

That is not “everything under control,” Mr. President.

If any member of his administration tells the President something optimistic, he repeats it and usually exaggerates it. The disease will magically disappear when the weather gets warm; a vaccine will be ready soon—all misstatements from President Trump.

In a televised meeting with government health experts and pharmaceutical experts, the President repeatedly failed to comprehend that a vaccine would take over a year to develop and test. This is the President of the United States during a crisis. He doesn't even understand the basic rudiments of what is going on. He suggested blithely that we could just use the influenza vaccine for the coronavirus, and he was quickly corrected by Dr. Fauci, one of our health experts. Twenty-four hours later, the President was claiming that pharma executives would speed up the production of a vaccine as a “favor” to him.

President Trump, people are sick. People are dying. This virus is wreaking havoc on the economy, and you look at it as a favor to you? It is not about you, Mr. President; it is about America and the crisis and what our Federal Government is doing to help.

The President saying it was a favor to him, stating such blatant mistruths, was a shocking demonstration of just how little the President listens, how little the President learns, and how little leadership he shows at a time when we desperately need leadership.

During a public health crisis of this magnitude, we need steady and confident leadership from President Trump. So far, it has been totaling lacking—unfortunately for America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question occurs on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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 (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES), 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 (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 64 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Baldwin	Gardner	Peters
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Portman
Bennet	Graham	Reed
Blumenthal	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Harris	Roberts
Booker	Hassan	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rosen
Braun	Heinrich	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Rubio
Burr	Hoeben	Sasse
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Johnson	Shaheen
Carper	Kaine	Shelby
Casey	Kennedy	Sinema
Cassidy	King	Smith
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Loeffler	Tester
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Cramer	Markey	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	McSally	Udall
Daines	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Murphy	Wyden
Feinstein	Murray	Young

NAYS—4

Lee	Schatz
Paul	Scott (FL)

NOT VOTING—6

Blackburn	Jones	Sanders
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Warren

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

#### ADVANCED GEOTHERMAL INNOVATION LEADERSHIP ACT OF 2019

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2657) to support innovation in advanced geothermal research and development, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have polled the Members of the Energy Committee and now withdraw the committee-reported substitute amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is withdrawn.

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was withdrawn.

AMENDMENT NO. 1407

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I call up substitute amendment No. 1407.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI] proposes amendment No. 1407.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be waived.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of March 3, 2020, under “Text of Amendments.”)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 1419 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1407

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1419.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. McCONNELL], for Ms. ERNST, proposes an amendment numbered 1419 to amendment No. 1407.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be waived.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a grant program for training wind technicians)

At the end of subtitle C of title II, add the following:

#### SEC. 23. WIND ENERGY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

(a) WIND TECHNICIAN TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title XI of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16411 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### “SEC. 1107. WIND TECHNICIAN TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM.

“(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this section, the term ‘eligible entity’ means a community college or technical school that offers a wind training program.

“(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to purchase large pieces of wind component equipment (such as nacelles, towers, and blades) for use in training wind technician students.

“(c) FUNDING.—Of the amounts made available to the Secretary for administrative expenses to carry out other programs under the authority of the Secretary, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2025.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58; 119 Stat. 601) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1106 the following:

“Sec. 1107. Wind technician training grant program.”.

(b) VETERANS IN WIND ENERGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title XI of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16411 et seq.) (as amended by subsection (a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### “SEC. 1108. VETERANS IN WIND ENERGY.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program to prepare veterans for careers in the wind energy industry that shall be modeled off of the Solar Ready Vets pilot program formerly administered by the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense.

“(b) FUNDING.—Of the amounts made available to the Secretary for administrative expenses to carry out other programs under the authority of the Secretary, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2025.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58; 119 Stat. 601) (as amended by subsection (a)(2)) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1107 the following:

“Sec. 1108. Veterans in wind energy.”.

(c) STUDY AND REPORT ON WIND TECHNICIAN WORKFORCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall convene a task force comprised of 1 or more representatives of each of the stakeholders described in paragraph (2) that shall—

(A) conduct a study to assess the needs of wind technicians in the workforce;

(B) create a comprehensive list that—

(i) lists each type of wind technician position available in the United States; and

(ii) describes the skill sets required for each type of position listed under clause (i); and

(C) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, make publicly available and submit to Congress a report that—

(i) describes the results of that study;

(ii) includes the comprehensive list described in subparagraph (B); and

(iii) provides recommendations—

(I) for creating a credentialing program that may be administered by community colleges, technical schools, and other training institutions; and

(II) that reflect best practices for wind technician training programs, as identified by representatives of the wind industry.

(2) **STAKEHOLDERS DESCRIBED.**—The stakeholders referred to in paragraph (1) are—

(A) the Department of Defense;

(B) the Department of Education;

(C) the Department of Energy;

(D) the Department of Labor;

(E) the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(F) technical schools and community colleges that have wind technician training programs; and

(G) the wind industry.

(3) **FUNDING.**—Of the amounts made available to the Secretary for administrative expenses to carry out other programs under the authority of the Secretary, the Secretary shall use to carry out this subsection \$500,000.

The **PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. **MURKOWSKI.** Mr. President, I thank all of those who just voted for the motion to proceed to S. 2657. We have called up my substitute amendment, No. 1407, which now contains the full text of the American Energy Innovation Act.

We are moving through the process, albeit a little slowly here, but we are moving through the process. We now have more than 150 amendments that have been filed to the bill. Senator **MANCHIN** and I are working together with other Members to sort through potential votes on the bill. We are also working to see which ones might fit into a managers' package of easy, non-controversial, worked-out proposals. I know everyone thinks that theirs is easy and that it has been worked out, and, of course, it is not controversial, but we have a handful of those proposals and are seeking additional ones.

I would remind Members that amendments require bipartisan cooperation, especially from those beyond the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources' jurisdiction. Those who are on the committee have had an opportunity to go through each and every one of these measures that we have in front of us and that have been incorporated as part of this American Energy Innovation Act. That input has been helpful and very, very positive as we have built these proposals. I know some folks are looking at much of this for the first time if they are not on the committee. They have ideas that are good and worthy, and we want to respect that process and incorporate them as appropriate and enhance this bill.

I want to have votes. The leader has said he wants to have an open amend-

ment process. I want to have a managers' package, but it is entirely possible—we have seen it before—that the opportunity will be spoiled. I would just urge Members to be honest about how ready their proposals really are. Sometimes, they might not be as vetted as you think they might be, and they might need some additional work, but know that, as a committee, we stand ready to work with Members on those proposals to better enhance them.

I have taken the opportunity over the past couple of days to share with colleagues more about what our package includes—the result of this good work that we have done over the past year in working through regular order in our committee. Last night, I talked about title I, which focuses on innovation—the big, key buzzword here, “innovation”—everything from energy efficiency and renewables to energy storage. We all talk a lot about energy storage—advanced nuclear and carbon capture, utilization, and storage. So there is a good focus on the innovation side of this bill.

This morning, I would like to highlight what is in title II, which is kind of our security title, and I put it in three different buckets. You have mineral security, which is critical to the supply chain. You have cyber security and grid security, which, again, are key to all operations of commerce and our economy. Then you have the economic security that comes with good jobs. The focus on the workforce is here as well.

Out of these three, I begin with mineral security, because we don't always associate these efforts with meeting our energy and our climate goals.

What we focus on within this bill is the development of new, clean technologies, but there is also a very important reality that we have to acknowledge, which is that meeting our energy and our climate goals will require a significant increase in our supply of critical minerals. The world is not producing nearly enough of almost all of them. Think about that. We are pushing and challenging those within our national labs and those within the private sector and are saying: Move us to these cleaner technologies—the world of renewables. Yet we have to build all of these things. Whether it is your smartphone or whether it is a wind turbine, we need to build them, and they require minerals—they require critical minerals.

If we are not producing them, where are we getting them from? More to the point, the United States is not producing nearly enough of almost any of these materials that we are talking about when it comes to how we move to clean energy sources. We are largely absent from the field, as countries—most notably, China—increasingly dominate long-term supply chains that will give them an almost insurmountable competitive advantage.

Consider a few of the numbers here. According to the World Bank, meeting

the goals that have been set by the Paris Agreement would increase demand for battery storage minerals, like lithium, cobalt, and nickel, by 1,000 percent. Right now, nearly 70 percent of raw cobalt is coming from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and over 60 percent of the processed cobalt used in batteries is controlled by China. Think about that. The United States has no capacity for battery-grade cobalt. That is the situation we are in right now. There is no capacity for battery-grade cobalt here in this country, and that is before the projected 600-percent increase in demand over the next 30 years.

Despite new development on State and private lands in Nevada and North Carolina, the United States only produces about one percent of the world's raw lithium and contributes about seven percent of the processed materials. Think about it—the cobalt that is so necessary and the lithium that we require for our batteries. The same goes for graphite, whereby 60 percent of mined graphite and 100 percent of the processed material is coming from China. We have some very promising reserves in my State of Alaska for graphite. Again, think about what this means when we are talking about solar panels, advanced batteries, and electric vehicles. What are they made of? It is not chocolate and candy canes here. If we want to compete in the industries of the future, we are going to have to do better. We will have to compete with China, particularly, and right now, we are at a disadvantage.

Last year, an expert from the Foreign Policy Analytics testified about China's domination of mineral markets and supply chains. For electric vehicles, China controls or has influence over 80 percent of the supply of rare earth elements. China also controls or has influence over 70 percent of the supply of graphite and graphene, 59 percent of the supply of lithium, 56 percent of the supply of vanadium, and 36 percent of the supply of cobalt.

Some of this is due to the production and supply chains in China. Some of it is as a result of extensive investments that China has made to acquire mines and mining interests around the world, most notably in places like the Congo. Yet this is the reality that we are facing right now—this ever-increasing reliance on and, therefore, vulnerability for these minerals that are so necessary to the investments that we will make.

It is not just China we are talking about here. Canada is well ahead of us. Just this week, Prime Minister Trudeau released the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan, with the goal of “being the leading mining nation,” in part, because minerals are critical to clean energy technologies.

So while other countries are competing to lead in this space, what are we doing here in this country? How are we doing it?

Now, I want to give the administration credit in this space. They recognize the problem. They are acting on it. The President laid down an Executive order. I just visited with the Secretary of the Interior on their minerals analysis, but, really, the facts in front of us are pretty clear.

USGS tells us this every year: We are still a long, long way from true mineral security. Right now, we import at least 50 percent of our supply of 46 different minerals, including 100 percent of 17 of them.

This is like the Achilles' heel for us because we have effectively surrendered the front end of the supply chain, and then we wonder why we have such a hard time capturing any of the rest of it.

So our mineral subtitle will help put us on the right track. It is not an overnight cure-all; there is none. But it will enable the United States to increase the responsible production and processing of critical minerals. It will help us figure out what we have. It will help us develop alternatives and substitutes for the minerals that we lack, and that is an important part of this because, as much as it is important to have that secure supply here, we need to be pushing ourselves to recycle, to find the alternatives and the substitutes. That is key and folds into the first title, which is all about innovation and the technologies that will help us advance that but keeping and pushing on the R&D in that space.

Then, also, what we do within the bill is increase recycling to reduce the need for new supplies. So you have a focus on mineral security, but how that ties into innovation and how we can reuse, recycle, and develop alternatives is key.

Over time, our mineral subtitle will help America become a leader in growing industries like battery and renewable manufacturing, along with the jobs and the economic growth that they represent.

I think it also helps put the United States in the driver's seat to prevent supply disruptions that could quickly derail our efforts to deploy renewables, energy storage, EVs, and other technologies.

There is one thing our minerals subtitle will not do. It will not weaken laws that protect our lands and waters. Our bill continues to ensure that only responsible development is allowed to proceed.

I have heard some claim just as recently as yesterday that our bill will somehow weaken the environmental review process, but know that that is not accurate. That is simply wrong.

The United States, right now, has one of the slowest permitting processes in the world—in the world. Some years back we were dead last; we were actually tied with Papua New Guinea. We do not have a permitting process that is the envy of anyone. It is entirely fair to encourage agencies to do better, like their counterparts all around the

world, by working smarter and more efficiently.

I also want to remind colleagues that we passed this same provision as part of our 2016 energy bill. Minerals were important enough to draw 85 votes back then, in 2016, so I would think that we would regard them as even more important now as our reliance and our vulnerability have only increased.

I want to thank Senator MANCHIN for his support on our efforts on mineral security and for his cosponsorship of the American Mineral Security Act. I was also glad to be able to combine his efforts on a bill that he called Rare Earth Element Advanced Coal Technologies. We have included that bill in our subtitle.

I also want to thank a number of members on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee—Senators BARRASSO, RISCH, DAINES, and MCSALLY—for their help in this very important subtitle.

Another subtitle within title II on security addresses the real and growing threat of cyber attacks. According to the 2019 Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community, China, Russia, and other foreign adversaries are using cyber operations to target our critical energy infrastructure.

We have already seen the real-world ramifications of cyber attacks on energy infrastructure. In December of 2015, Russian hackers cut off power to nearly a quarter of a million people in Ukraine. Two years later, Russian hackers infiltrated the industrial control system of a Saudi Arabian petrochemical plant and disabled the plant's safety systems. We can't let that happen here.

Our electric grid, which is composed of generation, transmission, and distribution resources, is a uniquely critical asset. Every sector of our economy depends on it. We know what the impact would be if there were a successful hack. It could impact homes, hospitals, banks, gas pumps, traffic lights, cell phone services. The consequences really go without bounds in terms of the devastation that could be wrought, particularly if power can't be restored for any meaningful duration.

So, working with the administration, we have seen some good steps to address this through the establishment of the Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Responses, also known as CESER, at the Department of Energy. I thank them for the leadership there. This office is really pretty busy preparing for and responding to more and increasingly sophisticated cyber threats.

Our innovation package builds on that effort through a bill called the PROTECT Act, which will enhance cyber security defenses of grid assets by providing incentives, grants, and technical assistance for utilities to invest in cutting-edge technologies.

The innovation package will also allow all utilities and power producers,

especially those most vulnerable smaller utilities that have fewer resources, to continue investing in new technology that keeps their systems protected against evolving cyber threats.

This is important because we tend to focus on the big systems and what that impact might be, but for many, many, many around the country in our smaller, more rural areas, these are our smaller utilities that don't have the resources to really be as current or as protected as they want to be and as they should be in the event of any kind of cyber threat. So helping assist them is important.

We included language from Senator GARDNER to facilitate State energy security plans and public-private partnerships for grid security. We included Senator CANTWELL's Energy Cybersecurity Act, which puts programs in place for the DOE to effectively partner with industry and other Federal agencies.

Senator CANTWELL has been a real leader—when she was the ranking member on the committee and now—as she continues to focus on this issue, the very important issue of cybersecurity. So she has a good provision included in this bill as well.

The American Energy Innovation Act will help improve our national security in significant ways—again, through mineral security and protecting our electric grid from cyber attacks.

We recognize that these measures play a crucial role in supporting energy innovation and ensuring that its many benefits can be enjoyed by the American people.

There is more that I will take the time to outline at a later point, but I think it is important that, as Members consider what this energy provision allows for, it is pretty expansive. It is pretty expansive, and it is expansive because, again, we haven't seen an energy bill become law in 12 years, so it should be expansive, and it should focus on how we can help facilitate more of the ingenuity and innovation that will come forward from our universities, from our labs, from public-private partnerships, from those who are working every day with great ideas to help, really, transform not only our economy but our environment as well.

So it is more than innovation in the renewable space. It is innovation in the carbon space. It is innovation in the nuclear space. It is innovation when it comes to industrial emissions. It is innovation when it comes to efficiency.

With that innovation comes security, whether it be recognizing that we must do more to ensure that we have stable and secure supply chains through mineral security, through the security that comes with protection of our grids and protection from cyber threats, modernization of our grids, and, again, the security of the good jobs that come with a skilled workforce.

So there is much to talk about in this good measure. Again, I encourage colleagues, we are in an amendment

process. Come to us with your comments, your suggestions, your concerns. Let's work them out, but let's get an energy bill through the Senate, through the House, and signed into law by the President.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NET NEUTRALITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, 2 years ago at this time, we were hearing that the internet, as we know it, was going to disappear. On February 27, 2018, Senate Democrats sent a tweet warning that Americans would be getting the internet one word at a time. Why? Because the Federal Communications Commission had repealed heavyhanded, Obama-era internet regulation. If we didn't immediately undo the FCC's rules change, Democrats warned, the effects on internet access would be catastrophic.

Well, 2 years later, the internet, as we know it, isn't just still with us, it is flourishing. Broadband access has expanded; Americans are enjoying faster internet speeds; and we are implementing 5G internet technology across the Nation, including in more rural places like South Dakota.

It turns out the internet doesn't fall apart without the heavy hand of government. In fact, it thrives. That should be an important lesson for us going forward. Historically speaking, the Federal Government has taken a light-touch approach to internet regulation. The government largely stayed out of the internet's way, and innovation and creativity flourished, delivering nearly everything from Netflix to weather apps, to Uber. But in 2014, the Obama administration decided it wanted the Federal Government to start regulating the internet more heavily, and in 2015, the Obama Federal Communications Commission passed the Open Internet Order, which dramatically expanded the Federal Government's power over the internet in the name of net neutrality.

Now, you might not know it from Democrats' rhetoric, but net neutrality is a concept that enjoys broad support in both parties. I support net neutrality and rules that prevent blocking, throttling, or the paid prioritization of internet traffic. I don't think a major service provider should be able to block a small new startup, and I don't think Netflix should be able to pay to have its search results appear before anyone else's.

What the Obama FCC did in 2015 went far beyond net neutrality. In the name of keeping the internet open to everyone, the Obama FCC asserted broad

new government powers over the internet using rules that were designed for telephone monopolies back during the Great Depression. This opened a whole host of new internet regulations, including price regulations.

Unsurprisingly, the FCC's move resulted in a decline in broadband investment as companies saw the possibility of burdensome new regulations headed their way. That was bad news for Americans, especially Americans in rural States like my home State of South Dakota.

Getting broadband to rural communities is already more challenging than installing broadband in cities or suburbs. The possibility of heavier regulations acted as a further disincentive to expanding access.

Fast forward to 2017, and the Federal Communications Commission, under Chairman Pai, voted to repeal the heavyhanded internet regulations passed by the Obama FCC. Democrats, as I already mentioned, responded hysterically, predicting that the internet, as we knew it, would disappear. Providers, they warned, would slow down internet speeds to a crawl and block access to desired content—except, of course, none of that has happened.

Here is what actually has happened. Broadband investment has rebounded. In 2018, private broadband investment rose by \$3 billion. Broadband access is expanding. The FCC reports that in 2018, "broadband providers, both small and large, deployed fiber networks to 5.9 million new homes, the largest number ever recorded."

Internet speeds have increased.

The Nation is poised for widespread adoption of the next generation of internet, which is 5G. All of this despite light-touch government regulation or, perhaps more accurately, because of light-touch government regulation.

At a time when Democrats are pushing for government takeovers of everything from our healthcare to our energy choices, it is important to remember that a lot of times heavyhanded government involvement causes problems instead of solving them. Of course, there is a place for government regulations, but more government involvement does not automatically mean a better outcome. In fact, a lot of the time it means the opposite.

Giving the Federal Government more power over the internet not only didn't help anything, it actually discouraged the investment needed to ensure that all Americans have access to reliable, high-speed internet service. Lifting the heavy hand of government regulation, on the other hand, encouraged broadband investment, which is resulting in better internet access for more Americans.

If we want the internet to continue to thrive and serve as an engine of economic innovation and advancement, we should ensure that the Federal Government stays away from heavyhanded regulations.

I have spent years calling for a bipartisan net neutrality bill that would address concerns about blocking while codifying a light-touch approach to internet regulation. I am still waiting for a Democratic partner on that legislation.

While the current FCC has established a healthy approach to regulation, a different administration could return and, in the same way they did during the days of the Obama FCC, slow down internet advances like 5G and the expansion of broadband that is happening in rural communities across the country.

I will continue to work for bipartisan net neutrality legislation that ensures that the government will not weigh down the internet with unnecessary and heavyhanded regulations. I hope my Democratic colleagues will join me.

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

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

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate passed my resolution to honor the life of Li Wenliang, the Chinese doctor who heroically tried to warn his fellow citizens and the world about the Wuhan coronavirus late last year. Dr. Li tragically fell victim to that very disease but not before he was victimized by his own government, the Chinese Communist Party. Li was 34 years old when he passed away of coronavirus on February 7. He had a wife, a young child, and another child on the way. His whole life was ahead of him, and now his wife is widowed, his child has no father, and his second child will never know his father.

As Li knew, when you become a doctor, you pledge to care for the sick and the dying—whatever the hardships, whatever the cost, whatever the risks to yourself. So when patients with a severe pneumonia began appearing in Li's hospital late last year, he sounded the alarm to fellow doctors, and the Chinese Communist Party responded with lightning speed—not to contain this epidemic but to intimidate Dr. Li and attack his reputation.

Local Communist goons paid him a visit a few days later, forcing him to retract his statements and apologize for so-called illegal behavior. China's state media piled on, denouncing Li and other whistleblowers as rumormongers who were spreading fear among the Chinese people.

That has been the pattern of the Chinese Communist Party's response to the coronavirus from the very beginning—first coverup and then catastrophe.

When Chinese internet users flooded social media with indignation following Dr. Li's death, their cries were

scrubbed from the internet by the Communist Party's army of censors.

When a Chinese human rights activist called for Chairman Xi to step down, he was detained and then disappeared.

When Wall Street Journal columnist Walter Russell Mead wrote a bracing article about the Chinese Communist Party's failure to contain the coronavirus, the Chinese Communists kicked three of the paper's reporters out of the country.

The Chinese Communist Party's deception has been so thorough that its rare moments of candor, however obviously helpful, have been quickly suppressed and punished.

When the number of reported infections spiked upward due to an improvement in data reporting, the party purged local officials who were likely responsible.

After Chinese scientists gave the world a headstart in developing a vaccine by publishing the disease's genome online, what happened? Were they given awards? Were they celebrated? No. Their lab was shut down the very next day. These scientists deserved awards. They deserved a medal. Instead, they were given a professional death sentence.

The Chinese people have suffered greatly from this coronavirus. They are, in fact, the first and the worst victims of their own Communist government. But now the whole world is suffering with them. Just as the Bubonic plague spread to Europe via traders on the Silk Road, the Wuhan coronavirus is traveling China's new Silk Road. It turns out that the Belt and Road Initiative exports not just China's money and Chinese debt but China's viruses as well as its repression. It threatens not only economies around the world; it threatens peoples around the world.

Right next door to China, Iran is suffering a devastating outbreak of the coronavirus. Birds of a feather flock together, I would have to add. The mullahs in Tehran have emulated the Chinese Communist Party's shameful response to coronavirus, first denying and then downplaying the outbreak until it was no longer possible to ignore the bodies stacking up in clinics, a mysterious sickness spreading through the Cabinet of Iran's Government itself.

Remember the suffering people in these countries when you hear triumphant, self-congratulatory messages coming from Chinese propaganda rags like *Global Times* and *China Daily*—or even the World Health Organization, which, I have to say, seems more interested in protecting the feelings of the Chinese Communist Party than protecting the health of people around the world. China's propagandists are reportedly hard at work on a book exonerating Chairman Xi for his negligent response to this virus.

The official line is that the coronavirus is contained and China is back to work, but don't believe it. Do

not believe the hype. The Chinese Communist Party lied from the very beginning of this outbreak, and it is lying still. It is responsible for the scale of this virus outbreak around the world. This outbreak didn't happen in spite of the Chinese Communist Party's efforts to contain it; it happened because of the Communist system of government.

Three months later, we still don't know how many people have been infected or killed by coronavirus on the Chinese mainland. All we have are bogus statistics that just so happen to track perfectly—perfectly—with the Communist Party line day after day.

I will cite just one example. *Barron's*, the financial publication, discovered that the official number of deaths could be predicted perfectly in advance—in advance—in China using a simple mathematical formula. This coronavirus isn't just contagious and deadly; it is good at math as well—if you believe the Chinese Communist Party. But that doesn't just happen in nature. They are obviously cooking their books. It is not hard to see why. China's economy has ground to a halt. The Chinese Communist Party is desperate to restart it and avoid the first contraction in the last 30 years, whatever it may cost in lives of the Chinese people. If China is truly back to work, as the Chinese Communists claim, it is only because it has employed Communist tactics that evoke the worst horrors of Soviet communism, from Stalin's 5-year plans to Leningrad in 1943.

After shutting down almost half the country's factories to stop the spread of coronavirus, the Chinese Communist Party is opening them again, barely 1 month later. Investors around the world beware: That decision is motivated not by confidence but by desperation. It will almost certainly lead to more outbreaks as workers congregate on crowded subways and factory floors, all because the Chinese Communist Party mandarins, living safely behind armed guards and walls in Beijing, decided that hitting their growth target was more important than the peasants' lives.

When I first called for travel restrictions on China back in late January, Dr. Li was still alive and the coronavirus was, thankfully, far from our shores. Tragically, it is now a global disease, and we have to do all we can to arrest its spread.

The most vital thing China can do is still be fully open and transparent about the origins and extent of the coronavirus.

I say to the Chinese Communist Party: Stop hiding behind your fake numbers and politically correct bureaucrats at the World Health Organization. Let truly independent experts into Wuhan to investigate this virus. The United States has offered repeatedly—repeatedly—to send a team and would do so tomorrow if you would just have the humanity to let them in and help save your own people.

Finally, give those people the freedom to speak candidly about the disease that has devastated your nation. Do not stifle the next whistleblower, the next doctor or nurse who speaks up to save the lives not just of their own people but of the people around the world.

Here in America, only time will tell how this virus will run its course. We have many advantages, though, to help us in this fight. We have the world's best doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals. As important, we live in a republic that protects the liberty of our citizens and gives every American the freedom to speak, to write, to dissent, to sound an alarm—loudly sound an alarm—when we see something that isn't right and we think we can make it right.

Tragically, for himself, for his family, for the world, Dr. Li Wenliang enjoyed no such freedom. Yet he still spoke up to try to save his neighbors and to save the world. For that he was punished, and now he has passed.

May he rest in peace, and may his memories inspire other selfless heroes who will speak truth and hold the Chinese Communist Party to account, no matter the cost.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY).

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BIPARTISAN BACKGROUND CHECKS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on average, we lose 100 Americans every single day to firearms.

Last week marked 1 year since the House of Representatives passed H.R. 8. It was a bipartisan bill. Both Democrats and Republicans supported it. The bill stood for a very basic proposition, and the proposition is this: Whatever your constitutional rights or God-given rights—if you make that argument—to a firearm might be, we as a society cannot allow people who are convicted felons or who are shown to be mentally unstable to legally buy firearms in this country. We are supposed to have background checks to make sure this doesn't happen. It turns out that more than one out of five firearms are sold in America without there having been background checks on the purchasers.

So H.R. 8, this bipartisan bill, passed the House to close the gaps in our background system. What kind of gaps are we talking about? We have terrible gun violence in the city of Chicago. Some of the critics of Chicago like to say: You have the toughest gun laws and the most gun deaths. Well, they don't tell you the whole story. Many of those guns start off not in Chicago and

not in Illinois but at gun shows in Northwest Indiana, where they are sold sometimes in volume without there being any background checks made on the purchasers.

It has been 1 year of nothing in the U.S. Senate in responding to this national crisis—not one thing. It is within the power of the majority leader, Republican Senator MITCH MCCONNELL, of Kentucky, to at least let us address the issue and debate it.

He has a majority. Nothing is going to pass here without Republican support. We know that. But don't the American people deserve a debate? One man, the Republican majority leader, says no. He styles himself as the Grim Reaper of the Senate. He takes pride in the fact that he has killed hundreds of bills passed by the House that will never, ever see the light of day in the U.S. Senate.

Well, I can tell the Senator from Kentucky that after attending so many funerals, after giving heartbreaking sympathy to the families of those who have lost their children and loved ones, after hearing about so many mass shootings—mass shootings—that should shock our conscience—aren't we shocked when people just go to a movie theater in Colorado and are gunned down as they watch a movie? Aren't we shocked when a crowd in Las Vegas just wants to enjoy a country western concert and they are gunned down? Weren't we shocked at a high school in Florida or a first grade classroom in Connecticut when mass shootings take place?

What will it take, America? What will it take for this Senate, what will it take for this majority leader to realize enough is enough?

I believe in Second Amendment rights to bear arms for those who buy them legally, use them and store them responsibly, whether it is for self-defense, sport, or hunting. But none of the people who come to me and argue this issue are arguing for convicted felons and mentally unstable people to buy a firearm. We need them to stand with us and to stand with law enforcement, who are often the victims of these firearms, to make this a safer nation.

There are obvious gaps in the Federal gun laws that make it easy for felons, abusers, and mentally unstable people to get their hands on guns and hurt innocent people. Loopholes in the background check system, like the gun show loophole I mentioned and one I haven't mentioned—the loophole on the internet, where there is no real background check whatsoever—account for massive sales of firearms each year in the United States.

The House-passed Bipartisan Background Checks Act would close these gaps in the background check system. Around 90 percent of Americans support the proposals in this bill—90 percent of them. It is good enough for America, but not good enough for the Senate.

Obviously, the majority leader needs to be persuaded, and 90 percent of America is not enough. It is a common-sense, bipartisan step we should take, consistent with constitutional rights but consistent, as well, with common sense.

I can't explain why the Senate Republicans will not take up a bipartisan, House-passed bill that is so overwhelmingly supported, even by Republicans. There are literally hundreds of bills, which have passed the House of Representatives, gathering dust on the Senate desk, and this is one of them. These bills deal with issues like reducing the cost of prescription drugs, protecting the pensions of working Americans and retired Americans, securing our elections from foreign interference, and, of course, reducing gun violence. They all wait on the desk of the Senator who styles himself the Grim Reaper.

There have been too many excuses for inaction. There is plenty of time, as you can tell, on the Senate floor for us to roll up our sleeves and actually legislate, and when it comes to gun violence, the cost of inaction is devastating—100 Americans a day.

It is time for Senator MCCONNELL to call up H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act, and have this Senate actually debate an issue and actually vote on an issue that can make a real difference in America.

S. 2657

Mr. President, I will commend the majority leader and Senator MURKOWSKI of Alaska for doing something that is out of the ordinary. There is a bill pending before the Senate on the issue of American's energy policy. You see, last year on floor of the U.S. Senate—this deliberative body that has been honored throughout history for the great debates that have taken place here—last year, during the entire calendar year, the Senate considered only 22 amendments in the entire year.

I have served here for a while. I can never remember a time when there was so little activity on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Well, I want to commend Senator MURKOWSKI. She has started us off this year, I hope, with an indication that things might change.

This Energy bill before us is going to be hotly debated. I am not going to agree with every provision, but that isn't required of it. What is required is to bring a measure forward, debate it, compromise where you can, and come up with the best product you can come up with.

Congress has not passed major energy legislation since the year 2009. Over 10 years have passed. Has the energy picture in America changed in 10 years? Of course. Has the environmental picture changed? We know it has.

President Obama, in 2009, in a stimulus package, included critical tax credits for renewable energy like wind and solar. This week's debate marks an

opportunity to tackle a decadelong legislative slump on these issues.

The American Energy Innovation Act seeks to modernize our electrical grid, support research into advanced energy technology, and improve energy efficiency in buildings across America.

Through significant bipartisan effort, my colleagues have constructed a package that starts to address one of America's most pressing issues—energy for our future.

Although the bill contains provisions that support innovation and research at the Department of Energy, I have to say I think we can do more. We need more robust support for basic science research—the kind of research that costs too much and takes too long for private companies to undertake on their own.

Time and again, whether it is new medicine, new medical devices, or new energy policy, the Federal Government has shown the real leadership in basic research.

We are at risk of no longer leading the world in cutting-edge research because our generation is not adequately funding basic science. We are living off the achievements of previous generations. We are not leaving the world of our children and grandchildren better for the research we are doing today—at least not as much as we should. That is why I put forth an amendment to this bill to increase funding for the Department of Energy's Office of Science by 5 percent real growth—that is 5 percent over inflation—each year for the next 5 years.

This amendment will provide more than \$43 billion over 5 years for basic research in energy technology and close a funding gap that has stunted some of DOE's most important projects.

Think for a moment about electric vehicles. Commonly now, their range of mileage is 200 to 300 miles. What if we doubled or tripled that number? Would it change the attitude of the public about using electric vehicles and reducing pollution? I think there is no doubt that it would.

This investment in research will pay off. It will strengthen the Energy bill and help move us into the 21st century in a leadership position where the United States should be.

While my amendment addresses one priority to enhance the American Energy Innovation Act, a larger question remains. It is fundamental and basic: How does this bill on energy address the existential threat of climate change? We should ask that about every bill that comes across the floor—certainly a bill talking about the future of energy.

My colleagues have worked to improve energy efficiency and fund innovation. I support both of those efforts. But this bill does not honestly and aggressively deal with climate change.

Unfortunately, facing the global threat of warming will require more than just faith and technology. Climate change impacts every sector of

American life. It is well past time that we deal with solutions that can promise our kids and grandkids a habitable planet.

According to the climatologist in my State of Illinois, as a result of climate change, Illinois faces higher temperatures and more frequent, intense rainfall than at any other time in our State's history. That is over 200 years.

Our farmers have seen it. Last year, increased precipitation between April and June literally crippled our farmers when it came to planting and left them, many times, with fields that were not productive.

We have seen it in the city of Chicago. In January, there were waves as high as 20 feet pummeling the Lake Michigan shoreline of Chicago and flooding our coastal communities.

During the summer, record temperatures in Chicago last year threatened the elderly with heat stroke and kept many kids behind doors. Even the Trump administration has seen it. Despite the President's denial of climate change, people within his administration spoke up.

In November of 2018, the "Fourth National Climate Assessment" reported that American economic losses could reach hundreds of billions of dollars by the end of the century as a result of climate change.

For decades, scientists have warned us about this threat, and now we can see it in our lives almost every day.

As the Senate considers energy legislation, we do the American people a great disservice by failing to seriously address climate change. That is why I have been working on an approach that I think has some promise.

Let's look back at history, to the 1930s. The United States faced a different existential crisis called the Great Depression. At that time, Franklin Delano Roosevelt established the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. This was an agency that issued low-interest loans and harnessed investment across the economy. The RFC, as it was known, became a critical lifeline for the U.S. economy, and its catch-all approach to investment spurred us into a recovery.

Though climate change represents a different set of challenges than the Great Depression, the RFC model shows us an example of a broad strategy needed to combat existential threats to our Nation. We need to take immediate action to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and limit human-induced global warming.

According to the EPA, in 2018, the United States emitted more than 5.2 billion tons of carbon dioxide—a 3.2-percent increase over the previous year. We are moving in the wrong direction.

Clearly, this administration's strategy of removing the United States from the Paris climate accord and skirting around climate change is one that is not helping us address this issue successfully and effectively. Tackling

this issue requires an immediate reduction in carbon emissions, massive investments in resilience and clean energy technology, and a willingness to take this threat seriously.

Climate change makes the normal disasters in America that much worse. It increases their frequency and their intensity, and it is devastating to the most vulnerable people and businesses in America.

I support efforts like the bill before us—the American Energy Innovation Act—that take small steps toward addressing climate change, but this problem calls for a much larger commitment, not just by the Senate and the House and by the President, but certainly by the American people. We have it within our power, if we have the will, to deal with this challenge.

Research, technology, and a willingness to make a sacrifice for future generations is all it takes. We can put that package together on a bipartisan basis. 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. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, the American people are apprehensive about the spread of the coronavirus in the United States and abroad, as we can always remember. Global financial markets are on edge. Both are resilient, but vigorous action, I believe, is needed to calm nerves, stabilize the situation, and get our arms around this crisis. I believe Congress must marshal the resources necessary for an aggressive, comprehensive, and swift response.

I am pleased to report to my colleagues this afternoon that we, with the House and leadership on both sides, have reached a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on an emergency supplemental appropriations package to do just that. The agreement provides a surge in funding at every level, as I have advocated for—local, State, Federal, and international—to meet the growing challenge that we face.

The total amount included in the package is \$7.76 billion, a little under \$8 billion. We arrived at that figure by going back to the agencies—the NIH, the Centers for Disease Control, and so forth. We asked: What do you need? What do you think you would need if this virus really spreads? We wanted to make sure that they had the tools and the resources and that we would not shortchange the American people in any way.

So the \$7.76 billion, we have been told by the people who know, should be sufficient. We hope it is. Nearly 85 percent of this funding will be spent right here in the United States—85 percent. And

\$2.2 billion is for the Centers for Disease Control, which the Presiding Officer is very familiar with because it is located in Atlanta, GA, including, no less than \$950 million—just short of a billion—to help States and local governments prevent and combat the spread of the virus.

Now, \$836 million will go to the National Institutes of Health to, among other things, train healthcare workers on the frontlines and to develop diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines related to the virus. And \$61 million will support the Food and Drug Administration's role in approving such products for the American people.

Now, \$3.1 billion of this package is for the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund, among other things, to supplement the Strategic National Stockpile here; to develop and purchase diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines; to provide resources for community health centers; and to help hospitals and help systems adapt and respond if this crisis grows.

Another \$300 million is made available for the purchase of additional diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines, should further need arise—in other words, a contingency.

Finally, to fight the spread of the virus abroad, which we have to do, \$1.25 billion is provided to the State Department and USAID to continue their work with our international partners.

We have listened carefully to the agencies and the experts on the frontlines in crafting this package. Vice President PENCE has also been very helpful in this effort, and I appreciate President Trump's eagerness to sign this legislation.

I also take a moment to thank Leaders MCCONNELL and SCHUMER, Vice Chairman LEAHY of the Appropriations Committee, Chairwoman LOWEY, chair of the House Appropriations Committee, and Ranking Member GRANGER for all of us coming together to do the right thing for the American people.

We face this crisis together. We are fighting it together. Ultimately, I believe we will prevail together, but now is the time for action. The House will act first. All indications are they will pass it swiftly—this package. I hope so.

When this package arrives in the Senate, I would urge my colleagues to do the same so we can get help to those who need it and ease some of the anxiety stemming from this outbreak. I think we owe it to the American people to do no less.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Chairman SHELBY just spoke. He and I

have worked so hard together on the Appropriations Committee on the emergency coronavirus supplemental request. I have always enjoyed working with Chairman SHELBY, and I am pleased we can announce that we have reached a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on an emergency supplemental to address the spread of the novel coronavirus and protect the health and safety of the American people. So I thank my friend Chairman SHELBY, Chairwoman LOWEY of the other body, and Ranking Member GRANGER for their cooperation.

I think one of the things I found during my time on the Appropriations Committee is that we tend to leave our labels at the door. We worked together. We did not see each other as Republicans and Democrats. We looked at each other as Members of the House and the Senate trying to get this done. I urge both the majority leader and the Democratic leader to move as quickly as possible, once the House acts today, to get this agreement to the President's desk.

As I said last weekend, there is no reason why we cannot and should not finish this bill this week and get it down to the President for signing. If we have to work Friday or even Saturday, let's get it done and get it done now.

Now, what the House of Representatives is debating today is vastly different from the \$1.25 billion grossly inadequate proposal from the Trump administration that was sent to Congress just 9 days ago. This was so poorly thought out that both Republicans and Democrats said it made no sense.

Where President Trump's proposal would rob Peter to pay Paul by stealing hundreds of millions of dollars from funds meant to contain an ongoing Ebola crisis and take money from programs the American people rely on, like the low-income heating assistance program, LIHEAP, our agreement provides \$7.8 billion in new emergency funding to address this crisis without raiding these important programs. We cannot just turn our backs on funding to address the ongoing Ebola crisis.

And millions of Americans rely on programs like LIHEAP. I would invite any of those from the White House who think we do not need this heating assistance in places like my home state of Vermont, where just a few days ago it was 10 below zero.

Our agreement does not rob Peter to pay Paul. We are not stealing hundreds of millions of dollars from funds meant to contain an ongoing Ebola crisis but simply providing \$7.8 billion in new emergency funding to address this crisis without raiding those important programs.

We also include a \$500 million authorization to enhance the availability of telehealth services—something that could be so helpful in virtually every one of our States.

We also reject the President's extreme "America First" mantra that would include nothing for USAID to

help contain the spread of the coronavirus abroad. Let's be realistic. At a time when communicable diseases are only an airplane flight away, that is a recipe for failure. If we can stop this before it gets to our borders, why shouldn't we work with other countries to do that? So, we instead provide \$1.25 billion in new resources for the global health response, provide humanitarian assistance, and secure funding for emergency evacuations of U.S. citizens, if needed.

We provide \$2.2 billion to support Federal, State, and local public health agencies to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. The funds will support laboratory testing and monitoring, infection control, and public health preparedness. Again, we are taking this completely out of politics and going to where our best people are who need the resources to address this crisis. I talked about some of the need for help with the Governor of our State, who is a Republican, and we worked very, very closely together. I applaud what he has been doing to prepare for this virus.

Our agreement is going to provide more than \$3 billion for research and development of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics to prevent or treat the effects of coronavirus. We are going to include provisions to ensure that vaccines developed with the support of Federal dollars—our tax dollars—remain affordable to those most in need. The taxpayers pay for it. They should not have to pay for it a second time because a large company wants to make a huge profit. In fact, we provide nearly \$1 billion for healthcare preparedness, the procurement of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies and funding to support community health centers, which provide healthcare to so many in our underserved urban areas and rural communities.

We provide \$61 million to the Food and Drug Administration to facilitate the development of new therapies and vaccines to combat the coronavirus but also to mitigate the potential medical supply chain interruptions.

Importantly, this agreement includes \$7 billion in small business disaster loans. What is happening can really hit the small businesses, which are the backbone of America's economy. We have this money, the small business disaster loans, to help mitigate the economic impact of the spread of the coronavirus in the United States.

When we confront this widening crisis, it is important to remember that we are not doing it as Republicans or Democrats seeking to score political points in addressing this threat. It is not something for the Republican Party or the Democratic Party to deal with. We should deal with it as who we are. We are Americans, and we are U.S. Senators. One hundred of us have to speak to our own conscience. At times of crisis in our Nation's history, the Senate has proven its ability to be the conscience of the Nation and a steady

guiding hand. That is what we have to do now.

I am pleased that the House measure does not include legislation related to extending FISA, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. We have had months to deal with that controversial legislation. It has no place on urgent funding legislation to combat the current health situation.

I am confident we can, once again, put aside partisan squabbles and help to lead our Nation forward. Taking up this agreement as soon as possible is the first step.

I will work with Chairman SHELBY. The two of us will work together to shepherd this bipartisan, bicameral agreement through the Senate and to the President.

I would note—and I will speak further on this later on—that there are an awful lot of members of our staffs, both Republican and Democratic, who have worked and worked and worked late nights, worked weekends, and worked on days off to get us here. I applaud the men and women who have done that.

I see my distinguished colleague on the floor, so I will yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

AMERICA'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to address America's aging roads and bridges.

Our highways are in need of repair all across the country. In some places, we actually need to rebuild new roads. That is why I, along with Senators CARPER, CAPITO, and CARDIN, have introduced America's Infrastructure Act.

This bipartisan legislation is going to make a significant investment in our roads, in our bridges, and in our tunnels. It will fund our highways at historic levels.

These investments are critical, but just as critical is speeding up government's approvals for important road projects.

Last Congress, the Environment and Public Works Committee, which I chair, heard testimony about a highway project in my home State of Wyoming. The project took a decade—a full 10 years—to get the required permits—one after another after another—but then it only took a couple of months to get the project done. It is a project that is going to make our roads safer and more efficient, which was the whole desired effect of this project. It was held up because of 10 years of waiting for Washington permits. A decade to permit, months to build—any American with common sense knows that is absurd. America's Transportation Infrastructure Act cuts through Washington redtape so projects can get done faster, better, cheaper, and smarter. That is key.

We used President Trump's One Federal Decision policy as a model. It is a great plan, a great policy put forward by the President. Under the policy, the President has set a goal for his administration of completing environmental



reviews within 2 years. It is a goal I absolutely applaud. Our legislation will codify key elements of that policy into law.

The bill will streamline duplicative requirements by many different Federal agencies on the same project. The permitting process will be simplified and will occur faster.

Our bill also gives States increased flexibility—something States want. So Federal approvals can get moving and the project construction can get started sooner. It reduces the amount of paperwork needed from States to complete the projects. It is unacceptable that the Federal Government would hold up State projects and put drivers at risk. Washington should never prioritize paperwork, which is what Washington tends to do—prioritize paperwork over people's safety.

America's Transportation Infrastructure Act cuts redtape. It makes safety a top priority.

Our legislation is bipartisan, passing the Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously, 21 to 0.

President Trump called on Congress to pass the bill. He did it during his State of the Union Address last month.

This legislation is a win for the entire country. The time is now to pass America's Transportation Infrastructure Act so we can reduce the punishing and costly regulations and then do the important work of improving highway projects so that they can get built.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 8

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I am coming to the floor today as we have just passed the 1-year mark since H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act, passed the House of Representatives. This is a piece of legislation supported by 90 percent of the American public. It is hard for anything to enjoy 90 percent support in this country these days.

The data shows us that this is a piece of legislation that, if enacted, would save lives. We have begged and pleaded for this piece of legislation to come before the Senate. I understand that there may not be 60 votes in the Senate to pass the exact piece of legislation supported by the House, but we could engage in a process of amendment, a process of compromise, and that could end up saving lives and getting a piece of legislation passed that is supported, as I mentioned, by 9 out of 10 Americans.

I have some remarks after what I expect will be an objection to my motion from the majority party.

I will ask unanimous consent of my colleagues that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 29, H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act; I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, if this unanimous consent were passed without a vote or even debate, that would become law. Passage of this request could infringe on the constitutional right of my constituents and many others across the United States. I believe firmly that would be the case and could even result in criminal charges against law-abiding firearms owners. So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. I am sorry to hear the objection. It is obviously not surprising. We have been waiting for a year for this body to act on the issue of gun violence. And though there are a range of measures that may actually be controversial, this is not one of them. This is not one of them.

It is really hard to find folks in America who object to the idea that somebody should have to prove that they are not a criminal, that they don't have a history of serious mental illness, before they purchase a firearm.

The fact is, the longer we wait, the more people die. There is no piece of legislation that is going to eliminate every single gun death in this country. In my State of Connecticut, when we passed the universal background checks law, we saw an immediate 40-percent reduction in gun homicides.

In Missouri, when they repealed their universal background checks law, they saw an immediate 25-percent increase.

That is the short-term immediate rate of return—both on the upside and the downside—you get when you take steps to ensure that criminals don't get guns or you take steps to make it easy for criminals to get guns.

Senator BLUMENTHAL is on the floor with me as well, and he will make remarks. I have been unable to persuade my colleagues, based on the data, that we should pass background checks—the data being the broad public support for the measure, the data being about the impact on people's lives that this piece of legislation would have.

I want to make the case that, just from the simple standpoint of humanity, we should care about listening to the American public and passing legislation that will reduce these numbers. This is heartbreaking. Some 39,000 people a year are dying from gunshot wounds, with 3,011 on average a month and 100 a day.

The majority of these are suicides, but the data tells us that by making it

harder for people to buy guns who shouldn't have them because of a serious history of mental illness or because of their criminal background, you will have less suicides. Many of these are homicides, and many of these are accidental shootings. All of them are preventable by better policy.

Remember, this happens in the United States and nowhere else in the advanced-income world. It is not because we have more mental illness in the United States. There is no evidence of that. It is not because our kids play more video games in the United States. There is no evidence of that. It is not because we spend less money on law enforcement. There is no evidence of that. It is because this country is awash in illegal and dangerous guns. It is because we have made a choice to make it a lot easier for some to find a way to a lethal firearm to commit an act of violence.

Every single one of the 100 persons who die every day is attached to families and friends and neighbors. The data suggests that for everybody who is killed in a gun homicide, there are 20 other people who experience some kind of life-altering, diagnosable trauma because of it.

I want to tell you a few of these stories today—stories of people who over the last year have been among this statistic—40,000 people who died from gunshot wounds. In March 2019, 1 month after H.R. 8 got to the Senate, Shelby Verderosa was home with her 6-month-old daughter when she was shot and killed in Phoenix, AZ. As a new mom, Shelby “was doing everything she possibly could to make sure her daughter had the best life,” said her cousin. One month after H.R. 8 passed the Senate, she was shot and killed when she was home with her 6-month-old daughter.

Lamar Sharp was at a picnic in Kansas City in April—2 months after H.R. 8 got here to the Senate—when he heard gunshots. Instead of running away from the gunshots toward safety, he ran to save his friend's 2-year-old grandson, and he was shot three times. He died 5 days before his 32nd birthday, 2 months after H.R. 8 got to the Senate floor.

In May, 3 months after the background checks bill got to the Senate, three LGBTQ+ young people were shot in Detroit. Alunte Davis, Timothy Blancher, and Paris Cameron were known for being funny. They were known for being wildly charismatic. Police believe their sexual orientation and gender identity were factors in their murders.

A month later, 4 months after H.R. 8 got here to the Senate, Durelle Moxley was killed on Father's Day when a shooting broke out in his neighborhood. Durelle and his wife had three young children. His friends said:

He was really proud to be a father. He was pumped and he was really celebrating Father's Day.

In July, 5 months after H.R. 8 got to the Senate, 5 months after sitting on

MITCH MCCONNELL's desk, awaiting action, Julianna Carr was killed by her brother in a murder-suicide at a housewarming party in Katy, TX. She left behind a husband and two children whom she called her "greatest loves."

Jurnee Thompson was 8 years old when she was shot in August, 6 months after the Senate got H.R. 8—6 months of doing nothing on a bill with 90 percent public support. Jurnee was the 14th child to be shot and killed in St. Louis alone last summer. Her dad says losing her was "one of the biggest fears of my life and now I'm living it as a reality."

In September, 7 months after H.R. 8 showed up in the Senate and the Senate did nothing with it, Usher Hanns was 17 years old when he was shot and killed. He was a senior at Weaver High School in Connecticut. He was a member of Hartford's Proud Drill, Drum, and Dance Corp. His mom said he was "a good son. He always made me smile. He's a joyful kid."

Deirdre Zaccardi was murdered by her husband Joseph in Abington, PA, in October, 8 months after H.R. 8 got to the Senate. He also shot their three children, Alexis, Nathaniel, and Kathryn, before turning the gun on himself. The Abington police chief said their deaths were "a horrific event no one should ever see."

Nine months after H.R. 8 got here in November, Gracie Ann Muehlberger was shot by a classmate with a semi-automatic, untraceable "ghost gun" in Santa Clarita, CA. Hundreds attended Gracie's memorial service. Her friends described her as an "independent spirit."

In December, 10 months after the House passed H.R. 8—10 months of doing nothing with it here in the Senate—Sergeant Chris Brewster was responding to a domestic violence call in Houston. When he got there, he was shot by a suspect fleeing the scene. He was a devoted husband who loved making people laugh. Friends described him as "wonderfully weird."

In January, 11 months after H.R. 8 got to the Senate, Gregory Rieves was killed. He had retired after 22 years as a State trooper, a career that he called his dream job. He was killed in Illinois. His friends described him as "the most gentle, kind-hearted person you could ever know."

In February of this year, two sisters, Abbaney and Deja Matts, were shot by Abbaney's ex-boyfriend in a dormitory in Commerce, TX. "I just want people to know they were fun," said their mom.

Just last week in Milwaukee, almost exactly a year since H.R. 8 came to the Senate, five people were shot on the campus of Molson Coors. People who went to work on a normal Wednesday and whose families will never get to hug them or tell them goodbye or hear their voices again were shot and killed in a workplace shooting.

Senator BLUMENTHAL and I are not going to give up. We are not going to

give up because of what we have been through in Connecticut, having experienced and lived through the aftermath of the horrific shooting in Sandy Hook, but also because of what we see happening every single day in places we represent—murders that happen in Hartford and Bridgeport and New Haven, murders that happen in rural areas of our State, as well—accidental shootings, homicides, suicides. Nowhere else, other than in the United States, does this epidemic of carnage happen at this rate. It happens because we have made a choice. We have made a choice to let the gun industry run Washington, DC, to give them veto power over gun policy that has helped their bottom line, that has made gun company executives rich. But it has resulted in 40,000 people a year dying—100 a day.

I will continue to come to the floor and tell the stories of those who have been lost. I am deeply sorry that when we try to bring up unanimous consent requests to the Senate to have a debate or a vote on H.R. 8, we keep hearing objections.

We don't run the Senate. Democrats are not in charge. We don't get to set the agenda. MITCH MCCONNELL, Senator MCCONNELL, does; Republicans who are part of leadership do. All you have to do is bring this bill to the floor. Let's have a debate on an expanded background checks proposal.

I get that the version of the bill that passed the House might not have 60 votes here, but why don't we try to find common ground? Why don't we sit down and do what the Senate used to do and find compromise that makes the country a better place? The fact that we aren't even trying to find bipartisan agreement on a background checks proposal is absolutely heartbreaking, not just to me or to Senator BLUMENTHAL; it is heartbreaking to the survivors and the family members of the folks who aren't with us any longer. It is an insult to them that we are not even lifting a finger to try to make this country a safer place.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am honored to join my colleague and friend, Senator MURPHY.

First, let me thank him for his leadership. We have worked together as a team. We have been partners in this effort from the very first days of our elections, and we were together at Sandy Hook on the afternoon of December 14, 2012, when we saw and met many of the families who suffered that absolutely unspeakable loss in an unimaginable tragedy that haunts us both to this day.

Just this morning, as a matter of fact, I was with one of the dads, Mark Barden, who has turned his grief into tremendously positive work in our schools, forming an organization called Sandy Hook Promise, one of the numerous grassroots organizations that

has grown in the wake of that tragedy. Of course, Brady existed before Sandy Hook, but afterward, there was Sandy Hook Promise and Newtown Action Alliance. Connecticut Against Gun Violence expanded, Moms Demand Action, Students Demand Action, Everytown for Gun Safety, Gifford—the list reflects the outrage and fear of the American public against this epidemic.

I am here to talk about an epidemic, a public health menace. Of course, we must do something to take effective action and do it promptly against coronavirus, COVID-19, which also reflects a threat to our health and safety. It has already killed Americans. It threatens to spread. There is a need for preparedness and honesty and truthfulness to the American public about the extent of the threat and about the need for action.

Gun violence today in America—just today and every day in America—kills more than 100 people. That number reflects only the fatalities. It is no measure of the people who are injured, sometimes crippled for life, and often emotionally damaged. It fails to reflect the families who suffer those losses and the trauma that affects children who are truly innocent bystanders to the drive-by shootings in downtown Hartford or Bridgeport or New Haven.

Literally, no community in America is immune from this public health epidemic, this menace that afflicts America unlike any other country in the world. Globalization has affected many public health threats, as we are learning about coronavirus. But America is unique in the magnitude of its gun violence epidemic, as my colleague Senator MURPHY has said so well.

The costs are not just in human lives and emotion. Even if you care nothing about the human condition, think about the dollars and cents—the costs, the medical care, and, of course, the talent and energy, the intelligence, the productivity that is lost literally every day in those 100 lives. There is no vaccine. There is no panacea. There is no magic cure for this epidemic.

The bill that brings us here today is just one piece of legislation, one tool that is vitally necessary, but it is only one step. It will not solve all of the problems of gun violence, but we know it will save lives. We know it from our experience in Connecticut. We know this enforcement mechanism will keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people.

It adds no new prohibitions. It imposes no new categories of people who are prohibited from buying guns. Those categories and those prohibitions are already in the Federal law. This background check expansion to all sales—not just federally licensed deals but private sales, sales on the internet—is simply a way to enforce the existing prohibitions, which were supported, by the way, by the NRA when they were passed decades of ago. It simply makes those prohibitions real.

I know, from my experience as a prosecutor over decades and as a State

attorney general, that the best laws on the books are dead letter if they are unenforced. That is really why 98 percent of the American people, the vast majority of gun owners, and even NRA members support this legislation. It is a simple, commonsense way to enforce existing prohibitions that keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. It is the least we can do for those victims of gun violence whose images and voices and faces are with their families still and many of them with us every day.

We should be very clear—because this measure should not be oversold—that it will not alone solve the problem of gun violence. There are a variety of other measures. I have introduced the emergency risk protection order legislation that would enable law enforcement—local police or State and Federal law enforcement—to take guns away from people who are dangerous to themselves or others. That legislation would require a warrant, and it would enable the warrant to be eventually challenged in a court proceeding. It would provide due process, which would be particularly important in domestic disputes when an estranged intimate partner may have a gun or when there is suicide and self-harm is threatened. This has worked in Florida thousands of times, where it was passed most recently, and in Connecticut. Connecticut was the first in the Nation to adopt an emergency risk protection order, and it has worked.

Along with that law are safe storage measures. There is Ethan's Law, which was named after Ethan Song, who was lost to his wonderful parents, Kristin and Michael Song. Ethan was visiting a friend whose parents failed to store their gun safely, and in that unimaginable tragedy, he was lost.

Of course, there are also other measures, like eliminating sweetheart deals that provide unique and virtually absolute immunity to gun manufacturers. The Sandy Hook surviving families are seeking redress against the manufacturer of the gun that killed their 20 children and 6 great educators. They are overcoming the obstacles imposed by the law that provides that immunity to the gun manufacturers.

Assault weapons bans, ammunition background checks, and high-capacity magazines are a series of measures that we should consider. It is not that every one of them is necessary, but every one of them can help to save lives. Not one of them alone will prevent all of these fatalities.

The least we can do is debate H.R. 8, which has been language on the Senate floor now for a year without its being called for a vote. That is really unconscionable. I know we use that word "unconscionable" so frequently that perhaps it has lost its meaning, but if we have a conscience and if we have a belief and a conviction in the democratic process, we should at least give a vote to this measure that is life-saving, that is supported by almost all

of the American people, and that is opposed only by the NRA and a gun lobby that is diminishing in power. In fact, the NRA is crumbling from within because of a financial scandal and on the outside because its extreme, inflexible positions are untenable to an American public that sees the public health epidemic before us as a result of gun violence and says: Enough is enough.

There is a movement that will eventually prevail. Whether it will win in this session—because we have been blocked again from unanimous consent by our Republican colleagues—I don't know. I do know with certainty that it will prevail because these grassroots have grown and have created a movement. The students of Parkland have created a movement. The Sandy Hook Promise, the Newtown Action Alliance, Brady, Giffords, and others have created a movement. Like many movements and social causes in this country—the civil rights movement being the best example—this is fuel and power and is led by young people who are saying with the most passion of all: Enough is enough.

Every one of them and every one of us knows someone—a family member, a coworker, a co-student, a colleague—who has been affected by gun violence. Almost two-thirds of those 100 deaths every day are from suicide, so we know mental health has to be addressed and that we need to invest more in mental health diagnoses and treatments.

Again, mental health diagnoses and treatments alone are not a solution. I have long spearheaded and advocated for mental health parity—more treatment, more insurance coverage—but they alone will not solve the gun violence epidemic in this country.

The fact is that the States that have universal background checks, according to a recent study, have had 52 percent fewer mass shootings than the States that have lacked them. It makes sense. Background check laws mean that 80 percent of the firearms acquired for criminal purposes can be stopped from being sold by unlicensed sellers.

We in Connecticut have one of the strongest universal background checks on the books anywhere in the country. Yet we know guns have, really, no respect for State borders. They cross State borders with impunity. They cause deaths in Connecticut even if they have been manufactured elsewhere or have been sold in the South and have come via the Iron Pipeline to Connecticut or to New York or to New Jersey, which also has strong gun laws. This national public health epidemic demands a national—Federal—solution that protects our Nation.

The Odessa shooting just this past August serves as a tragic reminder of the steep price that inaction exacts. The Odessa shooter failed a background check, but then he turned right around after he failed that background check from a licensed dealer and bought an assault-style rifle in a private sale.

That private sale was not covered by a background check, and seven more innocent people are dead as a result.

On December 14, 2012, I promised the parents who lost loved ones at Sandy Hook and other families that I would fight and do everything I could to make sure that no more parents would have to bury their children. I have worked tirelessly, along with others, like my colleague Senator MURPHY and many of us on this side of the aisle, on public health and safety measures that would stop gun violence. I have also worked with Senator GRAHAM on an emergency risk protection order proposal that has shown very serious signs of acceptance on that side of the aisle and even by the White House. So far, inaction has been the result.

Since that day, December 14, 2012, there have been 2,389 mass shootings, not counting the individual lives lost in Hartford or in the suburbs or in the rural areas. It is an equal opportunity public health epidemic. Like any epidemic, no one is immune. Over 2,000 times, families have had to wait, like the parents of Newtown, to see whether that morning's kiss goodbye would be the last. They have had to wait to see whether that last wave at the school door would be the final one. That really is unconscionable in the greatest country in the history of the world.

When I stood here in the months after 2012—in fact, in 2013—when we last voted on a universal background check bill, it was supported by a majority of my colleagues. There were 54 who voted for it, but it was not enough to reach the 60-vote threshold.

From the Galleries, I heard one of those parents shout "Shame." He was right. Shame on my Republican colleagues then, and shame on them now if they defy common sense and the will of the American people by preventing a vote—simply a vote. That is what we are asking for—a vote on H.R. 8. A year has passed since the House voted and approved this bill. Shame on them—my Republican colleagues—if they stand in the way of saving lives. Shame on them if they allow the carnage to continue on our streets, in our neighborhoods, and in our communities, crippling families and tearing apart those communities.

The vicelike grip of the gun lobby is breaking, and there will be bipartisan collaboration. It will be the result of not my persuasion from speeches given on the floor but of the American people at the polls, because the ultimate court is the court of public opinion and because the ultimate voice here is that of the American people.

In the military, there is a saying: "The enemy has a vote." Here, the enemies are the shooters, and the enemies are the opposers of these commonsense measures. We cannot allow them to have a vote. It is the American people who will vote, and they will hold accountable those colleagues who fail to be on the right side of this issue and on the right side of history.

I urge my Republican colleagues to rethink, to revisit, to reconsider their staunch, unyielding, inflexible opposition to even having a vote. To them, I say: Do your job. We are here to vote and save lives.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BROADBAND ACCESS

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I call the Senate's attention this afternoon to a pair of bills that are critical to the deployment of broadband access across the United States and the worldwide race to 5G, which we, of course, hope to win and will win.

The first of these measures will ensure that telecommunications networks are safe and secure from foreign intrusion. The second bill, which I hope the Senate will take up and pass even today by unanimous consent, would help create highly accurate broadband coverage data that will help expand access to high-speed internet. Both of these measures are Commerce Committee priorities and are the result of extensive negotiations and work on a bipartisan and bicameral basis.

Our economic and national security depend on nationwide access to high-speed internet that is safe and secure. The threat of foreign espionage through our broadband infrastructure is real, and it stems directly from the Chinese tech firms, like Huawei and ZTE.

These companies are pawns of the Chinese Government. As a matter of fact, for all practical purposes, they are wholly owned entities of the Chinese Government, and they are putting on a full-court press to establish their footprint in wireless networks around the world and right here in the United States.

Huawei and ZTE receive massive subsidies each year from the Chinese Government, and it is really beyond dispute that they are doing the bidding of the Chinese Communist Party.

Some of our allies have come to realize this threat and have taken decisive action. I want to commend Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. They have all banned Huawei technologies from their networks.

I am grateful that the Trump administration has shown strong leadership on this issue.

Last year, the Department of Commerce placed Huawei on its Entity List, severely limiting its ability to do business with U.S. companies. That was a bold step, but, unfortunately, some of our networks had already been compromised by Huawei by the time the Commerce Department took action.

So last week, the Senate took a major step toward removing the Chinese threat by passing the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act.

This bill, which some refer to as the "rip and replace" bill, would rip out the Huawei equipment and replace it with reliable equipment that will not engage in espionage.

This legislation will lay the foundation to give strong financial incentives to U.S. firms to strip out their Huawei and ZTE technology and replace it with secure alternatives. It will also help small, rural telecom providers transition away from firms that are controlled by Beijing.

That bill is now on the President's desk, awaiting his signature, and it may be that he is going to wait until it can be joined by the Broadband DATA Act, which, again, I say can be passed by this body as early as this evening, when we adjourn.

In December, the Senate unanimously passed the measure, but because the House passed a slightly amended version of the bill yesterday, we need to act again today to get this bill across the finish line and on to the White House.

The Broadband DATA Act addresses the Federal Communication Commission's flawed maps, which the Presiding Officer and I have been so concerned about. Every year, the FCC spends billions of dollars to promote deployment of broadband across the United States. This funding is especially important for America's rural communication, which so often lags behind in broadband development. We have done a lot to close the digital divide, but an estimated 20 million Americans still lack access to broadband.

For years, Members from both parties have noted that the FCC's maps have overstated broadband coverage, thereby understating the problem. For example, for Mississippi, the FCC map claims that we have a 98-percent mobile broadband coverage—something anybody can say from experience is not true. It is far from true. Without accurate maps, the FCC cannot direct support to areas most in need.

The Broadband DATA Act will fix this problem by creating a new database of areas in need of service, requiring providers to submit precise data, establishing specific standards for data collection, and allowing crowd sourcing to encourage public participation in the process.

As a result, the Broadband DATA Act will also help target Federal funds toward those areas most in need of assistance. These steps will pave the way for more Americans across the heartland to exercise and to access high-speed broadband and to enjoy the economic opportunities that come with that.

Coupled with last week's passage of the "rip and replace" legislation, Congress has achieved an important victory for our country and national security.

In conclusion, I want to recognize the excellent work of my staff on the Commerce Committee, both the majority and the minority.

I want to thank my friend and ranking member, Senator CANTWELL, as well as Chairman PALLONE and Ranking Member WALDEN of the House of Representatives on the Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as the members of their staff. Their efforts have gotten us to this point, ready for the President to put a signature on these two very important bills.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2590

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, the discovery of thousands of fetal remains in Indiana at an abortionist's home last year horrified us all and highlighted a disturbing trend that Indiana has taken the lead in rectifying.

This bill is our chance to fix the problem nationally. I believe all human life deserves a dignified burial, and fetal remains deserve to be treated with respect, not as medical waste. Sadly, irreverence toward fetal remains, like Dr. Klopfer's grotesque collection, in our case, is not an isolated incident. For example, in 2015, a Minnesota hospital threw out the body of a stillborn baby with dirty laundry.

Indiana has led the way. Governor MIKE PENCE signed a law in 2016 protecting the dignity of fetal remains, upheld by the Supreme Court last year in *Box v. Planned Parenthood*.

This legislation, the Dignity for Aborted Children Act, builds on Indiana's success and provides guidelines for handling fetal remains and penalties for failing to respect the sanctity of human life, and it ensures that crimes like Dr. Klopfer's have consequences.

The bill would require abortion providers to dispose of the remains of unborn children just as any other human remains or to release the remains to the family, should the family wish to receive them. This bill does not tell anyone what to do with their body. It only holds human fetuses to a higher standard of dignity than medical waste.

Last week, this body could not agree to ban abortions after science tells us fetuses are capable of feeling pain. This body could not agree to ensure that babies born alive after botched abortions should receive the same standard of care as a baby born in a hospital.

At the very least, we should be able to agree to treat the remains of unborn children with the reverence befitting a

human life rather than as medical waste.

Given this, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 2590 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, we have a serious public health crisis on our hands right now, and we expect it to get much worse. Right now, families across this country are actually looking to Congress to put partisanship aside and put their needs first and are counting on us to listen to experts and make decisions that are guided by science, not by ideology.

They need to know that our No. 1 priority and what we should be talking about is public health today.

Instead of discussing this harmful bill that will gut reproductive rights, put unnecessary restrictions on medical providers, and undermine medical research, which is an absolute non-starter and the absolute last thing we should be doing right now, I think we should be focused on what families actually need us to be focused on, which is the coronavirus outbreak and what it means for them and what we are doing about it.

The news of this virus is spreading throughout the country. The deaths, the illness, and the confusion it has caused in my home State of Washington and elsewhere are beyond alarming. The Trump administration has fallen far short of its responsibilities to Washington State and to communities nationwide.

I am pleased Democrats and Republicans in Congress were able to put partisanship aside to hammer out the robust emergency supplemental funding agreement that was announced earlier today. It is an agreement that goes well beyond President Trump's totally inadequate request in order to actually meet the needs we are hearing about from the officials on the frontlines of this crisis, like reimbursing States and local governments that have shouldered the cost of this response so far or the need to support research so we can develop new treatments and diagnostic tests and vaccines and the need to make sure those are available to everyone.

This agreement helps us prepare for what is next by providing funding to shore up our store of medical supplies, support medical community health centers in underserved areas, and bolster global health and public health preparedness programs.

I am working to make sure we get that bill signed into law as soon as pos-

sible, and I will continue to follow it closely because experts have already made it very clear this is not going to be over soon.

While the funding is a great first step, we need to make sure it is not the last one. It is very critical that we continue listening to our health experts, providing needed resources, and preparing for what is next, including what this will mean for families' day-to-day lives and for people who can't take a day off work without losing a paycheck or don't have affordable childcare if a school closes or don't have health insurance or are experiencing homelessness.

I hope my Republican colleagues will think long and hard about what their priorities are in the midst of this and choose to refocus their energy on working with us to address the urgent issues of the day instead of distracting us from serious work and wasting time we don't have.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, I think if we continue to make the argument with women's healthcare that it is mutually exclusive to consider that, and you define what we are talking about here—banning abortions where there is pain-felt capability or not trying to preserve the life of a baby born through a botched abortion—adding this as well: not treating the fetal remains with the dignity that they deserve—I think it is increasingly difficult to make the argument that we constantly hear about women's healthcare. They are not mutually exclusive. This is something that shouldn't be put into the category that it would impact any of that by putting this into effect.

I yield floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3259

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 3259 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I am disappointed that my colleague would try to codify a policy that has been proven to cause extensive harm to the most vulnerable women and families around the world.

In the past 3 years, we have seen the global impact of this policy. Health clinics have closed, access to care has decreased, and lives are needlessly put at risk. When women in developing countries and other parts of the world

don't have access to family planning and information they need for women's reproductive health, abortions actually increase rather than decrease. Research shows that by decreasing access to information about modern contraceptive options, abortion rates increase. This policy doesn't stop abortions; it only limits the resources that are available that prevent women from having unwanted pregnancies.

My Republican colleagues can call it whatever they want—the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, the Mexico City Policy—I call it dangerous and deadly. In fact, instead of protecting life, the global gag rule erects new barriers to critical health services, including reproductive health services, for people and communities who already have limited access to affordable, high quality healthcare.

Across U.S. global health assistance, we are seeing a breakdown in systems of health care provisions which disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable, hard-to-reach populations. In Uganda, mobile health teams that go into communities and provide sometimes the only health care available are being cut.

ABBEF, the International Planned Parenthood Federation member in Burkina Faso, was forced in 2017 to prematurely end its U.S.-supported pilot initiative to distribute contraceptives in secondary schools where there is a huge family planning need.

Marie Stopes International, MSI, received 17% of its donor income from USAID at the time the global gag rule was reinstated. These funds were exclusively used for voluntary contraception services and the loss of funding has impacted work with poor and marginalized communities most in need of accessing services.

Marie Stopes Ethiopia, with expertise in reaching remote communities, ended its U.S.-funded program providing vasectomies and tubal ligations to rural populations. No other organization has the technical skills and expertise to provide the same quality of service and choice.

Clearly this policy decreases care, increases abortions, and risks the lives of women around the world. And this is not about abortion, this is about controlling a woman's body and limiting her choices.

If we are actually going to get serious about improving women's health, we should be working to end the global gag rule.

Given the negative impact this policy has already had on so many women and families around the world, codifying it would just exacerbate those issues, so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, it is disappointing that when we take a look at something that is controversial like abortion and we peel it back a layer further, we make it noncontroversial

by making the discussion about something that most Americans—the overwhelming majority of Americans—agree about, which is, regardless of how you feel about abortion, you don't necessarily want your government taking your taxpayer dollars and the taxpayer dollars of a whole lot of people who have very strong feelings against abortion and using those to fund organizations that either perform abortions or that engage in promoting or lobbying or counseling or referring in order to encourage abortions. The overwhelming majority of Americans don't want that regardless of how they feel about life.

This shouldn't be a controversial issue. It is a non sequitur. It is a straw man argument to suggest that this somehow limits anyone's options. It doesn't. In fact, it expands options of individuals by saying: We are not going to take your money at the point of a gun, which is what governments do at the end of the day when they take money, in order to spend it on something that—depending on how you phrase the question and which pollster you are talking to, it is either a sizable majority or a bare majority of Americans who find that morally problematic. But an overwhelming majority of Americans say that, no matter what, you shouldn't be taking all taxpayer money and then using that to fund abortion or abortion-related advocacy.

Last week, the Senate had a chance to adopt some measures that would protect the dignity of human life—not just unborn human life but also born human life, including babies who had been born alive following a failed abortion attempt. Unfortunately, due to a minority of this body, we lost the opportunity to enact those reforms.

Those colleagues opposed to these measures did so largely on the claims that they were, as they put them, anti-woman or anti-healthcare. They claim somehow that these measures interfered with what should be considered personal—the personal nature of healthcare between women and their doctors.

I could not agree more that healthcare is personal. It is, after all, about healing, preserving, and prolonging the life of a human being, the life of a person. In the case of a pregnant woman, it is about two persons, sometimes three. If it is a woman who is pregnant with a single baby, it is two persons with two beating hearts, two distinct sets of DNA, and two unique and eternally valuable, unrepeatable souls—two persons with equal dignity and worth. We ought to value both of them and provide opportunity and care and rights and protection to both.

In the spirit of our founding, we ought to affirm through our laws and through our taxpayer dollars the truth that every member of our society—every woman, every man, every unborn child—is entitled to the right to life and to the full protection of that right

under the laws of the United States. Our healthcare ought to heal, preserve, and protect those lives. Unfortunately, many of our laws themselves permit and subsidize exactly the opposite of life in our country and even, tragically, abroad.

Congress allows and helps fund the most radical abortion policy in the Western world, enabling procedures that impose barbaric violence upon women and unborn children and ending the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent babies in our Nation every single year. It allows our foreign aid money to go to organizations that fund and promote abortions overseas, taking the lives of thousands of innocent babies across the globe—especially, by the way, baby girls.

In some of these countries, abortions happen in much higher numbers to female babies precisely because they are female. Abortion is, in many cases, the knife's edge of sexism—the exact tool they use to denigrate women's equal dignity and value and worth and right to breathe.

In some of these countries, women don't even want the abortions. In some cases, these organizations force their own so-called enlightened values on them, pressuring these women to take their own children's lives whether or not they really want to. This form of cultural and imperialism is not pro-woman, it is not pro-child, and it is certainly not pro-healthcare. It is pro-sexism and pro-violence. And we must end it. Today, we can, through the passage of the Protecting Life in Foreign Assistance Act. This bill would permanently stop the use of our foreign aid money for funding or promoting abortions overseas.

We ought to uphold the equal dignity of women, whether born or unborn, in America and across the world, and we should treat their bodies with reverence and dignity and respect, the respect they deserve, not because any government decided to confer that respect upon them but because they exist. Today, we can choose that, too, through Senator BRAUN's bill, the Dignity for Aborted Children Act. That measure, as Senator BRAUN has explained, will ensure that aborted children's bodies are not treated simply as medical waste to be crudely disposed of and that they should instead receive a proper burial or cremation, just as we accord to all other human beings.

We have to support and value women and babies everywhere. In our laws and for our lives, we ought to uphold the dignity of each and every human person, regardless of race, sex, appearance, abilities, or age. The measures before us today—those I have outlined and those that have been proposed by Senator BRAUN—do just that, and we should support them for the very same reasons that we should pass them. They shouldn't be objectionable.

It is tragic that they have drawn an objection today. It is tragic that any American, much less any Member of

the Senate, which calls itself the world's greatest deliberative legislative body, would object to these measures. After all, it is difficult to fathom how someone wouldn't want to protect babies. It is difficult to fathom why someone wouldn't be in favor of something at least protecting the conscience rights of U.S. taxpayers who don't want to see their hard-earned taxpayer dollars going to fund an operation, a procedure that they know is designed to end a human life—a human life that in many cases is deliberately ended because of the sex of the person whose life is being taken. This is tragic, it is unacceptable, and it shouldn't happen—not here, not on this soil, not on our watch.

We are not going to give up. The fact that we have endured these setbacks today, the fact that these well-conceived, non-objectionable pieces of legislation have drawn an objection today, doesn't mean this issue is going to go away. It doesn't mean these proposals are going to go away.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I want to talk to the Senate for a few minutes about refrigerators and air conditioners. Thank the Lord for both of them. They make our lives so much better, especially in the Presiding Officer's home State of Mississippi and, certainly, in my home State of Louisiana.

Refrigerators and air conditioners and the like are able to keep people and things cold by using coolants or refrigerants, I think some people call them. I am going to call them coolants. Basically, I will not go into the chemistry and/or the physics, but when a coolant in liquid form is converted to a gas, it is called phase conversion. It absorbs heat. That is why you will hear people, including but not limited to repair women and repair men, talking about coolant for an air conditioner or coolant for a refrigerator. It is that coolant that keeps us and our food cool.

Years ago, we used to use a coolant called Freon. You probably have heard that term. It is seldom used today. There are some small occasions when it is used, but for the most part, we have decided Freon is not a good coolant, not because it doesn't work but because it is very, very harmful to our environment. So a number of years ago, people the world over, including the U.S. Government, said: OK, we are not going to use Freon anymore. We are going to use another coolant, which we generally refer to as hydrofluorocarbons. If you hear me use the expression HFC or the acronym HFC, that is what I mean.

So we went along and, instead of using Freon, we started using HFCs, hydrofluorocarbons. Then we discovered—and by "we" I mean that most of the scientists throughout the world came to realize that

hydrofluorocarbons or HFCs are not very good for the environment either. The people who made this decision, many of whom were American scientists, decided we need to develop a third type of coolant other than Freon and other than HFCs to run our air conditioners and run our refrigerators and protect our environment at the same time.

A few years ago, most of the countries throughout the world made this decision. The representatives of these countries got together and said: OK, you remember we decided to stop using Freon, and now we have been using these HFCs. Yet we have discovered these HFCs are also harmful, so we are going to agree—all of these countries said—to develop a third type of coolant that is not as harmful to our environment.

That is the direction in which the world is headed. Within 5, 10, 15 years, not only will Freon be eliminated, but so will hydrofluorocarbons because the rest of the world is going to be using a third type of coolant, which has been developed and is being developed as we speak.

There is just one problem. The United States has not agreed with those other countries. That is OK. That is our right to do it our way. But that presents yet another problem because in 5 or 10 or 15 years, we are going to look up, and we are going to be the odd person out. The rest of the world is going to be using this new technology, and we are still going to be using hydrofluorocarbons. We are going to be isolated, and it is going to cost our business community a lot of business, and it is going to hurt us.

I and Senator TOM CARPER—a fine American and a good man—have a bill. It is called the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act—the Senator and I call it the AIM Act—and we have a lot of support. At last count, we had 32 cosponsors—half Republican, half Democrat—and that number is rising as we speak. That is a third of the U.S. Senate. You can't get a third of the U.S. Senate to agree on much of anything except that they like ice cream, but for this august body, having 32 cosponsors is a big deal.

Let me also say that we have a lot of support from the business community. For example—and I will not read all of the groups that are supporting it—the Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute is supporting this bill. It is in charge of our refrigerators and air conditioners, and it is saying: Yes, we want to do this. The environmental community supports this bill. It is rare that we get both the environmental community and the business community on the same page, but mainly through Senator CARPER's intellect and charm, we have been able to do that.

As you know, we are in the process of considering an energy bill, and that energy bill is really an amalgamation of a lot of other bills that deal with en-

ergy that are going to be put together in one bill, ably handled by Senator MURKOWSKI. Senator CARPER and I want to take our bill—the AIM Act, the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act, which is supported overwhelmingly by the business community and by the environmental community—and add it to Senator MURKOWSKI's bill as an amendment, and that amendment has already been submitted. We have a lot of support for the amendment. The last time I looked, we had 28 cosponsors to the amendment, and once again, the business community and the environmental community are supporting it.

The Presiding Officer is probably thinking, OK, KENNEDY. What is the problem? This is interesting, but what is the problem here?

How can I put this? The problem is the way we operate. One person in the Senate can stop the entire Senate from ever voting on something, as we all know, and I am not going to go into the details. In some cases, that is not necessarily a bad thing. Our Founders intended the Senate to move carefully and slowly, but it is a bad thing, in my judgment, when it is used routinely to keep the Senate from having an up-or-down vote on something that is important to the American people.

I mean, the logical approach would be, OK, you don't agree with the amendment. That is why God made rollcall votes. Let's vote. You can vote yea or you can vote nay or you can jump the rail, but everybody gets to weigh in. That is why I was sent up here. My people sent me up here to debate and decide. They didn't send me up here to participate and delay in stultification. So that is my message today: Let my people vote.

Once again, I understand there are rare occasions on which a Senator feels so strongly about something that he or she can and should exercise his or her right to prevent the whole body from considering something, but it has become a routine political weapon. That is one of the reasons, in my judgment, that we don't get more done in the Senate.

I am not criticizing anybody. I am part of this body. If I am criticizing this body, I am criticizing myself. But doing nothing is hard because you never know when you are finished. We can do a lot more in this body, and I think we all understand that, and I think we can all agree with that. I think one of the reasons the Senate polls right up there with skim milk among the American people is that we don't get more done, and one of the reasons we don't get more done is that we are not allowed to vote.

Once again, I am not telling anybody how to vote, for our votes are sacred, but you can vote yea on my ideas and Senator CARPER's ideas, or you can vote nay, or you can not vote at all—you can jump the rail—but please let us vote.

I am not criticizing anybody. I am really not. I know we are together a

lot, as the Presiding Officer knows, and we all know each other, and I can honestly say I like and respect every one of my colleagues in this body. I truly do. I may not agree with them, but I like and respect them, so my criticism is not personal. Yet our process here is a problem, which is my plea today to my colleagues: Please don't object to this amendment. Please. It doesn't mean you have to vote for it—you can vote against it—but please let the entire body have a vote because that is what democracy is supposed to be all about.

I yield the floor to my friend Senator CARPER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I commend the Senator from Louisiana for his leadership and for his courage in not just helping to develop this proposal that we have offered in a legislative forum but in trying to make sure that it gets the debate it needs and the vote it needs on this floor.

For a couple of centuries, Members of the Senate would introduce legislation, and that legislation would be debated. Democrats and Republicans would have the opportunity to offer amendments to that legislation and to get votes on that legislation and on their amendments. We would hammer out a compromise in the Senate and eventually with the House and with whoever was President.

The Presiding Officer may remember an old movie called "The Way We Were." That is the way we were, and we need desperately to get back to the way we were when we were the world's greatest deliberative body. A good way to get started on that path is by supporting the legislation that my friend from Louisiana and I have coauthored with the support of a broad coalition of Senators and with the support of the business community and the environmental community as well.

Our amendment, as Senator KENNEDY has described today, is identical to legislation called the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act. I am not a really big one for acronyms, but the acronym that the Senator has used is AIM, the AIM Act. It is currently supported by a bipartisan group of 32 Senators—16 Republicans and 16 Democrats. I would describe this as Noah's Ark, whereby, for every Republican, we add a Democrat and on and on and on. Even today, we are continuing to add sponsors and cosponsors to our bill and to this amendment.

This amendment, like the stand-alone bill, would save consumers money; it would create jobs; it would support economic growth; and it would help us to address the climate crisis. This amendment would authorize the EPA to implement a phase-down of the production and consumption of something called hydrofluorocarbons, known as HFCs, over the next 15 years. HFCs are used as coolants in refrigerators and air conditioners. They are

substances that help to make sure our air conditioners work and our freezers work and our refrigerators work, among other things, and that our chillers work.

Unfortunately, what came before the HFCs was bad for our ozone and our planet, and it created a big hole in the ozone layer of our planet. We figured out that it was not good. It turned out to be the refrigerants that we were using that were causing it. Scientists came along and said: Let's replace them. Let's get rid of those CFCs and replace them with something that doesn't give us a hole in the ozone layer.

Guess what. HFCs work. They do. They do a really good job at that. That is the good news. The bad news is these hydrofluorocarbons are 1,000 times worse than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas—1,000 times worse. So they are good on the one hand and are bad on the other hand.

So the scientists go to work again. Scientists in this country and businesses in this country go to work and ask: What can we do about this? They have come up with a replacement to replace the HFCs—1,000 times worse as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

We also have the opportunity, in using American technology, to put Americans to work in selling these products not just in America but around the world. American companies have invested literally billions of dollars to produce and sell the next-generation technology to replace HFCs. Our amendment protects those investments.

Again, the amendment is good for consumers, and I will explain why. The amendment drives the deployment of more efficient air-conditioning and refrigeration products and equipment. It reduces energy and upkeep costs as well. How much? What is it worth in terms of saving money for consumers? Apparently, the EPA has calculated it through its own economic analysis, and it has come up with a number that says that over the next 15 years, our legislation would save consumers \$3.7 billion—not millions but billions of dollars.

Our amendment is good for American jobs. The chamber of commerce expects our legislation to result in the creation of 150,000 additional direct and indirect jobs in this country in the years to come—150,000 additional, good-paying jobs. Our amendment is good for our economy.

Our legislation is expected to improve the trade imbalance in chemicals and equipment by \$12.5 billion, which is something we need to do, and it is expected to increase manufacturing output close to \$39 billion over the next 7 years.

Oh, by the way—P.S.—our amendment is good for the planet we live on and the people who inhabit it. We will end up joining the rest of the world to phase out HFCs, which will help to avoid an increase of up to a half a de-

gree Celsius in our climate, in our temperature on this planet.

All of these are win-wins. They are all win-wins. They are the reason that our legislation has such broad support from stakeholders. Our legislation is supported by an unlikely coalition. As Senator KENNEDY said, it is not every day that you find the lamb and the lion lying down together in their finding a common cause. Yet, in this case, there is a whole host of environmental groups, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and other business groups, a lot of Democrats, a lot of Republicans, and maybe one or two Independents. I mean, it is a great coalition, and it is one that I am proud of in my having worked with Senator KENNEDY to create. We do all of this with the broad support of this unlikely coalition.

Our legislation doesn't preempt the roles of States. With that said, I know that some of our colleagues have called for adding to this amendment new pre-emption authorities that would prevent States from addressing HFCs. My response to them is that there are reasons this is not an issue to be addressed at this time.

And as we have seen with TSCA and the California waiver for vehicle standards, this administration doesn't seem keen on following the law, and there is no guarantee that if we require EPA to phase out HFCs that the Trump EPA will do so in a timely manner or in a legally defensible way.

Allowing the States to act helps hold the Federal Government accountable. However, once a strong Federal program is in place, States will not need to act and will spend their resources elsewhere. We have seen this happen before with programs similar to the one this amendment would create.

I would like to add that many of my colleagues in this Chamber have stated that they support innovation to help achieve our climate and clean energy goals.

The Federal Government has many tools to drive innovation—many tools to drive innovation—Federal funding, Federal procurement, and also regulation.

There is a reason we have broad support from the business community. Businesses know that regulation will further drive innovation and U.S. investments. Without the regulations that would be created if this amendment were adopted, the United States will continue to lose global leadership in the production of HFC alternative technologies.

And let me just add a P.S. I know some people think climate change is a hoax; it is not real. My wife and some of her colleagues from the DuPont Company that she worked with for years traveled to Antarctica earlier this year. They spent a couple weeks down there, an incredible trip, learned a lot, and they came back and I said: How warm was it down there? She said

it was in the thirties—rarely below, not above.

She came back about 5, 6 weeks ago. In the weeks since then, the record-high temperature in Antarctica, South Pole, hit 63 degrees. That record lasted for about a week, and it was replaced by a new record, 65. That lasted for about another week or two. That was broken by another record. I think it was 67 or 68 degrees—like that.

A piece of Antarctica about the size of the District of Columbia fell off into the ocean. Something is happening here. Something is happening here, and I think what it is, is getting to be pretty clear.

Here is the good news. The good news is we can address that concern, that problem, which is not a hoax, and we can do so in ways that create tens of thousands of jobs, billions of dollars in exports, all kinds of economic opportunity, innovation, and technology that we would celebrate, and we should celebrate.

We need to support this amendment. I just want to again thank my colleague for his leadership, for allowing me to be his wingman in this effort, and I look forward to garnering the support of a broad coalition of our colleagues. It is the right thing to do. Let's do it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### ABORTION

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor tonight to briefly discuss a message from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice John Roberts.

As you know, Chief Justice Roberts recently sat in the very chair, Madam President, in which you are sitting right now as he ably oversaw the impeachment trial.

In a very rare admonition, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court this afternoon released a statement in response to statements made by the minority leader of the U.S. Senate, CHUCK SCHUMER.

The Senator, speaking outside the Court, across the street from this building, was at a protest while arguments were being heard inside the Court, and the comments made by Senator SCHUMER certainly appeared to threaten members of the Supreme Court.

The video clip shows Senator SCHUMER saying this. He said:

I want to tell you, Gorsuch. I want to tell you, Kavanaugh.

These are members of the Supreme Court, confirmed by the Senate. He said:

I want to tell you. . . . You have released the whirlwind, and you will pay the price.

"You will pay the price."

Well, it can't be a political price because Justices serve for life. Either they die in office or they can resign, step down. There is no political price to be paid.

To me, this sounds like he is talking about a physical price, violence.



Now, SCHUMER told abortion rights advocates who were outside the Court these very things:

I [will] tell you, Gorsuch. I [will] tell you, Kavanaugh. You have released a whirlwind, and you will pay the price.

He goes on to say:

You won't know what hit you. . . .

You, members of the Supreme Court. He, the minority leader of the U.S. Senate, saying:

You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions.

I believe these statements are outrageous; they are uncalled for; they are out of bounds; and on their face, they appear to invite violence against members of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Let me just read to you what the Chief Justice said today in his release. Chief Justice Roberts responded:

This morning, Sen. Schumer spoke at a rally in front of the Supreme Court while a case was being argued inside.

He goes on to say:

Sen. Schumer referred to two Members of the Court by name and said he wanted to tell them that "you have released the whirlwind! And you will pay the price! You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions."

The Chief Justice continued:

Justices know that criticism comes with the territory, but threatening statements of this sort from the highest levels of government are not only inappropriate, they are dangerous.

He concludes by saying:

All Members of the Court will continue to do their job, without fear or favor, from whatever quarter.

That is the statement of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court referring to the actions by the minority leader, the Senator from New York, CHUCK SCHUMER.

We cannot tolerate political violence or threats of harassment. We as a body, as a community, as a country should be looking to elevate our debates rather than lower them, which is what, in my opinion, the minority leader did today.

I hope the minority leader will think twice about comments like these in the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). The majority leader.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar Nos. 572 and 586; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

#### IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

#### To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Thomas A. Bussiere

#### IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

#### To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Jacqueline D. Van Ovost

#### [NEW REPORTS]

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### DIGNITY IN AGING ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last night we passed by unanimous consent legislation to revise and extend for 5 more years the key programs that Congress established under the Older Americans Act of 1965. I cosponsored the final version of this measure, which passed our Chamber as a Senate amendment to the Dignity in Aging Act, H.R. 4334.

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Senator COLLINS for leading the bicameral negotiations that made this bipartisan compromise possible. I expect that the other Chamber will soon accept the changes we made to their version of this legislation, so that Congress can send the final version to the President's desk in fairly short order.

For over five decades, the Older Americans Act has made resources available to the Aging Network and States for services to the elderly and disabled. An example is the nutrition services program authorized under title III, which makes resources available for home-delivered meals, enabling the homebound to remain independent. This statute also helps older Americans live independently by supporting community-based services, making information about care options available to family caregivers, and supporting the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

As I continue my 99 county meetings across the State of Iowa each year, I

welcome the feedback and ideas I get from local residents to help make our communities safer and stronger for older Americans. I also want to take this opportunity to commend the members of the Elder Justice Coalition, as well as groups such as the Iowa Association of Area Agencies on Aging, for their efforts in this area. These organizations and their members deserve recognition for their continued work on behalf of the Nation's older Americans and their contributions to this year's Older Americans Act extension.

In a decade, all of our Nation's baby boomers will have reached the age of 65 or older, and this demographic shift creates new challenges for our communities. With this in mind, I am currently working with my colleagues on other bipartisan initiatives to improve the quality of life for older Iowans, including legislation that would extend the Elder Justice Act. As the former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I wrote the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act to curb elder abuse and beef up tools and resources within local communities to help prevent financial fraud and exploitation of older citizens. For those Iowans who enjoy working and need to continue working to pay the bills, I have also championed legislation to strengthen age-related workplace discrimination laws.

Mr. President, as noted by the former head of the Iowa Association of Area Agencies on Aging, "The Older Americans Act provides the foundation that allows Iowa to continue to be a great place to for Iowans to call home." I want to again thank my colleagues for working with me in a bipartisan way on this legislation to improve the lives of older Americans in Iowa and across the United States.

#### ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: