

congressionally appropriated funds from the military to pay for his wasteful and candidly ineffective border wall.

Finally, President Trump's decision to terminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or DACA, has thrown Dreamers across this country deep into fear and uncertainty. The stakes of that decision have been shown in oral arguments before the Supreme Court this very week.

Dreamers are among our best and brightest—our best and brightest students, teachers, and even veterans. They only know this Nation as their home in many cases, and today I am meeting with a Dreamer named Samuel, who lives in Las Cruces, NM.

Samuel came to the United States from Mexico with his family when he was 11 years old. He has called Las Cruces his hometown for the last 13 years. As a DACA recipient, Samuel was able to study accounting at New Mexico State University and help provide for his family.

Dreamers like Samuel want to give back to their communities and the only Nation they know as home. They are American in every way except on paper, and because of President Trump, Dreamers like Samuel face a deeply fearful future.

Whenever we debate immigration, frankly, it becomes a little personal for me, and that is because, like most—all of us in this Nation of immigrants—my family's story in America began with a search for a better life. My father came to the United States with his family from Germany as a young boy. They were fleeing the government of a racist, populist dictator who was first elected democratically and then used race and scapegoating to cement his grip on power. I always wonder how different my own life would be if America had turned my father away or separated him from his family.

This is not some abstract question for the mothers, fathers, and children who are desperately seeking refuge and the prospect of a better life in America today. I know that so many Americans watching this administration's immigration policies know in their hearts what America truly stands for as a nation built by many generations of immigrants like my father. That includes local officials, first responders, and volunteers in communities like Deming, Las Cruces, and Albuquerque, NM, who over the last year provided shelter, food, and help to asylum seekers who had nowhere else to turn. It includes the thousands of Americans who marched in the streets and demanded an end to family separation, and it includes millions of Americans who want our leaders in Washington to finally affirm the incredible value that immigrants provide for our country.

I want all of you to know that I stand with you. You are on the right and just side of history.

I will keep calling on us to hold this administration accountable to our

American values, and I will keep calling on Congress to uphold our end of the bargain and finally act to reform our broken immigration system. That should start by passing the Dream Act.

We also need to address the root causes of migration from Central America, including extreme poverty, criminal gangs, and violence. We must make smart investments in real border security and economic development in our border communities. We need to provide the necessary medical and humanitarian resources to our border region, particularly for the rugged, backcountry terrain we have in my State.

I will never stop fighting for policies that respect the dignity of immigrants, recognize the real needs of our vibrant border communities, and live up to our true American values.

Unfortunately, I don't think we will ever have a productive path forward on any of these urgent matters with this President and his administration. That is true no matter who President Trump ultimately shuffles into the role of Acting Homeland Security Secretary, but it is especially true if the President chooses Chad Wolf.

When Senator ROSEN questioned Mr. Wolf in the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee about the role he played in family separation and other cruel immigration policies, Mr. Wolf said: "My job wasn't to determine if it was the right or wrong policy." In other words, folks, he was just following orders.

I think it is clear that the Trump administration has shown an appalling disregard for basic human dignity. Now the Senate has confirmed someone who will simply rubberstamp the continued failures of this administration.

I should also note that the current pending vote on the floor is for a judicial nominee, Steven Menashi, who has also played a role in the administration's shameful immigration policies. As a counsel in the Trump administration, Mr. Menashi has acknowledged that he advised Stephen Miller on immigration policy, and he has a long record of opposing the basic human and civil rights of people of color, women, LGBTQ Americans, and immigrants.

As the general counsel at the Department of Education under Betsy DeVos, he played a leading role in trying to deny debt relief to students defrauded by for-profit colleges.

I can't believe that we as the Senate can allow these types of appointments to keep going forward. We should not let this go on. This is not who we are as a country, and this is not the America that I know and love.

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

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

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we just celebrated Veterans Day here in the Senate, back home, and across our great country in the States that all of us represent. Everybody was celebrating our troops, our military, and supporting their families.

You hear that word "support" a lot when it comes to Veterans Day and our military and their families, but I am going to talk a little bit about that rhetoric. That is great. Senators talk a lot. But that is very disconnected from what actually is going on in the Senate right now and what is happening in terms of the action of supporting our troops.

I came to the floor a couple of weeks ago to talk about this. I was pretty fired up. I am someone who is very collegial with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, but the one thing I have noticed is that there is talk on supporting troops and then there is action. The rhetoric, particularly with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, doesn't always match what is actually happening.

I would like to explain to my constituents at home, the American people, and anyone watching what is happening right now with regard to supporting our troops—the action, not rhetoric—the action. Two weeks ago, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle filibustered the Defense appropriations bill. That is the bill that funds our troops. We had a big budget deal. We all agreed to it.

It is hard to vote for it. I voted for it because it actually supports rebuilding our military pretty significantly after the Obama-era cuts. I voted for that.

We are starting to bring up these minibus appropriations. We had one a couple of weeks ago. We debated and voted on it. The plan was to bring up the Defense appropriations bill. What did my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do? They filibustered it. It was the ninth time since I have been in the Senate that my colleagues decided to filibuster the spending for our troops. There is no other bill in the body of the Senate that the Democrats filibuster more than the bill that funds our troops. They don't want you to know that. They don't go home and brag about it because they should be ashamed about it, but that is what they did.

Despite this budget deal and despite all of this great support for our troops, right now, my colleagues, for the ninth time since I have been a Senator, which is 5 years—nine times they filibustered the spending for the men and women who serve in the military. I ask the leaders to come out and explain that to the American people. Explain that to the press. Explain that to the people watching on TV. They don't. I think most of my colleagues don't want to do it, but they are told to do it because their leadership wants another priority. That is what is happening.

They talk about supporting our troops, but then the action is that we

are actually not supporting our troops at all. We are keeping funding away from them because we are trying to leverage the desire to support our military and a Defense appropriations bill for other political goals. This has happened nine times.

There is no other bill since I have been elected to the Senate that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle filibuster more. When they want leverage on a nonmilitary issue, they filibuster spending for the troops. I would welcome some of my colleagues to come and explain why they do that. That is one issue.

Another issue is not my colleagues in the Senate, but it is certainly the Democrats on the other side of Capitol Hill. We are now debating the National Defense Authorization Act—the NDAA, as we call it. This is the heartbeat of the Congress. Why? It has passed this body 58 years in a row. That is the closest thing we have to a guarantee in this body. Members—Democrats and Republicans—come together, and we set forward—coming out of the Armed Services Committee, on which I sit—the NDAA, which oversees, reforms, and authorizes important programs for our national defense and sets spending authorization for the entire military. Again, this process is normally very bipartisan, and it has been and continues to be in the Senate.

I give Chairman INHOFE, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, my good friend from Oklahoma, and Senator REED from Rhode Island, the ranking member, enormous credit for getting a bill that came out of committee 25 to 2. That is very bipartisan. Then, when it came to the Senate floor, it was 86 to 8. OK. That is the Senate saying: Hey, this is really important. We are going to take care of our military. We are going to lay out the policies and the topline numbers for rebuilding our military after the massive cuts from 2010 to 2015. So that is positive.

Why am I complaining about it? Well, that bill right now on the House side, as we have gone into conference, is stuck. It is stuck. Many of the more extreme Members on the House side, who really aren't big supporters of the military—let's call a spade—are now not allowing us to move forward on any kind of compromise in the broader NDAA as we move into conference.

There are provisions that are very important to the military that this body strongly supported in a bipartisan way, but right now, because of what is going on in the House—the leadership in the House, which seems to be a lot more focused on other issues and not the national security of our Nation, is not moving forward on any compromise. Who does this benefit? Well, it certainly doesn't help our troops. It certainly doesn't help our military. It certainly doesn't help their families. I can guarantee you, whether it is our adversaries or potential adversaries—

Russia, China, North Korea, or Iran—as they are watching the stalemate on the NDAA, they are very pleased.

This is something we need to come together and address. I am asking the chairman of the Armed Services Committee over on the House side, Chairman ADAM SMITH, and others to work with the Senate, work with Chairman INHOFE, work with Senator REED on getting to the compromises we all know we need to move this bill for the fifth year in a row to support our military. We think that should be based on the Senate bill.

When you have 86 Senators vote for something—a superbipartisan majority—that should be the basis for compromise. But it is stalled. The chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Chairman INHOFE, has done a great job. He is a very patient man. He and Senator REED, the ranking member on the Armed Services Committee, are frustrated. We are frustrated. The troops are frustrated. We don't have much time to waste.

Again, I would like to conclude by saying that there is a lot of rhetoric here. There is a lot of rhetoric about supporting our troops. But what we need is action. By the way, I think a lot of times my colleagues are like, well, you know the men and women in the military are not really watching this. They don't really know that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have filibustered the funding for what they need nine times in the last 4½ years—nine times. It is disgraceful, in my view. People think, well, they are not really watching what is going on with the NDAA, how the extreme elements of the Democratic Party and the House side are making sure there is no compromise so that we can't move this bill. Guess what. They are watching. They know this.

When they don't get support from the Congress of the United States, it is a problem for our military, not just in terms of the resources they need but in terms of morale. I am going to ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle: The next time you go home and give speeches about supporting our troops, supporting our families, do me a favor. Don't come back to this body and filibuster their spending or, for the Members of the House, don't stake out such obstinate positions that you know there is going to be no compromise on an NDAA bill that is really important to our military and has strong bipartisan support in this body.

I know some of my other colleagues are going to be on the floor talking about this NDAA issue, talking about the Defense appropriations issue. Again, let's match the rhetoric we all talked about with regard to Veterans Day—about supporting our troops—with action on the floor, not just hot air and words.

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I am here to speak about the topic of

healthcare, but while my friend from Alaska is on the floor, I hope we can bridge the policy disagreements we have right now over the Defense appropriations bill, the appropriations process and the authorization bill.

I have been in Congress long enough to have heard this argument be trotted out over and over again that if you vote against a defense bill, then you aren't supporting the troops, even if you have a legitimate policy disagreement you are trying to work out. I have heard that enough to know that it just doesn't match up with reality.

I was told that because I opposed the Iraq war, I didn't support the troops. People in the 1970s were told that if they didn't support the Vietnam war, they were opposing the troops. The fact is, we have a legitimate policy disagreement that we are trying to figure out. Democrats don't think we should be taking money from defense construction projects that are housing and protecting our troops to be used to build a border wall with Mexico that doesn't do anything, in our opinion, to protect the United States compared to the benefit of the spending on military construction projects. We think that, ultimately, we are serving our troops by making sure those military construction projects get funded instead of this wall that doesn't make sense if not for the President's campaign speeches.

So we have some policy disagreements over the budget. I would hope that my colleagues wouldn't try to use this tired argument that if anyone here ever votes against a defense budget, then they somehow are opposing the troops. That is just irresponsible and disingenuous rhetoric.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, I am here to talk about a few patients from Connecticut. We on the Democratic side are trying to put a face to this campaign that the President is engaged in to try to weaken and ultimately eliminate the Affordable Care Act. Right now there is a court case proceeding through the appellate courts that, if successful, would immediately end the Affordable Care Act, which provides insurance to 20 million Americans and makes sure that everybody in this country with a pre-existing condition doesn't get charged more. The President has weighed in on behalf of that lawsuit. He hopes it will succeed.

If it does succeed, we are going to have a humanitarian catastrophe in this country if 20 million people lose their insurance and, once again, insurance companies are allowed to charge you more if you have a sickness or a sick child. We want to make sure we put a face on who is going to be affected if President Trump's sabotage campaign against the Affordable Care Act succeeds.

I know my colleagues have remarks and are lined up to speak, so let me be as brief as I can. I want to tell you the story of just a couple of patients from Connecticut. I am going to cheat and