

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 10, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 128 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Table listing Senators who voted 'yea' for the amendment, including Alexander, Baldwin, Barrasso, Bennet, Blumenthal, Blunt, Booker, Brown, Burr, Cantwell, Capito, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Collins, Coons, Corker, Cornyn, Cortez Masto, Cotton, Crapo, Cruz, Daines, Donnelly, Durbin, Enzi, Ernst, Fischer, and Flake.

NAYS—10

Table listing Senators who voted 'nay' for the amendment, including Feinstein, Gillibrand, Harris, and Lee.

NOT VOTING—5

Table listing Senators who did not vote, including Boozman, Cassidy, Duckworth, and McCain.

The bill (H.R. 5515), as amended, was passed.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 449, H.R. 5895, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Jerry Moran, Mike Rounds, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Marco Rubio, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis, John Thune, Lisa Murkowski, Richard Burr, Roger F. Wicker.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 5895, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 92, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 129 Leg.]

YEAS—92

Table listing Senators who voted 'yea' for the cloture motion, including Alexander, Baldwin, Barrasso, Bennet, Blumenthal, Blunt, Booker, Brown, Burr, Cantwell, Capito, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Collins, Coons, Corker, Cornyn, Cortez Masto, Cotton, Crapo, Cruz, Daines, Donnelly, Durbin, Enzi, Ernst, Feinstein, Fischer, Flake, Gardner, Graham, Grassley, Harris, Hassan, Hatch, Heinrich, Heitkamp, Heller, Hirono, Hoeven, Hyde-Smith, Inhofe, Isakson, Johnson, Jones, Kaine, Kennedy, King, Klobuchar, Lankford, Leahy, Lee, Manchin, McCaskill, McConnell, Menendez, Moran, Murkowski, Murphy, and Murray.

NAYS—3

Table listing Senators who voted 'nay' for the cloture motion, including Gillibrand, Markey, and Warren.

NOT VOTING—5

Table listing Senators who did not vote, including Boozman, Cassidy, Duckworth, and McCain.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 92, the nays are 3.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

ENERGY AND WATER, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AND MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 449, H.R. 5895, a bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

ENERGY AND WATER, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AND MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5895) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

AMENDMENT NO. 2910

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I call up the substitute amendment, No. 2910.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alabama [Mr. SHELBY] proposes an amendment numbered 2910.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

AMENDMENT NO. 2911 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2910

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2911.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Tennessee [Mr. ALEXANDER] proposes an amendment numbered 2911 to amendment No. 2910.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To make a technical correction)

On page 37, line 19, strike "\$220,000,000" and insert "\$222,142,000".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, tomorrow the distinguished Senator from Alabama, Mr. SHELBY, and the distinguished Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, will lead us in the beginning of the Senate's appropriations process for the year that begins this October 2018. This is also the best opportunity we have had in a long time to do the appropriations process properly.

For the last several years, we have finished and reported our 12 bills out of the Appropriations Committee on which about one-third of the Senate sits. We have reported those bills to the Senate floor. We have usually done that with bipartisan support and often unanimously. This is no small task.

For example, in our Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, which I chair and which the Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, is the vice chair, this year we have had three hearings. We have received comments from 83 Members of the Senate. We have considered their comments. We considered our bill in a subcommittee markup, and then we approved the bill 30 to 1 in the Appropriations Committee on May 24. We are on pace this year, thanks to the leadership of Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY, to take those same steps with all 12 appropriations bills.

The Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, which has not been able to get bipartisan agreement since fiscal year 2010, was able to reach an agreement this year. So I thank Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY, and I thank Senator MCCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER, the Democratic and Republican leaders, for creating an environment in which all of this is possible.

We are saying to all Members of the Senate, we would like for the appropriations bills to be considered by more than one-third of the Senators. We know we have considered your thoughts in our committee process. We have done that, and we have done that carefully, but to the extent Senators want to, we ought to be able to consider relevant amendments—amendments that have something to do with the bill on the floor of the Senate.

So the key now is whether we know how to consider amendments, whether we can remember how to consider, talk

about, agree to time agreements, and then vote on amendments; how we can occasionally show restraint and not offer an amendment that would blow up the whole bill, keeping in mind that our goal is to pass an appropriations bill—literally a series of appropriations bills—that will spend more than \$1 trillion of the taxpayers' money in the year that begins October 2018.

Now, too often, once we have gotten on the Senate floor in this shape, we have gotten ourselves into this situation: Senators blocking other Senators' amendments—which Senators can do—but if Senators block other Senators' amendments and the tit for tat gets going back and forth, then no amendments are considered, and we are back in a situation where only the 31 Senators on the Senate Appropriations Committee have a say in the final bill. This is a chance for the other 69 Senators to be more involved by offering their amendments on the floor.

So it is my hope that beginning tomorrow, we will return to the practice of offering amendments that have something to do with the bills at hand, and then we will either accept it, modify it, try to talk a Senator out of offering it, or agree to a short period of time to talk about an amendment and then actually vote on the amendment. If we do that, we can finish our work in a timely way. We can restore to the Senate its most basic process, which is its article I of the Constitution responsibility for appropriating dollars.

Tonight I will make my opening remarks on one of the three bills we will be considering this week, the Energy and Water Development appropriations bill. Tomorrow, Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY will officially kick off our appropriations process. Senator FEINSTEIN, my colleague on the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, with whom I have worked for several years, will make her remarks and so will other Senators from the other two subcommittees. Then we will begin to vote on amendments. Our plan is to begin voting on amendments tomorrow.

We have a number of amendments already proposed that are bipartisan. Of course, it is up to the Republican leader and the Democratic leader how we proceed, but I have talked with them. I have talked with other colleagues. Our hope is to have a couple of amendments to vote on just before lunch, two more amendments to vote on right after lunch, and other amendments to vote on tomorrow afternoon.

I would say to Senators and to staff that all of us—all six of us Senators involved in the three subcommittees, plus Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY—hope Senators will file their amendments tonight and tomorrow. We want to finish the bill this week. That is what Senator MCCONNELL has asked us to do. That means, in order to have timely consideration of amendments—and we could do a number during the week; those that are not accepted, we

could vote on—we need to get on with it. We can still consider several amendments tomorrow, other than the ones already planned. This information has been available to Senators and staff for them to consider.

The Energy and Water appropriations bill went through the entire process I just mentioned. That has been public, and it has been available for anybody to read since May 24. It was approved 30 to 1—one-third of the Senate—and 83 Senators made suggestions that we tried to accommodate in the bill.

The Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill has been available to the full Senate since June 7. It was approved unanimously, after going through the full committee process, by a vote of 31 to 0.

The Legislative Branch appropriations bill is the third subcommittee bill that will be considered this week. It has been available since June 14. It went through the entire committee process and was approved 31 to 0.

Last Saturday, all three of these bills were stitched together into one bill. This has been available; we call it in our way of talking a minibus—three subcommittee appropriations bills fully vetted, fully public. It is time to deal with it.

Before I describe the Energy and Water appropriations bill in detail, I wish to tell the Senate a story told to me by the Senator from Colorado, Mr. GARDNER, who has taken an active interest in research, technology, and development ever since his arrival in the U.S. Senate 4 years ago.

Senator GARDNER came by my office a few weeks ago, and this is what he said to me: You know, I was flying over the Middle East, and I looked down, and there were cars everywhere. I thought, well, Henry Ford invented the assembly line. Then it got to be dark, and there were lights everywhere, and I thought, well, Thomas Edison invented the light bulb. We were flying at 30,000 feet, and I thought, the Wright brothers invented the airplane. They are all Americans. I got to thinking that is not all; we have invented the internet, the personal computer, nuclear power, the polio vaccine. It is hard to think of a major technological invention since World War II that didn't have some support from government-sponsored research.

A few weeks ago, a friend of mine in Nashville came up to me and lamented the fact—he said: I'm so sorry that Congress hasn't been funding research. He understood that since World War II, it has been so important to our country.

I told my friend: I think you have been missing what has actually been happening, because quietly, with bipartisan support, this Congress—which has a Republican majority and, for the last two appropriations bills, a Republican President—has been approving record funding for science, research, and technology. It is important that the American people know that.

Since January of 2015, it is true we have had a Republican majority in Congress, but there has been a consensus with Democratic Members of Congress. We have worked together to provide those record levels of funding for science, research, and technology.

Let me be specific. In the current year—fiscal year 2018—for the third consecutive year we provided record funding levels in regular appropriations bills for the following activities:

The Office of Science. The Office of Science provides funding for our 17 national laboratories, including the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, which are America's secret weapon. No other country has anything like them. Funding for the Office of Science in this fiscal year's appropriations bill—the one we are voting on this week—would increase funding by 6 percent.

Let's take supercomputing. Last Friday, Secretary of Energy Perry traveled to Oak Ridge, where he announced that the United States will regain the No. 1 position in the world in supercomputers, which we compete for every year with China and Japan. This is the result not of 1 year of funding, but of 10 years of bipartisan effort through three different administrations—Democratic and Republican—to try to make sure that America is first in supercomputing in the world. We continue to do that in the appropriations bill we are considering this week.

Or take an agency we call ARPA-E. ARPA-E is a cousin of DARPA which is an agency that was created in the Department of Defense some time ago, out of which came a variety of wondrous new technologies—from stealth to the internet, for example. So 10 years ago, Congress decided “Why not try the same thing in energy?” and created what we call ARPA-E to invest in high-impact energy technologies and then quickly get those technologies added to the private sector.

That is just our subcommittee. In other subcommittees—the Commerce, Justice, Science Committee, chaired by Senator MORAN and Senator SHAHEEN, the fiscal year 2018 bill increased funding for the National Science Foundation by \$200 million. The fiscal year 2019 bill, approved by the Senate Appropriation Committee last week, proposes to increase funding another \$300 million. The National Science Foundation makes about 11,000 grants to universities and other institutions around the country—\$8 billion next year—as a part of our effort to stay first in research, science, and technology.

Then there is one more example. In fiscal year 2018, for the third straight year, the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee, chaired by Senator BLUNT and Senator MURRAY, has provided increased funding for the National Institutes of Health and biomedical research—2 billion additional dollars in the first year, 2 billion the second year, and 2 billion the third year, which is in addition to 21st Century Cures Act funding to focus on the

Precision Medicine Initiative, the Cancer Moonshot, among other things. Senator BLUNT has said that is a 23-percent increase over three years.

So I would say to my friend in Nashville—and to others who may not have noticed this quiet development—that this Republican Congress and the Democratic Members of Congress, as well, understand that a principal reason why this country produces 24 percent of all the money in the world for just 5 percent of the people—the principal reason for this extraordinary concentration of brain power in the United States has been support by Federal dollars through our National Laboratories, the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and other agencies.

Let me make one other statement right upfront. That funding is not the cause of the Federal deficit. Funding for the National Laboratories, national defense, national parks, and the National Institutes of Health is all part of the 30 percent of the Federal budget we call discretionary spending. That is what we are talking about this week. That is the money Congress appropriates every year—more than \$1 trillion.

Over the last 10 years, this part of the Federal budget—the 30 percent that is the discretionary funding—has gone up at a little bit less than the rate of inflation, according to the Congressional Budget Office, and the Congressional Budget Office projects that over the next 10 years, this part of the budget will rise at a little bit more than the rate of inflation.

So record funding for the National Institutes of Health or the National Science Foundation or ARPA-E or to keep our position in supercomputing—or, for that matter, national defense—is not the source of the Federal deficit. What has happened is that the Congress—Democrats and Republicans alike—have placed a priority on science, technology, and research and, within the budget limits established, we have given that excellent funding—record funding. The source of the Federal budget deficit is mandatory spending, which amounts to more than 63 percent of the budget.

Now to the Energy and Water appropriations bill. This legislation provides a total of \$43.8 billion, \$566 million above what Congress provided last fiscal year—the year we are in now—and \$7.24 billion above the President's budget request. Funding in this bill supports several agencies, including the U.S. Department of Energy, the Corps of Engineers, the National Nuclear Security Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the regional commissions, including the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Delta Regional Authority.

I am pleased that the bill provides the fourth year of record funding for our 17 national laboratories and increases funding for supercomputers so

that we can stay first in the world. The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science, which supports basic science and energy research and is the Nation's largest supporter of research in the physical sciences, is funded at \$6.65 billion, a new record funding level.

The Advanced Research Projects Agency—we call it ARPA-E—is funded at \$375 million, record funding in a regular appropriations bill. As I said, it was created in 2007 by the America COMPETES Act, a bipartisan effort to invest in high-impact energy technologies.

The bill provides a total of \$1.68 billion for high-performance computing, including \$980 million within the Office of Science, and \$703 million within the National Nuclear Security Administration. This amount includes \$677 million to deliver at least one exascale machine in 2021, the supercomputer that will reassert U.S. leadership in this critical area—the one Secretary Perry announced last week.

The bill also advances efforts to clean up hazardous materials at Cold War-era sites. The bill provides \$7.2 billion to support cleanup efforts, which is \$581 million above the President's budget request.

This bill also includes provisions regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps of Engineers touches the lives of almost every American. Based upon the number of appropriations requests we have received from my colleagues in the Senate, the Corps of Engineers is the Federal Government's most popular agency. I can remember a hearing of one of our committees shortly after the Missouri and Mississippi rivers flooded a few years ago, and 18 different Senators showed up to suggest that we needed more money for the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Corps maintains our inland waterways. It deepens and keeps our ports open. It looks after many of our recreational waters and lands. It manages the river levels to prevent flooding and its dams provide emission-free renewable hydroelectric energy.

The bill restores \$2.142 billion that was cut from the President's budget request, bringing the Corps budget up to \$6.9 billion, a new record funding level under regular appropriations bills. For the fifth consecutive year, the bill makes full use of the Inland Waterway Trust Fund revenues for water infrastructure projects. In other words, when we take tax money from the barges that use the waterways, we spend that tax money to improve the waterways rather than put it in some account somewhere.

The bill also provides funding that exceeds the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund spending target established by the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014. This is the fifth consecutive year the bill has met or exceeded the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund spending target, which is necessary to adequately fund our Nation's

harbors, including Mobile Harbor in Alabama, Savannah Harbor in Georgia, Long Beach Harbor in California, and many others across the country.

We hear a lot of talk about infrastructure and the need to do something about it. Well, this bill does something about it for 5 straight years. We are spending all the money we have collected—and, in fact, we raised the revenues a couple of years ago—for the last few years at record levels to improve our inland waterways and deepen our ports.

A key pillar of our national defense is a strong nuclear deterrent. That has been in the news these last few weeks because of the President's discussions with the leader of North Korea. The bill includes a total of \$14 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration, including \$1.9 billion for six life extension programs, which fix or replace components and weapons systems to make sure they are safe and reliable. Congress must maintain a safe and effective nuclear weapons stockpile and keep big construction projects on time and on budget. This bill achieves those goals. Nuclear power is our best source of inexpensive, carbon-free baseload power. It is important for our national security competitiveness. Nuclear power provides 20 percent of our Nation's electricity, more than half of our carbon-free electricity.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which oversees our 99 nuclear power reactors, is also funded in this bill. We included funding to ensure that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is prepared to review applications for new reactors, particularly small modular reactors and advanced reactors, and to extend the licenses of our existing reactors if it is safe to do so.

The bill also provides \$47 million for research and development at the Department of Energy to support existing nuclear reactors, \$30 million for the Consortium for Advanced Simulation of Light Water Reactors, and \$30 million for the transformational challenge reactor.

The legislation again includes a pilot program to allow consolidated nuclear waste storage that I have worked on with Senator FEINSTEIN for the last 6 years. This has been a special priority of the Senator from California, as it is of mine. Funding is also included for the Department of Energy to take the first steps toward being able to store nuclear waste at private facilities.

Tomorrow, Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY will formally begin the process of the appropriations of the Senate for the year that begins October 1. As I said at the beginning, this is our opportunity to do it right—something we haven't done in a long time.

We have done our work in committee. We have gotten our bills through. We had our hearings. We considered everybody's ideas. But that is just 31 of us. What about the other 69 Senators? They might like to have more of a say when the bill reaches the floor.

What we are asking tonight is that Senators and staff read the bills. We don't have 2, 3, 4, or 5 days to sit around and read the bills. Senator MCCONNELL would like for us to be through with this bill this week.

We have 12 appropriations bills to consider. We ought to be able to do that in 2 or 3 days. If we read the bills and decide which amendments haven't already been considered and file the amendments tonight, tomorrow we can ask consent for a time agreement of, say, 20 minutes and give each side 10 minutes to speak, and then we can actually vote on the amendments. That is what we are supposed to do.

Sometimes the U.S. Senate has been like joining the Grand Ole Opry and not being allowed to sing. It is rare that we have an amendment. The appropriations process is a chance to do that. I hope we will have a chance to do that.

I wish to make one other plea to my fellow Senators. The Senate has enormous power. Each Senator is equal. As a result, when the majority leader gets up and says we are going to start tomorrow with a prayer and this bill, and then we are going to move to something else, he says, if you listen carefully: I ask unanimous consent that we open tomorrow at 9:30. I ask unanimous consent that we move to this bill.

He gets that. He gets that because Senators recognize that although any one of us could have stopped that by objecting, we demonstrate some restraint. Just because you have the freedom to do something doesn't mean you should always try to do it. We learned that in kindergarten. We are well past that level now; we are in U.S. Senate.

I am hopeful that we can begin tomorrow with our speeches from at least eight of our Senators who have been working on this bill, including our leaders. I am hopeful that we will have a couple of amendments to vote on before lunch—bipartisan amendments—maybe a couple more after lunch, and maybe two or three more in the late afternoon. That is up to the Democratic leader and the Republican leader to finally decide, but I think the chances are good.

I will ask all Senators and staffs who are paying attention tonight, please read these three bills. If you have amendments that need to be considered that are relevant to the bill, please file them tonight or first thing in the morning. Talk with our staff, and let's see if we can accept them, modify them, and, if necessary, vote on them. Let's try to get that done this week and show ourselves and the world that the U.S. Senate is still capable of a complete appropriations process. After all, that is our most basic responsibility.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that for the purpose of rule XVI in relation to the substitute amendment No. 2910, division A of H.R. 5895 serve as the basis for defense of germaneness for division A of the amendment, division

B of H.R. 5895 serve as the basis for defense of germaneness for division B of the amendment, and that division C of H.R. 5895 serve as the basis for defense of germaneness for division C of the amendment.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. I see the Senator from Hawaii. I don't know whether he has any remarks to make.

I see the Senator from Oklahoma.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, earlier this year, this Chamber was full of conversation about immigration. We had four bipartisan proposals that all came to this floor. All four of them had votes. All four of them had some engagement from different Members. All four of them failed. While we didn't succeed in getting something passed and resolved on immigration, I will note that over 70 Senators voted for at least 1 of the 4 options that included wall funding, increased border security, and naturalization for those students who are in DACA or DACA-eligible. At least 70-plus Senators voted for those three options. They were written in different ways in each bill, but they all had the same basis. I was one of those.

Like many of my friends on both sides of the aisle, during the debate, I said that Americans don't hold children accountable for the actions of their parents. It has been a basic principle we have held for a long time. We believe in the protection of children and the unity of families. That is what we have been about. We have some debate about that because some of this body believes a child is not a child until you can see them, and some believe a child is a child even when they are in the womb. But we do have unity about those individuals—that when we can see them and know them as a child, that we keep them as a family. Although you could strongly put me on the side of saying I think a child is a child even when they are in the womb.

It is right for us to focus on families. Quite frankly, it is also right for us focus on immigration law and to believe that we are a nation of laws.

We have a great dilemma at this point happening around our border. Let me set some context for this that I think is important, and I want to make sure people understand.

We are a very open nation for immigration. We have been before, and we are now.