

crying on the table, that is a child. That is a frightening statement about where we are in our culture.

I have had all kinds of folks say: Well, this is not about infanticide. Infanticide is already illegal.

I said: Yes, that is true.

In 2002, there was unanimous support in this body, in the Senate, to pass a bill saying that if a child is delivered, that would be infanticide. The problem was, it left no consequences at all and allowed what still happens today where if a child is fully delivered, there are no consequences for allowing them to die on the table.

A couple of years ago, Kermit Gosnell was fully delivering children in his abortion clinic. He was fully delivering them, and then he would take scissors, flip the child over, and snip their spinal cord to kill them. He is in prison right now for carrying out that act because that was considered infanticide. But what is still legal is allowing the child to just lie there on the table until they slowly die.

Jill Stanek is a nurse who has practiced for years in Illinois. She gave testimony in a hearing not long ago and testified multiple times about what is going on in some of these abortion facilities and what happens when a child is fully delivered and they are still alive. In her experience, what she has watched before, she has noticed that children will live outside the womb. These are viable children lying on the table, or in her particular hospital, they literally took the child to a linen closet and closed the door and left him there. They would live somewhere between an hour and, some children, as long as 8 hours, just waiting to die. Ladies and gentlemen, in ancient times, it was called exposure when you would take a child and set them outside to die without medical care.

Our vote today was, if a child is fully delivered, should they get medical care, or should we just allow medical facilities to just back off and allow them to slowly die? And today this Senate could not get 60 votes to say we should at least give medical care to that child instead of allowing them to slowly die on the table on their own—a child literally crying, kicking their feet, but ignored. I would hope we are better than that as a country, but apparently the line has still not been discovered for the value of a child. I am one who believes that a child has great value, a child has great worth. Whether that child is a kindergartner or in the womb, that child has value. As a culture, we should stand for the value of every child.

I am amazed, absolutely amazed when I think about the fact that 100 years ago, my wife, my mom, and my daughters would not have been able to vote. I can't even process that 100 years ago, my wife, my mom, and my daughters would not have been allowed to vote in America. What were we thinking as Americans that we did that?

I am amazed that there was a time in America not that long ago where if you

were of Japanese descent, they rounded you up, put you in camps, and held you, as an American citizen, just because you were of Japanese descent. I can't even process the fact that we did that as Americans.

I cannot believe there was a time in America where we looked at African Americans and said: That is three-fifths of a man. I cannot even process that was in our law, that we declared a human being three-fifths of a person.

I am so grateful that we no longer round up people because they are of Japanese descent, that we allow women to vote, and that we consider all people equal. I am so grateful that time has passed. I long for the day, which I believe is coming, that we as a nation look back and say: What were we thinking that we allowed children to live or die based on our convenience? And if a child was inconvenient, we just killed them or we set them on the table and allowed them to slowly die from exposure because they were inconvenient in the moment. There will be a day when we will look back on this season in American history and we will say: What were we thinking that we considered some children more valuable than others, that we considered some lives worth living and some to just be thrown away?

What is your line? When is a life worth protecting? When does life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness actually apply to you in America? I wish it was conception or at least when they can experience pain or at least when they are fully born, but this body has not yet found the moment when we can agree that life is valuable. I long for the day that we do.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I rise today to once again call upon the Senate to take immediate and urgent action to prevent Russia or any other foreign power from interfering in our 2020 elections. Since the last time I came to the Senate floor to talk about this issue, it has become only more urgent. The clock is ticking, and each day that goes by without the Senate taking action, this body becomes more complicit in the hijacking of our democracy by Vladimir Putin or other foreign powers that try to interfere in our elections.

Just in the last week, we have seen significant new developments. We know that the intelligence community briefed the House Intelligence Committee about ongoing Russian interference in our current elections.

We also know that upon learning about that briefing, upon hearing that

the intelligence community was doing its job in keeping Congress informed about election interference, President Trump erupted upon hearing the news. He did not want the House of Representatives to know what the Russians were up to.

We know that soon after that briefing, President Trump unceremoniously fired his Acting Director of National Security, Joseph Maguire, who is a military veteran and a career public servant of great integrity. All of that, we know. And we know that President Trump replaced Mr. Maguire with an Acting Director who has no prior experience in the intelligence community and whose only qualification appears to be to tell President Trump what President Trump wants to hear when it comes to intelligence information or other matters.

None of us should be surprised to learn that the Russians are interfering again in our elections. They did it in 2016. That was the unanimous verdict of all our U.S. intelligence agencies. In fact, that was the verdict by the head of agencies who had been appointed by President Trump. That was also the bipartisan finding of the Senate Intelligence Committee. They found that there was some level of Russian interference in the 2016 elections in every State in the country, all 50 States. It was also the well-documented conclusion in the Muller report that brought a number of indictments against Russian operatives of the GRU.

Just last November, the leaders of the intelligence agencies—again, leaders appointed by the current President—all warned the Congress and the American people that the Russians and other foreign powers would seek to interfere in our elections in 2020. Those agencies included the heads of the NSA, the CRA, the FBI, the DNI, and others. Last November, all of them warned us about expected Russian interference in our elections. So it really should be no surprise that we learned last week of a briefing in the House where the intelligence community said: We told you so.

We have determined that the Russians are interfering right now in the ongoing 2020 elections. That shouldn't be surprising. What is surprising and what is shocking is that the Congress has done virtually nothing to prevent it. Think about that. We were warned in 2016. We have been warned repeatedly since then that the Russians are going to interfere in our 2020 elections. We now have a briefing about ongoing interference and still nothing. What does the President do in response to that information? He fires the head of the intelligence community. He fires him because he doesn't want him to tell Congress what the Russians are doing.

Just last month, in February, the Senate Intelligence Committee issued another report. It was another bipartisan report. What they did was they went back to look at what happened in

the 2016 elections—specifically in the lead-up to the 2016 elections—and asked themselves the question: Why, when we learned that there was some Russian interference, did we not notify and alert the country?

Their findings were interesting. They found that there were various political reasons. People had concerns about making that information public. In fact, the Republican leader, the majority leader here, was one of those who said: No, we should not inform the American people about that interference.

The Senate Intelligence Committee drew lessons from that, saying: We shouldn't be caught once again unprepared. That is what they said in the report just last month, and now we are sitting here today with the intelligence community telling us the Russians are interfering right now as we speak, and we are doing nothing about it. Our democracy is under attack, and we are just pretending things are going on as normal. You would think we would all agree that when our democracy is under attack, we should unify immediately and take every action necessary to prevent that.

What could and should we do?

We should harden our election systems. We should make sure that voting systems around the country are harder to hack. We should make sure that voter registration information is harder to hack, and we have dedicated some additional resources to that. We haven't done enough, but we have taken some small steps in that direction, as we should.

This is a situation in which the best defense is a good offense, and as long as Vladimir Putin and the Russians don't pay any price at all for interfering in our elections, it should be no surprise that they are going to keep on doing it. It is cost-free to them. In fact, they are gaining major benefits, and we see them around the country. They are succeeding in helping to divide Americans against one another. They are succeeding in undermining public confidence in the democratic system. That is exactly what Vladimir Putin wants to do here in the United States and among our allies in Europe and elsewhere around the world.

What should we do about it?

After we learned of what happened in 2016, Senator RUBIO and I introduced a bipartisan bill. It is called the DETER Act. In addition to Senator RUBIO and me, we have Republican and Democratic cosponsors.

What does the bill do?

It is pretty straightforward. It says to Vladimir Putin and other foreign powers: If we catch you interfering in a future election, you will pay a price. That price will be immediate, and it will be severe. So, if you are thinking about what benefits you might gain from interfering in an American election, you will know there will also be a big price to pay.

That is the legislation that Senator RUBIO and I introduced back in 2017. It

has not gotten a vote here in the U.S. Senate. It has not gotten it. It didn't have a vote in the last Congress, so we reintroduced it in this Congress.

Now, last fall, when we were taking up the National Defense Authorization Act, the NDAA, the Senate agreed that part of our national defense meant defending our democracy and part of our defending our democracy meant defending the integrity of our elections. So we unanimously, by a voice vote here in the Senate, said that the Defense authorization bill should include a provision like the DETER Act, that it should include a provision that says to the Russians and other foreign powers: If we catch you interfering in an election, there will be a severe price to pay.

When I talk about a severe price, I mean sanctions on their economies, sanctions on their major banks, sanctions on the energy sectors—real economic pain, not imposing sanctions on a few oligarchs, but real pain. That is what the Senate said we should do as part of the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act.

Guess what happened?

When the conferees—when the negotiators—went behind closed doors, the White House essentially told the Senate conferees: Huh-uh, we don't want you adopting these important protections—protections to defend the integrity of our democracy.

So, despite that unanimous Senate vote, it just disappeared in the middle of the night from the negotiations over the Defense authorization bill.

What do we do?

The clock is ticking, and it is time for the Senate to do now what it said it wanted to do when we unanimously passed that motion to instruct the conferees to pass something like the DETER Act as part of the Defense bill, and we are, right now, engaged in ongoing discussions with the chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee to try to finally get this bill—this bipartisan bill—out of the U.S. Senate. I hope we make progress because what appears to be the situation is that the White House is essentially putting up a massive roadblock to progress on this matter.

It is not our job in the U.S. Senate to simply do the bidding of this President or of any other President. It is the duty of this Senate to protect our democracy against what we know is an ongoing attack on the integrity of our elections.

That is why I am here on the floor right now, because we just got the news last week that everything we had been warned about in terms of expected Russian interference in our 2020 elections is coming true. So we have a missile aimed at the integrity of our elections, and the Senate is doing nothing about it. It is unbelievable and grossly negligent to know, in realtime, that our elections are being undermined and to take no action.

I just want to say to my colleagues that, if we don't move forward on the bipartisan DETER Act in the coming days and make progress in the coming days, I will be back here on the Senate floor next week, and I will ask for unanimous consent to bring it up. If Senators want to come down here in the light of day and say no—no to bipartisan legislation that protects our democracy—they can do that, but we are going to keep at this, and with every day that goes by, we learn more about what is happening now.

I close with what I said before: We should not be surprised that Vladimir Putin is interfering in our elections. He did it in 2016, and we have been told ever since then that he will do it again. What is surprising and shocking and grossly negligent is that this body has not taken action to date to protect our democratic process. We are going to keep fighting until we get that done.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Would the Senator accept a question?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Yes, I would be delighted to entertain a question.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, just for the reference of everyone, I believe the majority leader is going to come in for his closing script. When he does, that will end whatever little colloquy we will have had here, and I will then do my "Time to Wake Up" speech.

In the time that it takes the majority leader to get here, I am interested in hearing the Senator from Maryland say that the White House—our White House—the President of the United States—is a massive roadblock to protecting the integrity of our upcoming election from foreign interference. How does that make sense? Why would it be an American President who doesn't want to defend the integrity of an American election from foreign interference?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank the Senator from Rhode Island for the question.

All I can say is we have seen a pattern from this President. We saw this President, President Trump, in Helsinki a few years ago, standing next to Vladimir Putin, and our President was the one who threw our intelligence community under the bus. He said he trusted Vladimir Putin when Putin told him, Don't worry, President Trump. We didn't interfere in your elections.

President Trump said: OK. I think President Putin may be right about our intelligence community.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. He did say it very strongly.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. He did, and we have seen that pattern over and over again.

We just learned of this briefing that took place in the House of Representatives this week. The response from President Trump was not, Oh, my goodness. Let's pass this legislation. It was to fire the guy who was in charge of the intelligence community.

So what do you think?

It is a mystery to all of us as to why the President is taking this action other than the fact that, of course, he did call on Russia in the last election and welcomed its support. We all saw him on national television when he did that.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Yes.

In fact, even the Mueller report showed that there was considerable Russian activity and support in the election that made Donald Trump our President. They couldn't prove an ongoing conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russian election interference effort, but they confirmed that there was a Russian election interference effort. If I recall correctly, they confirmed that the Trump campaign was witting of it, just not conspiring with it, just not directly engaged with it.

So I don't know. Perhaps it is just the hope that, perhaps, he will get elected again with foreign interference and that he doesn't want to close off that option, but it is a little bit odd for the President of the United States not to take the protecting of the security of the American election more seriously.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I am glad Senator WHITEHOUSE made that distinction with respect to the Mueller report.

It is true that they did not find a criminal conspiracy, meaning they did not find some agreement between the Trump campaign and the Russians to interfere, but they found plenty of evidence of the Trump campaign's welcoming the intervention from the Russians.

Of course, we have more recently seen President Trump spreading the conspiracy theories that were launched by Vladimir Putin that it was not the Russians who interfered in the 2016 elections: Oh, my God. It was the Ukrainians who interfered in the 2016 elections.

There is this famous videotape now of Vladimir Putin's saying: Thank God, they are not blaming the Russians anymore. They are blaming the Ukrainians.

Translation: Thank God our propaganda is working, and even the President of the United States and some Members of the House of Representatives are parroting our conspiracy theory, the ones that we cooked up.

It is really alarming that a foreign government—someone like Vladimir Putin—is so successful in spreading its misinformation within our system.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I appreciate the concern of the Senator from Maryland on this, and I wish him success with his legislation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank the Senator for his questions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I come to again raise an alarm about the massive carbon pollution

that we are dumping into our natural world and to tell the stories of two ocean creatures that are suffering from that pollution. Now, we may mock or ignore these creatures—these lesser creatures so far down the food chain from us—but we are fools to ignore the message of what is happening to them.

Matthew 25:41 admonishes, “as you did it to one of the least of these . . . you did it to me.” So we ought not mock and ignore these lesser species because they also have a lesson for us, a warning. If we keep up what we are doing to them, it will soon enough be we who suffer. As Pope Francis warned: Slap Mother Nature, and she will slap you back.

Let's start, before we get to the two species, with an overview.

First, it is not just these two species. Science writer Elizabeth Kolbert has warned that we have entered a sixth great extinction—the first and only great extinction in humans' time on the planet—and that this great extinction is driven by manmade pollution and climate change. Scientists from around the globe have just issued one of the most comprehensive reports ever on Earth's biodiversity, and the head of that panel, Sir Robert Watson, summarized its findings this way.

I quote him here:

The overwhelming evidence . . . presents an ominous picture. The health of ecosystems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than ever. We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide.

The legendary David Attenborough warns that we face what he calls “irreversible damage to the natural world and the collapse of our societies.”

He says: “It may sound frightening, but the scientific evidence is that if we have not taken dramatic action within the next decade, we could face irreversible damage to the natural world and the collapse of our societies.”

In all of this, we need to remember our oceans. Oceans are warming and acidifying and literally suffocating ocean species as oxygen dead zones expand. Earth's oceans warm at the rate of multiple Hiroshima explosions' worth of heat per second—per second. They acidify at the fastest rate in at least 50 million years. They are also fouled with our plastic garbage and polluted by runoff from farming and stormwater. Our oceans' warnings are loud and clear and measurable. They are chronicled by fishermen and sailors and measured with thermometers, tide gauges, and simple pH tests that measure acidification.

It is this acidification that takes me to these two species. The oceans are absorbing around 30 percent of our excess carbon dioxide emissions, and they do that in a chemical interaction that takes up the CO₂ but acidifies the seawater. Don't pretend there is any dispute about this. Acidification is a chemical phenomenon. You can demonstrate it in a middle school science

lab. You can demonstrate it with your breath, an aquarium bubbler, a glass of water, and a pH strip. In fact, I have done so right at this desk.

Here is the first species pictured—the tiny pteropod. It is an oceanic snail about the size of a small pea. It is known as the sea butterfly because it has adapted two butterflylike wings that can propel it around in the ocean.

Acidifying waters make it harder for pteropods and a lot of other shelled creatures to grow their shells and develop from juveniles to adults. Researchers in the Pacific Northwest have reported what they called “severe shell damage” on more than half of the pteropods they collected from Central California to the Canadian border.

These images show the pteropod's shell when the creature's underwater environment becomes more acidic—not good for pteropods. Maintaining their shells against that acidity requires energy—energy that would otherwise go into growth or reproduction. So acidification makes it harder for species, such as the pteropods and other shell creatures at the base of the oceanic food chain, to survive.

Who cares? Who cares about the lowly, humble pteropod? Who cares about some stupid ocean snail? Well, for one, salmon do. Half the diet of some salmon species in the Pacific is pteropods. Salmon fisheries support coastal jobs and economies across our Pacific Northwest. Offshore fishing in the United States is a multibillion dollar industry connected to hundreds of thousands of livelihoods. If you care about our fisheries industry, you should care about the humble pteropod. An entire food chain stands on its tiny back, and we are in that food chain.

Move up the food chain a little, and you find another creature facing peril from acidification—the Dungeness crab. You see this crustacean on ice in your local fish market. It is an important commercial catch along our west coast. In 2014, the last year the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission did a comprehensive report, the Dungeness catch was worth \$170 million. It is Oregon's most valuable fishery, and it is important also for Washington State and for California, where annual landings run between \$40 and \$95 million. Up north, in 2017, Alaska's commercial landings of Dungeness crabs totaled more than 2.1 million pounds.

Last month, marine scientists reported that acidified oceans are dissolving the delicate shells of Dungeness crab larvae. The acidic environment is not just damaging the shells but also damaging the larvae's mechanoreceptors, the hairlike sensory organs that crabs use to hear and feel and make their way around the sea. The damage to the crabs is bad news, but worse is that we are seeing it now. Scientists thought hardy Dungeness crabs wouldn't be affected by acidification for decades. Richard Feely, senior NOAA scientist and coauthor of the study, reports that these “dissolution