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No. 103

## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who has created humanity in Your image, look upon us and hear our prayers. Today, give our lawmakers the desire to do Your will and the energy to complete the tasks that will glorify Your Name. That which they don't know, reveal it. That which they lack, supply it. And that which they doubt, verify it. Keep them blameless in Your service, so that their lives will be living letters that will cause people to exalt Your Name. Strengthen their minds for Your service, so that Your wisdom will permeate their every endeavor. Remind them to not forget the lost, the lonely, the least, the last, and the left out.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, June 20, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,  
President pro tempore.

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

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 5895, which the clerk will report.

The 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.

Pending:

Shelby amendment No. 2910, in the nature of a substitute.

Alexander amendment No. 2911 (to amendment No. 2910), to make a technical correction.

McConnell (for Crapo) modified amendment No. 2943 (to amendment No. 2910), to increase funds for a nuclear demonstration program.

McConnell (for Baldwin/Portman) amendment No. 2985 (to amendment No. 2910), to set aside funds for cooperative agreements and laboratory support to accelerate the domestic production of Molybdenum-99.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as I discussed on the floor yesterday, returning to regular order in the appropriations process is at the forefront of the Senate's agenda.

Thanks to the bipartisan work of the Appropriations Committee, led by Chairman SHELBY, Ranking Member LEAHY, and the subcommittee chairmen, it is actually becoming a reality. Their efforts have already produced thoughtful legislation for the full Senate to consider, beginning this week with the combined measures for the Legislative Branch, for Energy and Water, and for Military Construction and the Veterans Administration. It is those last components I would like to discuss this morning.

This year, 2018, has already brought significant legislative progress for America's men and women in uniform. Earlier this year, Congress and the President did away with arbitrary funding limits that had eroded our forces' comparative advantage. We delivered the largest year-on-year increase in funding for our troops in 15 years. Now, with the Military Construction-VA funding bill before us this week, the Senate can keep the ball rolling.

The committee's package would deliver mission-critical maintenance and improvements that are needed on installations both at home and abroad. It would support Active-Duty personnel, as well as National Guard and Reserve units. It would allocate significant resources for projects that reinforce key alliances and extend our influence around the world.

In my home State of Kentucky, it would mean major improvements to training facilities at both Fort Knox—home of the Army Cadet, Human Resources, and Recruiting Commands—and at Fort Campbell, where the 101st Airborne Division and Special Operations forces prepare for evolving missions.

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



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But while underpinning the ongoing missions of our Active Forces, the legislation before us would also take critical steps to meet the individual needs of America's warfighters and their families here at home. It would allocate over \$1.5 billion to operate and maintain military family housing facilities. It would provide for vital safety updates at overseas American military schools, part of a system that serves more than 66,000 children. Hundreds of millions in additional funding would go to build and improve the network of military medical facilities, which provide care to nearly 10 million service-members and military families.

Finally, within the Military Construction legislation is important funding to support our veterans. In addition to funding the maintenance and upkeep of VA health facilities, it goes further in allocating targeted resources to address the system's shortcomings.

Especially when we talk about access to prompt, quality care, the status quo is simply not good enough for America's veterans. For the more than 300,000 Kentucky veterans and for the millions of veterans nationwide, we can and we must do better. That is why this bill includes billions of dollars to improve claims processing and to cut down on backlogs. There is funding for treatment, mental health services, and preventing opioid misuse.

There are plenty of good reasons to support this appropriations package, but one of the most compelling is the support it will deliver to our all-volunteer military and those who have served our country in uniform. So let's keep this legislation moving this week.

#### RESCISSIONS BILL

On another matter, Mr. President, speaking of government spending, we will soon have an opportunity to save some of the money taxpayers entrust to us. Thanks to the hard work of Members, including Senator LEE and Chairman ENZI, we will soon turn to a House-passed bill that acts on the President's request to rescind nearly \$15 billion in previously appropriated money that has gone unspent. This modest belt-tightening would in no way infringe on the bipartisan spending deal that Senators on both sides agreed to earlier this year. This savings package is 100 percent unrelated to that agreement.

Let me say that again. This savings package is 100 percent unrelated to the bipartisan agreement we reached earlier this year. It is totally separate. It simply pulls back a small amount of unspent funds from a variety of government accounts. If we, the people's elected representatives, want to speak seriously about stewarding taxpayer money, surely we can vote to recapture these unspent funds that are not even currently in use.

The President's modest rescissions request is entirely reasonable. It should be without controversy. I look forward to voting for it myself, and I urge my fellow Members to do the same.

#### TAX REFORM

Now, on one final matter, Mr. President, today marks 6 months since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed Congress. On Friday, it will be 6 months since the President signed it into law. What a 6 months it has been.

Already, Americans have seen their paychecks grow as the IRS withholds less of what they earned. Already, families are reaping the fruits of a new business tax code that gives American employers more ability to increase pay and create jobs. Six months in, these tax cuts have already led employers to issue tax reform bonuses, raises, and new benefits to 4 million workers and counting. That is welcome relief for middle-class families. But what about the long term?

Republicans know that enduring prosperity needs thriving businesses competing to hire American workers. So we designed tax reform to flip the Obama-era script and make America a more attractive place to invest, expand, and create jobs.

For large companies, capital investment might mean breaking ground on new locations or purchasing state-of-the-art technology. If you are a midsize employer, it might mean filling your factory floor with new equipment. If you are a Main Street family business, it could mean expanding into the vacant storefront next door or buying new tools that will transform your day-to-day operations.

In every case, you are placing a bet on your community and on your country. You are betting on American land, American equipment, and, most importantly, the future of the American workforce. You are putting down roots here instead of shipping jobs overseas. This is precisely what we have seen in the past 6 months.

Earlier this year, Apple announced plans to make \$30 billion in capital investments over the next 5 years—new facilities, new data centers, and more than 20,000 new jobs.

Chipotle Mexican Grill announced a \$50 million investment in upgrading and refurbishing their restaurants.

Carpenter Technology is using tax reform to speed up a new \$100 million facility in Redding, PA. Their new state-of-the-art mill will allow them to compete in precision electronics manufacturing. New equipment can't be easily outsourced; neither can the jobs it will create. Sure enough, Carpenter is partnering with a local community college to train a 21st century workforce.

Remember, these businesses aren't just creating new opportunities themselves. These projects also mean prosperity for American contractors and construction crews, and it is not just the big guys.

In West Palm Beach, FL, tax reform means new kitchen appliances for the Don Ramon Restaurant. In my home State of Kentucky, at Glier's Meats, tax reform meant a new quarter-million-dollar machine to speed up production of their famous sausages. For a

small business with fewer than 30 employees, that is a noteworthy opportunity. Everywhere you turn, businesses large and small are going all in on the future of the United States.

There is one more interesting thing the last 6 months have revealed: just how impossible it is for our Democratic colleagues to set aside their outdated, tax-and-spend ideology. Every Democrat in the House and in the Senate voted on party lines to block tax reform. They insisted the law wouldn't help American workers one bit. They said that it would be a disaster. Of course, the facts have debunked those predictions. But are our Democratic friends admitting they were wrong? No. They are doubling down on this silliness.

By now, we are all familiar with the House Democratic leader's comments from January. She laughed at the four-figure bonuses that working families were celebrating and called them "crumbs." Earlier this month, she doubled down:

Hip, hip hooray, unemployment is down. But what does that mean for me?

Well, my Democratic friends seem hopeful they can convince Americans that tax cuts, bonuses, and a stellar job market are nothing to celebrate. Talk about a tall order.

But while those rhetorical gymnastics keep them busy, Republicans will keep up the fight for middle-class families.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that in whatever order you choose, Senators CRAPO, BALDWIN, and WHITEHOUSE each be given a minute, then I be allowed to speak in leader time, and the vote come immediately after that.

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

The Senator from Idaho.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2943, AS MODIFIED

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in a few minutes we are going to vote on the Crapo-Whitehouse amendment. I stand to support that amendment and encourage my colleagues all to vote in favor of it.

I first want to thank my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE. He and I have worked together on a number of issues, building bipartisan support to advance our ability to utilize nuclear energy in the United States.

I also thank Senator ALEXANDER and Senator FEINSTEIN for their work to complete this Omnibus appropriations bill and to continue to push to bring our appropriations process to regular order.

Our amendment focuses on the development of fuel sources for our advanced nuclear reactors. The United States currently lacks both the supply of high assay low-enriched uranium, called HALEU, and a process to make HALEU for advanced reactor designs.

Advanced reactor startup cores require a high assay low-enriched uranium containing less than 20 percent fissile content. At the end of naval fuel's life, it contains highly enriched uranium with an average enrichment of 80 percent. Current operating naval reactors have the potential to create a total of 100,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel, and the Department of Energy estimates disposal of this spent nuclear fuel will cost about \$100 billion.

However, advanced nuclear reactors have the potential to reuse this spent nuclear fuel and to reduce the overall disposal cost. HEU repurposing, from materials like spent naval fuel, can be done using hybrid processes that use advanced dry head-end technologies followed by material recovery, which creates the fuel for our new advanced reactors. Repurposing this spent fuel has the potential of reducing waste that would otherwise be disposed of at taxpayer expense, and approximately 1 metric ton of HEU can create 4 useable tons for our new reactors.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, first, let me say what a pleasure it has been to work with Senator CRAPO on these issues.

Our situation is pretty simple. We have a U.S. Navy that generates spent nuclear fuel through its operations; we have a U.S. industry of next-generation nuclear technology that needs that spent fuel in order to test those innovative technologies; and we have extraordinary National Labs with world-class expertise in handling that nuclear material and supporting that innovation.

This amendment brings those three together. It allows the U.S. Navy's spent fuel to be delivered to National Labs so that pursuant to a law we just passed in the Senate recently, the cooperation between the National Labs and the nuclear innovation community can move forward. We have already passed that bill. I hope we will pass this bill.

I will close by saying there is something else in this that I think is worth our consideration. We have an enormous national liability with respect to our existing stockpiles of nuclear waste. Presently, we have no realistic plan for dealing with that. There is a prospect—it is definitely a maybe; I don't want to overpromise anything—there is definitely a prospect and it is the intention of some of these next-generation technologies that we will be able to develop nuclear technologies that will go through our nuclear waste stockpile and turn that into productive electricity generation. If we can get there, that would be a terrific Holy Grail. In the meantime, this is a smart and efficient way to support American innovation in these technologies.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote yes. I, again, appreciate Senator

CRAPO's leadership on this and the extraordinary National Lab that he has in his home State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Wisconsin.

AMENDMENT NO. 2985

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support my bipartisan amendment regarding an essential medical isotope. This amendment that I have introduced, along with Senator PORTMAN, would achieve three simple goals: It would safeguard and improve patient access to critical health screenings, it would promote medical innovations needed for cutting-edge diagnostics and new treatments, and it would move us away from our dependence on foreign sources of medical isotopes, while supporting America's medical innovation industry.

Let me explain quickly why my amendment is needed. The United States does not currently produce the medical isotope our healthcare system uses the most. This isotope is used in medical screenings and helps 50,000 patients per day in the United States by providing early detection and enabling treatment of cancer and heart disease.

U.S. patients are currently relying on supplies of this key isotope that come from Canada, the Netherlands, and South Africa. This raises costs and risks supply disruptions. Mind you, this isotope only lasts for 3 days.

For security in the healthcare system and certainty in patient access to essential medical tests, which are often needed in urgent situations, we must develop a domestic supply of these isotopes. The Department of Energy has been working diligently with the private sector to develop sources that are made in America, and this amendment would dedicate \$20 million to ensure that work continues so we can secure domestic production as soon as possible.

I urge my colleagues to support this important and bipartisan amendment.

I yield back.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I am on leader time.

FORCED FAMILY SEPARATION

Mr. President, as the purposeful, cynical, and shameful humanitarian crisis of family separation at the border continues to unfold, the vast majority of Americans are looking to President Trump's administration, which started this practice, to end it.

The Associated Press recently reported that the Trump administration has been sending babies and young children to what they call tender age facilities. It is unconscionable—unconscionable—that the Government of the United States is warehousing babies and toddlers alone in an institutional setting.

The crisis was willfully and purposefully created by this President through

his zero tolerance policy at the border. It can and should be ended by the same mechanism. With the simple flick of a pen, the President can end this policy. If the President wants to borrow my pen, he can have it. He can do it quickly and easily if he wants to. It is on his back.

The administration must end this gratuitously cruel and counterproductive policy that has brought such pain to innocent children and so much shame on this Nation. No law requires the separation of children from their families, no law says you must send babies to detention facilities, and no law is required to end it.

Nineteen Republicans in the Senate have already called on the Trump administration to reverse or suspend this policy administratively, without any congressional action. If our Republican colleagues and the Republican leadership in particular want to solve this problem, they ought to be directing their attention to the other side of Pennsylvania Avenue, to the White House, because that is where it can get done, done well, and get done quickly. This is at the administration's doorstep to stop or sustain. This is President Trump's responsibility. He could fix it this morning if he actually wanted to fix it. Instead, he points fingers of blame, he prevaricates, and he makes things up because he doesn't even want to own this policy. He knows how unpopular it is with the American people, but at the same time, he sort of wants to tell his base: I am with you. I am with you.

It is awful.

There is this idea that Congress could step in and pass legislation to deal with family separation. That is highly, highly dubious and unlikely. When has this Congress ever successfully passed immigration legislation in the last few years? Never. It is an illusion. Color us dubious that Congress—the House and Senate, with Republican majorities and strong rightwing elements who hate any change in immigration—could successfully pass legislation. Here are the problems:

First, would Speaker RYAN agree to pass and put on the floor a narrow bill that just deals with this issue? Has he ever done that before? Never. Never. Even if the Senate passed something, in the House, it would be dragged into a morass.

Second, would the President sign something that—it was reported in the newspaper that Sarah Huckabee Sanders said he would not sign the bill that Senator CRUZ is talking about. So what is the point? We want to solve this problem.

Third, will both Republican leaders, House and Senate, guarantee that a narrow bill will not have poison pill riders that are unacceptable to large percentages of this body added to any legislation?

Let's get those guarantees—no poison pill riders, Senate leadership and House leadership agree, and Speaker

RYAN has the votes to pass something before we move on a legislative path, when there is such an easy alternative path available, which is the President taking his pen and undoing what he has done.

The bottom line, my colleagues, is that there is only one real solution, as much as we would dream for another; that is, for the President to solve this problem. The odds of any legislation being able to pass—without poison pill riders—the House and Senate and be signed by the President is just about zero, while the percentage that the President could solve this problem if he wants to is just about 100 percent.

I have to say one other thing. TED CRUZ—a leading anti-immigration advocate—must be feeling the heat. He has never been for modifying our immigration laws in any way that helps immigrants. Read some of his past statements.

I ask the question, Is something cynical going on with some people? They want to get this off their backs because they feel the heat, but they really don't want to solve the problem, because if they did, Senator CRUZ and the others would do what 19 Republicans have correctly done: Ask the President to solve the problem himself.

#### TRADE

Mr. President, on a different subject entirely, our trade relationship with China. For too long, China has taken advantage of America's unwillingness to strongly confront its rapacious trade policies. For too long, China has dumped artificially cheap products into our markets, stolen the intellectual property of blue-chip American companies, and denied our most profitable companies access to its markets.

I am heartened that President Trump, after making a debacle of a deal on ZTE, has taken a tougher approach to China in recent days. His instincts to be tough on China are right on the money.

President Trump needs to stay strong. If he backs off at the first sign of trouble, after the first company calls to complain, after President Xi calls to complain, then China will know we are weak and unserious.

China is waiting to see if it can ride this out. We need to show China that America means business because the stakes are too high.

Business relocations to China have costs too many American jobs. The theft of our intellectual property has been called "the greatest transfer of wealth in history" by a four-star general and commander of U.S. Cyber Command. The lifeblood of the American economy is on the line. I urge President Trump to stay strong on China.

Don't mistake my support on this issue for what the President is doing with our allies. The tariffs leveled against Canada and our European allies are misguided and counterproductive. China is the real threat. And China should be the President's focus.

#### REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

Mr. President, 6 months ago today, the Republican majority jammed through a partisan tax bill that lavished tax cuts on big corporations and the wealthiest few. It is an appropriate time to look back on how the tax bill is fairing.

While the Republican leader, on a daily basis, celebrates vague statistics about business confidence, here are some cold, hard facts.

Since the beginning of 2018, corporations have announced plans to repurchase more than \$475 billion in stock buybacks—a record pace. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Labor statistics report that real average hourly earnings have dropped by 0.1 percent.

According to a recent analysis by Just Capital, only 6 percent of the capital allocated by companies from the tax bill's savings has gone to employees, while nearly 60 percent has gone to shareholders.

Remember, President Trump promised that the Republican tax bill would give a \$4,000 raise for the average American family. In reality, American families are not seeing close to that figure. A recent Washington Post headline sums it up best: "The Republican tax bill's promises of higher wages and more jobs haven't materialized."

The truth is, the tax law has failed to deliver for American workers and American families. Corporations are reaping record profits as a result of the tax bill and are refusing to pass much of those savings onto their workers. And whatever benefits American families are getting from the tax bill—if they are getting benefits at all—are starting to get wiped out by skyrocketing health care costs, the result of Republican sabotage.

All in all, that is why that today, 6 months since it passed, the Republicans' signature legislative accomplishment remains deeply unpopular.

I yield the floor.

#### VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2943, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question occurs on agreeing to Crapo amendment No. 2943, as modified.

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), 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 87, nays 9, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 132 Leg.]

#### YEAS—87

Alexander	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Graham	Nelson
Barrasso	Grassley	Paul
Bennet	Hassan	Perdue
Blumenthal	Hatch	Peters
Blunt	Heinrich	Portman
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Risch
Brown	Hirono	Roberts
Burr	Hoeven	Rounds
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Carper	Isakson	Schatz
Casey	Johnson	Schumer
Cassidy	Jones	Scott
Collins	Kaine	Shelby
Coons	Kennedy	Smith
Corker	King	Stabenow
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Tester
Cotton	Leahy	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Manchin	Toomey
Daines	McCaskill	Udall
Donnelly	McConnell	Van Hollen
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Enzi	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Fischer	Murphy	Young

#### NAYS—9

Feinstein	Harris	Sanders
Flake	Markey	Warren
Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden

#### NOT VOTING—4

Cardin	McCain
Duckworth	Shaheen

The amendment (No. 2943), as modified, was agreed to.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2985

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on the Baldwin amendment No. 2985.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 30 seconds on the Baldwin-Portman amendment.

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, Senator BALDWIN spoke a moment ago about this amendment we are about to vote on.

It is \$20 million to the National Nuclear Security Administration's domestic isotope program. This is something this body voted for back in 2012. CBO says it has no budget authority impact. It is really important because we are getting this all from overseas. We have no domestic source. We want to get away from using highly enriched uranium for national security reasons.

I encourage you to all vote for this.

I yield back my time.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

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 (Mrs. ERNST). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 133 Leg.]

YEAS—95

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murray
Baldwin	Graham	Nelson
Barrasso	Grassley	Perdue
Bennet	Harris	Peters
Blumenthal	Hassan	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Reed
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeben	Sanders
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cardin	Inhofe	Schatz
Carper	Isakson	Schumer
Casey	Johnson	Scott
Cassidy	Jones	Shelby
Collins	Kaine	Smith
Coons	Kennedy	Stabenow
Corker	King	Sullivan
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Tester
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Leahy	Tillis
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
Cruz	Manchin	Udall
Daines	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden
Fischer	Murkowski	Young
Gardner	Murphy	

NAYS—2

Flake Paul

NOT VOTING—3

Duckworth McCain Shaheen

The amendment (No. 2985) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

FORCED FAMILY SEPARATION

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I have just returned from South Florida where I went to a detention facility in Homestead, FL. There are 1,000 children in this detention facility, and 94 of 1,000 are children who have been separated from their families.

Despite being the senior Senator of Florida, despite having oversight responsibility of the Department of HHS, despite the fact that in that oversight capacity, we have the funding responsibility for the Department of HHS and one of its components, the Office of Refugee Resettlement—these children separated from their families are handled by that office—despite all of that, the Deputy Secretary of the Department of HHS refused to allow me to enter this facility and said that it was the Department's policy that you have to fill out a form, which we had done, but you have to wait 2 weeks before being allowed to enter the facility.

The question is, Why do they not want the Senator from Florida to get into this detention facility where there are children who have been separated from their parents? It must be that not only is this Department policy, but this is being directed by the President in the White House. They don't want me to see it because they don't want us to know what is going on in there.

I have subsequently found out that in addition to those 94 children, there are 174 children being held in my State of Florida who have been separated from their families. This is the current debate: Children have been ripped apart from their moms and dads, and it has always been an American value to keep families together, even when you are adjudicating the lawful or unlawful status of the parents. You always keep those children together on an immigration question, yet President Trump has now altered that policy.

Despite all the finger-pointing and the deflection, President Trump and his administration know this is their policy; he doubled down on it last night. But there is nothing in the law that requires them to tear parents away from their children. There is nothing in the law that requires the administration to rip an infant from a parent's arms, some young enough still to be nursing.

The decision to enact this quite horrendous and shameful policy was a decision by this administration—and this administration alone. That is why this Senator went to Miami yesterday. I wanted to see it for myself. I wanted to see: Is the facility clean? Are the children sleeping in beds? Are they sleeping on the floor? Do they have adequate care? If they were, I could report that it was a good news story.

I also wanted to be able to talk to the young children, the ones who had been separated. I had already gotten word from Senator VAN HOLLEN, who had been in Texas on Saturday and met a mom who said that her child had been separated from her and that child was in a detention facility in Florida. I wanted to see that child.

I am very proud of all of our colleagues who have come together to support legislation to keep these families together, and 49 of us on this side of the aisle have signed on as cosponsors. The policy of this legislation is simply this: Don't separate families in this question of immigration. It would prohibit the separation of those families. That has been the policy, and all the President would have to do is to say it, but in taking the position he has, maybe the only recourse is for us to pass this law.

I am proud of our colleagues on that side of the aisle who have rightfully stood up and publicly condemned this practice because every American knows that taking children from their parents is just not right. If a family is legitimately fleeing violence, repression, and conditions that most of us cannot imagine, they have a right under American law to present themselves at the border and ask for asylum. Past administrations of both parties have recognized this, which is why they acted with compassion and refused to do what the Trump administration is doing now. It is certainly time that we return to our true American value of keeping families together.

Because the passage of a statute is a long shot, it is really not up to us. It is up to the President. He could say it, and it would be done. No matter what we do here in this Chamber, the power to end this shameful chapter in our Nation's history lies with the President and his pen. He can sign an Executive order today, just as easily as he can sign a law that we pass here in Congress. Either way, it is up to him. He doesn't need Congress to act. He and he alone is allowing this shameful practice to continue, and he alone can stop it right now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I first want to respond to something that was said a moment ago. It is not he and he alone who can solve it. Congress is, in fact, the policymaking body within the Federal Government. We are the law-making body within the Federal Government. We can make changes to the law, and we can't lose sight of that fact.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—H.R. 3

Mr. LEE. Madam President, pursuant to title X of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I have a discharge petition at the desk and move to discharge from the Senate Committees on Appropriations and Budget H.R. 3, to rescind certain budget authority proposed to be rescinded in special messages transmitted to the Congress by the President on May 8, 2018.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to section 1017(b) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, there will now be up to 1 hour of debate on the motion to discharge, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Who yields time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, over the next 10 years, our national debt is set to balloon from \$21.16 trillion today to more than \$33.9 trillion in 2028.

With interest rates set to increase, the payments on the debt will also likely double over the next 10 years as a percentage of total economic output. Consider for a moment the fact we are paying a little more than \$300 billion a year to service our debt. It is not that much more than we were paying a couple of decades ago when our national debt was roughly one-fifth, one-sixth of its current size. The only reason our debt service payments are as low as they are today is that our interest rates are at all-time historic lows. Our Treasury yield rates are artificially, historically, aberrationally, severely low. The situation gets a lot worse if our artificially, historically low interest rates increase or start to return to their historical averages at a pace quicker than has been projected, as is easily possible. For example, if interest