

of refugees in that war-torn region. The consequences of these actions by Turkey and its proxies will persist for years to come.

Turkey's incursion poses a direct threat to U.S. national security interests in the region, not the least of which is by facilitating Russian foreign policy ambitions in the region and opening the door for ISIS to reconstitute.

At its inception, Turkey did not take the threat of ISIS seriously enough, and in the early days, ISIS's ability to easily traverse the Turkish-Syrian border bolstered its ability to grow in strength and numbers. Turkey did nothing—nothing—to stop them, did nothing to stop foreign fighters going into Syria. While Turkey has legitimate security concerns from the PKK, its singular focus on extending this feat to the whole Kurdish population risks its ability to effectively confront other terrorist organizations, including ISIS and al-Qaida.

There must be a full accounting by Turkey of these atrocities. That is why I am today introducing an expedited resolution of request for the Secretary of State to inform the Senate in 30 days of the extent of Turkey's human rights abuses in Syria. This resolution invokes statutory authority under the Foreign Assistance Act to require the Secretary of State to assess and report to Congress on Turkey's human rights abuses in Syria. This resolution calls for the administration to provide all available information concerning alleged violations of internationally recognized human rights by Turkey, its armed forces, and associated groups in Syria. It calls for a description of the steps the United States has taken to promote Turkey's respect of human rights in its Syria operations. The resolution also calls for a determination of whether Turkey's actions have resulted in the release of ISIS or other extremists inside of Syria.

I am also working closely with the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Risch, on the Promoting American National Security and Preventing the Resurgence of ISIS Act of 2019, which would impose targeted sanctions on Turkey for its actions in Syria. A similar bipartisan measure passed the House last week, and I urge the Senate to deliberate on the measure. Based on changing circumstances on the ground, we are updating the language to condition sanctions based on Turkey's actions. I hope it will be marked up in the coming days.

For years, the world held out hope that Turkey could be the bridge between east and west—a democratic, secular country that could be a democracy in Europe and a responsible actor on the world stage. I, for one, was always skeptical but certainly supported the sentiment. Today we are the furthest from that dream we have ever been. The most imprisoned journalists in the world—in the world—are not in

North Korea, Russia, or Iran; they languish in Turkish prisons. This doesn't happen in a democracy.

As international pressure mounted following Turkey's invasion of northern Syria, Erdogan threatened to unleash thousands of refugees onto the European Union's shores, a wave like we saw in 2015. These aren't the statements of a rational, responsible actor. Yet where is U.S. policy? The Trump administration was its normal erratic self in recent weeks as it flailed from sanctions on Turkey to claiming victory. The Kurds are the ones who emerged as the clear loser. Erdogan was eager to sign on to the Pence-Pompeo plan because it gave him all he wanted—full control of the Kurdish areas of Syria and carte blanche to wipe out swaths of the community.

In addition to claiming victory, President Trump now wants to invite Erdogan to Washington with open arms. Stunning. The photo of Trump and Erdogan in the Oval Office will not only be the nail in the coffin for any Kurdish aspirations to live in peace and security, it will also be the death knell for any credibility the United States hopes to maintain with any combat partners in the future.

President Trump, I urge you to cancel this invitation and side with the bipartisan consensus in the Senate and the House that Turkey, under Erdogan, is no friend to the United States. Do not ruin our reputation further by fawning over yet another authoritarian leader. You want to repair the damage that has been done? Show our commitment to our allies by inviting the Syrian Kurdish leadership to the Oval Office for a meeting on how we prevent a resurgence of ISIS. That is how you protect our interests. That is how you protect our national security.

It is time to challenge Erdogan to live up to NATO's values and to respect the international order. It is time to stop enabling Turkey to be a bad actor. It is time for the Senate to act.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The clerk will call the roll. The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

## RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

## EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

### 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 nomination of David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Tim Scott, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Braun, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, John Boozman, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Kevin Cramer, John Barrasso, Michael B. Enzi, Chuck Grassley, Mitch McConnell.

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 nomination of David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. Risch), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), 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 yeas and nays resulted—yeas 83, nays 9, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 343 Ex.]

### YEAS—83

Alexander	Ernst	Perdue
Baldwin	Feinstein	Peters
Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Bennet	Gardner	Reed
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blumenthal	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hassan	Rosen
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Heinrich	Rubio
Brown	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Capito	Inhofe	Shaheen
Cardin	Johnson	Shelby
Carper	Jones	Sinema
Casey	Kaine	Smith
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Collins	King	Tester
Coons	Lankford	Thune
Cornyn	Leahy	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Lee	Toomey
Cotton	Manchin	Udall
Cramer	McConnell	Van Hollen
Crapo	McSally	Warner
Cruz	Moran	Whitehouse
Daines	Murkowski	Wicker
Duckworth	Murphy	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	Young
Enzi	Paul	

## NAYS—9

Gillibrand	Markey	Schatz
Harris	Menendez	Schumer
Hirono	Merkley	Stabenow

## NOT VOTING—8

Booker	Klobuchar	Sasse
Burr	Risch	Warren
Isakson	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 83, the nays are 9.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Iowa.

## PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I have a couple of issues on which I want to speak. Trade and section No. 232 would be my second issue. The first one about which I want to speak is commonsense entitlement reform.

In the past year, we have seen a flurry of drug-pricing proposals. I am encouraged by the efforts of my colleagues here in the Senate, especially by Ranking Member WYDEN, by my colleagues in the House of Representatives who agree with this effort to reduce drug prices, and by the President of the United States, who has already been involved for a year and a half in lowering drug prices. All have made lowering prescription drug costs one of the core principles of our efforts and particularly a core principle for this administration.

I have paid attention to each of the pieces of legislation that have been proposed and have looked at their pros and cons closely. However, so far, there is only one bipartisan proposal that cuts prescription drug prices, that protects innovation, that lowers what senior citizens will pay at the pharmacy counter, and that brings along with it entitlement reform. The Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act of 2019 is the bill I am talking about. It responsibly reduces Medicare Part D costs.

As with any widely encompassing piece of legislation, there has been some spirited debate surrounding the different provisions of our bill. So I am here today, hoping to clear up some of the confusion surrounding a phrase that I have heard thrown around in this debate—"price setting." Opponents of the legislation criticize the bill for price setting. The scare tactic associated with this claim is centered on one particular policy in our bill—that of matching the growth of government subsidies that drug manufacturers receive to the rate of consumer inflation.

When I set out at the beginning of this year to create a piece of bipartisan legislation that had real and meaningful change, I knew the focus had to be on individual Americans. That is why we kept out-of-pocket costs at a level at which seniors could see relief. That is why we banned spread pricing, which games the healthcare system to the detriment of the beneficiaries and the taxpayers. That is why we created a new way of paying for lifesaving but very costly Medicare drugs. That is why we kept the growth of government subsidies in Medicare Part D to the rate of inflation.

Unlike other proposals, the Senate Committee on Finance's policy does not tie the launch price to an artificially low price. The bill doesn't stop a drug company from recouping its research and development costs, which will lead to more innovation.

What the Part D inflationary rebate does is really quite simple. After launching, if a drug manufacturer chooses to raise the price above the rate of inflation, it has to return the difference for the drugs paid by Medicare. This policy limits government subsidies in order to provide predictability for the Medicare Program. At the same time, it provides protection for the American taxpayer. That is simply all it does. Any subsidies that the pharmaceutical companies would have received from an exorbitant raise in price is then returned to Americans rather than to line pharma's pockets. The inflation rebate incentivizes companies to stabilize their pricing, and the taxpayers' money is used more prudently and more efficiently.

You have all heard of CATO, the research organization and policy organization. CATO is one of the Nation's leading libertarian and free market organizations. It has praised the bill for its significant cost savings for the taxpayers. Does anyone really think a libertarian organization would endorse price controls? In its analysis of the bill, CATO wrote that this bill "would not impose price controls" and "would reduce wasteful Medicare spending." CATO also acknowledged that these "commonsense tweaks to a bloated entitlement program are encountering strong opposition . . . mostly from those who would not make quite as much money off the taxpayers."

We all know that Medicare's finances are worsening. The program is projected to become insolvent within the next 6 years if we continue down this very same path. In getting back to my bipartisan bill, the Grassley-Wyden bill will ensure that the Federal Government uses Medicare's budget to pay for lifesaving treatments in a fiscally responsible manner.

This goal is not without precedent. For those who say we are acting in an unprecedented way and are setting prices, I say it isn't setting prices. They forget that throughout the American healthcare system, the government has, at one time or another, set up different ways to constrain high and rising costs.

For example, States have not been allowed to pay Medicaid providers at a rate that has been higher than Medicare's. Another example is in the Medicare Program. Medicare Part A has paid for the operating costs associated with acute inpatient care and has used the inpatient prospective payment system, or what is referred to as IPPS. Congress enacted the inpatient prospective payment system to constrain the growth of Medicare's inpatient hospital payments by providing incentives for those facilities to provide care more efficiently.

Congress also requires that the concept of budget neutrality be applied to a number of Medicare payment systems, including to provider payments. This is simple. In other words, the government says that if one provider gets an increase, another provider is reduced.

Finally, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation, within the CMS, is required by statute to enforce financial controls on total Medicare spending. The Center can only test different ways to pay for services in Medicare and Medicaid if they are expected to lower costs while they maintain quality. So this idea of using taxpayer dollars responsibly and in a targeted manner exists in many facets of the American healthcare system.

My point is, while some call the inflationary rebate in Part D a price control, I urge all of the Members to consider how Congress is using measures to contain costs currently. Isn't it the fiscally responsible thing to do when Federal taxpayer dollars are being spent by those of us in Congress? Shouldn't we do what we can to contain costs? After all, it is not what hospitals, doctors, and pharmaceutical companies may charge; it is about what the American taxpayer will pay for services. That doesn't fall into the category of price controls. At the markup for my prescription drug bill, even the Director of the independent Congressional Budget Office agreed with me.

I could continue to give examples of budgetary tools in the toolbox that Congress uses in an attempt to be fiscally responsible with regard to Medicare and Medicaid. I could also continue to provide examples of outrageous drug costs. Yet the bottom line is that the Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act of 2019 is a win for Americans across the board.

Seniors will pay less out of pocket; taxpayers will know their money is being used appropriately; and drug manufacturers will continue to be able to innovate.

That is why Ranking Member WYDEN and I strove to achieve these things in the very beginning. I urge my colleagues to keep these considerations in mind, and hopefully my colleagues will support this legislation as a way of answering the concerns that constituents express in almost every State. At least in the 99 county meetings that I hold in Iowa every year, doing something about the pricing of prescription drugs comes up. It has to be that way all over the country.

## TRADE

Now I want to turn to trade legislation, and I will not be as long on this point as I was on prescription drugs.

When I resumed chairmanship of the Senate Finance Committee in January, I laid out my top priorities for the committee's work.

For international trade, my agenda included reviewing section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, which allows the President, without any input