

background as one who has served as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I will look at my background as one who has listened to Republicans and Democrats alike in my State, but then I will call upon my conscience to vote for what is best.

Don't fail the American people by having something that feels good, that says nice things but doesn't make any change. If there were ever a time America needs changes—we have two crises. One, of course, is COVID-19, and we are not addressing that. The other is, once again, every American, of all races, has to look at racism in policing. We are better than that. Most of our police departments want to be better than that.

Let us stand up. Let the U.S. Senate be the conscience of the Nation. Again, I note we have been in the past. Wouldn't it be nice to be so in the present?

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mrs. LOEFFLER assumed the Chair.)

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act. The passage of this historic legislation marks a once-in-a-generation step by this body to restore and conserve our national parks, as well as our country's national heritage. It builds on an American tradition of conserving our natural wonders and shared public spaces. It reaffirms our commitment to preserve them for future generations.

It is also important to note that this is a jobs bill. According to a recent study, the Great American Outdoors Act will help create or support 100,000 jobs all over the country, including 10,000 in my home State of Virginia, at a time when millions of Americans are out of work.

Currently, the National Park Service has a deferred maintenance backlog of \$12 billion. A chronic lack of funding from Congress has forced the Park Service to defer maintenance on countless trails, buildings, and historic structures, as well as thousands of miles of roads and bridges. Today, over half of all Park Service assets are in desperate need of repair.

To address these needs, a little over 3 years ago, I approached my colleague and friend, Senator ROB PORTMAN, with an idea. What if we took unobligated Federal energy revenues and used them to address the maintenance backlogs at our national parks. So we came together, in a bipartisan partnership, and introduced the National Park Services

Legacy Act. A little over a year later, we combined our efforts with Senator ALEXANDER and Senator KING to introduce our Restore Our Parks Act. Earlier this year, this legislation was combined with Senator GARDNER and Senator MANCHIN's Land and Water Conservation Fund legislation to form the Great American Outdoors Act.

This legislation represents one of the largest investments in the infrastructure of our national parks in its over 100-year history. Over the next 5 years, the Great American Outdoors Act will fund more than half of all the deferred repairs and completely fund the Park Service's highest priority needs. As my friend from Maine, Senator KING, has noted, deferred maintenance is really simply a debt for future generations. With the passage of this bill today, we are one step closer to paying down that debt.

Few States in the country are as impacted by the Park Service's deferred maintenance backlog as the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the Commonwealth, we have a maintenance backlog of over \$1.1 billion. That is the third largest behind California and DC. I want to give a few examples of how this legislation will help preserve our historical heritage and create jobs in my State.

Here in the National Capital Region, the George Washington Memorial Parkway, which is managed by the National Park Service, has over \$700 million in deferred maintenance. As a matter of fact, anyone in this Chamber who travels on that road actually knows that we had a sinkhole appear in the parkway within the last year—an enormous safety threat, as well as an enormous inconvenience to anybody who travels on this important road. Our legislation would help rebuild this critical transportation route between Virginia, Washington, DC, and Maryland—reducing traffic and, again, creating jobs.

Further south on I-95, the Richmond National Battlefield Park has over \$5 million in deferred maintenance. The nearby Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site—this is the site actually of the first African-American-owned bank created by Maggie Walker, as well as the first bank owned by an African-American woman. I visited it last year, and it has maintenance needs approaching \$1 million. At the nearby Petersburg National Battlefield Park, the maintenance needs have grown to \$9 million over the years. This legislation will help support critical infrastructure needs of these parks, preserving these important pieces of our heritage while again supporting our local economies.

Let me take you a little farther west, out to one of the real gems of our National Park Service—probably one of the parks best known in Virginia around the country—and that is the Shenandoah National Park. It is one of the crown jewels of our Park Service. Again, the maintenance backlog there

in the Shenandoah sits at over \$90 million. Our legislation will put people to work on these overdue repairs, including to Skyline Drive and stretches of the Appalachian Trail, which are really at the heart of Virginia's outdoor tourism industry.

Let me take you a little farther down Skyline Drive, down farther in Southwest Virginia. As you head southwest, the Blue Ridge Parkway right here, which has accumulated over \$500 million in deferred maintenance—that is, as a matter of fact, over \$1 million of deferred maintenance for every mile of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Great American Outdoors Act will, again, put Virginians to work on these repairs so visitors can continue to appreciate the beauty of Southwest Virginia and support the local economy.

Let me end my visual tour of Virginia going to the eastern part of the Commonwealth. This is one final example. Colonial National Historical Park, which is home to historic Jamestown and the Yorktown battlefield—some of our country's most significant sites from the birth of our Nation. At this park and along the Colonial Parkway, there are deferred maintenance needs totaling over \$430 million. With this legislation, the wait on many of these repairs is over. We are going to create jobs, make sure this important part of our history is around for years to come, and make sure we leave our kids and grandkids that sense of who we are as a nation.

Now, before I close, I want to touch on the other half of this legislation, which provides full mandatory funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the LWCF.

For decades, the LWCF has been the most important tool of the Federal Government that States have had to protect critical natural areas, water resources, and, again, cultural heritage. Virginia has received over \$368 million in LWCF funding, which has helped preserve and expand critical recreation areas within the Commonwealth.

For example, the American Battlefield Protection Program, which is funded through the LWCF, has been vital for communities across Virginia, providing them with technical assistance and funding to help them preserve their history and, again, attract tourists. LWCF has also allowed us to expand and preserve land within the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests and along the Appalachian Trail. These efforts support the health of unique wildlife habitats and provide new access for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation.

Through this combination of the parks bill and the permanent funding for the LWCF, the Great American Outdoors Act ensures that we will continue to make these important investments in conservation in our parks for years to come.

In closing, I thank my colleagues, again, for supporting this historic legislation with an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote and a piece of legislation

that is supported by the administration. My hope is that the House will move quickly on this. What better present to our Nation than to have this legislation signed into law, hopefully, by July 4.

As we all know, at a time of significant division in our country, the fact that this body was able to come together and pass this bill with over 70 votes gives me a little bit of hope. Again, I am proud of my colleagues for stepping up to restore our national parks and public lands, and as I mentioned at the outset, this legislation will create over 100,000 jobs, jobs that are extraordinarily needed at this critical moment when our economy has been shattered. So for current Americans and future Americans, job well done.

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. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

JUSTICE ACT

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. President, I woke up this morning, Wednesday morning, June 17, 2020, and for so many Americans, this is just another Wednesday morning. You wake up; you get ready for work—but not in South Carolina.

In South Carolina, this Wednesday, June 17, is the fifth anniversary of when a racist walked into Mother Emanuel Church, sat through a Bible study for an hour and listened to believers talk about their love of God. At the end of that Bible study, he pulled out a weapon and killed nine people. So for me and so many South Carolinians, this is a hard day.

I will tell you this: Standing on this floor, remembering the words of one of the victims' son, Daniel Simmons, Jr., 5 years ago on a Wednesday, 1 week later—I asked Daniel Simmons, Jr., whose father, Daniel Simmons, Sr., had been killed in an attempt to start another race war at the home of the Civil War: What should I say to the people who would be watching around the country?

He said what I could not believe. It was this: Please remind them of Romans 8:28—that all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

I was standing at those doors on my cell phone. I could not believe the words he was speaking. In an act of true, unconditional love, he inspired me. He encouraged me. He taught me lessons of strength and courage and mercy our Nation needs to remember.

I came to the floor today to speak about my new bill, the JUSTICE Act, our Republican response to police re-

form. I was sitting in my office when the Senator from Illinois talked about the “token” legislation on this day, the day that we remember Mother Emanuel Church and the nine lost lives and my friend, the pastor of the church, Clementa Pinckney—the first person ever to call me a Senator, the pastor of that church, a Democrat pastor of that church said to me “My Senator,” in December of 2012—and reflect back on the fact that I have on my phone today the text for Clementa in which I said: Are you OK? He didn't answer because he was already dead.

To think that on this day, as we try to make sure that fewer people lose confidence in this Nation, to have the Senator from Illinois refer to this process, this bill, this opportunity to restore hope and confidence and trust to the American people, to African Americans, to communities of color—to call this a token process hurts my soul for my country, for our people.

To think that the concept of anti-lynching that is a part of this legislation would be considered a token piece of legislation because, perhaps, I am African American and the only one on this side of the aisle—I don't know what he meant, but I can tell you that, on this day, to hear those comments, again, hurts the soul.

To think about how, in the same year, 2015, Walter Scott, in my hometown of North Charleston, running away from the police, was shot five times in the back—I sponsored legislation then, and I don't remember a single person saying a single thing on that side of the aisle about helping to push forward more legislation on body cameras. But, today, this is a token piece of legislation. I think it is important that we stand up and be counted and make sure that we have more resources available for every officer to have a body camera because, as we saw in Georgia with Mr. Arbery, had it not been caught on video; in Walter Scott's case, had it not been caught on video; in George Floyd's case, had it not been caught on video, we might be in a different place.

On the other side, they are wanting to race-bait on tokenism, while this legislation would provide resources for body cameras, for anti-lynching, and for deescalation training. But, no, we can't concern ourselves with the families I sat with at the White House yesterday and in my office yesterday. Instead, we want to play politics because this is 2020, and we are far more concerned about winning elections than we are about having a serious conversation on reform in this country. No, we would rather have a conversation about tearing this country apart, making it a binary choice between law enforcement and communities of color instead of working for the American people, bringing the reforms to the table so that we have a chance to balance this Nation and direct her toward due north. No, that is too much to ask on June 17, 5 years later.

I started this conversation on body cameras in 2015, in the Walter Scott Notification Act in 2015. But, no, we want to have a political conversation. I reject that. I reject that.

I will tell you that I believe my friends on the other side of the aisle are serious about police reform. There are just some who are more interested in scoring political points than they actually are in getting a result.

It is not the majority of them. The majority of them have the same heart that we have for the American people. That is where we should be focusing our attention, not the color of my skin, not tokens. It is cool when you are out in the public. I get it all the time on Twitter. I am used to it. But on this day, my heart aches for my State. My heart aches for my uncle's church, which he attended for 50 years before he passed. So I am a little riled up.

I sit here quietly trying to pass good legislation that was based on the House bill because I knew that if I wanted a chance to get something done, we had to do it in a bipartisan fashion. I am not running for anything. I am not up for reelection. I am not trying to support someone for their victory. I am simply saying to the families I met with yesterday at the White House without a camera and in my office yesterday without a camera: I hear you. We see you. You are not simply sitting there silent. We are working on serious, tangible, measurable results.

Why is that not enough? Why can't we just disagree on the three or four items that we disagree upon? Why can't I say what I have been saying, which is that the House bill is, in fact, the blueprint for some progress? It goes too far for me in some areas, but, yes, I like the concept of more information. This is a good thing. The House does it; we do it. That is a good thing. I like the concept of more training. The House does it; we do it. I like the fact that we are looking for a way to ban choke holds. We do it by taking money from different departments; they do it in a different fashion. We are about 90 percent there.

But where do we go? Where do we go? People wonder why our country is so divided. It is because it is so easy to walk onto this floor and say “token” and send the same race-baiting message that we have heard for a very long time.

If you are a Democrat, hey, it is OK. That is not ever OK. It is not OK to say to our kids: You can't think what you want to think and be who you want to be. If you are not in line with one idea and the way they think, it is bad news. Then you are a sellout.

What message do you send the kids? I am going to be OK, but what message are we sending the kids throughout our country—that you can't be taught just to think; we have to teach you how to think. That is the kind of conclusion that is wrong. It is toxic. It is pushing our country toward an implosion that is avoidable.