While the debate surrounding abortion has engulfed this country for decades, the goalposts are now being shifted. Reproductive autonomy, we are now told, must include the ability and choice to end the life of a baby who survives an attempted abortion.

As a former medical provider, I believe that to end a newborn's life either by refusing to provide lifesaving care or actively taking that child's life—as in the case of the infamous abortionist Dr. Kermit Gosnell and others—violates the oath every medical provider takes to do no harm.

As a dad and a grandfather, I know from my own experience just how precious each life is. My daughters and grandchildren are treasured gifts that bring my family and me immeasurable joy. To think that they or any other child might be treated with anything other than the dignity and respect they are entitled to is tragic, heartbreaking, and outrageous.

Providing necessary medical attention to save the lives of infants who survive an abortion is an imperative that we as a society must embrace if we are to be faithful to the promise our Founders made to the generations of Americans who would succeed them. In declaring the self-evident truth that all men are created equal, surely they intended to extend the same rights and liberties that their countrymen fought and died for to newborn babies who survive abortions.

I am proud to have stood with my colleagues today in support of this legislation that seeks to protect these precious, vulnerable lives. We can and should do this as a reflection of the country we want to be.

Our abortion laws in the United States already situate us among some of the world's worst human rights abusers, including North Korea and China.

Now a national conversation about whether to provide children who survive abortions medical attention and care has ensued. It is my hope and prayer that the final word in this discussion will end with a resounding commitment to protect and preserve life.

I would like to thank the junior Senator from Nebraska, Mr. SASSE, for leading on this critical issue and pushing to bring this measure to the floor today.

I would also like to thank the President for his vocal commitment to defending life and protecting the most vulnerable among us.

I feel blessed to stand alongside so many others to raise our voices on behalf of the voiceless.

While I am disappointed with the result of today's vote, I remain committed to fighting for those who are unable to fight for themselves and will continue working to protect and uphold the sanctity of life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

NORTH KOREA

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to offer some thoughts regarding the ongoing negotiations with North Korea that began with the Singapore summit between President Trump and Kim Jong Un and will continue in a few days when the two leaders meet again in Vietnam.

I join the chorus of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have expressed concern regarding the outcome of the last summit and the subsequent negotiations. This is not meant as a criticism of the diplomatic process itself. Clearly, we are in a much better place now than 2 years ago, when the President was promising fire and fury for the Korean Peninsula, terrifying our South Korean allies, who stand to lose millions of their citizens in any confrontation with North Korea. Furthermore, if the Singapore summit had resulted in a clear path toward denuclearization, I would be standing here right now commending these diplomatic efforts.

The maximum pressure campaign, significantly enhanced by this body's sanctions regime and the United Nations Security Council's resolutions, brought North Korea to the negotiating table. It was a golden opportunity and, unfortunately, it was squandered by this ill-prepared administration, which seems more concerned with photo ops than with the substance of the negotiation.

The Singapore summit was a loss for the United States and our alliances and a great publicity win for North Korea. The 2005 six-party joint statement contained significantly more commitments from North Korea than the joint statement of the Singapore summit. Given President Trump's bluster and renouncement of the JCPOA, one would have thought that he would leave Singapore with an ironclad commitment and schedule for denuclearization. Instead, he got less than in any past negotiation with North Korea.

Most concerning to me is that without obtaining a single concrete concession from North Korea, President Trump undermined our alliance with the Republic of Korea by characterizing our joint exercises as provocative war games. It was a huge propaganda win for North Korea and a huge loss to the United States and to the readiness of the joint force. The regularly scheduled exercises are very important to troop readiness and our regional security. While I understand the need to create diplomatic space for these negotiations to proceed, we must ensure that we do not sacrifice readiness for empty promises.

While I am pleased with the agreement on the return of prisoners of war and missing-in-action personnel remains, which rightfully continue to be important issues for U.S. families, the Singapore summit was mostly pomp and circumstance that did not advance our national security interests. In fact, it could be said that we are in a worse position than we were before the summit. President Trump undeservedly transformed Kim Jong Un from a ruthless dictator to a world statesman in short order. He has since used his stature from the summit to make closed-door deals with China and Russia that will be used as leverage against the United States.

The President also conferred legitimacy on a corrupt and morally bankrupt dictator who has imprisoned hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children in political camps under brutal conditions and has committed horrendous crimes against his neighbors and own people. Human rights did not play a prominent role at the summit, and the joint declaration does not include one single reference. If we want to continue to serve as a beacon for human rights, this issue will have to be on the agenda for these negotiations. There are a number of U.S. sanctions against North Korea because of its human rights record, and this body will not loosen those sanctions until and unless we see progress on the issue. As such, I was dismayed that the President in his State of the Union Address did not call out the North Korean regime's callous disregard for human rights.

Since the summit, we have seen just how problematic the joint declaration has been as a foundational document for the negotiations. While Secretary Pompeo characterized the first meeting with North Korean negotiators at the summit as ''productive,'' the North Koreans criticized Secretary Pompeo's gangster-like demand for denuclearization. The chasm between the two sides was created by the ambiguity of the summit itself and its failure to create an agreed-upon path for both parties. We have not seen a substantial dismantlement of nuclear or missile sites over the last year, and independent news reporting reflects that North Korea continues to develop its nuclear and missile arsenals despite the self-imposed ban on testing.

What should we have gotten from the summit? Since we played our biggest card and gave Kim Jong Un a meeting with the President of the United States, the answer is a lot more than what we did get. First and foremost, we should have gotten a joint declaration that North Korea agrees to complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization. If we were not going to get that commitment, then we should have at least gotten a specific commitment similar to the September 19, 2005, joint statement, where North Korea committed to ''abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and returning at an early date to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to IAEA safeguards.'' Instead, we got a vague statement that North Korea will ''work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.''

Despite the administration's protestations to the contrary, it is not at all clear that North Korea actually agreed to complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization, generally referred to as CVID. I am concerned, as are others, that the words ''complete denuclearization'' were used because the North Koreans would not agree to CVID. If that is the case, then, we are starting in a worse place than we were during the 2005 talks.

Why do these words matter? They matter because of the historical context of these negotiations. Without the word ''verifiable,'' North Korea has not agreed to inspections, and, without inspections, we cannot be sure that North Korea will take the steps necessary to denuclearize. The regime does not have a good track record of living up to its agreements. Without a verification process that includes a robust inspection and verification regime, we will never be sure that North Korea is not reverting to its past tactics and cheating on its commitments.

Even more alarming to those who follow past negotiations is that the commitment that did come out of the summit sounds suspiciously like the tack North Korea has taken in past negotiations—that denuclearization of the peninsula will require the United States to remove its nuclear umbrella from its ally, the Republic of Korea, and remove its troops from the peninsula. North Korea has peddled this tit-for-tat denuclearization narrative for years, and this administration must ensure that it does not become the narrative of the upcoming negotiations. These competing narratives should have been reconciled at the summit by the leaders but instead were left for future negotiations.

The administration now has another opportunity in Vietnam to establish some credibility for these negotiations and demand a set of concrete deliverables. We should all recognize that CVID will take years to accomplish. Despite President Trump's patently false claim that he has solved the North Korean nuclear threat, that threat is still very real and very dangerous. There are commitments that we need from the other side to gauge whether North Korea is sincere in its intent to denuclearize. We already know that the intelligence community has made the determination that North Korea does not intend to denuclearize. Therefore, the concessions we seek from North Korea need to include a verification and inspection scheme that includes a reasonable timeline and is comprehensive enough to include all of its weapons of mass destruction programs and facilities and focuses on engagement instead of punishment. We should not use inspections as ''aha'' moments to catch the North Koreans in intentional or unintentional mistakes. Instead, they should be used as the foundation to develop a comprehensive picture of all of North Korea's weapons programs and as the basis for future negotiations.

What would a successful summit in Vietnam look like? We need a declaration from North Korea of all of its nuclear weapons and programs and facilities. Ideally, it would also include a catalog of all of its missiles and missile facilities. This declaration of all of its sites and programs needs to be provided to the United States in short order to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency, or the IAEA, inspectors to start the inspections process, which will take years.

Second, we need North Korea to agree to verifiable denuclearization with IAEA inspections, and that agreement should include a concrete timeline with a step-by-step process. If we are going to continue to scope down our joint exercises for the sake of these negotiations, then, we need to see concrete actions by North Korea in the next few months. It has been almost a year since the last summit, and we have not seen any concrete irreversible actions taken by North Korea on its nuclear program that signify an intent by the regime to give up or significantly curtail its programs.

I wanted to speak on this issue today before the second summit because I am concerned that the President will fall prey to North Korean manipulation and accept an agreement that does not include significant concessions by the regime. Kim Jong Un's ploy is to make commitments for the future that can easily be forgotten or to offer up facilities or sites that are obsolete.

For example, if the President gets assurances for the dismantling of the Sohae launch facility and the closure and inspections of the Yongbyon nuclear facility, he may think that North Korea has moved the needle on denuclearization, but as the experts will tell you, the real jewels are other nuclear sites that are more critical for the regime's programs. As recent reports by the Center for Strategic and International Studies have shown, there are many missile sites that have not been declared and that are critical to the nuclear program. This is why a full declaration is so critical—so that we finally have a comprehensive accounting of the nuclear and missile programs that exist.

In the meantime, the administration also needs to be vigilant that China and other countries continue to enforce sanctions. President Trump's assertions that the problem is solved will significantly undercut our ability to keep the pressure on. We need consistent messaging from the White House and the rest of the administration that the Singapore summit was the first step, and until we see concrete results, there will be no abeyance of the sanctions regime. Keeping China in line on that front will be a significant challenge, especially given the isolationist bent of this President, who has managed to alienate the very partners we need to cooperate on the sanctions regime.

China does not need to state publicly that it will stop enforcing sanctions. Even low-level cross-border trade can allow the North Korean economy to hobble along for years, and all it will take is an indication from Beijing that sanctions enforcement is no longer a priority.

Let me be clear. One of the most important outcomes of this process is also the preservation of our alliances with South Korea and Japan. Even if we were to somehow achieve a CVID deal with North Korea but lose our special relationships with these two nations, we will come out the other side less secure than we are today. While North Korea poses a significant threat to the United States, peace on the peninsula cannot come at the cost of a diminished U.S. presence in Asia. Our alliances and partners in the region are the bulwark of our strength in the region.

Both South Korea and Japan have significant national security interests that will be adjudicated during these negotiations. Neither is at the negotiating table. I am very concerned that Japan in particular is dismayed that there has not been any substantive progress in the negotiations. It is critical that the administration continue to raise issues that are critical to Japan, especially the Japanese citizens who were abducted by North Korea. It is up to this administration to ensure that their interests are voiced and that their security needs are met. That means not only addressing North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile program but also its short- and intermediate-range missiles. It means consulting with our allies before significant decisions that affect their security are taken, and it means not publicly lamenting about the costs associated with these historic and strategic alliances. We cannot simply put a price tag on our regional security. Losing these alliances will cost us far more in the long run and leave us far less secure than we are today.

We also need to be concerned about the recent deterioration of the relationship between our two critical allies. Trilateral cooperation is only effective if South Korea and Japan can overcome their historical animosities to present a united front against North Korea.

I know there is a lot of discussion today about the possibility of a peace agreement to end the 65-year-old armistice. I fear that many see a peace agreement as the precursor for a removal of U.S. forces from the Korean Peninsula. I am concerned that our President does not understand the critical importance of the deployment of U.S. Forces Korea on the peninsula.

Let me be clear. The withdrawal of troops from the peninsula would significantly undermine our ability to fulfill our treaty obligations to South Korea. It should not be a subject of these negotiations or any future negotiations with North Korea. The presence of our troops is the cornerstone of our military alliance with South

Korea, and they must remain present and ready to ''Fight Tonight'' for the benefit of the alliance and regional security.

Looming over all of this is our long-term strategic competition with China. I find it telling that China was one of the first countries to announce the cancellation of our joint exercises with the Republic of Korea.

What are China's ambitions for this negotiation process? While China is certainly concerned about the nuclear arsenal its southern neighbor has amassed, denuclearization may not be China's highest national security concern during these negotiations. In the long run, China recognizes that its near-peer competition with the United States complicates its interests in these negotiations. China's highest priority is likely to ensure that it does not end up with a U.S.-allied reunified Korea on its southern border. Another goal is driving a wedge between the United States and its allies in order to promote itself as a regional hegemon.

We all recognize that Russia has similar ambitions—separate us from our allies, establish themselves as regional hegemons, and coerce and bully their smaller neighbors on issues of defense, trade, and economics. We cannot allow that to happen.

We already see attempts by China to relax sanctions enforcement. This trade spat is just one of the wedges North Korea will be able to leverage between China and the United States. We need a coordinated strategy that keeps our long-term interests in Asia focused while resolving the North Korean crisis. To date, we have not seen any indication that such a strategy exists.

Peace on the Korean Peninsula has eluded us for decades. There is an opportunity now to force Kim Jong Un's hand, through skillful negotiation and a coordinated sanctions regime, to take concrete steps toward denuclearization.

I hope this administration will use the Vietnam summit to negotiate a substantive agreement that keeps America and its allies safe, strong, and secure.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

S. 311

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am here to take the opportunity to join my colleagues to speak in support of the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act. I thank Senator SASSE for his continued leadership on this issue. I supported the bill when Senator SASSE introduced it last Congress, and I was glad to see Senator MCCONNELL, our leader, bring this bill to the floor for a vote.

I am astonished—astonished—that we are debating whether it is appropriate to leave born children to die. Today, now, in the year of 2019, how can this be? Science demonstrates that human life begins at conception, and our understanding of neonatal development is increasing every day.

I am a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services. The National Institutes of Health is one of my top priorities for funding. At the NIH, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development has advanced our knowledge of pregnancy and development in the womb. Under this Institute, the Neonatal Research Network has pioneered research that has led to techniques that saved the lives of children in their earliest stages, when these children are at their most vulnerable.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that more than 10,000 babies are aborted each year after 20 weeks of conception, when science—science—tells us that an unborn child can feel pain inside the womb. That number will increase as a result of recent State-level efforts to end virtually any restriction on abortion when a child could viably live outside the womb. These efforts are extreme and fall far beyond the mainstream of American opinion.

This legislation does nothing to limit prenatal abortion. While we must address that issue—the root causes of abortion and the ways to curb this heartbreaking trend—that is not the issue at hand today in this legislation. The question before us is this: When a child survives an abortion and is born, does the U.S. Senate believe the child can still be eliminated, or should the baby be protected and given all possible care to survive? This act requires healthcare practitioners to ''exercise the same degree of professional skill, care, and diligence to preserve the life and health of a child as a reasonably diligent and conscientious healthcare practitioner would render to any other child born alive at the same gestational age.'' Any negligence in this regard is subject to criminal and civil punishment, which at present does not exist.

Should anyone think this is some made-up issue—despite the Virginia Governor's shocking comments revealing an openness to infanticide and New York's expansion of abortion well beyond the age of viability that makes born-alive abortion survivors more likely—we have concrete evidence that this grotesque act happens. Notorious abortion provider Kermit Gosnell is serving life in prison for these very acts.

Closing our eyes to what is obscene does not make it any less real. That it is allegedly ''rare'' doesn't make it any less real or abhorrent. One child purposefully deprived of healthcare and allowed to die is one too many. It is infanticide, which brings us to the crux of this issue. We need to think carefully about the long-term impacts to the definition of ''healthcare'' if Congress refuses to act positively on this measure. Do the guardrails of neonatal health succumb to the belief that infants don't really count as one of us?

Our society is not one of the ancient Romans or the Aztecs. We don't sacrifice our children to please an unknown god. In the progress of human history, principles of the enlightenment—also known as the Age of Reason—declared self-evident truths that all humans are created equal and endowed with the unalienable right to life. Although undoubtedly we have our flaws, these enlightenment principles enshrined in our founding documents remain true to who we are as a nation and who we are as human beings. We recoil when we hear of children who are harmed in any manner. Yet today we are faced with a reality where the ability to terminate an unborn child's life when it is viable outside of the womb is something that is not only tolerated but is passionately defended by the left.

That is bad enough, but to see legislation ensuring that the medical care of born children gets blocked is incomprehensible. The immutable march of progress in human history has met a roadblock today in the U.S. Senate. The Age of Reason seems to have escaped us.

Tonight, the Senate had an opportunity to send a message showing who we are as leaders and as a society as a whole—one that protects the weak and the voiceless instead of one that permits their destruction. I regret and I am saddened that the Senate failed this fundamental test.

I am eager to do more to protect innocent life, including the unborn, but the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Act provided us an opportunity to affirm the most basic need for healthcare for a vulnerable child who has already beaten the odds to survive. Let's hope we have another opportunity to give these children the chance at life they so deserve.

I thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

NOMINATION OF JOHN L. RYDER

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, this week, the Senate may see an extreme example of how the minority can abuse its rights in a way that provokes the majority into an excessive use of its power. I come to the floor to offer my Democratic colleagues a way to avoid both mistakes.

Here is the abuse of minority rights: More than a year ago, President Trump nominated John Ryder of Memphis to serve on the board of directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority based on the recommendation that Senator Bob Corker and I made. Finally, this week, the Senate is likely to vote on Mr. Ryder's nomination.

You might say: Well, there must really be something wrong with Mr. Ryder.

Well, if there is, then all the people who are supposed to find out what is wrong with Mr. Ryder have not found it out. Senator Corker and I know him very well as one of Tennessee's finest