Senate that puts the Americas and the Western Hemisphere as item No. 1, rather than the last item. And I think the President is right, and I applaud him and his team because we have ignored our own neighborhood for so long—for so long. And when we have focused on it, it has usually been more about keeping other nations away than it has been about building the partnerships that will really strengthen the Americas.

The Trump administration's decision to make the Americas the top priority makes it unique among any recent administration that I have been familiar with, and if it is done correctly, I believe it offers us a great path forward to deepen the ties among the more than 1 billion people who are Americans—North, South, or Central—who live in this hemisphere.

And as the chair and ranking member of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, I say getting this right is critical to American well-being because today certainly, but even going forward, how can we match up economically with nations like China or India, each with more than a billion citizens?

The productivity of the more than 340 million Americans is second to none, but at some point—at some point—the scale of our chief competitors becomes really hard for us to match. But if you think about the Americas with 1-plus billion and if we strengthen ties throughout the Americas—let's call it an ''Americas First'' policy—strengthening ties in security and education and trade and diplomacy and humanitarian assistance and democracy promotion, we can more than match the might of the world's most populous countries, even our fiercest competitors like China.

But we won't achieve it—we won't achieve it—through dominance or invasion. We have tried it before. We tried it for 200 years, and it hasn't worked. It produces hostility, suspicion, resistance. It chases nations that could be friends, that should be friends, into the arms of adversaries. But we can achieve much through respectful partnerships and by giving the attention to our America neighbors that we have often reserved solely for nations in Europe or the Middle East.

We have tried throughout our history this positive approach on brief occasions—FDR's Good Neighbor Policy, President Kennedy's Alliance for Progress—but we have too often tried it for a short period and then lapsed back into a failed Monroe Doctrine mindset.

President Trump's instinct to prioritize the Americas is the right one; it is the right one. But doing it the right way and not repeating the mistakes of the past is the key to making it a success.

And finally, a plea to my Senate colleagues: The vote we will have Thursday on our bipartisan resolution to say no to war in Venezuela without congressional authorization is actually a vote about many things. It is a short resolution, like a page and a half, but it is a vote about many things. It is about Venezuela. It is about war. It is about the use of U.S. troops. It is about our complicated history in the region. It is about the example we set and our position in the world. But it is also, ultimately, about what it is to be a U.S. Senator.

In recent months, this body has rejected my resolutions saying that the Senate should have a role, if we go to war, with Iran or Venezuela or launch strikes on unknown boats in international waters.

I have put those votes on the table, and we have had votes on them. And the Senate has opposed my resolutions. The Senate has actually voted in favor of its own irrelevance, saying that it didn't need to be consulted about war.

We have the opportunity to change this. We have the opportunity to say forcefully: Mr. President, you are the article II Commander in Chief of this country, and we want you to inhabit every square centimeter of power the Constitution gives you. But we are the article I branch, and the Constitution demands that you need to consult us before taking America to war.

So cast a vote in accordance with the Constitution, and that honors the relevance of the U.S. Senate. If you believe that a war to topple the Venezuelan Government and seize its oil is justified, you should be willing to vote to support it. You should be willing to introduce an authorization for use of military force, put it on the floor, and advocate for it. And if you don't believe a war against Venezuela is a good idea—as I don't—you should be willing to vote against it. But don't outsource this power, carefully vested in the article I branch by our Founders, to this President or to any President.

We were all sent here for a reason. We were all sent here to show courage. We were sent here to stand up for our constituents and our troops and the Constitution, and there is no more important power for Congress to maintain than the power to send our sons and daughters into war.

I yield the floor.

## ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11:15 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 11:15 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:32 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 11:15 a.m.

## CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate January 6, 2026:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

SARA BAILEY, OF TEXAS, TO BE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 7034:

*To be general*

LT. GEN. CHRISTOPHER C. LANEVE

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

JOSHUA SIMMONS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.