

does. Flying around the world can be hard on bodies. When you have all the work you have to do at home and you go around the world and you encourage freedom-loving people—I know that many, many wonderful folks in Taiwan who are fearful because of what they see happening in Hong Kong know they have had an advocate in the chairman of the Armed Services Committee for many, many years.

To the people in Taiwan who are also scared at this moment, JIM INHOFE is a heroic speaker. I just want to thank him for the work he has done there.

Mr. INHOFE. Thank you very much. Thank you. I appreciate that.

It has been a tough time here. I would say that he has made my day.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Over the past few days, we have been working on this national defense authorization bill. It is one that we pass every year and have passed every year for 60 years.

My colleagues have done good work on this bill so far. We took requests very seriously. We put hundreds of them in this bill. We actually did. Over 700 of the papers and amendments have been put in this bill. One of the reasons we wanted to do this is because—we didn't used to do it, but we actually did this time. A problem that existed last year didn't exist this year. There is resistance on the floor to getting amendments. That resistance has gone now, and I think we are going to be able to do it.

This bill was written by the Democrats and Republicans in the U.S. Senate, and they did a very good job. When you stop to consider that we have as many—we actually have over 700 amendments that are now a part of this bill. This was made by the Members here, not by any other group. It is not the way it has always been done.

We had a great markup. In fact, our markup ended up—I call it unanimous because it was passed by 25 to 2, and the 2 who voted against it are not big on the military anyway. I call it unanimous. That is unusual—unusual—to get a bill this size to pass unanimously out of a committee to the Senate floor.

This is going to happen today. I feel very good about the progress we are making. When we come back from this Fourth of July recess, we are going to be able to finish it, and it should be in good shape.

In a few moments, I will be asking for unanimous consent on adoption of the managers' package and to make six amendments in order. By my estimation, this is the first time in at least the last few years that we have really considered and voted on this many individual amendments on the floor.

I have to say something about Senator REED. Sure, we differ on some things, but it has always been that we have reached agreement on virtually every issue. I was glad we had agreement on amendments. We were pushing hard to have even many more amendments. We wanted to consider as many

as possible. We wanted every Member to have a say in this bill, and that is exactly what happened. I am glad we were able to reach a bipartisan path forward to complete consideration of this bill right after the recess, and that is exactly what we are going to do.

I have gone over a lot of the reasons this bill is so important over the past week, so I will keep it simple. Here is why we need to pass this bill:

First of all, it gives our troops a needed and deserved raise. It is out there.

It authorizes more than 30 kinds of special pay for our troops at various levels of hazard—things that haven't been done before.

It makes sure our military families—this is the big thing. I have a very close friend in here who was talking about the fact that—on the floor—the main problem we are facing in our Nation as a threat is China and Russia. He made the comment and observation that, yet, we spend more on the military than the two of them put together. That is true, but I did want to remind him—and I did on the floor yesterday—that there is a reason for that. The reason for that is the most expensive thing we have in the military that we deal with every year are people. We take care of people.

I remember last year that one of the main thrusts of our bill was to get all of those housing things that were privatized 10 years before and that hadn't been performing very well—to take care of our troops and their families. We spent time doing that. You take a Communist country like China or Russia—they don't care about the troops. They give them a gun and say: Go out and kill people. No wonder we have to spend more. That is the reason we are going to continue to do that, and this bill does that.

There are countries out there that hate everything America stands for and want to do us harm. We know that is right. I sometimes get tickled when I hear people talking about, well, we don't want to do this because that is going to upset them. We don't want to keep Gitmo open because that might upset the terrorists. Well, welcome to the real world.

So this gives our troops the equipment, the training, and the resources they need to defend this Nation.

I never want to put ourselves in the position where we have a fair fight in America. We don't want fair fights. We want to go into combat with a clear advantage over our adversaries, and this bill does that.

It makes sure that the Pentagon is situated to support our troops wherever they are, but it also protects taxpayer dollars and ensures accountability to the taxpayers. That is very important, and this bill does that.

This bill also does a lot of good things we all support. That is why we are passing the bill today. It is a no-brainer. It is not a matter of if we are going to pass it; it is a matter of when.

It is now down to the hours. It will be set up so that when we come back from the recess, we will be able to pass this bill.

Keep in mind, we pass it, and that is not the end because the House has to pass their bills, and, of course, then the President will sign the bill. We go into conference with the House and the Senate, and before the President signs the bill, we have to have not just a conference, but very likely it will go to the Big Four. If it does that, that is another process. Very likely, it could be November when we actually end up passing this bill. Our absolute deadline has always been December 31. We will be well in advance of that.

I know the President has strong feelings about one of the provisions of the bill. He says if that is in there, he will veto the bill. We all know what that is. It is controversial. It is the Warren amendment that was put in. I have to say this: All but one Republican oppose that. I have to say that so people will hear it and understand it because that is true.

Anyway, passing the bill is not a matter of if; it is going to pass. This is a very good bill. It is a must-pass bill. One of the things that happen with a must-pass bill is that everyone who can't get their bills on other interest areas passed—they know this bill is going to pass, so they try to put in amendments. We have taken a lot of the amendments that have nothing to do with defense, but nonetheless we know it is necessary. It has been necessary for 60 years. This is nothing new.

I would remind our colleagues that we have a long way to go yet. We will make sure that the conference report is a bipartisan one when we get to that point so that both parties can support it. It is exactly what we have right now. I have to say, with Senator REED—we very carefully weighed our portions of the bill, as well as amendments, to make sure we were fair to both sides—both the Republicans and Democrats—and that is the product we have in front of us.

From the brave patriots who fought for our Nation nearly 250 years ago to the 2.1 million who serve today, this bill is by them and for them.

This weekend, as you celebrate Independence Day, think about what this holiday stands for. Think about what it takes to protect the freedoms we celebrate.

There is no doubt in my mind that this bill will give our troops what they need. The bill will make American families safer and will enable us to stand up for our democratic values around the world. We will be passing this bill and will be very proud of it.

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

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

HONG KONG AUTONOMY ACT

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I am here on the Senate floor with my colleague from Maryland. I am here this morning, in part, to condemn the Chinese Communist Party's actions, their efforts to swallow Hong Kong into the mainland and silence the dissent of the people of Hong Kong, but I am also here to do something about that.

For decades, Hong Kong has been one of the most successful, thriving societies on the planet. An indispensable part of their success has been their freedom. Hong Kong has enjoyed a vibrant free press, free speech, freedom to worship. They have had an independent judiciary and a partially democratic electoral representative system of government for a long time now.

Hong Kong is one of the freest places in Asia and, because of these freedoms and the Hong Kong people's natural entrepreneurial spirit, Hong Kong is just one of the most successful and vibrant cities there has ever been.

Yet for years—maybe because of this—the Chinese Communist Party has pursued a systematic campaign to snuff out these basic freedoms in Hong Kong and bring the Hongkongers who live there into line. The intensity of the Chinese Communist Party's aggression appears to be growing by the day.

Their campaign shouldn't be very surprising. Just look at the recent actions: the genocidal action toward the Uighurs in Xinjiang or the aggressive action toward neighboring countries in the South China Sea—or toward the entire world, since the COVID-19 virus was first detected in Wuhan and the Chinese Government lied to us about its nature.

Fundamental principles, such as freedom and transparency, the just rule of law—these ideas are entirely antithetical to the core of the Chinese Communist Party's mission. I think that, several years from now, we are going to look back on July 1 of 2020 as a milestone in the Chinese Communist Party's aggression and hostility toward Hong Kong.

Yesterday was the first day that the Chinese Communist Party's new so-called national security law went into effect. News reports described the law as “tailor-made to bring Hong Kong's massive pro-democracy movement to heel.”

This picture was taken within the last 48 hours—thousands and thousands of people of Hong Kong taking to the streets to simply demand their freedoms—peacefully—to protest, to insist that they continue to have the freedoms that help make their society such a great society.

Tragically, 300 of these people were arrested last night simply because they were protesting the Chinese Com-

munist Party. Some of the arrests were made because Hongkongers possessed items that called for Hong Kong's independence. That is right—people arrested simply for holding a sign, arrested for holding a flag. Among them was a 15-year-old girl—a 15-year-old girl. Her crime: She held a flag that said “Hong Kong independence.” Another was a 19-year-old young man. His crime was that he had a pro-democracy sticker on his phone. Imagine—the nerve of wanting to have self-determination and expressing that with a sticker on your phone. So he was arrested.

His parents attempted to visit their son in jail and bring him dinner, and the police refused their visit. It is not at all clear if this young man will be able to get out even on bail.

So the Chinese Communist Party has very rapidly started enforcing this new law, and I think it is because they realize what is at stake. They know that the people of Hong Kong fervently believe in the importance of an open and free society. They believe in and they want the ability to practice liberal values, and they want a system of transparent, accountable government, one that is elected by and responsive to the people.

See, the vision of the people of Hong Kong for their own city, for their society, is anathema to the Chinese Communist Party because the Chinese Communist Party's deepest fear is that mainland Chinese citizens will demand the freedoms that Hongkongers enjoy, and that quest for freedom on the mainland would pose an unacceptable risk to the authoritarian control of the Communist regime.

So the Chinese Communist Party is cracking down. We have been witnessing it just in recent hours. This new so-called national security law was unilaterally imposed on the people of Hong Kong without any input from the people of Hong Kong, and that is in direct contravention to Chinese commitments to Hong Kong and the international community. The law was also purposefully written in a very vague and ambiguous manner, designed to essentially criminalize any behavior or speech on the part of a resident of Hong Kong that the Chinese Communist Party does not approve of.

Now, the law may be ambiguous, but the message behind it is not. If a 19-year-old can now be imprisoned for having a sticker on his phone or a 15-year-old girl can be imprisoned for having a flag, then no one is safe, and that is the message that Beijing wants to send to the people of Hong Kong: We can arrest you. We can imprison you if you misbehave. So think twice about what you say, where you go, with whom you meet, what you read, what you write. Maybe even think twice about what you think.

This law, sadly, looks like it means the end of Hong Kong's autonomy and the freedoms which underpin its social and economic vibrancy. And we are

seeing the effects: As I said, hundreds of arrests that occurred just yesterday as tens of thousands of courageous Hongkongers—here we see some of them—poured into the streets to shout and chant and demonstrate peacefully, to tell the Chinese Communist Party that they are not going to back down.

We have also seen Hongkongers who have been forced to scrub their social media history, booksellers who were intending to remove books from their shelves, Hong Kong pro-democracy political figures saying that they have to lessen their activism and rethink their strategy.

How can you blame them? How can you blame them? They could face years in prison if the Hong Kong authorities, at the bidding of the people in Beijing, choose to target them.

I think we can fully expect independent media voices in Hong Kong to be shuttered and Beijing's censorship and surveillance apparatus to flourish in the coming months and years.

The fact is, Hong Kong's vibrancy is being throttled by the Chinese Communist Party.

So I am on the Senate floor today to request passage of a piece of legislation that responds to this. I am pleased to report it has already received unanimous support from both Chambers of Congress. I introduced this legislation with my colleague Senator VAN HOLLEN of Maryland to create real penalties on those responsible for this campaign by the Chinese Communist Party to end Hong Kong's free way of life.

It is called the Hong Kong Autonomy Act, and the bill would impose mandatory sanctions on anyone involved in taking action to attack the basic freedoms that were promised to the people of Hong Kong.

Critically, our legislation also takes another step. It penalizes banks that choose to finance the erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy, banks that would put marginal profits ahead of the basic human rights of the people of Hong Kong.

I am really pleased that we are here this morning. I think we are on the verge of sending this legislation to the President's desk because America needs to take meaningful steps like this to push back on the Chinese Communist Party.

We should remember that this aggression toward Hong Kong is not limited to Hong Kong. The Chinese Communist Party is intent to spread its influence and power worldwide, and in the process, it is meant to simultaneously undermine and challenge free and open societies. I should point out that the spread of the Chinese Communist Party influence around the world poses a very real threat to us, to Americans, to our national and economic interests.

That is part of why the Hong Kong Autonomy Act is so important. It is not only an effort to shield freedom-loving Hongkongers from this continuing escalation of aggression by the