

Then there was 2013 in West, TX. That is not the region. That is the name of the city. Following a massive fertilizer plant explosion, it tore through a tight-knit community and claimed the lives of 15 people, including most of the town's volunteer fire department. Sandy, of course, was on the ground, as she always is, helping to connect with the first responders and local officials, making sure they had the support we could provide from our office.

She was there during the Bastrop fires in 2011, the Wimberley flooding in 2015, and the deadly hot air balloon crash in Maxwell, TX, in 2016. Sandy has been a gracious helping hand during the tough times and an enthusiastic cheerleader during the good ones. I am sorry to lose such a devoted staffer and friend, and I know my team in Texas will miss her bighearted participation in our team effort.

I don't think it is really a coincidence that Sandy chose the month of September to retire because, of course, this is the start of her beloved Texas Longhorns' football season. I know she is looking forward to attending UT games this fall, along with her husband Stan and perhaps her son Kyle and his wife Brittney. I know for sure she will enjoy spending more time at her family's ranch in the Texas Hill Country.

I come to the Senate floor to publicly express my appreciation, as well as that of my entire staff and I would dare say every single Texan who ever met her, and to thank Sandy Edwards for the lives she has touched and made better. I say, thank you, Sandy, and I wish you a well-deserved next chapter in your life.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Louisiana.

#### ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, \$1 million a minute—not \$1 million an hour or a day or week, \$1 million a minute. That is how much we borrow every minute to operate the Federal Government. It is \$1.4 billion—that is nine zeros—a day. That is how much more we spend than we take in. Some people have said—I have heard Americans say this—that we spend money like a drunk sailor. That is not accurate because a drunk sailor stops when he runs out of money. We just borrow.

We don't just print this money. We issue Treasury notes and Treasury bonds and Treasury securities. We borrow it. Some Americans loan it to us. Some folks in other countries like Japan and China, they expect to be paid back, and we do have to pay them back. In a couple of years, we are going to be spending more in our budget on interest on our debt than we are spending on defense.

Now we are in the middle of putting together a budget for the American people. The first thing we had to do was agree on how much money we are going to spend. They call that the topline number, but that just means how much money we are going to spend

for the next 2 years. You will not be surprised to learn we are going to spend more.

I think it was a bad deal. I voted against it. Our agreement on what we are going to spend in the budget we are putting forward now, according to the CBO, is going to add to our \$22 trillion—that is 12 zeros—deficit. In fact, what we just agreed to, the additional spending, is going to add, according to our Congressional Budget Office, \$12 trillion over the next 10 years.

I voted against it. I lost. The majority rules. Now we are trying to put together a budget with all this extra money, and our challenge is or ought to be: How do we spend the money the American people are going to give us in an efficient way? I think every single Member of the Senate wants to do that.

I want to talk for a few minutes about an issue that is going to come up. It is going to come up through the subcommittee I chair. It has to do with elections, and it has to do with money.

Russia tried to interfere with our election. You can write that down and take it home to mama. It is true. They did it. They didn't change a single vote, but they did try to influence the way Americans did vote. To try to prevent that from happening again in 2018, this Congress gave our States \$380 million to shore up their election systems. They haven't spent all that yet.

This Congress also took other steps. The Senate has unanimously approved two bipartisan election security bills. I think they are both now pending in the House. We passed the Defending the Integrity of Voting Systems Act. That is going to make it a Federal crime to hack any voting system in a Federal election. We passed the Defending Elections Against Trolls from Enemy Regimes Act. We call that the DETER Act. It will bar people who interfere in our elections or attempt to do so from entering the United States. Our Department of Homeland Security, very able women and men, and our cyber security advisors there, smart people—they are helping our State and local officials, on a daily basis, guard against threats.

We had a classified briefing. By "we," I mean all Members of the Senate, Republicans and Democrats. "Classified" means it is in our room down in the basement where foreign agents cannot listen in. The FBI Director was there. The Director of National Intelligence was there. Most senior ranking members of our military were there, and the topic was: How did we do in 2018? We know the Russians and others took a run at us in 2016. They didn't succeed, but they tried. How did we do in 2018?

Let me tell you, our men and women at the FBI and in our military and in Homeland Security, they are on it. Our 2018 election went off without a hitch. I am not saying some foreign despots didn't try to influence how we voted, but they didn't change a single vote. Our people did a great job, and every

Senator, Democratic and Republican, in that room, in that classified setting—I can't tell you the details. I wish I could. If I could, you would be impressed. But everybody walked out of there and said: Man, we are on it. The 2018 elections went off without a hitch, and, by God, we are ready for 2020.

We didn't just do that. I am going to go back to what I just said. We gave our States \$380 million. They haven't even spent all of it yet, but there is going to be an effort to spend a whole bunch more to give it to the States. I don't know how much, but at least \$200 million, maybe \$400 million, maybe a billion. If I thought it was necessary, I would vote for it.

Some of my colleagues, in perfectly good faith, think the States need more money, even though they haven't spent what we gave them to begin with and even though all of our intelligence officials say we are ready for 2020. Some of my colleagues, in good faith, think they need more money, but some of my colleagues see this as a first step to nationalizing elections, and that is what worries me.

Do you know what makes our elections safest of all? You can't just hack one system. You have to hack 50. You have to hack 50 because the States run elections, and they do a pretty good job. They do a really good job.

There is an effort—not by all but by some—to get the Federal Government in charge of elections. Do you know how you do that? You don't just jump in and grab them. You sneak up on them. I will tell you how you sneak up on them. You start giving them money, and you get them addicted. You give them a little more money, and you get them addicted. Then, the next thing you know, the Feds are running the elections, and not for all but for some of my colleagues that is what this is about.

This country started out as a self-reliant, tax-averse Union of States. They were very skeptical of the Federal Government. Our original States and all those after them, they insisted on running their own elections, and it has worked. We don't need the Federal Government in charge of elections.

There are some of my colleagues coming this time—and, look, I am not impugning their integrity. They are entitled to their opinion because this is America, but I am entitled to mine. In the effort last year, we were able to beat it back. I am afraid some of my friends on this side of the aisle this time are having second thoughts. I am hearing all kinds of rumors. It is amazing what you can pick up around this place if you just walk around the floor and keep your mouth shut and your ears open. You hear all kinds of stuff.

I am here to say, if we do it, we are going to look back, when the Federal Government is running our elections and screwing them up, and say this is where it began. If you want to put the U.S. Federal Government in charge of your elections instead of the States, if

you think that is a swell idea, I want you to close your eyes for a minute and imagine living in a world designed by the post office because that is what you are going to get.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RETURN OF PAPERS REQUEST—S. 1790

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Secretary of the Senate be authorized to request from the House of Representatives the return of the papers to S. 1790 to provide for a correction. I further ask that if the House agrees to the Senate's request, upon receipt of the papers from the House in the Senate, notwithstanding passage of the bill, the amendment at the desk be agreed to and the papers be returned to the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent; the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 60, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 280 Ex.]

YEAS—60

|           |         |         |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| Barrasso  | Boozman | Carper  |
| Bennet    | Braun   | Cassidy |
| Blackburn | Burr    | Collins |
| Blunt     | Capito  | Cornyn  |

|            |           |            |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Cotton     | Isakson   | Romney     |
| Cramer     | Johnson   | Rounds     |
| Crapo      | Jones     | Sasse      |
| Cruz       | Kaine     | Scott (FL) |
| Daines     | Kennedy   | Scott (SC) |
| Enzi       | Lankford  | Shaheen    |
| Ernst      | Lee       | Shelby     |
| Fischer    | Manchin   | Sinema     |
| Gardner    | McConnell | Sullivan   |
| Graham     | McSally   | Tester     |
| Grassley   | Moran     | Thune      |
| Hassan     | Murkowski | Tillis     |
| Hawley     | Perdue    | Toomey     |
| Hoeven     | Peters    | Warner     |
| Hyde-Smith | Portman   | Wicker     |
| Inhofe     | Risch     | Young      |

NAYS—31

|              |          |            |
|--------------|----------|------------|
| Baldwin      | Heinrich | Rosen      |
| Blumenthal   | Hirono   | Schatz     |
| Brown        | King     | Schumer    |
| Cantwell     | Leahy    | Smith      |
| Cardin       | Markey   | Stabenow   |
| Casey        | Menendez | Udall      |
| Cortez Masto | Merkley  | Van Hollen |
| Duckworth    | Murphy   | Whitehouse |
| Durbin       | Murray   | Wyden      |
| Feinstein    | Paul     |            |
| Gillibrand   | Reed     |            |

NOT VOTING—9

|           |           |         |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Alexander | Harris    | Rubio   |
| Booker    | Klobuchar | Sanders |
| Coons     | Roberts   | Warren  |

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jennifer D. Nordquist, of Virginia, to be United States Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

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

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas Peter Feddo, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Investment Security. (New Position)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

END CHILD TRAFFICKING NOW ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, this is not the first time I have come to the floor to discuss a situation that is on our Nation's southern border and the need that we as a country have for a stronger, more efficient immigration policy. I have made more than one trip to South Texas this year, and each time I have returned, I have found myself more motivated to cut through the noise, and to get something done.

What should be a practical policy discussion has, unfortunately, turned political, and very real problems have compounded into an unprecedented crisis.

Within these Halls, we have debates over asylum caps and visa requirements. They are indeed important issues, but recent reports on the explosion of human rights violations perpetrated by cartels, coyotes, and international gangs have added some much needed context to these debates.

By now, we have all heard how dangerous the journey to our southern border can be for those who are being brought forward by cartels, coyotes, and international gangs. Traffickers have really built a big business—a very big and profitable business—on moving drugs and desperate human cargo across the border. Sometimes these individuals make it, and sometimes the guides leave their charges to die—to die alone in the desert. Rumors of abuse, assault, and gang rape have manifested and been proven true. Border Patrol agents at most ports of entry administer pregnancy tests to girls as young as 12 years of age.

While we waste time arguing over talking points, monsters—absolute monsters—are dragging children into the crosshairs of an international crisis. While we debate the best way to amend our loose asylum laws, traffickers are finding ways to exploit those laws, using children to force their way back and forth across the border under the guise of parental legitimacy.

"Child recycling" is a crude term but an accurate term, and we define it as when a minor is used more than once by alien adults who are neither relatives nor legal guardians but pose as family members for the purposes of crossing the border. How despicable and how very selfish of them. Child-recycling isn't a myth, unfortunately. It is not an urban legend. It is a definite, well-defined, clear and present danger.

DHS has uncovered more than 5,500 fraudulent asylum claims since May of 2018. I want you to think about that number—5,500 fraudulent asylum claims since May of 2018. Customs and Border Patrol tells us that unaccompanied minors are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and that drug runners and sex predators are rolling the dice on these fraudulent asylum claims to move their products—which, bear in mind, are people and drugs—to move them more efficiently.

Earlier this year, Immigration and Customs Enforcement introduced a pilot program they believed would help determine how serious the child recycling problem is. They began administering DNA tests on all adults accompanied by minors who claimed a familial relationship but lacked the paperwork to prove this relationship. As a safeguard, all swabs were destroyed, and no genetic profiles were collected or stored. The purpose was solely to